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The Types and Effectiveness of Voter Mobilization Efforts in the U.S. Presidential Elections of 1828 and 2008

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THE TYPES AND EFFECTIVENESS OF VOTER MOBILIZATION EFFORTS IN

THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 1828 AND 2008

by

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Abstract

This project is a case study of the types and effectiveness of voter mobilization efforts in the U.S. presidential elections of 1828 and 2008. Political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups utilize a variety of different voter mobilization tactics with the goal of persuading potential voters to make the leap to become voters. By utilizing newspapers and academic works, I determined the tactics that political organizations deployed to mobilize potential voters in both election years. Innovative mobilization tactics evolved in the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008, including the development of a two-party system and the use of the internet to distribute mobilizing messages which is why I have chosen to study them together. Additionally, the winning candidates of 1828 and 2008 were more representative of the American population. I utilized election result data, ANES and exit polls to determine the effectiveness of voter mobilization efforts at increasing voter turnout rates. Voter turnout rates were compared to turnout rates in neighboring election years to provide context for the dramatic changes that occurred in 1828 and 2008. The evidence suggests that voter mobilization efforts were effective at persuading potential voters to participate.

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Chapter One: Introduction

One of the most critical criteria of a successful democratic system of governance is the ability for citizens to participate in politics. Political participation can take a variety of different forms including running for office, contacting a member of Congress, and, most basically and fundamentally, voting. Through elections, eligible citizens are able to select an individual to represent their values, beliefs and interests in the legislature. This basic responsibility creates the essential makeup of elective bodies and gives citizens voice in their government. Both of these aspects are central to the development and maintenance of a just and democratic society. It is also an application of civic duty for those individuals who choose to participate.[1] At its root, voting in the United States is about choice. A potential voter must follow a line of decisions including which issues are most important, which party to support, which candidate is preferred and, most importantly, whether or not to participate at all. Many Americans do not make the choice to participate in electoral politics and abstain from voting at all.

Voter turnout is critical to electoral politics since those individuals who choose to exercise their right to vote determine the outcome of a given election. Political entities such as political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups engage in a variety of different tactics to motivate and mobilize citizens to participate in the electoral process. Through contact, they hope to influence the decision making process of potential voters. The goal of mobilization is to convince potential voters to make the transition to voters. Significant amounts of capital are contributed to these measures and the valuable time of both staff and dedicated volunteers is expended. Mobilization tactics include person-to-

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[1] Verba, Sidney., Scholzman, Kay L., & Brady, Henry E. *Voice and equality: civic voluntarism in American politics*. Harvard University Press: 1995.

person interaction between a voter and a campaign supporter as well as specialized

messaging to specific voters through various forms of media such as email or pamphlets.

In some election years, innovative mobilization tactics are developed and these new

strategies are effective at mobilizing the electorate. Evidence suggests that new voter

mobilization efforts used in the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008 were effective at

mobilizing voters.

Throughout the history of the United States, the methods of political contact with

the electorate have evolved.[2] However, similarities do exist in mobilization methods of

the past and in more recent days. For this reason, I am studying the presidential elections

of 1828 and 2008. In the elections of 1828 and 2008, new and innovative mobilization

techniques were employed by and in favor of the ultimate winner, which is why I believe

they should be studied together. The essential questions of my project are: what types of

mobilization tactics exist? Which types of mobilization tactics are most effective at

energizing the electorate? A variety of different tactics were utilized by the various

entities related to the elections in both 1828 and 2008. I have elected to study these

particular election years together because innovative mobilization strategies were

effectively implemented by political organizations in these years. Because 1828 and 2008

are separated by 180 years, it is possible to study the evolution of voter mobilization

efforts over the course of American history when these two election years are considered

together.

Because voter turnout is central to determining the outcome of elections, it is

important to understand the implications of voter mobilization. Campaigns and interest

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[2] Schier, S. (2000). *By invitation only: the rise of exclusive politics in the United States.* Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

groups frequently engage in a variety of actions in order to mobilize the public in favor of their particular cause. Some of the most basic forms of mobilization tactics include door-to-door canvassing by supporters in which a certain message is verbally distributed to potential voters; telephone banks in which supporters pass messages or conduct surveys of the public through telephone calls; direct mail and leaflets in which messages are conveyed to voters through the written word; and advertisements through various forms of media such as television and radio in which a central message is communicated. Political organizations spend millions of dollars in the United States on the implementation of these various techniques. Countless hours are spent by the staff and volunteers of political parties, campaigns and interest groups in the interest of achieving these goals in each election cycle.

For this reason, it is important to study the implications of voter mobilization upon voter turnout levels. Voter mobilization is a central focus of political organizations in elections. These actions expend a significant amount of valuable resources. Whether or not resources are wasted upon these costly undertakings has inherent value. Any popular norm that inherently uses resources that cannot be recovered such as time and money should be evaluated in order to determine its value. By studying two elections that are separated by a significant number of years, I intend to investigate the value of mobilization tactics throughout American history in addition to evaluating the changes time has wrought upon those tactics and mobilizational skills. The elections of 1828 and 2008 were further related by the implementation of new and innovative mobilization tactics that changed the course of electoral politics.

The elections of 1828 and 2008 were unique for a variety of different reasons. The winning candidates of both elections brought a greater degree of representation of the American population to the most prestigious elected office in the nation. In 1828, the first westerner was elected to the presidency.[3] Andrew Jackson, a populist, did not support the political power held by the American socio-economic elite that was epitomized by his competitor, incumbent John Quincy Adams. He was, to many Americans, a president of the common man. To his supporters, Jackson represented the interests of the people at large instead of the interests of the wealthy and educated. In 2008, the first African American president was elected to the coveted Oval Office. As a member of a minority group, Barack Obama represented the essential diversity of the American population. The son of a single mother, Obama also had the capacity to understand the inherent struggle of the middle class. Both Jackson and Obama represented the people in important and different ways than any of their predecessors. They brought the diversity of the American public to the forefront of American politics. Each election managed to alter the makeup of the executive branch in critical ways. Different demographic groups were given greater voice and recognition through the ascendancy of the winning candidates of Andrew Jackson and Barack Obama. Both elections were also contentious and fought with innovative tactics.

In the election of 1828, Jacksonians such as Martin Van Buren established long-standing foundations of American electoral politics. Political parties developed around the supporters of Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams.[4] The two-party political

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[3] Remini, Robert V. *The Election of Andrew Jackson*. Harper and Row, Publishers Inc. New York, New York. 1963.
[4] Cole, Donald B. *Vindicating Andrew Jackson: the 1828 election and the rise of the two party system*. Lawrence, KA: University Press of Kansas, 2009.

system was firmly established in the United States following this election. The two-party system is integral to electoral politics in the United States. Van Buren knitted together loyal supporters across the nation with a national organization that acted through local groups.[5] These actions brought supporters together in unique and innovative ways, which helped to increase voter turnout.

In the election of 2008, Barack Obama and his team further developed the successful ideas of his predecessor George Bush in the 2004 election.[6] The internet was a major component of the Obama campaign; through online pathways, Obama was able to raise extraordinary amounts of capital and organize numerous volunteers to electioneer on his behalf.[7] Obama was able to heighten his involvement and prominence amongst potential voters through social media platforms such as Facebook and his innovative website as well as through popular websites such as YouTube where campaign messages dispersed rapidly.[8] John McCain utilized some similar techniques with less sophistication and success. These mobilization tactics transformed electoral politics in the United States.

A structural organization will follow. In the following chapter, I will conduct a literature review. Due to the essential importance and relevance of voter turnout and mobilization to electoral politics in the present, a variety of scholars have investigated various aspects of these concepts. In order to determine the unique angle of this study, it

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[5] Parsons, Lynn H. *The birth of modern politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the election of 1828*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

[6] Bishop, Bill. *The big sort*. Houghton Mifflin: 2008.

[7] Magleby, David M. "Elections as sports teams: spending by campaigns, political parties, and interest groups in the 2008 election cycle." From *The change election: money, mobilization and and persuasion in the 2008 federal elections*. Temple University Press: 2011. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/j.ctt14bt6t0.7?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents Accessed on 10/14/2016

[8] Smith, Aaron. "The Internet's Role in Campaign 2008." *Pew Research Center*. (2009). Retrieved from: http://www.pewinternet.org/2009/04/15/the-internets-role-in-campaign-2008/ Accessed on 10/13/2016.

is critical to understand what scholarship already exists on the subject matter of voter turnout and mobilization. I will discuss the major discoveries and research methods undertaken in this expansive and growing field of study.

In chapter three, I will begin data analysis and discussion of the election of 1828. Far less information exists on this election because it took place in the distant past. Extensive records of the election of 1828 do not exist as they do today. For this reason, far fewer data exist and are accessible today. The types of mobilization efforts will be uncovered by revelations in newspaper articles published in the different stages of the election cycle. It is possible to determine what tactics were employed by the developing political parties and campaigns through their reportage in the partisan presses. By studying written records, it is possible to identify what tactics were used by political parties, interest groups and campaigns in this election cycle. I will utilize election results data and compare it to population data in order to determine voter turnout levels. Furthermore, I will compare the 1828 data with data concerning neighboring presidential elections. In this way, I intend to highlight some of the statistically important changes in voter turnout that occurred in the presidential election of 1828.

In chapter four, I will analyze similar data concerning the election of 2008. A far greater level of information is available about this election cycle and for this reason, this particular chapter will be richer than its predecessor. The types of mobilization efforts employed by political parties, campaigns and interest groups will be identified and discussed. I will use newspapers and scholarly literature to determine the types of mobilization efforts that were used. A plethora of information concerning this election exists particularly on the internet. The innovative strengths of the Barack Obama

campaign will be discussed including their use of the internet as an integral component of their campaign strategy in comparison to the online presence of the competing campaign of Senator McCain. Electoral returns, population data and polling conducted by such sources as the American National Election Studies will be utilized to analyze the presidential election data of 2008. These data will also be compared to similar data concerning other presidential elections including the election of 2004. I will utilize the same data sources that I used in chapter three and will supplement the sparse data of 1828 with the richer data sources of 2008.

In chapter five, I will synthesize the information gathered in the previous two chapters to formulate my conclusions. I conclude that the evidence suggest mobilization tactics are effective at motivating the people to vote. Both the campaigns of Andrew Jackson and Barack Obama were able to effectively utilize mobilization tactics to influence voters and persuade citizens to support them at the ballot box. Social pressure was the center of their mobilization strategies. Martin Van Buren effectively created a national political party with intense local roots to solidify the presence of Jackson supporters in neighborhoods and communities where supportive messages were more easily distributed. These social factors of both direct and indirect mobilization impacted the outcome of the election. The Obama team used the internet to connect supporters through social media such as Facebook and the campaign website. Volunteers and staff undertook traditional mobilization tactics such as door-to-door canvassing and telephone banks in order to spread the message to a wide variety of likely and potential voters throughout all fifty states.

The elections of 1828 and 2008 effectively used mobilization techniques to motivate certain segments of the electorate. This particular project is unique due to the nature of its comparison. Scholarship on mobilization and voter turnout on the election of Andrew Jackson is limited. No one has attempted to identify the types and effectiveness of mobilization tactics in the election of 1828. A plethora of scholarship exists on the 2008 presidential election. However, the elections of 1828 and 2008 have not been studied together for the purpose of analyzing mobilization strategies. For this reason, my research is unique and will shed light upon the value of mobilization in relation to voter turnout in presidential election cycles.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

A wide range of research exists on the study of both voter mobilization and voter turnout in American elections. Many scholars are particularly interested in examining voting patterns, which demographic groups are more or less likely to participate in the political process, why so few Americans vote, what motivates people to vote, and how the electorate can best be motivated to participate, among other questions. Because those who turnout to vote determine the ultimate outcome of an election, both scholars and political operatives are interested in understanding what influences citizens to participate. Some believe that campaigns, parties and organizations persuade different parts of the electorate to become voters through the application of mobilizing contact. Many scholars conduct experiments to collect data and examine the impacts of different mobilization techniques on their samples. Others abstractly consider the electoral environment. In order to demonstrate the unique angle of my research, I will briefly summarize existing research in the field of voter turnout and mobilization.

There has been a significant change in the way that campaigns, political parties and interest groups interact with the American electorate over the past two hundred years. In the earlier days of the Union, mobilization was conducted by appealing to the electorate as a whole in order to produce enthusiasm and participation through popular politics.[9] By appealing to the diverse electorate as a whole, candidates and campaigns believed that their message would inculcate the population and thus grant them victory. Turnout rates began their impressive rise in the nineteenth century with the election of

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[9] McGerr, Michael E. *The decline of popular politics: the American north 1865-1928*. Oxford University Press, New York: 1986.

Andrew Jackson in 1828. Popular politics in the nineteenth century was characterized by excitement, pageantry and clientelism.

Political parties were incredibly localized. Parties thought of votes and voters as means to control government offices and, through government offices, government jobs. As Piven and Cloward said, political machines would persuade potential voters to vote by "inducing them with friendships, favors, small bribes, by the promise of some protection from the harassment of city cops, or by threatening them with the loss of any of these."[10] This has transformed immensely in recent years. Today "candidates, interests, and consultants carefully identify those in the public most likely to become active on their behalf and then employ a variety of inducements to stimulate the action" of voting.[11] Schier designates mobilization as the past action of appealing to the electorate as a whole and activation as the new tactic of targeting specific messages to individual potential voters in order to increase their likelihood of participation. He argues that these changes have had negative impacts on democracy in America by popularizing a method of exclusion in which a significant portion of the American population is ignored and, therefore, not properly represented. For this reason, Schier argues that the brand of inclusive politics exhibited by the mobilization practices of the past were far better for the American public at large.

Mobilization is also generally considered as the actions taken by campaigns, political parties and interest groups to persuade eligible members of the electorate to participate in politics. Political entities such as political parties target individual voters in

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[10] Piven, Frances F., & Cloward, Richard A. *Why Americans don't vote*. Pantheon Books, New York: 1988, 39.

[11] Schier, Steven E. *By invitation only: the rise of exclusive politics in the United States*. University of Pittsburgh Press: 2000.

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order to distribute specific messages to increase the likelihood of participation. Politics, including the electoral variety, has a variety of costs. The goal of the campaign, political party and interest group is to persuade potential voters to overcome the cumbersome cost of participation. The paradox of voting states that people "receive only collective benefits [from voting and so] they will not turnout to vote, and for very good reason: The result of the election will be the same whether they participate or not."[12] Citizens must be convinced to overcome the various costs of voting such as having to "register, learn something about the candidates and parties, decide how to vote, and get to the polls on election day."[13]

Campaigns, political parties and interest groups attempt to convince potential voters to favor their argument. Rosenstone and Hansen argue that political groups tend to target people they are already familiar with; those in prominent positions in social networks who have the best capacity to spread the message throughout their social circles and mobilize others indirectly; those who are powerful and have more influence over a variety of other people; and, finally, those who are likely to participate already such as partisans. Due to the availability of resources such as time, money and civic skills, wealthier and more educated individuals are more likely to participate in politics. These certain varieties of citizens are more likely to be targeted and are, therefore, more valued in the political process. These characteristics are widely accepted among the scholarly community. As Schier argued, Rosenstone and Hansen agree that the specific targeting of recent mobilization efforts excludes a significant proportion of the eligible electorate.

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[12] Rosenstone, Steven J., & Hansen, John M. *Mobilization, participation, and democracy in America*. Macmillan Publishing Company: 1993.
[13] Wolfinger, Raymond E., & Rosenstone, Steven J. *Who votes?* Yale University Press: 1980.

Verba, Scholzman and Brady created the Civic Voluntarism Model by evaluating data collected from a massive two-step, randomized phone interview of eligible voters in order to examine how different aspects of socioeconomic status (SES) impact the likelihood of political participation.[14] They argued that the political process does not equally represent all of America's citizens because everyone does not participate equally. In many cases, those individuals who are equipped with greater civic skills and resources are more likely to participate in politics and those who participate more frequently are better represented. Wealthy and well-educated citizens, they determined, are better equipped with the necessary resources for participation such as organizational and writing skills as well as the time and money to focus on politics. Additionally, if an individual does participate beyond simply voting, they are likely more informed and passionate about certain issues than is the rest of the population. Many of these individuals belong to issue publics.

Some believe that voter mobilization efforts are effective if certain conditions and attributes are present amongst the eligible electorate. For example, citizens who are connected to a political organization are more likely to turnout to vote. Whether or not a citizen is a registered member of a political party is likely to impact their likelihood of voting. In many instances, "districts with a higher proportion of declared partisans have higher rates of turnout." [15] Conway also argues that voter turnout is likely to be higher when more prestigious political offices such as president are on the ballot. Voters, Conway said, are sometimes persuaded to vote through different cognitive mobilization practices.

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[14] Verba, Sidney., Schlozman, Kay L., Brady, Henry E. *Voice and equality: civic voluntarism in American politics*. Harvard University Press: 1995.
[15] Conway, Margaret M. *Political Participation in the US*. CQ Press: 2000,

In some instances, Conway argues that voter turnout is likely to increase "when there is little consensus on the issue agenda and the preferred outcomes regarding the issues, and when one party's candidates are not assured of victory."[16] She additionally believed that mass media is incredibly influential in persuading voters to participate and who to vote for. Candidates and campaigns communicate with the electorate through advertisements and debates, which are presented through mass media with "frequent repetition of a single theme being simply and vividly presented so that it becomes familiar and is easily remembered by these potential voters."[17] A variety of outside factors influence the way that potential voters become voters.

Some argue that political participation is driven not only driven by genuine interest in politics. At certain points in time, people act because "they care about addressing problems in their own lives or living up to a personal sense of who they are."[18] By investigating the participation rates of New Orleans Hurricane Katrina refugees in the 2006 mayoral race with a multi-tiered approach, Han showcases the impact of issues in motivating people to vote. Potential voters only become voters if they are motivated to participate in the electoral process. Some individuals, Han said, belong to different issue publics which "refer to different groups of voters who have particular concern for certain policy issues."[19] One example of an issue public is the environment public in which voters are particularly interested in policy questions related to the environment.

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[16] Conway, *Political participation*, pp. 87.
[17] Conway, *Political participation*, pp. 93.
[18] Han, Hahrie. *Moved to Action: motivation, participation and inequality in American politics*. Stanford University Press: 2009.
[19] Han, *Moved to action*, pp. 11.

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If people are passionate members of an issue public, they are more likely to participate in the political process if their issue is being targeted in pending legislation or in the public eye. Han ties motivation to psychological theories including the idea that people are more likely to participate if they have an emotional reaction to an issue at hand. People, Han says, "who have made the connection between a political issue and their personal concerns" are more likely to participate in the political process.[20] Individuals tend to remember things that they care about more often and vividly and if they care about something they are more likely to act. Caring, Han says, can increase voter turnout.

Some political scientists believe that campaigns can utilize these kinds of strong opinions to influence the way that voters decide who they will vote for. Because the United States political system is, at heart, a two-party system, many members of the electorate will not agree with every policy decision and stance of their party. Campaigns can focus on controversial and topical issues that are likely to divide each party; some people who do not support their party's stance on an important issue are likely to decamp to the other side. In this way, campaigns can obtain the support of persuadable voters. Campaigns "can affect the electorate by priming the criteria on which voters base their decisions either by increasing the accessibility or importance of particular criteria or simply informing the public when candidates line up with different criteria."[21] Hillygus and Shields suggest that utilizing wedge issues to divide the electorate effectively influences persuadable voters by conducting two surveys of voters. They surveyed whether or not participants agreed with their party or disagreed on a number of issues and

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[20] Han, *Moved to action*, pp. 43.
[21] Hillygus, D. Sunshine, & Shields, Todd G. *The persuadable voter: wedge issues in presidential campaigns*. Princeton University Press: 2008.

from these studies concluded that some 25 percent of the electorate are persuadable

voters with "issue positions that are inconsistent with their preferred party."[22] Wedge

issues, they concluded, were influential in helping persuadable voters decide who to vote

for.

Some political scientists believe that voter turnout itself is not terribly important.

What matters the most to campaigns is whether or not the voters who do turnout vote in

their favor. For this reason, campaigns have tended to focus their efforts upon

successfully motivating their party's particular base to participate in the election cycle. It

is logical, Cavangh argues, that "the preferences of habitual nonvoters who are newly

mobilized at a given point in time must be distinctively different from those of the

habitual voters for even a sizeable turnout increment to affect the distribution of the total

vote."[23] The voices of the many habitual voters are more powerful than the handful of

habitual nonvoters who are motivated to participate unless a significant number turnout.

For this reason, Cavangh believes that elections are won when a campaign is best able to

convert habitual voters who prefer the opposite party.

Partisan habitual voters are central to elections. Political parties, campaigns and

interest groups often rely upon mobilization tactics in order to contact partisans and

encourage them to participate in the electoral process. A plethora of literature exists that

examines mobilization. Donald P. Green has conducted an impressive amount of studies

upon the value of different mobilization tactics.[24] In their book, Green and Gerber

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[22] Hillygus & Shields, *Persuadable voter*, 59.

[23] Cavangh, Thomas E. "When turnout matters: mobilization and conversion as determinants of election outcomes." From *Political participation in American democracy*. Edited by Crotty, William. Greenwood Press: 1991.

[24] Green, Donald P., & Gerber, Alan S. "*Get Out the Vote!*. Brookings Institution Press: 2004, Retrieved from:

collected data from a variety of nonpartisan groups who utilized different mobilization

techniques such as phone banking, door-to-door canvassing and leafletting. They studied

the local election results in comparison to the potential voters contacted and were able to

calculate whether or not contacted voters participated.

Gerber and Green found that personal contact by campaign volunteers and

workers is the most effective tactic to increase voter turnout. Canvassing, they said, "by

friends and neighbors is the gold-standard mobilization tactic; chatty, unhurried phone

calls seem to work well too."[25] These personal interactions tend to be more influential on

potential voters. Less personal forms of campaign communication such as formal

leafletting and automated phone calls are less effective. Personal contact by someone that

a potential voter knows has a more influential impact because they "seem to encourage

people to talk about the upcoming election with others in the household, which has the

effect of extending the influence of a canvassing campaign beyond those who are

contacted directly."[26] By discussing the election, people are able to increase the societal

norm of participating in the electoral process. These individuals are able to indirectly

mobilize others that they are familiar with.

Green, Gerber and Larimer also investigated the importance of mobilization

through social pressure.[27] Different types of mailers were distributed to potential voters,

including some that stressed the civic duty aspect of voting and some showed the

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http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/10.7864/j.ctt1gpcdbr.4?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=voter&searchText=mobilization&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dvoter%2Bmobilization%26amp%3Bacc%3Don%26amp%3Bwc%3Don%26amp%3Bfc%3Doff%26amp%3Bgroup%3Dnone&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents Accessed on 11/4/2016

[25] Gerber & Green, *Get out the vote!*, 6.

[26] Gerber & Green, *Get out the vote!*, 38.

[27] Gerber, A.S., Green, D.P., & Larimer, C.W. "Social pressure and voter turnout: evidence from a large-scale field experiment." From *American Political Science Review* volume 2, no. 1. American Political Science Association: 2008. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/27644496 Accessed on 11/11/2016

potential voter's own record as well as those of their neighbors. While many of the

mailings were effective at increasing voter turnout rates, the most effective mailer

showed voting records and "implies a remarkable 8.1 percentage-point treatment

effect."[28] By showing the voting records of the individual in comparison to their more

active neighbors, this particular tactic effectively applies social pressure to persuade the

potential voter to participate in the electoral cycle. When it is the social norm to vote,

more people are likely to participate. The pressure to conform to social norms convinces

potential voters to participate. Green and Gerber also suggest that potential voters can be

persuaded to participate through simple stimulation such as a single mailer.[29]

Christopher B. Mann conducted a similar field experiment to that of Green et al.

in order to study the impact of social pressure on voter mobilization. Mann worked with a

nonpartisan organization and distributed a single mailer to targeted voters which

encouraged them to vote.[30] Mann theorized that more aggressive social pressure would

elicit a negative response in voters in the long run. In short, citizens may develop a

negative association with the act of voting, which would reduce their likelihood of

participation. The social psychology theory of reactance, Mann said, states that

"individuals with a negative response to a message may ignore it, perform the opposite of

the behavior advocated, or attack the source of the message."[31] Mann's experiment

showed that both forms of mobilization contact are effective at motivating potential

voters to participate.

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[28] Gerber, Green & Larimer, "Social pressure", 38.

[29] Gerber, A.S., & Green, Donald P. "The effect of a nonpartisan get-out-the-vote drive: an experimental study of leafletting." From *The Journal of Politics* volume 62, no. 3. University of Chicago Press: 2000. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/2647962 Accessed on 11/11/16

[30] Mann, Christopher B. "Is there backlash to social pressure? A large-scale field experiment on voter mobilization." From *Political Behavior* Volume 32, no. 3. Springer Science + Business Media, LLC: 2010. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/40960944 Accessed on 11/11/2016

[31] Mann, "Social pressure", 388.

The psychological impact of gratitude has also been examined in electoral politics. As discussed above, social pressure has proven to be a statistically effective mode at mobilizing potential voters. It appears that behaviors by campaigns that inspire an emotional response in the recipients leads to an increase in voter turnout. This also appears true when positive actions are employed. Costas Panagopoulos conducted three field experiments to test the effect of gratitude on the mobilization of the electorate.[32] Each experiment surveyed registered voters who received non-partisan mailings; official records were utilized to determine whether or not targeted potential voters participated. Mailings thanked voters for participating in the previous election cycle. Panagopoulos found that "gratitude treatment elevated turnout by 3.0 percentage points on average."[33] Panagopoulos concluded that the gratitude treatment had a statistically significant impact upon voter turnout levels.

A critical component of voter turnout and mobilization has received less attention: voter registration. In the United States, a potential voter must register within their state of residence to be eligible to vote. Each state does not have the same voter registration laws and requirements; some states require potential voters to register weeks in advance while other states like Maine permit same-day registration. These stipulations have significant impacts upon voter turnout. Most campaigns, Robert A. Jackson noted, fail to focus on registration during the window of registration in many states.[34] Because campaigns focus upon energizing potential voters to vote and not encouraging eligible citizens to register,

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[32] Panagopoulos, Costas. "Thank you for voting: gratitude expression and voter mobilization." From *The Journal of Politics* volume 73, no. 3. University of Chicago Press: 2011. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/10.1017/s0022381611000405 Accessed on 11/11/2016

[33] Panagopoulos, "Thank you for voting", 710.

[34] Jackson, Robert A. "A reassessment of voter mobilization." From *Political Research Quarterly* 49 no. 2. Sage Publications, Inc: 1996. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/448877 Accessed on 11/8/2016

turnout can be depressed. For this reason, Jackson said, "the increase in intensity of campaigns that takes place during the last few weeks before an election comes too late to encourage the registration of most Americans."[35] Many people can be impacted by the buzz and excitement during the final surge of the election but are unable to express their opinions in the ballot box because they have missed their opportunity to register. By creating three separate models that explored influential characteristics such as education and income and their impacts upon registration status, Jackson's data suggest that campaigns are best able to target and mobilize voters who are already registered to vote.

Some political scientists have also studied the impact of new technological advances upon the electorate and voter mobilization strategy. One critical technological asset is email. Email is an easy and inexpensive form of communication. In the present day, many campaigns utilize email to stay in contact with potential voters about news and advertisements and to show support for their goal by contributing monetarily or by voting in the upcoming election. David W. Nickerson conducted a field experiment to survey the effectiveness of email in mobilizing the electorate.[36] Nickerson sampled volunteers from the nonpartisan organization Working Assets. Volunteers were randomly assigned to either the experimental group, which received general mass emails, and the control group which did not. Election result data were compared to the Working Assets lists. According to Nickerson, the data suggested that mobilization by email was not effective.

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[35] Jackson, "Reassessment", 334.
[36] Nickerson, David W. "The impact of e-mail campaigns on voter mobilization: evidence from a field experiment." From *Politicking online: the transformation of election campaign communications*. Rutgers University Press: 2009. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/j.ctt5hj455.11 Accessed on 11/11/2016

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Political scientists have also investigated the impact of grassroots mobilization. Bergan et al. studied the critical presidential election of 2004.[37] The Bush campaign revolutionized voter mobilization through intensive microtargeting efforts of the Republican base. Instead of focusing primarily on the persuadable voters, which had been standard up to that point, the Bush campaign focused their mobilization drive on energizing the base. Bergan et al. utilized data from official campaigns and from the National Election Survey. They determined that more than half of the population was contacted by either Democrats or Republicans; contact rates increased in battleground states. Grassroots mobilization, they argued, are effective because they allow for campaigns to make personal contacts with the electorate. However, Bergan et al. said, "if campaigns respond strategically to one another, the advantages of grassroots campaigning for one party will be largely offset by an opponent responding in kind."[38] While voter turnout increased significantly between 2000 and 2004, Bergan et al. believed the evidence suggested that grassroots mobilization was not the sole cause of elevated turnout levels.

It is a fact that voters participate more regularly in elections with important and influential seats such as presidential races. Voters participate in local elections far more sparsely. Some political scientists believe that voter mobilization may increase turnout levels in low-propensity elections. David Niven studied the impact of door-to-door canvassing in a Florida municipal election in 2001.[39] Niven determined that, per

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[37] Bergan, Daniel E., Green, Donald P., & Pangopoulos, Costas. "Grassroots mobilization and voter turnout in 2004." From *Public Opinion Quarterly* volume 69 issue 5. Oxford University Press: 2007. Retrieved from: http://poq.oxfordjournals.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/content/69/5/760.full Accessed on 11/15/2016

[38] Bergan et al, "Grassroots"

[39] Niven, David. "The mobilization solution? Face-to-face contact and voter turnout in a municipal election." From *The journal of politics* volume 66, no. 3. University of Chicago Press: 2004. Retrieved

psychological study, people are more likely to be influenced by persuasion tactics if they

do not have strong beliefs and opinions. Mobilization will also be ineffective if the

targeted individual is a habitual nonvoter who is disengaged from politics. It is crucial,

Niven said, for targets to easily understand the message and for "the targets to think about

the message, and targets seeing themselves as personally affected by the message affect

the accessibility of the appeal."[40] Niven conducted field experiments in 2001 in which

local union members and members of a local church went door-to-door with positive

messages about the importance of voting in addition to leaving a flier. The data found

that voter turnout increased among "consistent, intermittent, and seldom voters."[41]

Person-to-person contact was effective in this instance.

Some studies have shown that person-to-person contact increases voter turnout

amongst historically low-propensity voters in different minority groups. For example,

Melissa R. Michelson conducted field experiments in 2001 and 2002 to study the impact

of nonpartisan door-to-door canvassing of Latinos.[42] The data she collected suggest that

Latinos "can be mobilized to vote by the same sorts of door-to-door, personal efforts that

are currently in vogue among campaign professionals."[43] Michelson used a mix of

bilingual and unilingual canvassers who distributed messages that encouraged voting as a

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ft.issn=00223816&rft_id=info:doi/ Accessed on 11/15/16

[40] Niven, "Mobilization solution", pp. 871.

[41] Niven, "Mobilization solution", pp. 881.

[42] Michelson, Melissa R. "Meeting the challenge of Latino voter mobilization." From *The Annals of the
American Academy of Political and Social Science* volume 601. Sage Publication, Inc.: 2005. Retrieved
from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/10.1017/s0022381611000405 Accessed on
11/14/2016

[43] Michelson, "Latino voter mobilization", pp. 85.

civic duty or as a function of ethnic solidarity. The data showed that "to increase Latino turnout, more Latinos need to have face-to-face contact with a voter mobilization activist."[44] Person-to-person contact, Michelson argued, was influential in persuading Latino voters to participate in upcoming elections. Some also argue that Latinos have been contacted at lower rates because they are less likely to reside in contentious battleground states, which means that their votes are not as critical to winning an election.[45]

One of the most important themes that shows up throughout many studies of mobilization is the importance of asking. Many voters do not participate because they are not asked to do so. Steven Schier despairs the development of activation in which "a large segment of the public--about half--receive little invitation or inducement to participate in our politics." (Schier, 2000). Verba, Schlozman and Brady uncovered data from their massive randomized series of telephone interviews that eligible citizens do not participate in politics "because they can't; because they don't want to; or because nobody asked."[46] When individual citizens are targeted for mobilization, they are asked to participate and that request encourages them to participate.

A plethora of scholars has studied voter turnout and voter mobilization. The voters who turnout to vote in a given election determine the results. Campaigns, political parties and interest groups seek to increase their likelihood of achieving success by mobilizing supporters to participate. In the present day, certain voters are targeted by

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[44] Michelson, "Latino voter mobilization", pp. 99.

[45] Ramirez, Ricardo. "Voice of the people: the evolution and effectiveness of latino voter mobilization." From *Mobilizing opportunities: the evolving latino electorate and the future of american politics*. University of Virginia Press: 2013. Link: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/j.ctt6wrnb9.8?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents Accessed on 12/1/2016

[46] Verba, Sidney., Schloman, Kay L., & Brady, Henry E. *Voice and equality: civic voluntarism in American politics*. Harvard University Press: 1995.

political organizations through a variety of contact methods: door-to-door canvassing, email, leaflets and telephone calls, among others. Some scholars believe that this transition has been harmful to democracy because not all voters are invited to take part in the political process. Others argue that voter mobilization efforts are statistically proven to be effective at increasing voter turnout levels. Some suggest that different contact methods are more effective at mobilizing eligible citizens than others. Psychology, in many instances, is critical in persuading people to overcome the burdensome costs of participation in American politics. Mobilization, the scholarship suggests, is tied to voter turnout.

A variety of ways exist in which to contact members of the electorate for the purpose of mobilization. The most important elements of mobilization include the ability to successfully contact a potential voter through a person-to-person encounter, a phone call or the passage of written material such as an email or a leaflet. Mobilization is only important if contact with the voter has the power to influence individual voters either to persuade them to participate in the electoral process or to vote in a particular way. If the contact fails to motivate potential voters, the effort was wasted. Because the influential strength of mobilization in the decision making process of individual voters is not guaranteed or concrete, whether or not mobilization efforts are worthwhile is a critical component of mobilization research in the realm of political science.

In this project, I will identify the various mobilization tactics employed by relevant political parties, campaigns and interest groups in the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008 and evaluate electoral returns. I will evaluate this data to determine

whether or not mobilization efforts appear to have had an impact upon voter turnout in

the critical presidential elections of 1828 and 2008.

Chapter Three: Analysis of the Presidential Election of 1828

The election of 1828 was a rematch between incumbent John Quincy Adams and his populist nemesis Andrew Jackson. Factions developed amongst the American population backing the military hero or the cold, well-educated member of the elite. Supporters of Jackson and of Adams fought for the hearts of the nation through written warfare in local newspapers that stretched across the United States. Both parties developed sophisticated party systems to rally support for their respective candidates. The Jacksonian party led by Martin Van Buren, however, was far more efficient and advanced. The new parties sought to influence the outcome of the election by encouraging their fellow countrymen to join them at the ballot. These warring factions deployed a variety of mobilization practices across the United States. Through the implementation of these strategies, Andrew Jackson won the presidency.

Mobilization practices in 1828 were quite different from the popular methods used today. Methods of communication were far less advanced and slow in reaching intended individuals and the public as a whole. Ideas were circulated across the nation through mail and, most critically, through newspapers. Local papers delivered useful information for citizens ranging from ordinary information such as sale of land[47] to political commentary. Citizens also communicated their political ideas through conversation at local party meetings and gatherings. These were the bedrock of

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[47] Farrington, A.C. "Miscellany", *Albany Argus*, New York: October 26, 1827. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=C6DO5CSSMTQ3NDkwMjY1NC4xMDcyNTM6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryname=5&p_queryname=5&p_docnum=18&p_docref=v2:10C61B0A8F932EC0@EANX-1426A434E57A6BE0@2388656-142495865A85B410@0 Accessed on 1/23/2017.

dispensation of political knowledge and influence during the 1828 presidential election cycle.

Types of voter mobilization used in the presidential election of 1828

There are a variety of different types of political mobilization that interested parties and entities can employ to energize potential voters. In this section, I will discuss the various types of mobilization practices that were utilized by supporters of both Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams. Afterwards, I will discuss existing data about the presidential election and its relation to mobilization practices used. Through these means, I will gauge the effects of mobilization practices in this national election cycle.

The first type of political mobilization used in the election of 1828 was grassroots mobilization. Grassroots mobilization is typified by individual members of a community working together for a political cause. Grassroots efforts are often organized from a bottom-to-top organizational structure; grassroots strategies focus on local communities and neighborhoods. Voters are encouraged to participate at the individual level as opposed to en masse. Politics occur at the more intimate neighborhood level as opposed to nationally or statewide. Voters are acknowledged and appealed to as individuals. This distinction is important to the development of interest and engagement in a particular issue or election. When individuals are spoken to at a personal level, they are more likely to have an emotional response, whether that be good or bad. Some psychological theories suggest that people are more likely to participate in politics if they have an emotional reaction.[48] Grassroots mobilization seeks to engage potential voters through the

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[48] Han, Hahrie. *Moved to Action: motivation, participation and inequality in American politics*. Stanford University Press: 2009.

emotional connection and reaction inspired by a personalized interaction with a political organization.

Grassroots mobilization was possible due to the organizational structure of the developing political parties, most particularly of the Jacksonians. The Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams factions grew into political parties, which started the two-party system in the United States due to the degree of sophistication of the organization and their power to influence and unify the public. Based upon the organizational structure of Martin Van Buren's political machine in New York, the Albany Regency,[49] the Jackson party was designed with a sophisticated organization that extended straight down to the neighborhood or ward level. Martin Van Buren began to organize the party in earnest following his reelection to the Senate in 1826.[50] His goal was to reestablish the old alliance between New York state and Virginia, to link "the 'plain Republicans of the north' without losing the 'planters of the South.'" Van Buren was able to accomplish this goal through vague policy stances and through an adequate party structure that extended through every state of the Union. By the year of 1827, Van Buren's party existed in every major city and town in the United States. The party system was divided into levels starting in localities and progressing to the national committee.

The Jacksonian Democrats were organized into specific tiers. Jacksonians held statewide conventions in which the members of a central committee were either elected or appointed depending upon the preference of the individual states. Central committees were tasked with monitoring the lower county committees and with communicating

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[49] Parsons, Lynn H. *The Birth of Modern politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the election of 1828*. Oxford University Press, New York: 2004.

[50] Cole, Donald B. *Martin Van Buren and the American political system*. Princeton University Press, New Jersey: 1984.

important information with fellow central committees in other states. County committees supervised the progress of city and town committees, which were known as either Jackson committees or Hickory Clubs. County committees were "too important in shaping mass support to be treated with anything less than deference and respect" by the central committees.[51] More populated areas were further divided into neighborhood wards, similar to the organization of a political machine such as Van Buren's Albany Regency.[52] The individual Hickory Clubs and Jackson committees were critical in mobilizing voters at the individual level because potential voters were contacted directly by friends, neighbors or community leaders who belonged to the party organization. Initially, these organizations were filled by wealthier and more educated individuals in the community. These individuals would venture into the community "to bring the campaign down to the level of the average citizen."[53] Grassroots mobilization would have been impossible without local and community level organizations to increase party membership and to directly contact potential voters in local communities and neighborhoods. Supporters of John Quincy Adams attempted to replicate the sophisticated system developed by their rivals with far less success. Similar statewide structures were developed and communities hosted various committees for supporters of the incumbent president. These committees were not as well organized or as effective at contacting ordinary Americans unlike the counterparts of Old Hickory. Supporters of Adams "were wealthier and tied more firmly to the commerce of the county seat, while

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[51] Remini, Robert V., *The Election of Andrew Jackson*.Harper and Row Publishers Inc. New York: 1963, pp. 91.
[52] Watson, Harry L. *Liberty and power: the politics of Jacksonian America*. Harper and Collins Inc., Toronto: 1990.
[53] Watson, Harry L. *Liberty and power*, pp. 90.

the Jacksonians had closer ties to the rural hinterlands."[54] Because Adams supporters had fewer interactions with ordinary Americans, their efforts to mobilize at the grassroots level were less successful. Because Jacksonians were already connected to more rural individuals, they were better able to spread their message at the local level.

Potential voters interacted with each other at Hickory Clubs and meetings of Adams supporters. Oftentimes, meetings occurred "when men were already gathered for militia musters or court meetings especially in the South."[55] Individuals discussed their political beliefs at intermittent local meetings. As a collective, the Jackson committees gave supporters the means to legitimately express themselves and to further organize for the purpose of mobilizing potential voters. Different resolutions were discussed and voted upon at Jackson meetings. The proceedings for many of these committees were recorded in local partisan newspapers. Take, for example, the resolutions of the Jacksonians of Herkimer County, New York in October of 1827: "this convention approve of the resolution of the republicans of this state, to oppose the re-election of John Q. Adams to the office of President, and *most earnestly* recommend to their fellow-citizens to give their undivided support for that high office to their fellow-citizen General ANDREW JACKSON, of Tennessee, a patriot of the revolution, and the hero of the late glorious war."[56] The committees also offered their support to local and state politicians of the Jacksonian brand who wished to run for elective office in the upcoming days. Party solidarity was a key goal of these meetings and, through this unity, party leaders sought

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[54] Remini, Robert V. *The Election of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 90.

[55] Parsons, *Modern politics*, pp. 138.

[56] Anonymous, "Herkimer County", *Albany Argus*. New York: October 26, 1827. Accessed on 11/23/16. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U6ED53DRMTQ4NTYzNjg5My44 MDIxNTQ6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryna me=5&p_queryname=5&p_docnum=18&p_docref=v2:10C61B0A8F932EC0@EANX-1426A434E57A6BE0@2388656-142495865A85B410@0-142DE445B1B928A2

to mobilize their fellow party members through participation at the ballot box. The party was strongest if it was in power; the only way for a party to be in power in the United States is if a plurality of eligible voters favor them on election day.

In Pennsylvania, a local Jackson committee held a meeting to express its beliefs because it was "apprehensive that the state of public feeling might be misconceived, and political purposes subserved by their silence...they believe that Mr. Adams, in the administration of the General government, has departed from the republican principles upon which they think it should be administered."[57] The local communities served several different purposes which were beneficial to the Jacksonians. Individual supporters were able to discuss politics with others who were interested in such discussion; they were able to express and share their enthusiasm for an accepted cause and they were able to interact with members of the official party. Through contact with leaders of the party, the political parties themselves were able to engage in the political mobilization tactic of direct mobilization. General campaign goals were delivered to the attending members of the meeting and, later, to the press where additional potential voters could be indoctrinated. Indirect mobilization of potential voters followed the local committee meetings. Jacksonians who attended a fiery meeting could discuss the proceedings and the political discourse that appeared at the meeting with their friends and neighbors, who could be influenced by the passion of their comrade. All of these are important components of grassroots mobilization strategies.

[57] Clark, David H. Hopkins, Reuben. "Pennsylvania C.H., (VA.), United States' Telegraph. Washington D.C.: November 25, 1827. Accessed on 11/25/2016. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=L62H51LHMTQ3NDkxNzAwMS40MDU0NTc6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryname=5&p_queryname=5&p_docnum=1&p_docref=v2:14B5AA4CDB0CB043@EANX-14ED15289D970AF0@2388686-14EC5ABD5CF6D350@2-14EEB099DFE16468@

Another critical aspect of voter mobilization in the election of 1828 was the organization of electioneering entertainment. Jacksonians in particular hosted a variety of different types of events that were designed to heighten the interest and emotional investment of potential voters in the election itself. Both campaigns hosted and engaged in a variety of different types of entertainment in order to attract the attention of potential voters. Individuals are more likely to participate in politics when they are engaged. Exciting events hosted by supporters are likely to stick with potential voters and induce them to participate. Jacksonians increased investment in politics by hosting and producing "barbecues, tree plantings, parades, public rallies, dinners, jokes, cartoons and propaganda."[58] These forms of entertainment were exciting and memorable, which helped to increase the positive arguments made by supporters in favor of their preferred candidate. Some of these events such as hickory pole raisings helped to increase the esteem of the already popular military hero. One of Andrew Jackson's many nicknames was Old Hickory "after the tough, fibrous wood well known as the most durable natural substance on the frontier."[59]

This symbolism was important in capturing the attention of potential voters and inspired confidence in their candidate. A strong symbol was memorable. Jackson's reputation as a military hero increased the legitimacy of his nickname and of his run for the presidency. It was important for potential voters to remember Jackson's skills and history. His nickname was encouraged through poems and songs that were circulated in newspapers across the United States. One song titled "Hoorah for the Hickory Tree" associated positive themes with the valiant hero such as "it's gude to grateful' and kind;/

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[58] Remini, Robert V. *The Election of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 101.
[59] Watson, Harry L. *Liberty and power*, pp. 78.

It's gude to be brave and free;/ It's gude to support old Hickory's cause...Hurrah for our

Liberty Tree;/ Hurrah for the Hickory Tree;/ It's gude to reward that soldier sa brave."[60]

In this particular piece, Jackson is linked to patriotism. Liberty poles were a common

practice conducted in the Revolutionary period; hickory pole raisings were essentially the

same thing. In the 1820s, the infant years of the American experiment were regarded with

particular reverence. Jacksonians hoped to increase their percentage of the voting

population by associating Old Hickory with a critical and highly-regarded period of

history. The campaign themes of strength and virtue underscored the importance of

participating in the election. Jackson's military prowess, another popular theme at the

time, was also highlighted in such songs as "Hunters of Kentucky; Or the Battle of New

Orleans."[61] This song commemorates the famously successful battle of New Orleans.

Jackson and his soldiers, the majority of whom were from Kentucky, are celebrated for

their skill and bravery. Jackson was celebrated because "he was wide awake,/ And was'nt

scar'd at trifles;/ For well he knew what aim we take,/ With our Kentucky rifles." This

song predates Jackson's run for the presidency but was widely utilized by his campaign

in order to inspire greater enthusiasm for Old Hickory. Jackson's military prowess was

stressed in the form of song and poetry in order to inspire passion in potential voters.

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[60] A.N.P. "Hurrah for the Hickory Tree." *United States' Telegraph*, Washington D.C.: November 11, 1827. Accessed on 11/23/2016. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=J66C4BHJMTQ4NTY2MDU2OC41NjU5Nzg6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryname=7&p_queryname=7&p_docnum=8&p_docref=v2:12066FDA04B327BA@EANX-13AC0B8E76E8F608@2388688-13ABA7018D1A9958@1-14563AA4719C4025@No%20Headline

[61] Woodworth, Samuel. "Hunters of Kentucky; Or the Battle of New Orleans." *New Hampshire patriot and state gazette*. New Hampshire: November 26, 1827. Accessed on October 21. 2016. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=L62H51LHMTQ3NDkxNzAwMS40MDU0NTc6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryname=7&p_queryname=7&p_docnum=1&p_docref=v2:10C1C906F583E7C8@EANX-10C587DB8CA2AE20@2388687-10C587DC6DAEBF78@4-10C587DE0EB46B68@

Passionate people are more likely to participate in politics. Jacksonians hoped to mobilize their fellow citizens to action by attaching patriotic themes to their campaign.

Get-out-the-vote strategization was also a critical component of the 1828 presidential election. Partisan newspapers and pamphlets were utilized to encourage potential voters to participate. Jacksonians and friends of the Adams administration both pleaded with their fellow citizens to participate in the election. Both sides cited fear and hatred of the opposition as a battle cry. Should the opposite candidate win the coveted seat the country would fall into chaos and ruin, each cried in various ways. The only way to prevent such misfortune from befalling the country was through voting. Local party organizations were utilized to convene "a committee of twelve for the purpose of using all fair and honorable means to bring all who are in favor of Andrew Jackson to the polls."[62] The party organization of a political machine was critical in this aspect. Community leaders made sure to monitor and encourage potential voters in local neighborhoods or wards to get out and vote. In 1828, the election itself took place over the course of several weeks across the nation, from October 31 through November 13. Different states held their elections at different times during these several weeks. Get-out-the-vote efforts were critical in mobilizing voters to participate in their states election period.

The Jacksonian party organization encouraged mobilization efforts such as get-out-the vote. Take, for example, the sophistication of Kentucky organizers who "carried

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[62] Boody, Edmond, & Baker, Elias. "Democracy of Windham," *Eastern Argus*, Maine: October 31, 1828. Accessed on 10/14/2016. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=I57H53PIMTQ3NjQ3MTY0Ni42NT A2Mjk6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryname =3&p_queryname=3&p_docnum=5&p_docref=v2:11343147EE7DD718@EANX-1081FE8C6EAA6558@2389027-1081FE8CCB7C3750@1-1081FE8E76908180@Democracy%20of%20Windham

into full and successful operation last year, a plan or system of Committees, from a Principle or Central Committee at Louisville, down to Sub-Committees into every ward of the town, and [militia] Captains company in the country."[63] Supporters of the Jacksonian cause were divided in a sophisticated manner to contact the greatest number of individuals at the local level. Influential people such as militia captains imparted their beliefs upon their fellow citizens. A national message delivered from a familiar and respected source are more likely to sway the opinion of a potential voter. Through this important division of labor, potential voters were mobilized by individuals who held positions of respect and command. Jacksonians utilized the community as a vital resource for mobilization at the individual level. Jacksonians were able to organize and mobilize at the grassroots level. Support for Old Hickory "sought to persuade the voters rather than command them." [64]

The Jacksonians went one step further than their competition by appealing to minorities and immigrants. Pennsylvanian Germans, for example, received literature that was written in their native tongue of German. Jacksonians "published tracts, handbills, and pamphlets in German…[and] sent German-speaking lawyers into heavily populated communities to organize rallies and public meetings."[65] By addressing immigrants in their native tongue, the party increased its accessibility to a significant number of voters. German-speaking voters could independently understand the literature and felt as though their voices were welcome in the political system. These immigrants and minorities were invited to participate in the political process. The goal was to mobilize fellow citizens to participate in the election and to encourage them to vote for their candidate.

[63] Watson, Harry L. *Liberty and power*, pp. 90.
[64] Watson, Harry L. *Liberty and power*, pp. 90.
[65] Remini, Robert V. *Election of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 104.

Jacksonians and friends of the administration also utilized franking to their advantage. Members of Congress were able to utilize taxpayer money in order to communicate with the public, which is called franking.[66] In this way, politicians who supported either Jackson or Adams were able to flood constituents with entirely biased mail that argued heavily in the favor of their preferred candidate. Critical campaign information was distributed to potential voters through these mailings. Supporters of both Jackson and Adams were able to disperse mobilizing messages without paying a penny because of the frequent abuse of franking. This so-called franking privilege gave both campaigns a significant amount of free media, which they used to their advantage.

Electioneering events were also a critical type of mobilization strategy utilized in the election of Andrew Jackson. In the early nineteenth century, it was taboo for a candidate to actively run for a political office. If a candidate actively sought office by participating in grotesque campaign events and rallies, society frowned upon that individual for it was seen as degrading and unbecoming. This was particularly true of the presidency for electioneering was "abominable; it is adverse to the spirit of our republican institutions, and utterly inconsistent with political liberty."[67] This idea was beginning to change. The elite of society still found electioneering appalling but the public at large found such activities appealing.

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[66] Remini, Robert V. *Election of Andrew Jackson*, p. 84.
[67] Hortensius. "For the Louisiana Advertiser," *Louisiana Advertiser*, Louisiana: January 11, 1827. Accessed on 12/31/16. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DateAscend&tabID=T003&prodId=NCNP&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R1&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=1&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28tx%2CNone%2C14%29electioneering%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2901%2F11%2F1827+-+04%2F05%2F1828%24&retrieveFormat=MULTIPAGE_DOCUMENT&userGroupName=maine_orono&inPS=true&contentSet=LTO&&docId=&docLevel=FASCIMILE&workId=&relevancePageBatch=GT3016000472&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

Passionate voters wished to see and hear about the ideas of their preferred

candidate. Because it was distasteful, John Quincy Adams refused to participate in

electioneering events or to produce electioneering literature. His counterpart, however,

was different. Andrew Jackson participated in public events that helped to increase his

popularity amongst the majority of Americans. By further boosting his image and public

familiarity with his personality, Jackson sought to mobilize the public to support him.

These events were not technically connected to his campaign but still had the same

impact. Perhaps most notably, Andrew Jackson participated in a large celebration of the

victory of the Battle of New Orleans in 1827. Large crowds gathered to witness Old

Hickory's arrival and to hear him speak. Newspapers covered the event extensively.[68] By

participating in events that the public was able to read about and to witness for

themselves, Jackson increased his connection to the people as a whole as well as his

campaign claim as being a politician for the people.

Supporters of both Jackson and Adams sought to mobilize members of the public

by inspiring fear and hatred of the opposition in the media. Both utilized media as a

mobilizing medium and platform to disperse campaign messages to the public.

Newspaper, handbills and pamphlets were frequently distributed to potential voters. A

significant number of newspapers were devoted to one candidate or the other. These

partisan papers published stories that were incredibly biased in favor of either Jackson or

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[68] Morgan, G.W. "Order of ceremonies for the 8th of January, 1828," *Louisiana Advertiser*, Louisiana: December 9, 1827. Accessed on 2/3/17. Retrieved from: http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort =DateAscend&tabID=T003&prodId=NCNP&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R3&searchType =BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=10&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28tx%2C None%2C11%29new+orleans%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2912%2F29%2F1827+- +01%2F05%2F1828%24&retrieveFormat=MULTIPAGE_DOCUMENT&userGroupName=maine_orono &inPS=true&contentSet=LTO&&docId=&docLevel=FASCIMILE&workId=&relevancePageBatch=GT30 16000030&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y

Adams and slandered the reputation of the other. To an Adams newspaper, the election of

Andrew Jackson was the end of democracy. To a Jackson newspaper, the opposite was

the case. The morals and reputations of Jackson and Adams were discussed at great

length and debated. Supporters of the administration condemned Andrew Jackson

because he "is replete with intemperate bursts of passion, arbitrary measures and gross

violations of the constitution--all going to show his unfitness for the first office in our

government."[69]

At the time, Jackson was famous for his military victory at the Battle of New

Orleans, Adams supporters "deprecate the idea of devotion to men of mere military

talents, and much more so, to military rulers."[70] Military rulers were something to fear as

they had the capacity to destroy the democratic experiment through the implementation

of martial law. Friends of the administration believed that" the people are wide awake to

the dangerous precedent of electing a Military Chieftain, one who has universally

trampled upon and made the *civil* subservient to the MILITARY power; and who never

hesitated to violate the Constitution whenever it interposed a barrier to his MILITARY

SCHEMES and MILITARY AMBITION."[71] Another newspaper expressed

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[69] Anonymous, "Declaration of objections to the election of Andrew Jackson, to the chief magistracy of the United States." *Rhode Island Republican*, Rhode Island: October 25, 1827. Accessed on 9/27/2016. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=C6DO5CSSMTQ3NDkwMjY1NC4xMDcyNTM6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequerynname=5&p_queryname=5&p_docnum=11&p_docref=v2:10CF512A85EBBB58@EANX-10E6A04D096E42C8@2388655-10E6A04D1933A900@0-10E6A04DB2798628@

[70] Benschroten, J.V. "Untitled," *The American*. New York: October 31, 1828. Accessed on 10/14/2016. Link: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=W66N49RHMTQ4NTgwMDMwOC4zNTM1MzoxOjEzOjEzMC4xMTEuNDYuNTQ&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryname=3&p_queryname=3&p_docnum=1&p_docref=v2:10D35048E774E038@EANX-1418CFA3B1B9ACE0@2389027-14181BA7E8C20178@1-1420D36DDD60EE60@%5BRoger%20Strong%3B%20Appointed%3B%20Electors%5D

[71] Anonymous, "The Presidency," *Eastport Sentinel,* Maine: December 1, 1827. Accessed on 10/31/2016. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-

"apprehension that the military disposition of the General might, even in the Presidential seat, make him unmindful of his civil obligations."[72] Adams supporters inspired fear in potential voters with such sweeping statements. Andrew Jackson, the military hero, would destroy American values as president.

John Binns, a particularly fervent Adams supporter, circulated a pamphlet called the Coffin Handbill for its depiction of coffins, inaccurately portrayed Andrew Jackson as a murderer. The pamphlet stated that "Jackson quarrels with Samuel Jackson, and runs him through the body with a sword cane."[73] This handbill was distributed in order to mobilize the public against Andrew Jackson. By associating Jackson with horrific murders as well as military crimes, the Adams supporters hoped to inspire fear in potential voters, which would mobilize them to vote in favor of the incumbent. They also associated Jackson with moral degradation by asserting that "in the summer of 1790, Gen. Jackson prevailed upon the wife of Lewis Roberts, of Mercer County, Ky, to desert

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MDU0NTc6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryn
ame=7&p_queryname=7&p_docnum=19&p_docref=v2:1251A9ACC0685F75@EANX-
1270C4217A98DEA8@2388692-1270C42192510A88@1-1270C421E1CE7AE0@The%20Presidency
[72] Anonymous, "A meeting of the friends of the administration." *Daily National Journal*, Washington DC:
October 8, 1827. Accessed on 2/14/2017. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort
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None%2C29%29friends+of+the+administration%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2909%
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12501392&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#
[73] Richmond Enquirer, "Coffin Handbill--Damn'D:, *Delaware Patriot & American Watchman*, Delaware:
August 5, 1828. Accessed on 12/3/2016. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort
=DateAscend&tabID=T003&prodId=NCNP&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R1&searchType
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None%2C15%29coffin+handbill%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2909%2F12%2F1826+
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+11%2F16%2F1828%24&retrieveFormat=MULTIPAGE_DOCUMENT&userGroupName=maine_orono
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14120568&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

her husband and live with himself in the character of a wife."[74] By encouraging the

distribution of such lies and mistruths, Adams supporters hoped to mobilize the American

public by smearing the name of Andrew Jackson. Morally upright citizens would fear the

presence of morally questionable man in the White House and would vote in favor of

Adams.

Supporters of Jackson sought to repudiate unjust claims made against their

candidate and to muddy the reputation of the incumbent. John Quincy Adams "possesses

all this kind of cunning and cool calculation."[75] Adams was portrayed as an educated elite

who disparaged the uneducated majority and was disconnected from the reality of

ordinary Americans. Jacksonians seized upon the incumbent president's infamous toast at

a gathering in Baltimore, in which he discussed "a Philosophical tale of *my* favorite

author Voltaire."[76] Adams discussed "the meaning of his toast '*Ebony and Topaz*,' which

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[74] Cadet, Providence. "Per contra," *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Gazette*. North Carolina: May 15, 1827. Accessed on 12/2/2016. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DateAscend&tabID=T003&prodId=NCNP&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=7&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28ke%2CNone%2C12%29mrs.+jackson%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2909%2F12%2F1826+-+11%2F16%2F1828%24&retrieveFormat=MULTIPAGE_DOCUMENT&userGroupName=maine_orono&inPS=true&contentSet=LTO&&docId=&docLevel=FASCIMILE&workId=&relevancePageBatch=GT3012675389&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

[75] Leonidas. "Political." *Dover Gazette & Strafford Advertiser*. New Hampshire: June 10, 1828. Accessed on 1/30/2016. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DateAscend&tabID=T003&prodId=NCNP&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R5&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=7&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28ke%2CNone%2C16%29adams+and+russia%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2909%2F12%2F1826+-+11%2F16%2F1828%24&retrieveFormat=MULTIPAGE_DOCUMENT&userGroupName=maine_orono&inPS=true&contentSet=LTO&&docId=&docLevel=FASCIMILE&workId=&relevancePageBatch=GT3012529233&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

[76] Adams, John Q. "Ebony and Topaz," *Vermont Watchman and State Gazette*, Vermont: February 5, 1828. Accessed on 2/14/2017. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DateAscend&tabID=T003&prodId=NCNP&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R5&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=4&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28tx%2CNone%2C14%29ebony+and+topa%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2907%2F16%2F1827+-

he was apprehensive they would not understand, [and] he speaks in the most ironical

terms."[77] This particular speech spoke to "the far fetched conceit of the President."[78] By

referencing Voltaire, Adams illustrated his educational superiority over the majority of

the American public. Adams was well-read, well-educated and, for these reasons, did not

have the capacity to understand the struggles of average Americans. The "Ebony and

Topaz" toast underscored Adams's pride in his own intellect, which he took pleasure in

parading over the less educated. Adams's education and family history helped to fuel the

narrative of stark difference between the two candidates. Jackson did not belong to the

long-standing American elite. Adams and his supporters also spearheaded painful attacks

on Old Hickory and his wife alleging that Rachel Jackson was for not yet divorced before

she lived with Jackson, which especially smeared Mrs. Jackson by implying that she "a

female whose character whose purity and virtue is at least doubtful."[79] These particular

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13356265&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y

[77] Militiaman. "Ebony and Topaz," *United States' Telegraph*. Washington, D.C.: October 27, 1827.
Accessed on 11/20/2016. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort
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None%2C15%29ebony+and+topaz%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2909%2F12%2F182
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12157143&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

[78] Jackson, A. "Ebony and Topaz," *Louisiana Advertiser,* New Orleans, Louisiana: November 20, 1827.
Accessed on 2/14/2017. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort
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one%2C14%29ebony+and+topa%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2907%2F16%2F1827+
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+12%2F17%2F1828%24&retrieveFormat=MULTIPAGE_DOCUMENT&userGroupName=maine_orono
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14172005&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y

[79] A subscriber and member of the Presbyterian church. "To the Editors of the N. York Com Advertiser,"
Louisiana Advertiser, New Orleans, Louisiana: July 30, 1827. Accessed on 2/14/2017. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort

claims underscored the moral deficiencies of John Quincy Adams and his supporters.

Members of the public were outraged by the "INVIDIOUS SLANDERS which, although

they are happily repelled by the good sense, the candor, and in DOMESTIC

INSTANCES, by the DELICACY of the American people, tend to give a broad incorrect

and disparaging impressions."[80] The public was unhappy with the inclusion of Mrs.

Jackson's morals in the realm of politics. This addition, many felt, was an example of

"falsehood, malice and violence hitherto unknown in political warfare…[and] the people

cried out shame, shame! And curses loud and deep upon all who committed and

encouraged this wickedness."[81] The supporters of Adams and the man himself resorted to

unjust campaign tactics that the people displeased. They spoke to the nature and skills of

the party and of Adams. Jackson's skills were derived from the battlefield, which was

respectable to the common man. Most importantly, Jackson was perceived as "amply

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one%2C11%29mrs+jackson%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2907%2F16%2F1827+-
+12%2F17%2F1828%24&retrieveFormat=MULTIPAGE_DOCUMENT&userGroupName=maine_orono
&inPS=true&contentSet=LTO&&docId=&docLevel=FASCIMILE&workId=&relevancePageBatch=GT30
14171838&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y

[80] Anonymous, "We have been favored with a copy…" *Louisville Public Advertiser*, Louisville, Kentucky:
January 19, 1828. Accessed on 2/14/2017. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort
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None%2C11%29mrs+jackson%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2910%2F16%2F1827+-
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[81] Anonymous, "The attack of the COALITION upon Mrs. Jackson," *United States' Telegraph*.
Washington DC: October 12, 1827. Accessed on 2/14/2017. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort
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None%2C11%29mrs+jackson%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2907%2F16%2F1827+-
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qualified to discharge the duties of that exalted station with credit to himself and benefit

to his country, but that he was likewise the "*Man of the People.*"[82]

By creating a narrative that contrasted the strengths and weaknesses between the

two candidates, both campaigns hoped to mobilize potential voters in order to vanquish

their foe. Important themes were incorporated into these narratives that inspired different

connotations and emotions in the American public. By heralding Jackson as a Man of the

People and hosting hickory pole raisings, for example, Jacksonians fed the public a

message of patriotism that contrasted well with the image of Adams as an aloof diplomat.

The dichotomy of the two men contributed to the strength of the competing narratives

and encouraged eligible voters to take part in the electoral process as messages were

dispersed through the media. Grassroot party organizations brought these national

messages closer to home at Hickory Club meetings and party leaders throughout local

communities sought to persuade their friends and neighbors. Mobilization was a driving

force in the election of 1828.

Data analysis

Because the presidential election of 1828 occurred so far in the past, plentiful data

concerning voter turnout do not exist for this particular election. Prevalent data sources

and means of collecting data such as exit polling did not exist. However, some data do

exist. These data are critical to understanding the election of Andrew Jackson. I

attempted to locate anecdotal evidence in primary sources such as newspapers which

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[82] Palladium, Geneva. "Geneva Gazette," *Albany Argus.* New York: October 26, 1827. Accessed on
11/23/2016. Retrieved from: http://infoweb.newsbank.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/iw-
search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=C6DO5CSSMTQ3NDkwMjY1NC4x
MDcyNTM6MToxMzoxMzAuMTExLjQ2LjU0&p_action=doc&d_viewref=search&s_lastnonissuequeryn
ame=5&p_queryname=5&p_docnum=18&p_docref=v2:10C61B0A8F932EC0@EANX-
1426A434E57A6BE0@2388656-142495865A85B410@0-142DE445B1B928A2

discussed record turnout rates or some such surprise at the impressive political

involvement that occurred in this election cycle compared to previous elections.

Unfortunately, such evidence was unavailable. No such evidence was present in existing

literature about the election of 1828, Martin Van Buren or Andrew Jackson himself. For

this reason, I will analyze the sparse existing data concerning voter turnout in the

presidential election of 1828 and round to the nearest integer. The majority of the data are

collected from the CQ Press Library; all other sources are cited as they appear.

In 1828, a variety of different voting regulations limited the pool of eligible voters

in the United States. Women, for example, were not legally permitted to participate in the

electoral process and most states also excluded African Americans. However, suffrage

had expanded a great deal by the election period in 1828. Every state did not require

citizens to own property in order to vote; in fifteen states white males were not required

to own property to be eligible to vote, which was a drastic expansion of eligible voters.[83]

For this reason, there were 2,074,000 eligible voters in 1828. This was a significant

increase from the voting-age population in 1824, which capped at 1,362,000. In 1828,

712,000 more citizens could participate in the electoral process.[84]

Out of the pool of voting-age citizens, 1,148,018 participated in the presidential

election of 1828. 55.4 percent of the eligible population participated in this particular

election cycle. Between 1824 and 1828, the number of eligible voters increased from

1,362,000, an increase of 66 percentage points. However, in 1824 only 365,833 eligible

voters participated in the presidential election, a mere 27 percent of those who could have

participated. These data prove that voter turnout increased by a sizable 29 percentage

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[83] Gans, C. (2011). Chapter 2. 1810-1829. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009*. Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n2
[84] Gans, C. (2011). Chapter 2, 1820-1829. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009*.

points between 1824 and 1828. The presidential election of 1828 had the highest level of voter turnout between 1789 and 1836,[85] exceeding 1820, which had the lowest turnout level with a measly 10 percent.[86] 1828 levels beat the 1820 levels by a whopping 45 percentage points. The average voter turnout rate between 1789 and 1836 was 44 percent. Voter turnout levels in 1828 exceeded the average turnout level by 11.5 percentage points, which is a significant increase in participation rates. Such a dramatic increase in turnout levels is incredibly stark when compared to the relatively low turnout rates experienced in the other election years of the given period.

These data suggest that, in its time, 1828 had the highest voter turnout levels witnessed in a presidential election in American history. Eligible voters turned out with far greater frequency than they had in any election year before. Evaluation of turnout levels at the individual state level underscore this important increase. The average turnout rate for individual states was a whopping 52 percent in 1828; in 1824, the average was was 28 percent. The difference between average turnout rates in 1824 and 1828 was 23 percentage points. As is apparent, the difference between the average turnout rates between the two years is almost equal to the average statewide turnout rate in 1824. In 1828, Rhode Island, the state with the lowest turnout rate, 17 percent of eligible voters turned out to vote; in 1824, on the other hand, Virginia, the lowest turnout state, had a rate of 12 percent. The difference between the states with the lowest turnout rates is 5 percentage points. Additionally, in 1828 New Hampshire had the highest turnout rate with 75 percent while in the previous presidential election Maryland, the highest turnout,

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[85] Gans, C. (2011). Chapter 1 1788-1809, Chapter 2 1810-1829, Chapter 3. 1830-1849. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009* (pp. -). Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n2

[86] Gans, C. (2011). Chapter 1. 1788-1809. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009* (pp. -). Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n2

had turnout rates of 54 percent. The difference between these two highest placers is 21 percentage points. Voter turnout rates, in fact, increased in nearly every state in 1828 when compared to turnout rates of 1824. Turnout rates increased dramatically and significantly between the years of 1824 and 1828.

Individual states witnessed impressive increases in voter turnout levels between the election of 1824 and 1828. Take, for example, the state of Pennsylvania. In the election of 1824, Pennsylvania had a voter turnout rate of a mere 20 percent. In 1828, Pennsylvania had a turnout rate of 56 percent.[87] That is an increase of 37 percentage points, which is incredibly significant. Another example is Tennessee, which increased from a voter turnout level of 27 percent in 1824 to 50 percent in 1828; the difference between these two election years for New Jersey is 23 percentage points. Both of these states experienced a significant rise in voter turnout levels. As depicted in Figure 1, which is located at the end of this chapter, voter turnout rates increased with the rise of the red bars, which represent 1828 as compared to the blue bars, which represent 1824. Voter turnout levels increased significantly compared to turnout rates in the previous presidential election.

Data show that Andrew Jackson secured the presidency by accumulating the necessary number of electoral and popular votes. Andrew Jackson won 642,553 votes in the general election; John Quincy Adams won 500,897.[88] That means that 56 percent of voters who participated in the election voted for Andrew Jackson while 44 percent of voters voted for John Quincy Adams. Jackson received 12 percentage points more than his incumbent competitor. The difference between the number of votes that the two

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[87] Gans, Curtis. "Chapter 2 1810-1829", *Voter turnout in the United States 1788-2009*.
[88] Anonymous. "Election of 1828." The American Presidency Project. Accessed on 2/20/2017. Retrieved from: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/showelection.php?year=1828.

candidates received is 141,656. A total of 141,656 more individuals turned out to vote for General Andrew Jackson during the 1828 election cycle than did for John Quincy Adams.

When Jackson ran in 1824, he received 151,271 votes; by 1828, the number of votes he received increased by 491,282, which is nearly 500,000. Between the two election cycles, Jackson received 25 percentage points more in 1828 than he did in 1824. John Quincy Adams received 113,122 votes in the general election in 1824; however, he did not win the popular election. Both candidates increased their share of the vote count in 1828 as compared to 1824; however, the 1824 election was a four-way battle between John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay and William Crawford. In both elections, Jackson garnered a greater percentage of the vote than did John Quincy Adams. However, he did not collect sufficient numbers in certain states to obtain the necessary number of electoral votes in the Electoral College in order to win that particular year. In 1828, Jackson was able to rally and increase his share of the votes to obtain a seat in the White House.

It is true that there were four presidential candidates in the election of 1824 and only two in the election of 1828. For this reason voters, naturally, had to choose between the two candidates instead of the four. Because there were fewer candidates, Jackson and Adams received higher percentages of the vote. The data show that Jackson was able to increase his percentage of the vote by a significant margin during the four year gap between presidential election years. Additionally, Jackson was able to secure the necessary number of votes in the Electoral College in order to win the election. In 1828, Andrew Jackson received 178 electoral votes while his opponent won 83.[89] The Twelfth

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[89] McIver, John P. , "Electoral and popular votes cast for President, by candidate: 1789–2000." Table Eb149-153 in *Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition,*

Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states that a candidate must win a majority of the electoral votes in an election in order to win; if this does not occur, the House of Representatives determines the ultimate winner through a series of votes.[90] In 1828, there were 261 electoral votes;[91] in order to win definitively, a candidate needed to receive at least 131 electoral votes. By receiving 178 electoral votes, Jackson cleared the majority hurdle by 47 votes. In this way, Jackson was able to secure a sufficient number of electoral votes to win the election. Jackson's success was fueled by his popularity in many states.

It is important to compare data for the presidential election of 1828 with similar data from previous years in order to establish the political background and environment preceding the election of 1828. By comparing and contrasting the data, the election results of 1828 become more stark and unique. By underscoring the political and electoral reality of the United States in the early nineteenth century, it is possible to understand how revolutionary Andrew Jackson's election truly was. The election of 1828 truly changed the presidential game. After 1828, for example, voter turnout levels changed drastically. At the start of the nineteenth century, voter turnout levels hovered in the twenties; after 1828, voter turnout levels were never lower than fifty percent.[92] The

edited by Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. http://dx.doi.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/10.1017/ISBN-9780511132971.Eb123-267

[90] Glenn, G. (2003). The electoral college and the development of american democracy. *Perspectives on Political Science, 32*(1), 4-8. Accessed on 2/20/17. Retrieved from http://www.library.umaine.edu/auth/EZProxy/test/authej.asp?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/60149004?accountid=14583

[91] National Archives and Records Administration. "Electoral Votes, by State." US Electoral College. Accessed on 2/20/2017. Retrieved from: https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/votes/1821_1837.html#1828

[92] Gans, C. (2011). Chapter 1 1788-1801, Chapter 2 102-1829, Chapter 3. 1830-1849, Chapter 4 1850-1869, Chapter 5 1870-1889, Chapter 6 1890-1909. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009* (pp. -). Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n2

election of 1828 fundamentally altered presidential elections and campaigns; 1828 marked the rise of voter turnout levels in the nineteenth century.

Increased participation rates became the norm following the elevated rates of the election of 1828. It is possible that these changes occurred because of the increased role of voter mobilization efforts that took place in electoral politics in the presidential election of 1828. New methods of interacting with potential voters were introduced and normalized in the electoral process in 1828; at the same time, voter turnout levels increased significantly. The data suggest a possible correlation between the impact of voter mobilization efforts upon the voting-age population. The data suggest that voter turnout increased significantly in the election of 1828.

Figure 1[93]

1824-1828 Voter Turnout Percentages

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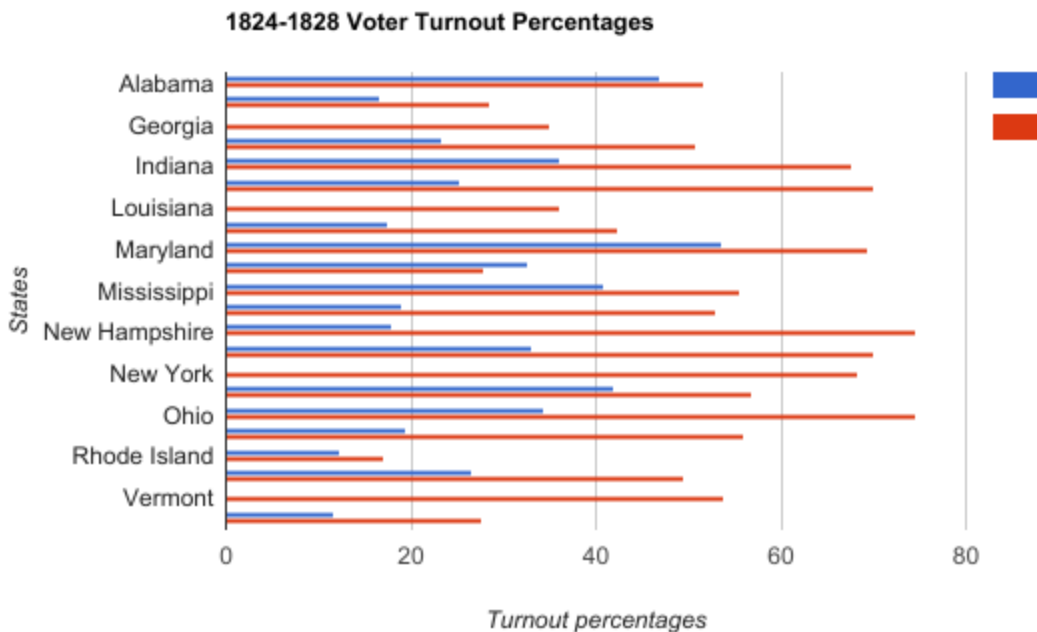
[93]Data from: Gans, C. (2011).Chapter 2 102-1829. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009* (pp. -). Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n2

Chapter Four: Analysis of the Presidential Election of 2008

The 2008 presidential election was a match between two senators from Illinois and Arizona. It was well-known for a variety of nuances that had not previously typified American elections. The internet was an integral component to the development of both Barack Obama and John McCain as candidates of their respective political parties.[94] Both utilized the web to connect with potential voters and to distribute mobilizing messages. Political parties, campaigns and interest groups used a variety of different types of voter mobilization strategies to encourage supporters to participate in the presidential election. Many of these tactics built upon and refined mobilization strategies used in previous elections, which sets 2008 apart from other presidential elections. The Barack Obama campaign for example, utilized the internet to mobilize impressive levels of individual donations to fund his presidential campaign. Additionally, 2008 witnessed an increase in voter turnout levels.

In 2008, more than half of the voting-age population participated in the election process leading to a higher than normal level of voter turnout. Additionally, campaigns, political parties and interest groups engaged in intense fights to contact and persuade targeted potential voters to participate in the presidential election. In this way, these groups engaged in a variety of different voter mobilization efforts aimed at increasing their share of supporters at the ballot box by election day. In this chapter, I will discuss and identify the different types of voter mobilization efforts utilized in the 2008 presidential election. Then I will analyze data concerning the election results and population of 2008. Because of the wide array of rich data sources that exist for the

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[94] Kenski, Kate & Hardy, Bruce W., & Jamieson, Kathleen H. *The Obama victory: how media, money and message shaped the 2008 election*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

election of 2008, I will supplement these findings from the American National Election

Studies in order to investigate a correlation between voter mobilization efforts and voter

turnout rates.

Types of voter mobilization efforts used in the presidential election of 2008

Perhaps one of the most important types of mobilization efforts used in the 2008

presidential election was grassroots mobilization. Drawing on mobilization

breakthroughs in the 2004 presidential election, Republicans and Democrats focused their

efforts on targeting certain types of voter such as likely voters instead of focusing on

undecided voters who were typically the section of the population to whom campaigns

most sought in the past.[95] Republicans engaged in intense grassroots mobilization efforts

by conducting a 72-hour task force that was based upon the successful program with the

same name which was used by the George W. Bush campaign in 2004.[96] By utilizing this

adapted tactic, the McCain campaign and the Republican Party were able to contact a

significant number of potential voters who were likely to belong to the Republican base.

Both Republicans and Democrats focused on engaging likely voters through

standard grassroots techniques such as door-to-door canvassing by both volunteers and

paid staff, contact through telephone banks, and written material such as leaflets. The

campaigns and party organizations created extensive field operations across the United

States in order to deploy grassroots mobilization efforts such as those listed above and

"exploited advances in voter targeting capabilities that provided campaign operatives

with access to vast amounts of detailed information that they could use to communicate

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[95] Bishop, Bill. *The big sort*. Houghton Mifflin, 2008.
[96] Francia, P. L., Panagopoulous, Costas. "Grassroots mobilization in the 2008 presidential election," *Journal of Public Marketing*. Haworth Press/Taylor & Francis, Philadelphia: 2009.

effectively with individual voters."[97] Field operations were utilized to engage in a variety of grassroots mobilization tactics such as those listed above. By using databases that compiled extensive consumer and voting history patterns, campaigns were able to specifically identify and target likely supporters with mobilizing messages. In this way, the ideas of both the Howard Dean and George W. Bush 2004 campaigns were refined with success. Barack Obama's campaign in particular was a hybrid system that combined a bottom-up design that allowed volunteers to behave spontaneously within the structure and control of the campaign's goals.[98] The campaign of his rival, on the other hand, was designed in the more typical strictly top-bottom structure wherein volunteers and supporters were closely monitored by paid staff who functioned under a strict hierarchy of command with the candidate at the top

Both utilized the internet to connect with and organize potential voters at the grassroots level. Both campaigns also had strong presences in states that were vital to obtaining the requisite number of electoral votes, often referred to as battleground states. These states were "divided into precincts, with a neighborhood team established in each precinct and a leader appointed who lived in the neighborhood."[99] By designing an intensely local, community-based organization, campaigns engage in grassroots mobilization. Grassroots mobilization is critical because it is rooted in local communities and neighborhoods. Close ties to communities through the participation of local leaders and residents lends a personal edge to political organizing. When a potential voter is

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[97] Francia and Panagopoulous, "Grassroots mobilization in the 2008 presidential election", pp. 317.
[98] Vaccari, Cristian. "The Internet in the 2008 Presidential Election," *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*: 2010, pp. 330. Accessed on 10/13/2016. Retrieved from: http://www.tandfonline.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/doi/abs/10.1080/19331681003656664
[99] Conway, M. Margaret. "Chapter 2 The Scope of Participation in the 2008 Presidential Race: Voter Mobilization and Electoral Success," *Winning the Presidency*, (Paradigm Publishers, 2009), pp. 118.

contacted by a friend or colleague who is associated with a political organization, the contact is more likely to have an impact on the individual. Potential voters, like all people, seek to adhere to trends that permeate their social networks. For this reason, "the obligations and rewards of friendship, camaraderie, neighborliness, and family ties are very powerful. People want to be accepted, valued and liked."[100] Familiar faces associated with campaigns tap into the need to conform to social norms. Contact asserts a norm of voting and associates a familiar face with the goals of a campaign. These psychological components contribute to an individual's decision to overcome the various costs of participation. Because of the relational ties between community members, grassroots mobilization is a critical strategy.

The Obama campaign strengthened their grassroots campaign by utilizing technology to orchestrate a complex campaign structure that was open to the participation and organizing efforts of volunteers. They also utilized technology to contact individual voters through text messaging services and social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.[101] The Obama campaign was fitted with an elite and skilled team constructed of technologically savvy individuals including Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes. Hughes designed the candidate's innovative and interactive social network website MyBarackObama.com, which was a critical tool because it "enable[d] those who did sign up to organize into manageable groups."[102] This particular website was

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[100] Rosenstone, Steven J., & Hansen, John M. *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America,* (Macmillan Publishing Company: 1993), pp. 23.

[101] Cogburn, Derrick L., Espinoza-Vazquez, Fatima K. "From Networked Nominee to Networked Nation: Examining the Impact of Web 2.0 on Political Participation and Civic Engagement in the 2008 Obama Campaign," *Journal of Political Marketing*, 2011. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/doi/full/10.1080/15377857.2011.540224?src=recsys

[102] Clayton, Dewey. *The Presidential Campaign of Barack Obama: A Critical Analysis of a Racially Transcendent Strategy, (*Walworth Publishing Co, New York: 2010), pp. 140.

especially useful in the development of grassroots mobilization because it enabled

motivated volunteers to participate in campaign activities through independent actions.

MyBarackObama.com, for example, allowed volunteers to call potential voters to

collect data for the campaign from the comfort of their own homes. Like its mother

website of Facebook, users were able to "post a photo, a brief description of why they

support Obama, issues that are important to them, and limited biographical

information."[103] By attaching local information, the website made it possible for

supporters to work together at the neighborhood level. The Obama campaign also

engaged with volunteers so that "those who earned their way into the volunteer hierarchy

joined a neighborhood team, each with a lead person and at least three deputies given

specific responsibilities: a phone bank captain, canvass captain, a data coordinator

responsible for making sure field contacts promptly reached the VAN [Voter Activation

Network]."[104] The Voter Activation Network is a database used by progressive

organizations such as labor unions, "offering clients an integrated platform of the best

fundraising, compliance, field organizing, digital, and social networking products."[105]

The VAN was founded by Mark Sullivan in 2001 and was first used in Cambridge,

Massachusetts.[106] The VAN provided volunteers and paid staff the technological tools to

identify, contact and record information about said interactions with potential voters. The

local component of such innovative tactics was critical to grassroots mobilization. By

allowing supporters to connect at the local level, the Obama campaign encouraged

volunteers to spread their political beliefs and enthusiasm to friends and neighbors. Since

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[103] Clayton, Dewey. *The Presidential Campaign of Barack Obama,* pp. 141.
[104] Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab*, (Crown Publishers: 2012), pp. 281.
[105] "About NGP VAN", NGP VAN, Accessed on 4/9/2017. https://www.ngpvan.com/about,.
[106] "NGP VAN", Wikipedia.com, Accessed on 4/24/2017, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NGP_VAN.

grassroots organization is typified by the interaction of individuals at the local level, such

interactive interfaces as MyBarackObama.com were critical to the development of

grassroots mobilization in the 2008 presidential election.

Through social networks or socnets such as Facebook or MyBarackObama.com

the Obama campaign was able to create a successful organization in which volunteers

were able to "call their own shots, from organizing rallies to recruiting and training a

cadre of Obama supporters to work their precincts on election day."[107] Volunteers were

able to act spontaneously but were encouraged to adhere to the guidelines established by

the campaign itself through incentives "such as help and recognition from campaign

leadership and staff, to those volunteers that most closely followed the instructions."[108] In

this way, volunteers were encouraged to both host and attend events such as dinners and

rallies with friends and neighbors to inspire support and enthusiasm for their preferred

presidential candidate Barack Obama. The campaign also hosted training events to equip

volunteer organizers with organizing skills and tools to improve their capacity to engage

with potential voters.

David Plouffe, the Obama campaign manager, believed that "it was clear we had

uniquely motivated and talented volunteers who could give us a leg up, so we tried to

send the message that they should consider the campaign a movement--their

movement."[109] The Obama campaign granted volunteers the freedom to act

independently. By granting volunteers this freedom, the campaign was able to engage in

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[107] Clayton, Dewey. *The Presidential Campaign of Barack Obama*, pp. 139.

[108] Vaccari, Cristian. "The Internet in the 2008 Presidential Election," pp. 330.

[109] Magleby, D., and Magleby, D. "Elections as Team Sports: Spending by Candidates, Political Parties, and Interest Groups in the 2008 Presidential Election," from *The Change Election: Money, Mobilization and Persuasion in the 2008 Federal Elections*. Temple University Press; 2011, pp. 60. Accessed on 10/14/2016. Retrieved from:
http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/j.ctt14bt6t0.7?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

a wide variety of grassroots mobilization efforts such as door-to-door canvassing, meetings of local supporters in communities,[110] and participation in a national phone bank that could be accessed by interested parties from the comfort of their own homes. Individual volunteers were able to connect with each other through social media as well as to coordinate events in their local communities. This freedom allowed volunteers to engage with their friends, peers and neighbors to furnish support for candidate Obama. The Obama campaign also hosted training events to teach volunteers skills to ensure that they were able to organize effectively.[111]

The Obama campaign was further skilled at mobilizing voters through its efforts to "personalize the campaign for supporters by connecting to the values and local issues that animated their lives."[112] By engaging in grassroots mobilization practices, the Obama campaign was able to tap into communities at the local level. The Obama campaign was better equipped to interact with potential voters at the personal level in part due to the relative degree of freedom that volunteers were granted. The massive scale of the Obama operation ensured that the campaign was infused with the cultures of numerous communities across the United States. By connecting with individuals at the local level, the Obama campaign was able to directly ask potential voters to participate in the election, which is a mobilization strategy. Many scholars believe that potential voters can be persuaded to become voters simply by being asked to participate.[113] Scholars also

[110] Osborn, Tracy, Scott D. McClurg, and Benjamin Knoll. *Voter Mobilization and the Obama Victory*. 2nd ed. Vol. 38. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2010. Accessed September 9, 2016.
[111] Clayton, Dewey. *The Presidential Campaign of Barack Obama*
[112] Han, Hahrie. *Moved to Action: Motivation, Participation and Inequality in American Politics, (*Stanford University Press: 2009), pp. 20.
[113] Verba, Sidney., Scholzman, Kay Lehman., & Brady, Henry E. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. (Harvard University Press: 1995).

believe that enthusiastic supporters who choose to participate in mobilization practices are more likely to be effective than unwilling volunteers.[114]

Additionally, the Obama campaign was able to appeal to different minority groups such as Latinos and Asian Americans based upon his post-racial campaign. Obama did not base his entire campaign upon his race and, in this way, some viewed his campaign as post-racial. As a member of a racial minority group, Barack Obama was better perceived as a champion of the post-racial society. He was also able to connect with other members of racial groups because his post-racial campaign "allowed [minorities] to focus on the parts of his biography to which they could relate."[115] His family background, for example, tied him to immigrants. Relatability to the candidate acts as a mobilizing agent for voters by making them feel more connected to the election due to the shared experiences between the candidate and the individual. When individuals feel more connected and, therefore, more emotional about the candidate and the election in general, they are more likely to participate. Creating a feeling of closeness between the candidate and the potential voters increases the value of the act of voting.

The John McCain campaign, publicly funded and therefore limited in its capital resources, was primarily organized in the typical campaign fashion with control vested in the upper echelons who guarded and controlled campaign activities and messages. Candidates can select to receive public funds for their campaign, which severely restricts the amount of money the campaign can possess in a given period of the election; candidates are limited by legislation that prevents supporters from donating unlimited

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[114] Michelson, Melissa R. "Meeting the Challenge of Latino Mobilization," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, (Sage Publications: 2005).
[115] Logan, Enid. *At This Defining Moment*. (New York University Press: 2011), pp. 88.

funds between the primary and general elections.[116] Privately funding candidates such as Obama, who was the first to decline public funds since their introduction to electoral politics, are able to amass unlimited funds throughout the course of their campaign. Like his competitor, the McCain campaign created a socnet for supporters to utilize as a resource to generate enthusiasm called McCainSpace, a spin on the popular socnet of MySpace. Unlike MyBarackObama.com, however, "McCainSpace was nearly impossible to navigate and was virtually abandoned."[117] The difficult interface was an obstacle that users had difficulty overcoming, which lead to its ultimate demise. Because the McCain campaign lacked an adequate socnet for supporters to use for self-expression and organizational purposes, the Obama campaign was able to connect with volunteers more efficiently. The ability to effectively organize volunteers at the grassroots level impacted the degree to which the campaigns were able to mobilize potential voters. In this way, the use of the internet in the 2008 presidential elections was closely related to grassroots mobilization.

Technology was also utilized in other important ways in the 2008 presidential election. In addition to the use of socnets to communicate with followers and supporters, campaigns, political parties and interest groups utilized such technological innovations as email and text messaging to interact with potential voters and supporters. The Obama campaign in particular integrated technology in their campaign. The Obama campaign was able to integrate technological advancements in advertising and communication to ensure that campaign messages spread widely. Through the use of the candidate's

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[116] Mableby, David B. "Elections as Team Sports: Spending by Candidates, Political Parties, and Interest Groups in the 2008 Election Cycle." In *The Change Election: Money, Mobilization, and Persuasion in the 2008 Federal Elections*, edited by Magleby David B. and Magleby David B., 52-86. Temple University Press, 2011. http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/j.ctt14bt6t0.7.
[117] Clayton, Dewey. *The Presidential Campaign of Barack Obama*, pp. 143.

website BarackObama.com and MyBarackObama.com, the campaign was able to collect significant amounts of contact information such as cell phone numbers and email addresses, which were then tapped into to disperse mobilization information. For example, "on Election Day, every voter who'd signed up for alerts in battleground states got at least three text messages. Supporters on average received five to 20 text messages per month, depending on where they lived -- the program was divided by states, regions, zip codes and colleges -- and what kind of messages they had opted to receive."[118]

Links to the website were also attached to various campaign advertisements on the web. Participants of email lists were frequently contacted with news "as the campaign hopes the online supporters will spread the new information to friends, family, and colleagues."[119] This particular strategy is an example of indirect mobilization. The campaign hoped to indirectly mobilize individuals who were not directly contacted; instead, a personal contact would convey the campaign message. The personal relationship between the contacted person and those they, in turn, sought to mobilize had the potential to influence the decisions of other potential voters. Through the use of such extensive programs, the Obama campaign was able to spread mobilization messages to significant numbers of voters.

The Obama tech team also invested in advertising on places like Facebook so that "for Obama supporters on Facebook, it was nearly impossible to be on the site at any given moment and not see an Obama ad. A critical group known as the 'analytics team' measured everything that went in and out of the site -- tracking which ad at what time drew the most traffic and what kinds of e-mails from the campaign got opened and read

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[118] Vargas, Jose Antonio. "Obama raised half a billion online." *The Washington Post*: November 20, 2008.
[119] Frantzich, Stephen E. "Chapter 8 E-Politics and the 2008 Presidential Campaign: Has the Internet "Arrived"?" *Winning the Presidency*, ed. William J. Crotty (Paradigm Publishers, 2009), pp. 138.

most."[120] With the existence of a full-time and skilled technology team, the Obama

campaign "used peer-to-peer communication to build a juggernaut that did not depend on

the whims and choices of the media's collective brain trust."[121] Instead, the Obama

technology team utilized their skills to identify and target potential voters through

innovative and competitive experiments with technology such as text messaging and

advertisement placing.

Both campaigns, political parties and interest groups also used the media as an

important platform for distributing campaign messages and to encourage voters to

participate in the election. Media platforms such as YouTube and Twitter were frequently

used to convey important messages. Internet-based media platforms were popular for

political organizations in 2008 because they were forms of free media, meaning money

did not have to be spent to secure a time spot or location of a given advertisement.

YouTube was a particularly crucial platform in the 2008 presidential election as the

video-sharing website was a common interface for the distribution of campaign news and

new advertisements. Both teams utilized new and innovative video streaming websites

such as YouTube to communicate with supporters such that an estimated 40 percent of

registered voters had watched campaign videos online; this coincided with nearly 2.3

billion viewings of YouTube videos mentioning either Obama or McCain."[122]

Such videos include the Obama Girl and the Black Eyed Peas music video of

Obama's New Hampshire speech. The Obama campaign also purchased advertisements

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[120] Vargas, Jose Antonio. "Obama raised half a billion online."
[121] Carr, David, & Stelter, Brian. "Campaigns in a Web 2.0 world." *New York Times*: November 2, 2008. Accessed on 10/18/2016. Retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/03/business/media/03media.html
[122] Magleby, D. "Elections as Team Sports", pp. 59.

in critical areas and time slots such as space in video games and during the Superbowl.[123]

By tapping into popular technology and media sources, the Obama campaign was able to

more effectively communicate with and mobilize young voters who are typically ignored

in elections. "By June, McCain had posted 208 videos on YouTube that were viewed 3.7

million times. Obama had more than 1,000 videos that were visited 53.4 million

times."[124] Such an extensive degree of contact by the campaigns was critical in

maintaining and generating enthusiasm among supporters. Enthusiastic supporters were

more likely to contribute donations, volunteer and to vote in the election.

The typical mediums of media were also utilized to promote or oppose Barack

Obama and John McCain. Television advertisements, for example, were utilized by both

campaigns, political parties and interest groups to build arguments either for or against

each candidate. Through the use of these advertisements, the candidates were cast as

certain characters. Take, for example, the advertising campaign of John McCain's

celebrity feature. "He is the biggest celebrity in the world," a female voice intoned, as

images of Britney Spears and Paris Hilton flashed on the screen. "But: is he ready to

lead?"[125] Many of these ads appeared in both English and Spanish, which increased their

appeal to the growing number of Hispanic voters. Various interest groups conveyed

mobilizing messages through their advertisements.

Many advertisements in the 2008 election were negative because "negative ads do

reach voters and they are sometimes successful in characterizing opponents in the worst

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[123] Magleby, D. "Elections as Team Sports"

[124] Frantzich, Stephen E. "E-Politics and the 2008 Presidential Campaign", pp. 146.

[125] Draper, Robert. "The Making (And Remaking) of McCain" *The New York Times* (October 22, 2008). Accessed on 10/18/2016. Retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/26/magazine/26mccain-t.html?_r=0

possible light and in motivating voters."[126] Take, for example, the National Rifle

Association Victory Fund spot that premiered in the week prior to election day. This ad

showcased a frightened mother holding a handgun in her living room as a voiceover said

"Imagine your child screaming in the middle of the night when a convicted felon breaks

into your home. As a darkened home is shown on the screen the voiceover added,'

"Worse, he comes back a second time. Unbelievably, Barack Obama made you the

criminal."[127] This particular ad ends with a suit-wearing Obama superimposed upon

prison bars. By associating Obama with incredibly negative events and actions, the

Republican Party, interest groups and the McCain campaign itself sought to undermine

Obama as a candidate. Supporters of Obama, on the other hand, sought to associate John

McCain with President George W. Bush, who was unpopular at the time. This suggested

close relationship implied that McCain was a major contributor to the economic

downturn and that "McCain's policies hurt, and Obama's helped, the middle class."[128]

They also suggested that McCain's long history in Washington politics made him

disconnected from the daily struggles faced by average Americans.

  Negative advertisements associated candidates with negative events with the goal

of inspiring negative sentiments in the audience. Negative feelings about a candidate, like

negative feelings for people in general, reduce the favorability of that candidate. Negative

advertising is also a mobilizing tactic because it encourages intense emotions. Emotional

connections increase the perceived benefit that an individual feels about voting. These

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[126] Crotty, William J. "Chapter 2 Electing Obama: The 2008 Presidential Campaign", *Winning the Presidency*, ed. William J. Crotty (Paradigm Publishers, 2009) pp. 33.

[127] Kenski, Kate & Hardy, Bruce W., & Jamieson, Kathleen H. *The Obama victory: how media, money and message shaped the 2008 election*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 91.

[128] Kenski, Kate., Hardy, Bruce W., & Jamieson, Kathleen H. *The Obama Victory*,

negative feelings would prompt potential voters to express those sentiments at the ballot box. Through these means, advertisements were utilized to mobilize potential voters.

Positive advertisements were also used to convey important messages with the aim of increasing warm feelings for each candidate. Barack Obama, for example, had a "thirty-minute prime-time infomercial that cost $1 million and ran on CBS, NBC, MSNBC, Fox, BET, TV One, and, Univision, attracting thirty-three million viewers."[129] Positive advertisements were used to convey positive messages about the candidate's abilities and past experience. The Obama campaign, for example, used the street artist Shepard Fairey who had created the famous image of Obama with the word hope in addition to Obama with the word vote.[130] These positive images of candidate Obama were utilized to instill favorable emotions amongst potential voters.

The presence of field offices is also related to the ability to mobilize potential voters at the grassroots level. Campaign and political party staff are organized at field offices around the country during elections. From these field offices, staff are able to organize outreach and get-out-the-vote efforts in order to persuade potential voters to participate. Field offices are the home bases of campaigns and political parties in local areas. Volunteers report to paid staff who are stationed in field offices; these staff members lead volunteers on grassroots mobilization drives such as door-to-door or leafletting canvassing or telephone banks. Because of the relationship between field offices and campaign activity, field offices are critical to the development of voter mobilization efforts.

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[129] Heilemann, John., & Halperin, Mark. *Game Change*. (Harper Collins: 2010), pp. 419.
[130] Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab*, pp. 289.

In 2008, candidate Barack Obama possessed a far greater number of field offices than did his competitor. Because Obama had more money at his disposal, he was able to support a wide network of connected offices that were similarly fitted with a variety of staffers and technology. In early 2008, there were "336 offices for Obama and 101 for McCain."[131] By the end of October, the contrast between the number of Obama field offices compared to McCain's was incredibly stark, with Obama clocking in around 700 and his competitor around 400.[132] This significant difference ensured that the Obama campaign had the capacity to engage with a greater number of potential voters across the country than did his competitor, who was forced to choose where to allocate limited resources.

Campaigns, political parties and interest groups utilized the voter mobilization tactic of hosting voter registration drives. Laws require citizens to register before they can vote in a given election in the United States. For this reason, citizens must register to vote in order to be eligible to vote. Every state has different laws, some of which require citizens to register a certain amount of time before an individual can vote while others, such as the state of Maine, allow citizens to register on the same day that voting takes place. A valuable mobilization tactic is to encourage supporters and potential supporters to register to vote. In this way, campaigns, political parties and interest groups hope to increase their share of the vote totals. The Obama campaign was particularly interested in registering minorities and the young; individuals in these demographic groups often vote

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[131] Silver, Nate. "Obama Leads Better than 3:1 in Field Offices," *fivetheirtyeight.com* *http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/obama-leads-better-than-31-in-field/* Accessed 10/17/16

[132] Luo, Michael., & McIntire, Mike. "Voter turnout rate said to be highest since 1968," *The Washington Post* (December 15, 2008). Accessed on 10/11/2016. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/newsstand/docview/410317068/51DA5FC140224087PQ /1?accountid=14583

at a lower rate than average. Interest groups such as "Democracia USA, which focused on Latino voters; Women's Voices, Women's Votes, which targeted unmarried women"[133] hosted voter registration drives.

Perhaps the most critical mobilization tactic utilized in the 2008 presidential election was microtargeting. In the past, political parties and campaigns crafted messages that would appeal to the electorate as a whole with the goal of increasing enthusiasm and support amongst the people in general.[134] By 2008, political parties, campaigns, and interest groups sought to gain support from the public by engaging with select segments of society that are more likely to participate; these likely voters are prodded with persuasive actions such as telephone calls, emails and letters to encourage the act of voting.[135] Potential voters are targeted based upon a variety of different attributes such as voting history and political party affiliation that help to identify their political orientation and likelihood of voting. Even more information "such as magazine subscription, types of cars driven, where individuals shop, how much they earn, commuting patterns, and voting histories in local elections"[136] are compiled in databases that are used to more accurately identify potential supporters and voters.

Microtargeting was completed by campaigns, political parties and interest groups through the use of extensive databases, which tracked important public information such as address and voter registration. Such information was critical to determining whether or

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[133] Conway, M. Margaret. "Chapter 6 The Scope of Participation in the 2008 Presidential Race: Voter Mobilization and Electoral Success", *Winning the Presidency*, (Paradigm Publishers, 2009), pp. 116-117.

[134] McGerr, Michael E. *The decline of popular politics: the American north 1865-1928*. Oxford University Press, New York: 1986.

[135] Piven, Frances F., & Cloward, Richard A. *Why Americans don't vote*. Pantheon Books, New York: 1988, pp. 39.

[136] Conway, M. Margaret. "Chapter 6 The Scope of Participation in the 2008 Presidential Race: Voter Mobilization and Electoral Success, *Winning the Presidency*, ed. William J. Crotty. (Paradigm Publishers, 2009) pp. 116.

not an individual was likely to participate in the election cycle and, therefore, whether or not it was worthwhile to attempt to mobilize that particular voter. Databases were also used to track "any campaign contact--a donation, a volunteer offer, or a contact initiated by the camp--is tracked in a master database."[137]

Campaigns utilized databases to identify who to contact. Information in the databases made it possible for organizations to identify which residents in a given neighborhood were more likely to support their candidate and, therefore, who they should contact. Individuals who were likely to be Republicans, for example, were not contacted by the Democratic Party because those voters were unlikely to support the Democratic candidate. Democrats and other liberal organizations used Harold Ickes' database service called Catalist, which was "a data 'utility' for Democratic campaigns and liberal causes."[138] Field officers and volunteers also used the Voter Activation Network (VAN) to track and identify potential voters.[139] Databases ensured that precious resources were not wasted on voters who would not support the candidate. This data was used to personalize contact such as emails to align with likely areas of interest of potential voters. Additionally, in 2008, advertising, discussed earlier in the chapter, was a critical component of targeted mobilization efforts. Campaigns, political parties and interest groups utilized such advertising ploys as television, radio and internet advertisements to convey important messages that they believed would sway certain types of individuals.

Another important type of voter mobilization utilized in the 2008 presidential election were get-out-the-vote efforts. In the rush before the final days of the election,

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[137] McDonald, Michael P., & Schaller, Thomas F. *The Change Election: Money, Mobilization, and Persuasion in the 2008 Federal Election*. Temple University Press: 2011. Accessed on 10/13/2016. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/j.ctt14bt6t0.8

[138] Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab*, (Crown Publishers: 2012), pp. 175.

[139] Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab,* pp. 281.

political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups stepped up their mobilization

games by increasing contact with potential voters with the goal of mobilizing as many

supporters as possible to vote. This practice is commonly referred to as get-out-the-vote

or GOTV. For GOTV, volunteers and staff hit the pavement to knock on doors, fill

phone banks, and send emails and mass text messages to encourage potential voters to

become voters. Some of the most popular GOTV methods include door-to-door

canvassing and telephone conversations wherein "it is the interactive aspects of the

mobilization effort, combined with the narrative structure, that are key to its

effectiveness."[140]

The Obama campaign deployed a clever strategy known as the Houdini Project.

This GOTV method was intricate and effective. The Obama campaign used a "flusher--a

term for a volunteer who goes out to round up non-voters on Election Day--to know

exactly who had, and had not, voted in real time."[141] These flushers would go out on

election day to determine which individuals needed to be contacted and to update

databases with this information instantly. Databases like VAN were used to track these

individuals and GOTV volunteers were able to catalogue contact with non- and potential-

voters. By maintaining a constant update of databases like the VAN, the campaign was

able to accurately track their resources to ensure that contact was not wasted on

individuals who had already voted.[142] During this particular GOTV drive "each voter in a

precinct was given a four-digit code, and as soon as he or she cast a vote, an Obama

worker assigned to the polling place would punch in an update by phone to automatically

[140] Bedolla, Lisa García., Michelson, Melissa R. *Mobilizing Inclusion: Transforming the Electorate through Get-Out-The-Vote Campaigns*. Yale University Press: 2012, pp. 24.
[141] Clayton, Dewey. *The Presidential Campaign of Barack Obama,"* pp. 151.
[142] Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab*, pp. 300.

tag the voter's name in the VAN."[143] The Houdini Project ensured that the campaign

knew who had voted and who had not voted in real-time, which allowed them to target

those individuals who had not participated yet. In this way, they were able to streamline

their mobilizing contacts to those who most needed to be contacted. Mobilizing messages

were targeted to individual voters who were likely to need the encouragement to get to

the polls. In this way, Obama supporters were able to magically track voters much like

the magician Houdini was able to accomplish impossible feats.

By keeping track of individuals, the Obama campaign was able to determine

which potential voters needed to be contacted to ensure that as many Obama supporters

as possible voted by election day. Flushers played an important role in GOTV by

bringing potential voters to the polls when necessary. Technology was also used to

engage with potential voters in the GOTV drive. These actions helped to increase the

number of votes cast in favor of Barack Obama. On MyBarackObama.com's virtual

phone banks called the National Call Team, "some 3 million calls were made in the final

four days of the campaign."[144] Contact with potential voters in the final days of the

election is a critical component of voter mobilization.

Volunteers and staff of both campaigns as well as interest groups engaged in

GOTV activities such as the distribution of fliers and other campaign literature. The

AFL-CIO was particularly engaged in the distribution of fliers that outlined Obama's

positive relationship with labor history and working families and pictured the candidate

with working people.[145] AFL-CIO "staff and volunteers visited 16,000 homes, distributed

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[143] Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab*, pp. 300.

[144] Vargas, Jose Antonio. "Obama raised a half a billion online." *The Washington Post*.

[145] Timothy J. Minchin (2016) "A pivotal role? The AFL–CIO and the 2008 presidential election", *Labor History*. Accessed on 9/27/2016. Retrieved from:

1.5 million leaflets, and sent out 500,000 mailings."[146] Additionally, the AFL-CIO

organized an intensive GOTV drive in battleground states referred to as the "Final Four"

in the four days leading up to election day in which volunteers and staff contacted

millions of union employees encouraging them to vote.[147] On the conservative side,

influential interest groups such as the Chamber of Commerce "deployed almost 600

staffers into the field in the closing days of the 2008 camp, largely to encourage

Republicans to come to the polls."[148] In this way special interest groups such as labor

organizations were critical components of the deployment of voter mobilization

strategies.

Political parties, campaigns and interest groups utilized voter mobilization

strategies in the 2008 presidential election. All of these organizations sought to increase

the share of votes cast for their preferred candidate. Grassroots mobilization tactics were

deployed by all types of organizations including direct mail, email, door-to-door

canvassing and telephone contact through telephone banks. The internet was also a

critical component of grassroots mobilization as supporters connected with each other

and organized campaign events on social media networks such as Facebook and

MySpace. Each campaign created websites that in some way mirrored social networking

websites but Barack Obama's was better designed and more effective interface.

Databases were also utilized to identify the proclivities of American citizens who could

then be targeted with specific messages with the hope of swaying their opinion and

http://www.tandfonline.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/doi/pdf/10.1080/0023656X.2016.1164380?needAccess=true

[146] Minchin, Timothy J. "A pivotal role?" pp. 306

[147] AFL-CIO. (2008). AFL-CIO union voters help drive historic victory for Obama. Press release issued November 5. Accessed on 12/15/2016 Retrieved from: http://www.gwu.edu/~action/2008/interestg08/aflcio08releases.html

[148] Magleby, D. "Elections as team sports", pp. 77.

motivating them to vote. Advertising was used to develop ideas about the candidates and their policy agendas. Both positive and negative advertising was utilized to inspire emotion and, in this way, interest in the campaign. Get-out-the-vote drives were also important in the final days of the election as volunteers and staff members of political organizations increased contact rates with potential voters to motivate them to participate. A variety of different types of voter mobilization tactics were used in the 2008 presidential election.

Data Analysis

Because 2008 occurred so recently, there are a plethora of data about this presidential election. In this section, I will analyze data about the presidential election of 2008. Because more data exist, these data will be far more varied and conclusive than the data sets utilized in the previous chapter. To make comparisons more logical, I will utilize the same data sources that I used for the election of 1828 and will supplement with some of the more advanced resources that were used to record and track data in 2008 as compared to 1828. Additionally, I will compare the results from 2008 with previous election years to provide greater depth and clarity to the 2008 data.

In 2008, there were 209,332,000 voting-age individuals in the United States.[149] Out of those 209,332,000 voting-age individuals, 131,300,047 people voted in the 2008 election. That means that 62.7 percent of the voting-age population participated in the 2008 presidential election. In the previous presidential election cycle of 2004, there were 201,780,000 voting-age voters; of these, 122,265,430 participated in the 2008 election.[150] That means that 60.6 percent of the voting-age population turned out to vote in the 2004

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[149] Gans, C. (2011). Chapter 11. 1990-2009. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009* (pp. -). Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n11
[150] Gans, C. Chapter 11 1990-2009. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009*.

presidential election. Based on these data, there was an increase of 7,552,000 voting-age

people in the United States in 2008 when compared to the voting-age population of 2004.

An additional 9,034,617 Americans voted in the 2008 presidential election compared to

2004. There was a total increase of 2.1 percentage points in voter turnout between the

two elections, which is a statistically significant figure. These data suggest that voters

turned out with greater frequency in the 2008 presidential election than they did in the

2004 presidential election.

The presidential election of 2008 had a voter turnout rate of 62.7 percent, which

the data suggests was the highest turnout rate in a presidential election between 1992 and

2008.[151] The lowest turnout rate in this period was 1996, which had a turnout rate of 51.4

percent. In 1992, just over half of the population participated in the presidential election.

The second highest voter turnout year in the period was 2004, which had a turnout rate of

60.6 percent, a mere difference of 2.1 percentage points. While the turnout rates of 2004

and 2008 are quite similar, 2008 obviously witnessed higher turnout rates. Among these

five presidential elections, the average voter turnout rate was 57.38 percent. As

mentioned, the voter turnout rate of 2008 was 62.7 percent, which means that the voter

turnout rate was higher than the turnout rate of the average period by 5.42 percentage

points, which is a statistically significant increase in voter turnout rates. Although the five

presidential election years between 1992 and 2008 experienced relatively similar voter

turnout rates, the data suggest that 2008 witnessed an increase in voter turnout levels. The

difference between the lowest turnout year of 1996, which had a voter turnout rate of

51.4 percent, and 2008 was a whopping 11.3 percentage points. An increase in voter

[151] Gans, C. Chapter 11 1990-2009. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009.*

turnout levels of over ten percentage points is impressive and significant from a statistical standpoint.

If the comparative period is extended to the presidential election of 1964, the data suggest that the presidential election of 2008 witnessed the highest presidential turnout rates in twelve presidential elections. The average voter turnout rate of this enlarged period is 57.03 percent. The 2008 election witnessed voter turnout levels that exceeded the average turnout rate in twelve presidential elections by a whopping 5.67 percentage points.[152] That means that the presidential election inspired a statistically significant increase in voter turnout and participation. In 2008 there was the highest voter turnout levels witnessed in 44 years, which is a significant rise in voter turnout rates. In this period, the lowest voter turnout rate was still 1996, with the lowest turnout rate of 51.4 percent. That means the 2008 presidential election exceeded the lowest presidential election turnout year of the period by 11.3 percentage points, which is highly significant.

At an individual state level, voter turnout levels were relatively high. The average voter turnout rate among individual states was 62.7 percent, according to data collected by Gans. In 2008, the state with the lowest turnout rate was Hawaii, which had a turnout rate of 49.1 percent while Minnesota, the state with the highest turnout rate, had a turnout rate of 75.7 percent.[153] The difference between these two rates is 26.6 percentage points, which is significant. The stark difference between these turnout rates indicates that voters in some states turned out with far greater frequency than did the voters of some other states. These figures also indicate that voter turnout was relatively high in every state in the 2008 presidential election. Hawaii, the state with the lowest turnout rate, witnessed

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[152] Gans, C. Chapter 9 1950-1969, Chapter 10 1970-1989, Chapter 11 1990-2009. In *Voter Turnout 1788-2009*. Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n11

[153] Gans, C. Chapter 11 1990-2009. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009.*

turnout levels that hovered near fifty percent. If the state with the lowest turnout rate was a mere 0.9 percentage points away from fifty, the turnout rates for the nation as a whole were largely above fifty percent. Only two states--Hawaii at 49.1 percent and West Virginia at 49.9 percent--experienced turnout rates that were under fifty percent. Four states had turnout rates that exceeded seventy percent while twelve states had turnout rates in the fiftieth percentile. Thirty-two states experienced turnout rates in the sixtieth percentile. Over half of the states experienced turnout levels that exceeded fifty percent. While turnout rates of fifty percent are far from stellar, they are able to at least somewhat represent those who are qualified and therefore eligible to vote.

In 2008, Barack Obama received 69,456,897 votes in the general election while his competitor received 59,934,814 votes.[154] Based on these numbers, Obama received 52.9 percent of the vote in the general election while John McCain received 45.7 percent of vote. Based on these numbers, Obama received 7.2 percentage points more than his competitor in the election, which is significant. In aggregate numbers, Obama received 9,522,083 individual votes more than McCain. Due to the size of the American population, a small percentage point difference is created by the votes of a large body of individual Americans. For this reason, Obama was able to win the election with over 9 million more votes than the other major contender. This means that over 9 million supporters of Barack Obama turned out to vote during the election period than did supporters of John McCain. These significant differences created the outcome of the race.

Like the majority of presidential elections, the election results were determined by the voting blocs of various regions of the country. Because of the number of electoral

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[154] Anonymous. "Election of 1828." The American Presidency Project. Accessed on 2/20/2017. Retrieved from: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/showelection.php?year=2008

votes that each state is able to contribute to a presidential candidate, some states are more

critical to gain than are others. Take, for example, the state of California, which has fifty-

five electoral votes as compared to the state of Alaska, which only has three electoral

votes.[155] Fifty-five electoral votes are more likely to contribute to a winning coalition

than are three electoral votes. A winning coalition is constructed of different regional

strongholds. In 2008, Barack Obama was able to win the presidency with the support of

New England, the West Coast, some of the Midwest, a handful of tossup southern states

such as Florida, the island state that the candidate grew up in, and Colorado and New

Mexico.[156] John McCain, on the other hand, received electoral votes from most southern

states, most of the Midwest and the states in America's heartland. However, this coalition

was not strong enough to win the election. Barack Obama was able to receive support

from a sufficient number of states that are critical to the Electoral College system such as

New York and Florida, which both have twenty-nine electoral votes as well as California,

the state with the largest population and therefore the largest number of electoral votes.

This winning coalition was critical to Obama's electoral success.

In 2008, there were a total of 538 electoral votes in the United States Electoral

College.[157] In order to win the election, a candidate must receive over half of the total

electoral votes. Two-hundred-sixty-nine electoral votes plus one exceeds the one-half

requirement that is necessary to win the presidency. To win outright, a candidate much

receive a minimum of 270 electoral votes in the general election. In 2008, Barack Obama

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[155] Leip, David. "2008 Presidential General Election Results," from *US Election Atlas*. 2016. Retrieved from: http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/index.html Accessed on 3/1/2017.
[156] Leip, David. *US Election Atlas*
[157] National Archives and Records Administration. "2008 Presidential Election Results." Federal Register. Retrieved from: https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/2008/election-results.html Accessed on 3/1/2017.

received 365 electoral votes while John McCain received 173 electoral votes. Based on these numbers, Obama received 95 more electoral votes than necessary in order to secure the presidency. It also means that Obama received 192 more electoral votes than McCain did. These differences in the electoral votes caused the election outcome. Because Obama was able to secure a winning coalition amongst the various regions of the nation, he was able to earn more than a sufficient number of electoral votes to obtain the presidency.

Additionally, following the election of 2008 a significant number of newspapers distributed articles that discussed amazement with record turnout levels. In Tennessee, for example, "the number of Hamilton county voters in Tuesday's presidential election was up 8.1 percent from the presidential election four years ago...the number jumped nearly 63 percent this year over four years ago to a record 67,989 four years ago."[158] The state of Maine also witnessed increased voter turnout levels, which were indicated by "a record number of absentee ballots cast before Election Day, long lines at polling places across Maine, and the fact that his [the attorney general's] office had to provide additional ballots to several towns that were in danger of running out."[159] National news organizations similarly distributed analysis of increased voter turnout levels. The *Boston Globe* calculated that "in states won by president-elect Barack Obama, turnout was more than five percentage points higher than in states won by [Republican] John McCain, according to a Globe analysis of data compiled by a pair of researchers who study voting patterns in US elections."[160]

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[158] Flessenger, Dave. "Early voting big factor in record turnout," *Chattanooga Times*: November 9, 2008.
[159] Hoey, D. (2008, Nov 05). State's turnout sets record. *Portland Press Herald* Retrieved from http://www.library.umaine.edu/auth/EZProxy/test/authej.asp?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/2773 93113?accountid=14583
[160] Mooney, Brian C. "Voter turnout didn't set record Democrats' passion wasn't matched by GOP," *Boston Globe* (November 14, 2008).

In 2008, a variety of organizations collected data related to the presidential

election. Some conducted exiting polls, which took place at polling places on election

day. Some, such as the American National Election Studies (ANES), conducted surveys

both before and after the election occurred in order to gauge the degree to which

individuals were exposed to the presidential election and its related campaigns.[161] In the

ANES 2008 Time Series Study,"2,323 Pre-election and 2,102 Post-election interviews

were successfully conducted during the field period, including 512 Latino interviews and

577 interviews by African American respondents."[162] Over-samples were conducted in

this particular survey to better represent cross-sections of American society. Interviewers

asked a variety of different questions in order to gauge a respondent's opinions and

experiences regarding politics in the United States. Some of the most interesting

questions are related to the degree of contact that individuals had with campaigns or

political parties during the election in addition to questions concerning an individual's

participation in the election cycle. For example, one question in the ANES Time Series

Study is "Did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a

sign in your window or in front of your house?"[163] These questions seek to gain an

understanding of how much campaigns interacted with individual voters during the

election cycle. This survey is critical to understanding the way that campaigns interacted

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[161] American National Election Studies, *ANES 2008 Time Series Study*. Accessed on 3/6/2017. Retrieved from: http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/25383?searchSource=find-analyze-home&sortBy=&q=2008+voter+turnout

[162] Arthur Lupia, Jon A. Krosnick, Pat Luevano, Matthew DeBell, and Darrell Donakowski. 2009. User's Guide to the ANES 2008 Time Series Study. Ann Arbor, MI and Palo Alto, CA: the University of Michigan and Stanford University.

[163] Arthur Lupia, Jon A. Krosnick, Pat Luevano, Matthew DeBell, and Darrell Donakowski. 2009. 2008 Pre- and Post-Election Survey Data Collection Instrument . Ann Arbor, MI and Palo Alto, CA: the University of Michigan and Stanford University.

with individual voters and can act as a means to interpret the impact of voter mobilization efforts on the voting public.

The data I am using comes from the ANES cumulative file. I have rounded to the nearest integer. Data suggest that 52 percent of respondents who voted in the election and participated in the survey tried to influence the vote of others during the campaign while 78 percent of those who failed to vote also did not try to influence the vote of other individuals during the campaign season. Another 84 percent of voters conversed with friends and family about politics during the 2008 presidential election while 56 percent of those who did not vote were unwilling to engage in such political discourse. These data, therefore, suggest that those individuals who abstained from voting did not attempt to influence the vote of others during the campaign but that a majority of those who voted engaged in indirect mobilization by attempting to influence the vote of others.

Additionally, some 89 percent of those who voted also watched television programs that were related to the election while 27 percent of those who did not vote also abstained from viewing television programs related to the election. Of those who voted, 72 percent read articles related to the election. Of those who voted, 81 percent had access to the internet during the election while 19 percent of those who did not vote lacked internet access. These data suggest that individuals who voted in the 2008 presidential election were more likely to have engaged with mobilizing messages. Political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups in the 2008 presidential election utilized media platforms such as television and newspapers to promote and spread mobilizing messages. Because a significant percentage of respondents reported having access to these platforms, it is possible to infer that many of these individuals received mobilizing

messages. For this reason, these data suggest that some potential voters were exposed to mobilizing messages distributed by political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups. It is possible that exposure to mobilizing messages persuaded some to vote in the 2008 presidential election.

NES respondents were able to identify whether or not they participated in the election. Some 49 percent of respondents who voted reported contact with any major party during the election of 2008. Respondents who voted further reported contact from both the Democratic and Republican parties as 37 and 29 percent respectively. Additionally, respondents who voted reported contact from anyone other than parties which would include interest groups at 19 percent. While none of these numbers suggest that a majority of voters or potential voters were contacted, it does suggest that the major political parties engaged in mobilization based upon targeting. Certain individuals were targeted by the political organization to receive mobilizing messages, which appear to have effectively persuaded some voters to participate.

Respondents who voted for Democratic candidates attempted to influence others' vote choice at 48 percent in 2008 while 57 percent of Republicans sought to influence others. Those who voted for the major parties did not attend political rallies or meetings at high rates with a mere 14 percent of Democrats and 6 percent of Republicans reporting such participation. However, there is a 8 percentage point difference between those individuals who attended rallies, suggesting that a greater percentage of Democratic voters engaged in this type of political participation. Democrats also engaged in electoral politics by displaying campaign buttons or stickers at a higher level than their Republican counterparts, with 27 percent and 16 percent respectively. These data suggest a difference

of 11 percentage points between these participatory actions and that Democrats participated at higher rates than Republicans. The increased rate of political participation by Democratic supporters may have contributed to the elevated rates of Democratic supporters at the ballot box.

Respondents who favored Democrats and Republicans differed in their reported levels of media consumption as well. Of respondents who voted for Democrats, 91 percent watched television programs about the campaign while 89 of Republican supporters engaged in this type of activity. Democratic voters read newspapers about the campaign at a rate of 71 percent while 73 percent of their Republican counterparts reported such activity. Democratic voters also discussed politics with friends and family members at higher rates than Republican voters, with 85 percent of Democratic voters and 84 percent of Republicans reporting such behavior. These data suggest that a significant percentage of both Democratic and Republican supporters were engaged during the election season. By taking the time to watch television programs and read articles about the election, these voters increased their knowledge and their level of exposure to mobilizing messages distributed by political parties, candidate campaigns, and interest groups. Democratic voters reported a higher level of exposure to mobilizing messages through television programming and article reading, which may have contributed to the increased level of Democratic voters in the election. Republican supporters reported discussing politics with friends and families at a slightly higher percentage than their Democratic counterparts. These data suggest that Democratic and Republican supporters were interested in the election.

Additionally, 50 percent of Democratic voters reported contact from any major

party in 2008 while 47 percent of Republican voters reported the same contact. These

data suggest that Democratic voters were more likely to be contacted by the Democratic

or Republican party than their Republican counterparts in the presidential election of

2008. Forty-four percent of Democrats reported contact from the Democratic Party in

2008 while 30 percent of Republican voters reported contact from the Democratic Party.

Similarly 37 percent of Republican voters reported contact from the Republican Party

with 21 percent of Democratic voters reporting contact from the Republican Party. The

Democratic Party, according to these data, was able to contact a greater number of

Democratic supporters than Republican supporters. The Republican Party, on the other

hand, was able to contact a greater number of Republican supporters and fewer

Democratic voters. The major parties, in short, were able to identify and contact potential

voters who were likely to support their respective candidates. For this reason, these data

suggest that the major political parties were able to contact likely supporters with

mobilizing messages. Mobilizing contact may have persuaded some potential voters to

participate.

NES data similarly provide information about mobilization in age-cohorts ranging

from age 17 to 99. These data suggest that a majority of respondents in all age-cohorts

watched television programs about the election with 77 percent of 17-24 year-olds as the

lowest reported rate and 65-74 at the highest with 98 percent. These data suggest that a

majority of respondents from all age-cohorts were exposed to mobilizing messages in

television programs. A significant amount of mobilizing messages were transmitted

through television by political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups in the

2008 presidential election. These data suggest that potential voters from all age-cohorts were exposed to these mobilizing messages, which may have influenced their decision to participate in the election. Additionally, 85 percent of 17-24 year-olds reported having access to the internet during the 2008 presidential election. The group with the highest internet access rates in the NES report was that of 35-44 year-olds with 87 percent. The group with the lowest reported access to internet was the cohort of 75-99 who reported internet access at a mere 33 percent. These data suggest that a significant percentage of potential voters in several different age-cohorts had the potential to receive mobilizing messages through the internet. The internet was an incredibly important platform for the dissemination of mobilizing messages in the 2008 election. The internet was critical to the Obama campaign's mobilization effort through innovative usages of Facebook and the interactive MyBarackObama.com. These data suggest that mobilizing messages could reach potential voters from different age demographics, which were necessary for electoral success.

Racial demographics were also critical in the 2008 presidential election. NES respondents had the option of identifying as non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic white and other. These data suggest that 91 percent of black, non-Hispanic respondents reported watching television programs about the campaign, which was higher than that reported by white, non-Hispanics, who reported watching these programs at 84 percent. Another 89 percent of respondents who identified as other reported this activity. These data suggest that well over half of respondents from the three racial/ethnic options was exposed to mobilizing messages from political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups through television programming. This exposure may have persuaded some

individuals to participate in the election. Additionally, 64 percent of black, non-Hispanics reported reading newspapers about the campaign and 69 percent of white, non-Hispanics reported the same activity. Respondents who did not belong to either of these racial groups reported reading newspaper articles about the campaigns at 64 percent. These data indicate that the majority of individuals of the three racial categories had access to some of the media platforms that political organizations used to promote mobilization messages in the 2008 presidential election. Access to both television and written mobilizing messages may have accounted for the increased levels of voter turnout in the presidential election of 2008. Mobilizing messages on television and in newspapers may have influenced potential voters to become voters.

Thirty-four percent of white, non-Hispanic respondents, 35 percent of black, non-Hispanic respondents and 27 percent of respondents who identified as other reported contact from the Democratic Party. Similarly, 29 of white, non-Hispanic respondents, 9 percent of black, non-Hispanic respondents and 15 percent of other respondents reported contact from the Republican Party. These data suggest that the Democratic Party contacted a greater percentage of voters in all three racial categories. Because Democrats were able to contact potential voters of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, they were able to convey mobilizing messages to a significant portion of the voting population. Mobilizing messages and contacts may have persuaded some potential voters to vote in the election. White, non-Hispanic respondents reported discussing politics with family and friends at 79 percent; 77 percent of black, non-Hispanic respondents reported the same activity; and 75 percent of respondents who did not identify with either of the above categories similarly engaged in indirect mobilization. These data suggest that the

Democratic Party contacted potential voters at greater rates than did their Republican

counterparts. Respondents of all three racial categories reported contact from the

Democratic Party at higher rates than they did for the Republican Party. It is possible to

infer that a greater number of Democratic supporters turned out to vote in the 2008

presidential election because a greater number of potential voters from different racial

backgrounds were contacted with mobilizing messages.

The NES data provide critical insight into the ways that members of the public

were exposed to mobilizing messages in the 2008 presidential election. Collectively, they

suggest that political organizations were in contact with certain segments of the

population. A significant percentage of respondents reported having access to mobilizing

messages through direct contact from major political parties and interest groups as well

as access to television programs and newspaper articles about the campaign.

Additionally, a significant percentage of respondents from various racial backgrounds,

age-cohorts and candidate-preferences had access to the internet where a great deal of

mobilizing content was available. Because these data suggest that a majority of potential

voters had access to and were exposed to mobilizing messages in the 2008 presidential

campaign, it is possible to infer a possible correlation between mobilization efforts and

voter turnout.

The exit polls conducted of segments of voters as they leave their polling places

are also indicative of voting trends in election cycles. I am exclusively using the exit poll

data from CNN because it was superior for the 2008 presidential election.[164] The exit

polls suggest that President Obama was more successful in obtaining support from a

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[164] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls." CNN.com.
http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/results/polls/#USP00p1 (Accessed on 3/31/2017).

variety of different demographic groups, including minorities, while his competitor was less successful in cultivating support amongst more diverse sections of the population. African-Americans voted for Obama at an overwhelming rate of ninety-five percent, voting for his competitor with a measly four percentage points. Sixty-seven percent of Latinos, another critical demographic, voted for Obama; a mere thirty-one percent voted for McCain.[165] Obama won sixty-two percent of the vote of Asian voters. These figures indicate that Obama received a higher percentage of the vote amongst various minority groups when compared to his competitor. These data suggest that Obama was able to win the votes of a greater variety of individuals.

Additionally, Obama received a higher percentage of the vote amongst individuals from every educational background: sixty-three percent to thirty-five percent amongst voters with no high school education; fifty-two to forty-six percent amongst high school graduates; fifty-one percent to forty-seven percent amongst voters with some college education; fifty percent to forty-eight percent amongst college graduates; and fifty-eight percent to forty percent amongst voters with postgraduate education.[166] However, McCain was able to win a greater percentage of the vote amongst white voters with and without a college education. Obama, on the other hand, was able to win the support of non-white demographic groups both with and without a college education. Obama was able to overcome the barrier of white voter support for McCain by increasing his share of the minority vote.

John McCain received a higher percentage of the votes of white male and female workers. Fifty-seven percent of white males voted for McCain, indicating that McCain

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[165] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[166] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"

beat Obama in this demographic by sixteen percentage points, which is a significant difference. Fifty-three percent of white women voted for McCain while forty-six percent voted for Obama.[167] Amongst listed minority groups of both gender, Obama won overwhelmingly. Take, for example, black women. In 2008, an astonishing ninety-six percent of black women voted for Obama, exceeding the vote obtained by McCain by ninety-three percentage points.[168] Latino women also voted for Obama at a whopping sixty-eight percent; only thirty percent of Latinas voted for McCain. These data indicate that McCain was able to obtain the majority of votes from white Americans of both genders and of all educational backgrounds. Obama was able to obtain the support of minorities across the board.

Other key demographic groups were critical in the 2008 presidential election. The Obama campaign sought to engage with and mobilize the youth vote, for example. The age-group of 18-29 voted overwhelmingly for Barack Obama, who received sixty-six percent of the vote.[169] Obama received a higher percentage of the vote in every age bracket except 40-49, where Obama and McCain tied with forty-nine percent each, and 65 and older, which McCain won with fifty-three percent. Obama received fifty percent of the votes of the largest age-group, 50-64, while his competitor received forty-nine percent.[170] Obama also received sixty-nine percent of the vote of those who had never voted before. Obama also received a greater share of the vote of union members and of union member families. These significant differences in vote totals are indicative of the voting patterns of the American population. These data indicate that Barack Obama

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[167] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[168] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[169] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[170] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"

received a greater percentage of votes from a variety of different demographics groups while McCain was able to obtain a greater proportion of votes of the white population.

Religion was also an important component of the exit poll data, which indicate that McCain obtained the majority of Protestant votes with fifty-four percent. Additionally, McCain earned the votes of 73 percent of white evangelicals, compared to the twenty-six percent that Obama received. These data suggest that McCain supporters were more effective at mobilizing evangelical supporters than Obama was. Obama, on the other hand, received a majority of the votes of individuals who identified as either Catholic, at fifty-two percent; Jewish, with seventy-eight percent; other, with seventy-three percent; or non-religious, with seventy-five percent.[171] These data indicate that Obama was supported by a wider range of voters who came from different religious backgrounds while McCain was primarily supported by Christians. Relatedly, McCain received a greater percentage of the vote of married individuals with fifty-two percent. Obama, on the other hand, received sixty-five percent of the vote of unmarried individuals.[172]

Expectedly, both candidates received the majority of the vote from voters who identified with the candidate's given party. McCain received ninety percent of the vote of voters who identified as Republicans while Obama received eighty-nine percent of the vote from individuals who identified as Democrats. In this race, independents were critical. In 2008, Obama received fifty-two percent of votes cast by voters who identified as independents while McCain received forty-four percent of the vote.[173]These data suggest that Republicans were better able to mobilize independent voters during the

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[171] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[172] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[173] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"

election however Obama was able to increase his share of the vote amongst other demographic groups. For example, Obama received a greater share of the vote of first-time voters than his competitor did. Obama received sixty-nine percent of votes of first-time voters while McCain received thirty percent. These data suggest that Obama received the majority of votes of those who identified with the candidate's party and that a significant number of independents decided to support Obama.

The exit polls also include data about contact that voters received from different political organizations. Fifty-one percent of respondents indicated that they had been contacted by both the Obama and McCain campaigns. Eighty percent of respondents who supported Obama indicated that they had been contacted by the Obama campaign only; nineteen percent of McCain supporters indicated that they had been contacted by the Obama campaign.[174] Eighty-two percent of McCain supporters indicated that they had been contacted only by the McCain campaign; seventeen percent of Obama supporters reported contact only from the McCain campaign. These data indicate that both the Obama and the McCain campaigns contacted a significant number of voters. Furthermore, they indicate that a significant number of those contacted by a campaign eventually participated in the election. The high contact rates of supporters also suggest that campaigns were effectively able to contact individuals who were likely to support the candidate. A significant number of individuals who voted for Obama, for example, were contacted by the Obama campaign. This means that databases and voter identification were effective at determining likely supporters. Because much of campaign contact was geared toward mobilization, these data suggest that mobilization contributed to voter turnout levels.

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[174] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"

Fifty-seven percent of respondents indicated that both McCain and Obama attacked their competitor unfairly.[175] Sixty-two percent of McCain supporters indicated that they believed Obama unfairly attacked McCain; thirty-six percent of Obama supporters agreed.[176] Sixty-five percent of McCain supporters indicated that they felt that McCain did not unfairly attack Obama; thirty-two percent of Obama supporters felt similarly.[177] Sixty-two percent of Obama supporters believed that McCain attacked Obama unfairly; thirty-six percent of McCain supporters agreed. These data suggest that campaign advertisements, particularly negative ones, had some influence upon the thoughts that voters had about the candidates. As intended, the negative advertisements inspired emotional responses in the viewing audience, prompting some to participate in the presidential election through the act of voting. These data suggest that negative advertisements may have had some impact upon voters.

The 2008 presidential election data suggests that more supporters of Barack Obama turned out to vote than did supporters of John McCain. In order to better appreciate the turnout levels in 2008, it is appropriate to compare and contrast existing and similar result data from previous presidential elections. These similar datasets provide context of the electoral environment leading up to the 2008 election and in addition to providing superior means to understand voter turnout levels. These data suggest that voter turnout in 2008 was higher than in previous election years. A greater percentage of the voting-age population turned out to vote in 2008 than they had in previous presidential election years. Additionally, turnout levels at the state level generally increased in 2008 when compared to previous presidential elections. In order to

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[175] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[176] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"
[177] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls"

account for the increase in voter turnout levels, it is important to utilize data from exit polls. With these data, it is possible to delve into the psyches and identifying characteristics of the voting public.

Data from exit polls and NES suggest that the campaigns were able to effectively identify and contact a significant percentage of citizens who eventually turned out to vote, which further suggests that such contact may have influenced some people's decision to vote. Turnout levels amongst demographics such as the youth and African-Americans who were especially targeted with mobilizing messages by the Obama campaign witnessed elevated turnout levels. The fact that these demographics turned out at increased rates suggests that mobilizing contact by the campaign influenced some people to vote in this election. Additionally, innovative mobilization tactics were employed by political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups in the presidential election of 2008. By utilizing new technology such as social media, text messaging and databases to target potential voters, mobilization became incredibly specialized.

These data suggest a possible correlation between mobilizing contact and voter turnout because potential voters who were contacted were more likely to vote in 2008. The data suggests that a significant number of voters were contacted by a campaign and, therefore, that those who were contacted by a campaign were more likely to participate. For this reason, it is possible to infer a possible correlation between mobilizing contact and voter turnout levels. In 2008, innovative mobilization techniques were deployed by political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups and at the same time, voter turnout increased both in aggregate and in demographic groups that were targeted to

receive mobilizing messages. These data suggest a possible correlation between voter

mobilization efforts and eventual voter turnout.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Voter mobilization strategies are commonly used in presidential elections.

Different types of voter mobilization techniques were deployed by campaigns, political

parties and interest groups in the U.S. presidential elections of 1828 and 2008. Before the

introduction of advanced technology, the majority of mobilization strategies were rooted

in direct contact with potential voters and through partisan newspapers. In this way,

supporters of Andrew Jackson and his rival John Quincy Adams were able to distribute

persuasive messages with the goal of encouraging supporters to vote in their favor on

election day. These partisan presses supplied eligible voters with biased images about

both of the candidates, with some articles depicting Jackson as immoral[178] and a

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[178] Cadet, Providence. "Per contra," *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Gazette*. North Carolina: May 15, 1827. Accessed on 12/2/2016. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DateAscend&tabID=T003&prodId=NCNP&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=7&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28ke%2CNone%2C12%29mrs.+jackson%3AAnd%3ALQE%3D%28da%2CNone%2C23%2909%2F12%2F1826+-

murderer[179] who would likely destroy the nation if he acquired the coveted White

House.[180] Jacksonians, on the other hand, produced similarly negative ideas about John

Quincy Adams, who was portrayed to "[possess] all this kind of cunning and cool

calculation."[181] Supporters of both Jackson and Adams came together to form local

committees at which individuals could discuss their political views and learn more about

their favored candidates. With this platform in place, different goals and ideas about the

candidates were able to spread throughout the United States. Local communities were

able to develop intricate systems of supporters of each candidate, who were then able to

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12675389&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

[179] Richmond Enquirer, "Coffin Handbill--Damn'D:, *Delaware Patriot & American Watchman*, Delaware:
August 5, 1828. Accessed on 12/3/2016. Retrieved from:
http://find.galegroup.com.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/ncnp/newspaperRetrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort
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=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=5&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28ke%2C
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14120568&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

[180] Anonymous, "The Presidency," *Eastport Sentinel,* Maine: December 1, 1827. Accessed on 10/31/2016.
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search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=EANX&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=L62H51LHMTQ3NDkxNzAwMS40
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ame=7&p_queryname=7&p_docnum=19&p_docref=v2:1251A9ACC0685F75@EANX-
1270C4217A98DEA8@2388692-1270C42192510A88@1-1270C421E1CE7AE0@The%20Presidency

[181] Leonidas. "Political." *Dover Gazette & Strafford Advertiser*. New Hampshire: June 10, 1828. Accessed
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=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=7&qrySerId=Locale%28en%2C%2C%29%3AFQE%3D%28ke%2C
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12529233&contentSet=UDVIN&callistoContentSet=UDVIN&docPage=article&hilite=y#

influence the thoughts and opinions of friends and neighbors. Data suggest that voter

turnout rates were higher in 1828 than they were in previous presidential elections.[182]

Data and information about the election of 1828 are relatively scarce. There is no

scholarship that explicitly examines the innovative mobilization tactics developed in

1828. For this reason, my project is integral to the development of such research. Future

researchers can utilize the topics discussed within these pages to learn more about the

innovative tactics such as grassroots mobilization that were introduced to American

electoral politics in this election. The influence of mobilization efforts can be studied

with greater detail with regard to presidential elections in early American history.

Technological advances such as socnets and online databases like VAN altered

the landscape and the mobilizing options that were available to political parties,

campaigns and interest groups by 2008. Instead of cultivating campaign rhetoric that

appealed to the general masses as a whole, campaigns strove to specifically target their

messages to individuals who were likely to support their cause. Databases such as

Catalist[183] gave political parties, campaigns and interest groups the ability to identify

likely supporters who should be contacted with mobilizing messages. The internet was

also used in innovative ways to target and reach a significant number of potential voters.

Social networking websites were used to promote campaign goals and for supporters to

connect with one another. Obama supporters were able to utilize internet services such as

Facebook or MyBarackObama.com to organize campaign events. Through such

grassroots events, volunteers were able to directly and indirectly spread campaign

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[182] Gans, C. (2011). Chapter 1788-1809, Chapter 2 1810-1829, Chapter 3. 1830-1849. In *Voter Turnout in the United States 1788-2009* (pp. -). Washington, DC: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781608712700.n2

[183] Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab*, (Crown Publishers: 2012), pp. 175.

enthusiasm throughout their localities. Video streaming services such as YouTube were also popular mediums for contacting potential voters and distributing important campaign messages.[184] Campaigns also used online tools to track contacts with potential voters and to contact them through door-to-door canvassing drives and telephone banks where volunteers and paid staff distributed mobilizing messages to identified individuals. Traditional forms of grassroots mobilization remained critical to the presidential election of 2008 but were supplemented by innovative uses of technology. Traditional media such as newspapers and television were also used to convey both positive and negative ideas about the candidates. These different images of the candidates were used in the hope of inspiring intense emotion in potential voters, which could spur them to the voting box.[185] Voter turnout levels were also higher than in previous election cycles in the 2008 presidential election with particularly high levels amongst such demographic groups as young/new voters and minorities such as African-Americans. Such demographic groups were key targets of the Obama campaign's mobilizing efforts.

  In both 1828 and 2008, political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups sought to persuade potential voters to participate in the presidential election. Because campaigning requires the usage of valuable resources such as money and time, political organization seek to operate with a great deal of efficiency. Many of the voter mobilization tactics that are related to personal contact between a political organization and an individual potential voter are more effective at persuading eligible citizens to

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[184] Magleby, D., and Magleby, D. "Elections as Team Sports: Spending by Candidates, Political Parties, and Interest Groups in the 2008 Presidential Election," from *The Change Election: Money, Mobilization and Persuasion in the 2008 Federal Elections*. Temple University Press; 2011, pp. 60. Accessed on 10/14/2016. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/stable/j.ctt14bt6t0.7?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
[185] Michelson, Melissa R. "Meeting the Challenge of Latino Mobilization," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, (Sage Publications: 2005).

participate. Political organizations seek to distribute mobilizing messages efficiently. Political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups utilize tactics that are more likely to persuade voters and to influence their opinions about the candidate with the goal of contacting as many potential voters as possible, whether that be a specified demographic through microtargeting or through broad based appeals in newspapers. The types of mobilization strategies in both 1828 and in 2008 were selected because they were both efficient and effective at accomplishing the organization's goals.

As is apparent, voter mobilization efforts were prevalent in the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008. Though the strategies were different due to the available types of technology, campaigns, political parties and interest groups in both elections sought to increase their share of supporters on election day by mobilizing potential voters. Political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups sought to influence the election by spreading mobilizing messages to potential voters through media platforms, personal contact with supporters and enthusiasm-building events such as rallies. Because the evidence suggests that voter mobilization efforts were effective at mobilizing citizens to participate in the election, voter mobilization efforts are valuable to political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups. Voter mobilization efforts are related to increased voter turnout rates. Because increased voter turnout rates are generally perceived as positive by the organizations orchestrating voter mobilization efforts, mobilization efforts are an important and valuable component of the electoral process in the United States.

Although data was sparse on 1828, I believe that it is not a coincidence that voter turnout levels increased during the same election that innovative campaign tactics that

stressed mobilizing potential supporters were first used. A greater number of Jackson

supporters turned out to vote in the 1828 election cycle than did for John Quincy Adams

in part because Jackson supporters worked hard to motivate eligible voters to vote in

favor of their preferred candidate. In other words, Jackson supporters were more

equipped to mobilize voters than their competitors. By using a sophisticated organization

of grassroots supporters in the form of Jackson committees, Jackson supporters were able

to spread campaign messages to friends and neighbors in local communities, which

influenced voters. Without data to determine how many voters were contacted by either a

Jackson or Adams Committee member or what newspapers voters were exposed to, proof

of a correlation between mobilizing contact and voter turnout is not possible for the

election of 1828. It is possible to conjecture, however, that there may be a correlation

between mobilizing contact of political parties, campaigns and interest groups and the

stark rise in voter turnout that occurred in the presidential election of 1828.

The data similarly suggests a possible correlation between increased voter turnout

levels in the presidential election of 2008 and the successful implementation of voter

mobilization strategies. In 2008, political parties, campaigns and interest groups sought to

increase their share of the vote by persuading supporters to participate in the election.

The internet was used to identify likely supporters and likely voters. According to NES

data, a significant number of Americans had access to the internet.[186] NES respondents

also reported engaging with campaign related material by viewing related television

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[186] American National Election Studies, *ANES 2008 Time Series Study*. Accessed on 3/6/2017. Retrieved from: http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/25383?searchSource=find-analyze-home&sortBy=&q=2008+voter+turnout

programs and reading election-related articles in newspapers.[187] Resources were streamed

to direct mobilizing messages such as emails, advertisements and doorstep conversations

with campaign volunteers at these likely voters. Data suggests that a significant number

of voters were contacted by either the Obama or the McCain campaign.[188] For this

reason, a possible correlation may exist between voter mobilizing contact and voter

turnout. Exit poll data suggests that the majority of both Obama and McCain voters were

contacted by at least one candidate campaign during election season. The high contact

rate amongst voters is incredibly significant. NES data suggest that only some potential

voters were contacted by the major party organizations or by any political organization at

all in the 2008 presidential election.[189] Therefore, these data suggest that political parties,

candidate campaigns and interest groups targeted different voters to receive mobilizing

messages at the individual level but sought to engage with a wider expanse of voters

through less specific forms of mobilizing contact such as television advertising. Voters

were more likely to have experienced campaign contact and, therefore, to have been

exposed to mobilizing messages. Additionally, demographic groups who were

particularly targeted by the Obama campaign such as first-time voters and African-

Americans turned out and overwhelmingly voted for Barack Obama.[190] NES data suggest

that respondents from the three racial categories of non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic

blacks and those who identified as neither of these racial groups were targeted by

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[187] American National Election Studies, *ANES 2008 Time Series Study*. Accessed on 3/6/2017. Retrieved from: http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/25383?searchSource=find-analyze-home&sortBy=&q=2008+voter+turnout
[188] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls." CNN.com. http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/results/polls/#USP00p1 (Accessed on 3/31/2017).
[189] American National Election Studies, *ANES 2008 Time Series Study*. Accessed on 3/6/2017. Retrieved from: http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/25383?searchSource=find-analyze-home&sortBy=&q=2008+voter+turnout
[190] Cable News Network, "Election Center 2008 Exit Polls." CNN.com. http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/results/polls/#USP00p1 (Accessed on 3/31/2017).

political organizations at different rates.[191] Data suggest that the Democratic Party was able to successfully contact a greater percentage of potential voters than their Republican counterparts. These data suggest that intense efforts to engage and mobilize certain segments of society effectively increased the share of the overall vote for either Obama or McCain. Increased turnout and support of Barack Obama may be related to increased contact of these demographic groups.

The innovative methods of mobilizing potential voters in addition to increased voter turnout rates suggests that voter mobilization efforts were effective in the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008. While the data for 1828 is sparse, it suggests a possible correlation between mobilizing contact and increased voter turnout. In 1828, Martin Van Buren revolutionized electoral politics by creating a sophisticated, grassroots-based national party organization in support of Andrew Jackson. By contacting potential voters and inspiring enthusiasm for both the candidate and the election itself, Jacksonians were able to increase their share of the vote. After this election, mobilizing contact by political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups became the norm in presidential elections.

Similarly, in 2008 the Obama campaign revolutionized electoral politics through the use of technology to efficiently and effectively communicate with potential voters and supporters. By using the internet to communicate with potential voters, to organize and fundraise, the Obama campaign was able to contact significant numbers of voters while engaging in a nation-wide, grassroots-based strategy. In both of these election years, data suggests that more Jackson and Obama supporters, respectively, turned out to vote. New

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[191] American National Election Studies, *ANES 2008 Time Series Study*. Accessed on 3/6/2017. Retrieved from: http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/25383?searchSource=find-analyze-home&sortBy=&q=2008+voter+turnout

mobilization tactics were utilized by supporters of Jackson and Obama both of whom obtained electoral success. For this reason, the evidence suggests that voter mobilization efforts were effective.

In some ways, voter mobilization efforts have remained largely the same between the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008. In both elections, potential voters were contacted by supporters at the personal level through direct contact from a supporter or from a political party, candidate campaign or interest group. Grassroots mobilization was important in both elections as it permitted members of a given community to communicate with friends and neighbors to convey persuasive messages. Prominent members of communities were able to influence friends and neighbors through efforts related to grassroots mobilization. Personal contact between supporters and potential voters was critical to both elections. Though the means of contact have shifted with the introduction of technology, the goal of persuading potential voters through the spread of enthusiasm from individual supporters is still crucial to mobilization.

These mobilization strategies may have transnational impacts as well. The election of 2008, for example, was watched very closely by citizens in countries all around the world. For many, the relevance of the election was rooted in the race of the ultimate winner. Mobilization strategies may have developed in a similar way around the world as these various strategies have become popular in the United States. Additionally, because many of these strategies were proven to be both effective and efficient through exit polling and turnout rates, political organizations in foreign nations may have decided to utilize similar techniques.

As is apparent, voter mobilization efforts have changed dramatically between the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008. Perhaps most importantly, the essential goal of mobilization has shifted. In 1828, political parties and interest groups sought to appeal to the electorate as a whole; in 2008, political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups sought to influence small, specially-selected portions of the public by engaging them with mobilizing messages. Political organizations are more concerned about the opinions of those who are passionate about politics because they are more likely to vote in the present-day. For this reason, some voters may feel neglected and unimportant, which can contribute to higher levels of political apathy. When voters do not feel as though their voice or their vote matter, they are less likely to participate. When voters fail to participate in politics, their voices are not fairly represented in the government. In this way, the new modes of voter mobilization may contribute to inequalities and lack of faith in American representative democracy.

While evidence does support the effectiveness of voter mobilization efforts, other questions related to voter mobilization have yet to be answered. Is negative or positive advertising more effective at persuading potential voters to participate? Do internet-based advertisements influence potential voters with greater frequency than do more traditional mediums of advertising such as in newspapers, on television or on the radio? Is contact through social media a superior method of distributing campaign messages than traditional telephone calls, pamphlets and door-to-door canvassing conversations? Does targeting negatively impact or undermine democracy by ignoring certain segments of society? Future researchers have a plethora of opportunities to study the relationship between voter mobilization efforts and voter turnout by examining: how influential are

television advertisements on undecided voters? Does the prevalence of microtargeting in electoral politics have negative implications on representative democracy as a whole and, if so, what are they? Why do some voters need to be persuaded to participate? It would also be possible to incorporate my findings about the elections of 1828 and 2008 in relation to the impacts of mobilization efforts on any or all other presidential elections in U.S. history.

In the presidential elections of 1828 and 2008, non-traditional candidates were able to obtain the presidency. Andrew Jackson, the first western president who did not hail from an elite family, was able to inspire the people with his populist ideology. Barack Obama, the first African-American president, was able to inspire minority groups and break the tradition of Caucasian dominance in the White House. Political parties, candidate campaigns and interest groups played key roles in these respective elections. New and innovative mobilization tactics were deployed in order to generate enthusiasm and support amongst eligible voters. During these separate periods, voter turnout levels increased, suggesting a possible correlation between mobilizing contact and voter turnout.

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me=maine_orono&inPS=true&contentSet=LTO&&docId=&docLevel=FASCIMILE&w
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Author's Biography

Natalie M. Goding was born in Farmington, Maine on February 28, 1995. She was raised in Livermore Falls and graduated as third in her class at Spruce Mountain High School in 2013. Majoring in political science, Natalie has a minor in Spanish. She is a member several honors societies including Alpha Lambda Delta, She graduated from the National Education for Women Leadership program in 2015. In the spring of 2016, Natalie was an intern in the D.C. office of Congresswoman Chellie Pingree. She also attended and recruited for *ElectHer* in the fall of 2016. She was a recipient of the Robert B. Thomson Scholarship.

Upon graduation, Natalie plans to work in the collaborative environment of Berman & Simmons as a litigation paralegal trainee.