Presidential Campaigning during Midterm Elections

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Previous studies have approached presidential campaigning at midterm from very different theoretical vantages. One component of the literature suggests that presidents campaign at midterm primarily to aid individual candidates and improve congressional makeup, while another argues that all presidential travel is part of the "permanent campaign" that presidents undertake in order to further personal reelection goals. Interestingly, these approaches, and the factors that each suggests influence presidential decisions, have remained effectively insulated from one another in empirical studies of presidential travel and campaigning. This study combines these complimentary theoretical stories to provide a more comprehensive model of presidential campaigning in midterm elections. We test this model in an analysis of midterm campaign stops between 1994 and 2006 and show a mix of factors from both literatures best explain presidential campaigning at midterm.

In the fall of 2002, President George W. Bush made over 40 official campaign speeches for dozens of congressional candidates across the American states. What encouraged President Bush to campaign so frequently in 2002? Pundits suggested that the close partisan division of Congress, the high number of vulnerable seats, and his own historic popularity gave the president tremendous incentive to campaign. Bush, they argued, could use the 2002 elections as a referendum on his presidency, encouraging voters to support Republicans as the nation had supported him (Milbank 2002; *National Journal* 2002). In contrast, Bush purportedly avoided campaigning for numerous candidates in 2006 due to his lagging approval numbers (Balz 2006).

Two complimentary, but largely isolated bodies of scholarship have also offered answers to the question of presidential campaigning in midterm elections. One area of research focuses on the use of campaign stops to aid those seeking congressional election (see for example Cohen et al. 1991). Another body of work, concerned with presidential travel more generally, suggests that midterm campaign stops might be used to further the president's own reelection and policy goals (see Doherty 2007b). This study

begins with the assumption that both theoretical stories are plausible and combine them to offer a more comprehensive model of presidential campaigning in midterm elections between 1994 and 2006.

Midterms and the Permanent Campaign

The literature explicitly concerned with the subject suggests that, despite their historical losing record, presidents campaign at midterm primarily to aid individual candidates and influence congressional makeup, thus improving their chances for policy success in Congress (but see Herrnson and Morris 2007). Scholars suggest that the president's decision to appear on the stump is driven by the marginality of the individual candidate, presidential popularity within a state, and the percentage of legislative losses in the last legislative session (Cohen et al. 1991)[1] or a combination of presidential popularity and the number of competitive House and Senate races (Hoddie and Routh 2004). Most notably, Cohen et al. (1991) argue that presidents are unlikely to campaign in states where they are unpopular because the costs to individual candidates, and ultimately to the president's future policy success in the Congress, are too great.

Presidential campaigning at midterm also fits nicely into the growing literature on the "permanent campaign" (Blumenthal 1980). The concept of the permanent campaign assumes that presidents use travel opportunities throughout their administrations strategically in order to maximize reelection chances. Doherty (2007b) suggests that these motivations compel presidents to travel more frequently to states with a large number of electoral votes and to states that are electorally competitive. The author argues that, because "electoral goals permeate the president's term one would expect to see targeting of key electoral states throughout a president's term in office" (Doherty 2007b, 753). Charnock et al. (2006) also adopt a "permanent campaign" approach and attempt to understand first term travel by presidents from Eisenhower to George W. Bush as a strategic allocation of electoral resources. Their findings, in data drawn covering a significantly longer time period (Eisenhower through George W. Bush Administrations) than Doherty's (2007b) study, confirm the importance of electoral votes as an important factor in presidential decisions about which states to visit. Their findings regarding electoral competitiveness are more mixed, though margin of victory/defeat does appear as a significant predictor of travel for 3 individual presidents.

Though the literature on the "permanent campaign" does not focus explicitly on midterm campaigning, there are numerous reasons to treat these stops as strategic travel by presidents attempting to maximize electoral resources. First, journalists and White House staff consistently suggest that

presidents campaign during midterm elections with their own reelection campaign in mind (see Allen 2002; Milbank 2002). Top Bush administration officials have directly linked Bush's 2002 campaign stops to his reelection bid. A top Bush adviser maintained in September 2002 that the states in which he campaigned heavily at midterm are also critical states for Bush in 2004 (Allen 2002). As early as June 2002, Karl Rove, Bush's senior advisor, and Ken Mehlman, his political director, identified states that Bush had nearly won in 2000, "listed them according to the final margins, then totaled the electoral votes at stake in each category" (Allen 2002, A04). Others also link Bush's strategy in 2002 to his reelection bid in 2004, even citing the outcomes in twenty-five gubernatorial contests as vital to Bush's chances in 2004 (Milbank 2002).

Second, presidential speeches provide evidence that the president has his own personal reelection in mind when he campaigns during midterm. Without question, a president will stump for a candidate, discussing that candidate's record and why voters in a district or state should vote for that candidate. Yet, much of the president's own midterm campaign speeches concern his policy record. Perhaps presidents are citing their policy record so that voters associate a congressional candidate with those policy victories and a popular president, as the conventional wisdom would hold. But presidents are also taking an opportunity to claim credit for their own policies in these speeches in an implicit effort to remind voters to vote for them or their political party in two years.

Combining the Theoretical Models

Obviously these two theoretical approaches to understanding presidential travel are highly complimentary, though the insights from both have yet to be combined in a single study. Both assume that presidents act strategically when allocating scarce travel resources during the midterm campaign season. One simply emphasizes the policy gains that presidents hope to achieve by influencing the makeup of Congress, while the other focuses on the direct electoral benefit that they might garner by choosing to visit some states rather than other. Because the broader literature on presidential motivations suggests that presidents typically have both electoral and policy goals (see Light 1999), we argue that both models of presidential travel can and should be combined to produce a single set of expectations about the factors that influence presidential campaign stops during midterm elections.

Doing so produces a relatively rich set of empirical expectations about the factors that influence the likelihood that a president will campaign in a state during midterm elections. Previous work on campaign stops suggests that the presence of highly competitive congressional races within the state

should increase the likelihood of a visit. Because unpopular presidents are unlikely to provide congressional candidates much benefit (and are unlikely to be asked to appear), that literature also suggests that low approval ratings within a state are likely to reduce the likelihood of a campaign stop. Turning to the work on the permanent campaign, we expect that presidents attempting to strategically maximize electoral resources will be more likely to campaign in states with a high number of electoral votes. Additionally, presidents are unlikely to waste scarce time in states where they have no chance of victory, and so a lower margin of victory or defeat in the previous election should, therefore, be associated with a higher probability of making a campaign stop.

Before moving on, it is important to deal with the question of a president's second term in office and the potential effects on midterm campaign activity. If we assume that presidents campaign to benefit candidates, influence the makeup of Congress, and achieve policy success, then there should be little difference between the first and second term. Presidents will campaign in states with marginal candidates and those in which they are popular regardless. However, if we assume that they are strategically maximizing their own chances for reelection, then there would be little incentive to favor large states, or those that are electorally competitive, when there is no possibility for reelection. Interestingly, however, the findings from previous studies of the permanent campaign do not conclusively demonstrate this. Doherty (2007b) finds that presidents travel less overall in their second terms, but does not offer a direct test of the expectation that presidents travel to large or competitive states less frequently in the second term relative to the first. Given the research of Light (1999) and Jacobson et al. (2004), it is possible that presidents campaign during their second terms for even longer-term, legacy goals. Lacking a stronger theoretical foundation, however, we hold only that presidential campaigning should be less in the second than first term, consistent with Doherty (2007b).

Data

Dependent Variable

Our dependent variable in this study is a dichotomous measure of whether or not a president campaigns in a state during a midterm election.[2] Presidential campaign stops were recorded from the *Public Papers of the Presidents* and then aggregated by state and year. For coding purposes, a presidential speech was coded as a campaign stop any time that the president appeared with and endorsed a senatorial or gubernatorial candidate between June and November in a midterm election year. We restrict the dependent

variable to statewide races and exclude presidential stops on behalf of House candidates because we have state-level, rather than district-level, predictor variables.[3] We display these data in an Appendix.

Independent Variables

The Permanent Campaign Literature. The next two measures represent hypotheses regarding the goals of presidents' campaign strategy at midterm drawn from the literature on the permanent campaign. First, we hypothesize that the number of electoral votes should increase the likelihood of midterm campaigning in a state because presidents campaign during midterm not only to benefit other candidates, but also to help their own goal achievement. To account for this, we include a count of each state's electoral votes, which are available in the *Book of the States.*[4]

Second, we include a measure that accounts for whether or not a state is in play, based on the popular vote margin in the previous presidential election. Accordingly, the president's previous electoral performance in a state may influence the president's decision to campaign in a state. If a state is not "in play" a president would not want to waste his time and resources campaigning in that state, whereas a larger margin of victory (or defeat) in the president's initial campaign for the presidency should decrease the president's chances of campaigning in that state.[5] Hypothetically, if a state was competitive in the previous presidential election, presidents are more likely to campaign there during midterm. These data are available on numerous websites. For the purposes of this paper, the model in Table 1 includes a measure coded 1 if the popular vote was ±5 percent in the previous presidential election and 0, otherwise.[6]

The Midterm Campaigns Literature. The remaining variables included in subsequent analyses represent the key explanations for midterm campaigning in previous studies—presidential approval and candidate marginality. The conventional wisdom and supporting research contends that presidents are more likely to campaign in a state where they are relatively popular. To assess the president's popularity in a state, we include a measure of state-level approval drawn from a relatively new dataset of presidential approval ratings at the state level (Beyle et al. 2002). The data consist of aggregate responses from presidential job approval questions asked in one or more poll conducted within a state between January and October of a midterm election year. Though the number of polls conducted in each state correlates closely with state size, the compilers of the data selected only scientifically conducted polls for inclusion in the data.[7] To deal with the problems posed by differing response sets across polls, the dataset reports only dichotomized "percent negative" and "percent positive" ratings. For the

purposes of this study, we collapse all state polls in any given year into one aggregate approval figure.[8]

Though the data set represents the best available information on state-level approval ratings of American presidents, it is not comprehensive in its coverage of states and years. The set contains state-level polling data beginning in 1963, but the early years contain results from very few states. Because of this limitation, we restrict the analysis in this article to four recent mid-term elections, 1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006, where a campaigning president was in his first or second term.[9] Although we were forced to exclude a few states from each analysis fortunately, for the purpose of this analysis, when taken together across all elections, included states do not differ from excluded states on a number of dimensions.[10] Difference of means tests suggest that the two groups of states are not statistically different in terms the number of marginal races (t=0.76), the percent of House seats held by the president's party (t=0.57), or the likelihood of being a presidential campaign stop (t=0.89).

Even taking into account these challenges, the state-level measure of presidential approval employed in subsequent analyses represents an improvement over indicators used in previous studies. Cohen et al. (1991, 168) use "the difference between the vote for the president and the number two candidate in the previous presidential election at the state level" as an indicator of public support (see Hoddie and Routh 2004). Although a clever measure of presidential popularity given limitations in data availability fifteen years ago, it may not accurately reflect the president's current popularity in a state at midterm. Any state vote for Ronald Reagan in 1980, for example, was likely much higher than his approval ratings in that state two years later when his national approval ratings were below 40 percent.[11]

To assess the degree to which presidents campaign to help individual candidates we measure the level of candidate marginality in two ways. The first captures whether or not a senate or gubernatorial race within a state was labeled as "vulnerable" prior to the election. "Vulnerable" includes open seats, but not all open seats are "vulnerable." For the 1994 election we depend on *CQ Weekly* for the assessments. We utilize the list published in the *National Journal* for the 1998, 2002, and 2006 midterm elections. We use these *a priori* assessments rather than a post hoc measure of races in which the incumbent wins with less than 55 percent of the vote (Fiorina 1977; Mayhew 1974) in order to avoid potential problems of endogeneity.[12] The second measure of marginality focuses on the number of competitive House elections, which could increase the likelihood of a presidential campaign stop. This count variable ranges between 0 and 5. Again, we use *CQ Weekly* and the *National Journal* to identify competitive races.[13] Presidents

should be more likely to campaign in marginal races, rather than for safe incumbents.

Controls. The model also includes two variables that control for other potential influences on the likelihood of a midterm campaign stop. First, previous work suggests that presidents travel less frequently in their second terms (Doherty 2007b). Thus, we include a dummy variable for the president's term in office, coded 1 if a second term (1998 and 2006) and 0 if a first term contest (1994 and 2002).

As a final control we include a measure of the strength of the president's party within a state, based on the logic that presidents are expected by partisans to act as party leaders by campaigning for members of the House of Representatives, the Senate, and state-elected officials, including governors. The specific indicator included in subsequent models is the percentage of presidential party incumbents in the House of Representatives, with presidents being more likely to campaign in states that have a higher percentage of co-partisans in Congress. We have also estimated models substituting a general measure of state political ideology (see Berry et al. 1998). The results do not change in any meaningful way and we think that this measure is more theoretically appropriate.[14] What is more, this measure—if statistically significant and positive—lends support to our argument that presidents campaign in state for party leadership reasons, perhaps to benefit their own political party in the presidential election during the waning days of the president's second term in office.

Findings

Because our dependent variable is dichotomous, we employ a logistic regression in this analysis on data consisting of all states that reported presidential approval percentages in 1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006.[15] Table 1 displays the unstandardized coefficients, standard errors, and because coefficients are difficult to interpret in logit, predicted probabilities for several key variables.[16] Both the additive and interactive models, which predict the likelihood of whether or not a president campaigned in a state during midterm, are highly significant and correctly predict about 76 percent of the cases.

Turning first to variables suggested in previous studies of midterm campaigning, the findings provide only mixed support for these expectations. On the one hand, state-level approval has a positive but statistically insignificant impact on the probability of the president making a midterm campaign stop in a state. Although weakly positive, this finding is striking in light of the overwhelming conventional wisdom which dictates that

**Table 1. Determinants of President's Decisions
to Campaign in Midterm Elections**

Independent Variables	Additive Model	Interactive Model
State-Level Approval	0.03	0.02
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Vulnerable State-wide Offices	1.80*	1.85*
	(0.45)	(0.46)
	[+0.38]	[+0.39]
Competitive House Races	0.25	0.54*
	(0.18)	(0.25)
		[+0.14]
State Party Make-up	0.02*	0.03*
	(0.01)	(0.01)
	[+0.15]	[+0.15]
Electoral Votes	0.11*	0.14*
	(0.03)	(0.04)
	[+0.24]	[+0.30]
Close Races	0.36	0.30
	(0.44)	(0.43)
Second Term	-0.59	-0.64
	(0.44)	(0.45)
	[-0.13]	[-0.13]
Electoral Votes*Competitive House Races		-0.02*
		(0.01)
		[-0.17]
Constant	-5.43*	-5.69*
	(1.16)	(1.12)
χ^2 (p > .001)	68.47	48.82
Correctly Predicted (%)	75.7	76.9
PRE (%)	36.9	40.0
Psuedo R^2	.30	.31
N	169	169

*p<.05 (one-tailed test)
Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors for the additive model and robust standard errors for the interactive model. Predicted probabilities, which are in brackets, hold all other variables at their mean.

presidential approval ratings are a primary reason for presidential campaign stops. Using a state-wide measure of approval ratings, we show this is not strongly the case.

On the other hand, Table 1 corroborates the importance of vulnerable candidates to a president's decision calculus, although only for state-wide races. The indicator of whether a senate or gubernatorial race was competitive is positive and significant, such that the vulnerability of one of these offices increases the president's probability of campaigning in a state by .38. Yet, the impact of the number of competitive House seats on the likelihood of a presidential campaign stop in a state fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance in the additive model.

The findings from Table 1 also provide mixed support for hypotheses drawn from the literature on the permanent campaign. They do indicate that the president's reelection goals have an important impact on the likelihood of making a campaign stop. Even when controlling for vulnerable races, state-level approval, and other factors, the measure of electoral votes within a state is positive and significant. Holding all other variables at their mean, a one standard deviation increase in electoral votes increases the probability of a midterm campaign stop by .24. Although closeness of the previous presidential election is positive and in the expected direction, the coefficient is not statistically significant.

Turning finally to the controls, the party makeup of a state matters to presidential campaigning. The higher percentage of legislative seats that belong to the president's party increases the likelihood that a president will campaign at midterm. A one standard deviation increase in state party control increases the probability of a midterm campaign stop by .15, holding all other variables at their mean. Although a modest impact when compared with the effect of other variables, this result provides some evidence that presidents are more likely to campaign in states that lean in favor of the president's political party. Two possible reasons for this effect even in the second term are for presidents to appeal to existent support in a state to build an historical legacy (see Jacobson et al. 2004) and to benefit their party in the subsequent presidential election. The second term is also important to presidential campaigning at midterm. The negative coefficient on the second term dummy variable indicates that presidential campaign behavior is different in the second term, with presidents campaigning less overall in comparison, at least at a lower level of statistical significance.[17]

Given the primacy of electoral votes in the president's decision as to where to travel (Charnock et al. 2006) and our expectation that it, too, affects midterm campaign stops specifically, it is possible that a state's electoral benefit to a president may condition the impact of other political

variables. Although most possible interactions with electoral votes are statistically insignificant[18] and thus not included in the interactive model presented in Table 1, the number of competitive House seats, when interacted with a state's electoral votes, is statistically significant and negative. This interaction suggests that as a state becomes more important to a president's electoral goals, the importance of helping House candidates' election chances decreases. Consistent with the presidential travel literature, this finding affirms the importance of electoral votes to the president's decision calculus during midterm campaigning, even as the midterm elections literature holds that presidents campaign at midterm primarily for the benefit of congressional candidates and their policy goals in the next Congress.

Discussion

We now place these findings in the context of the 2002 midterm election and the view that presidents campaign in those states where they are popular and, thus, can be most helpful to candidates. In 2002, Bush chose not to campaign in several states, including Kansas, which had vulnerable seats and where he enjoyed a high approval rating. Presumably a campaign appearance would have benefited the vulnerable candidate. Our findings suggest that he chose not to campaign in those locations, however, because Kansas has only 6 electoral votes and was not, therefore, crucial to his personal reelection goals. Alternatively, despite few competitive or vulnerable races, the president chose to speak in Pennsylvania twice, which controlled over 20 electoral votes in the 2004 presidential race and was a clear battleground state.[19]

An alternative explanation to ours, nevertheless, is that presidents campaign in large states because this is where big-money donors are, not for the reelection goals that we identify. Although plausible, this alternative hypothesis is difficult to test directly, lacking a clear calculus for what might predict the propensity of candidates to raise more money in one state versus another.[20] As such, we cannot definitively reject this alternative rival hypothesis, but provide some evidence that it is incomplete and possibly inaccurate. Arguably, presidents have the most to gain from raising money for legislators—and themselves—during a first term midterm election contest for two reasons. First, if fundraising sways congressional races or gives presidents more leverage over individual legislators (Jacobson et al. 2004) presidents would benefit more from fundraisers in their first-term midterm campaign, when they are more likely to have more legislative influence than in their lame-duck, second term. Second, reelection, another first term goal, requires substantial amounts of money. Although presidents have the intangible and perhaps strategic goal of campaigning to improve a historical

legacy in the second term, this requires less money than running for reelection. Thus, we would expect to find that presidents campaign more in large states during their first than second terms, if the fundraising hypothesis is to be supported.

Additional analyses do not, however, demonstrate support for the fundraising hypothesis. A multiplicative interaction of the number of electoral votes and an indicator of second term was statistically insignificant, indicating that presidents are not less likely to campaign in large states during the second midterm election of their administration. We also do not find support after an examination of the location of designated fundraising events for state-wide candidates found in the *Public Papers of the Presidents*. A comparison of 1994 and 1998 reveals that President Clinton attended more fundraising events for large state-wide races in 1998 than in 1994, by a margin of 11 to 8. President Bush attended exactly the same number of fundraisers in large states, 3, in 2002 and 2006. We believe this provides evidence against the alternative fundraising hypothesis and challenge future research to demonstrate otherwise.[21]

Conclusion

We have argued that presidents have multiple goals when they campaign in midterm elections, seeking not only to influence individual races and affect the composition of the Congress, but also to increase their own chances for reelection. These expectations are drawn from two complimentary, but largely disconnected literatures on presidential decision-making— one emphasizing the president's desire to help individual candidates and influence the make up of Congress and one focusing on the president's strategic use of travel to further his own reelection goals.

Combining the insights from these theoretical stories in a single empirical model produces some support for and some challenges to both. Candidate marginality in a midterm election is important, as the presence of vulnerable state-wide races in a campaign season significantly increases the likelihood that presidents will campaign in a state at midterm. This has long been an accepted predictor of presidential stops in the literature on midterm campaigns, but has not been investigated in previous studies of presidential travel more generally.

Conversely, the findings suggest that approval ratings within a state do not influence the likelihood of a presidential campaign stop at midterm. This calls into question the long accepted wisdom, among both pundits and scholars, that presidents' midterm campaign decisions are based on their popular standing in a state. We show, instead, that the likelihood of visiting a state is a function of other factors. Future research should explore the impact, never-

theless, of individual legislators' requests for campaign appearances by presidents, which is obviously related in important ways to approval and is something that neither we nor other scholars have yet examined.

The expectations from work on the "permanent campaign" also received mixed support. Electoral votes are a strong and significant predictor of the decision to campaign in a state, which indicates that presidents do attempt to strategically maximize electoral resources through campaign stops. As noted above, this has been a consistent finding in the literature on presidential travel but has been absent from research focused more specifically on campaign stops during midterm elections. The persistence of this finding in the presence of the control for term in office also suggests that presidents see an advantage to their political party's chances to maintain the White House, and perhaps their historical legacy, by touting their record in large, electorally-important states during the second term. Interestingly, the measure of electoral competitiveness in the previous presidential election, which typically emerges as a strong predictor of presidential travel in the literature on the permanent campaign, fails to reach statistical significance in our models. Yet, when candidate marginality is dropped from the model, a state's competitiveness becomes statistically significant. This indicates to us that although campaigning in midterm elections is a form of presidential travel and part of the permanent campaign, presidents have more flexibility to target battleground states outside of the congressional campaign season when they are not expected to assist congressional candidates at midterm.

The mixed findings regarding consistent predictors from both theoretical approaches confirm the importance of combining them in a single analysis. Doing so offers evidence that presidents pursue multiple goals during the midterm campaign—improving the electoral fortunes of individual candidates, strengthening their political party within certain states, and furthering their own chances for reelection or a positive historical legacy. It also suggests, however, that previous conclusions about the importance of presidential approval within a state and the impact of a state's electoral competitiveness may have been a product of underspecified models of presidential travel. Obviously, this analysis is far too preliminary to justify any certainty about that assertion, but it does suggest the need for further research that incorporates the insights from multiple theoretical approaches.

APPENDIX
Campaign Stop Count Data

Election Year	Number of Stops	Number States	Stops in Oct/Nov	Number of Multiple Stops	States With Competitive Races
1994	24	14	17	7	18
1998	39	11	9	7	23
2002	31	20	30	9	25
2006	26	19	12	6	28
Average	30	16	17	7.25	23.5

NOTES

[1]We do not model Cohen et al.'s (1991) measure of legislative failure for several reasons. First, it is an aggregate measure of presidential defeats in a model of presidential campaigning for individual senators. So conceptually we are concerned with this institutional measure used to assess decisions to campaign on behalf of individual legislators. Second, the measure is methodologically problematical. A blunt measure that is the same across fifty observations could cause estimation problems.

[2]We also ran a count model assessing the impact of popularity, candidate vulnerability, electoral votes, and state partisanship on the number of campaign stops within a state. The results from this model match closely with our findings in Table 1. Because the findings from the count model were confirmatory and did not produce any different conclusions, we have chosen not to include it in this research note.

[3]Nonetheless, we control for the number of competitive House seats in case House races motivate the president's decision to campaign in a state. Hoddie and Routh (2004) model competitive House races, as well, despite also having only statewide data.

[4]Some have suggested that the number of electoral votes is not a "clean" measure of a state's importance to the president because state size closely correlates with competitiveness. To control for potential spuriousness, we created an index of party competition in the state legislatures and included that measure in initial estimations. The index is calculated as proportion of the largest party minus one minus the proportion of the largest party (p-(1-p)) and takes on values of 0 (perfect competitiveness) to 1 perfect single party control. The measure was not significantly associated with the likelihood of a campaign stop, and the variance inflation factor with electoral votes and other measures were well within acceptable bounds. Because the inclusion of the measure did not change the findings in any meaningful way, we exclude it from the final model.

[5]We use a close race measure that is based on the absolute value of margin of victory in the previous presidential election. We use this dummy variable instead of a margin of victory measure in part because previous research use a margin of victory variable to approximate presidential popularity in a state (Cohen et al. 1991; Hoddie and Routh 2004). Conceptually electoral margin can be multifaceted (popularity, a state's likely electoral competitiveness), limiting its construct validity.

[6]Coding a state as competitive with a margin of ±10 percent (as Doherty [2007b] does) makes no substantive difference in the findings.

[7]Information on pollster, sample size, and methodology are available at www.unc.edu/~beyle/jars.html.

[8]In their original article, Beyle et al. (2002) demonstrate empirically that the state-level approval ratings aggregated from their data set correlate closely with the presidential vote within a state, and thus have high construct validity. Similarly, they demonstrate that ratings are consistent within states over time. Furthermore, the validity, reliability, and predictive accuracy of the approval ratings in the *U.S. Officials Job Approval Rating Collection (JAR)* have been externally validated in a number of studies (Alt et al. 2002; Dometrius 2002; Bath and Ferguson 2002; Anderson and Newmark 2002).

[9]The findings presented below hold when we include the 1990 election in the analysis. We have chosen not to include that election in the final models, however, because of the large number of states for which approval data is unavailable. Across all election years, included and excluded states do differ significantly from one another if we include 1990. Within that particular year, however, there are meaningful differences between in-sample and out-of-sample states. Thus, we chose to drop that year from the analysis.

[10]Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Dakota are missing from the data in 1994, while there is insufficient information to include Alabama, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, and North Dakota in 2002. 1998 is limited to all states except Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, North and South Dakota, Oregon, and Tennessee.

[11]We initially ran the models presented herein using a measure of the president's margin of victory (or defeat) in his initial run for the White House instead of the state approval measure. Interestingly, it failed to predict midterm campaigning. This further emphasizes the need for a measure of approval with greater construct validity.

[12]In other words, the president's activities (i.e., campaigning) may have affected the vote percentages secured by each candidate.

[13]Data for 1994: *Congressional Quarterly Weekly,* issues dated October 8, 1994 and October 21, 1994 (these provided supplemental and not conflicting data). Data for 1998: *The National Journal,* issue dated August 8, 1998 (for Senators and Representatives) and September 26, 1998 (for governors' races). Data for 2002: *The National Journal,* issue dated July 27, 2002. Data for 2006: *The National Journal:* "The Cook Election Preview" (July 29, 2006).

[14]The Wright et al. (1993) measure of state partisanship would also be an acceptable substitute. Unfortunately, it has only been updated through 1999 and is, therefore not the best measure to be included in a model of the 2002 election. Berry et al. report a correlation between the two measures of .8 (.9 in larger states where both measures are more reliable) and thus the substitution of the Wright et al. measure should not alter our current results. Another possible measure of state party is state-level *CBS/New York Times* party identification measures. These, of course, are correlated with our measure of presidential party incumbents in the House: a higher percentage of Democratic Party identifiers in a state will approximate a higher percentage of Democratic representatives in that state. Some have suggested using voter registration to assess party membership by state. But some states do not require its citizens to register to vote (e.g., North Dakota), while other states do not require voters to register with one or another political party. Voter registration also introduces problems associated with Independent voters and Independent "leaners" (see, among others, Wattenberg 1996).

[15]We also estimated a pooled logit, random effects model, using the xtlogit command in Stata. Stata automatically produces a χ^2 statistic with 1 degree of freedom estimating the probability that an autocorrelation parameter rho is distinguishable from zero. For our model the probability that rho was statistically different from zero was .499,

which confirms the absence of autocorrelation. What is more, and unsurprisingly, the coefficients and standard errors were virtually identical across the logit and pooled logit models. Reporting the logit model allows for us to also report probabilities.

[16]During each election year there was a set of states that did not hold a state-wide election (1994/2006-KY, LA, NC; 1998-DE, MS, MT, NJ, WV, VA; 2002-IN, ND, UT, WA). All models discussed below originally included a dummy variable for these states in order to control for the fact that a president was less likely to campaign in a state that had no state-wide election. In all models, however, the measure was insignificant, did not change the findings in any way, and has been dropped from the final model.

[17]The second term variable varies in significance depending on the model's specification, even though it is always in the negative direction.

[18]These conditional effects, such that presidents are even more likely to campaign in large states that were close in the previous election, proves statistically insignificant. Another possibility is that presidents are likely to campaign in large state in which they are also popular. This interaction is also statistically insignificant.

[19]Of course, Kansas was not close in 2000, but Pennsylvania was. Taken together, this may suggest a conditional impact of close races and electoral votes, but they do not work in this fashion. Again, an interaction between close states and electoral votes is statistically insignificant.

[20]Several measures that might assess fundraising power include income and income per capita. Neither of these variables significantly predicts the president's propensity to campaign in a state at midterm.

[21]Aside from these counts, there appear to be no other tally of fundraisers in congressional election years. Doherty (2007a, 27) provides a compilation of fundraisers by a state's electoral votes, but only for presidential election years. Not surprisingly, he finds that presidents attend more fundraisers in large than small states in presidential election years, presumably for the obvious electoral benefit of campaigning in large, instead of small states.

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Expanding the Measure of Congruency: Presidential Anticipation of Public Preferences, 1953-2001

Brandon Rottinghaus

Several important studies have examined congruency between presidential policy position taking and public opinion. Much of this policy-public opinion scholarship, however, explores reflexive responsive pathways between representative and represented, where presidents read public opinion and respond to the opinions of the known public. A less explored aspect of presidential responsiveness to public opinion is the idea of presidential anticipation of future public opinion similar to Key's (1964) concept of "latent opinion." In this article, we offer a simple measure of anticipatory public opinion. Confirming what Key speculated about latent opinion, we find that presidents are more likely to successfully anticipate public preferences when the issue is salient and when elections are approaching, whereas popularity matters very little. Based upon these findings, presidents tend to look outward at the future political environment they face rather than inward (at current popularity) in anticipating reactions to new policy agendas.

Decades of research have demonstrated that public opinion has a consistent effect on the design of public policy.[1] Specifically, these scholars find connections between public opinion and public policy outputs between half to three-quarters of the time (Page and Shapiro 1983; Stimson et al. 1995; Monroe 1998; Burstein 1998; Erikson et al. 2002). At the federal level, public opinion has been demonstrated to have a positive effect on spending, for instance, across a range of issues (Wlezien 1995), health care policy (Jacobs 1993), defense policy (Hartley and Russett 1992; Wlezien 1996) and welfare (Fording 1997). Much of this policy-public opinion scholarship, however, explores reflexive responsive pathways between representative and represented, where presidents read public opinion (through polls and otherwise) and respond to the opinions of the public.

A less explored aspect of presidential responsiveness to public opinion is the idea of presidential *anticipation* of public opinion.[2] Anticipation of public opinion occurs when politicians anticipate public opinion in the future and adopt policy positions (often new policies) without perfect information on whether or not the public will approve, or "where politicians try to please future voters" (Mansbridge 2003, 517). Anticipation of public opinion arises from politicians' desire to get reelected and implies politicians are continually reflective of public preferences (Arnold 1993). The presumption is that voters punish (or may punish) politicians for policy positions taken outside the boundary of public opinion and these voters use retrospective frames to