# CAMPAIGN ISSUES, PARTISANSHIP, AND GOVERNANCE

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**Running Head: Congressional Campaign Issues**

*Random order

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By restoring unified Democratic control of Congress and the Presidency, the 1992 elections raised once again a perennial question of American politics. Can American political parties--historically and typically so undisciplined--be governing parties? The traditional view, of course, is one of skepticism. While the President is elected on the large issues of war, peace, and prosperity, congressional elections are insulated from national politics, and turn instead on more parochial issues and the personal qualities projected by candidates. Voters' evaluations of congressional candidates (especially House candidates) depend on such intensely local and personal criteria as perceptions of a candidate's trustworthiness, sincerity, and helpfulness. Incumbency, moreover, bestows important advantages by putting sitting members of Congress in the position to claim credit for federal programs that help the district and to provide ombudsman-like services to constituents. Incumbent members who attend conscientiously to these tasks and avoid obvious scandals can normally expect to be returned to Washington (Fiorina, 1989; Cain et al., 1987; Bauer and Hibbing, 1989; Mann, 1978). The public often shows little knowledge of where congressional candidates stand on national policy issues, and even when it does, may find it rational to apply variable criteria in voting for different offices. Voters might, for example, seek to hedge their bets between presidents who would impose collective discipline for the public good, and representatives who would fight to minimize the consequences of such discipline for their own constituencies (Jacobson, 1990; also see Fiorina, 1990). The implications of the traditional view are that the President and his fellow partisans in the legislature, particularly in the House, are linked, at best, loosely, and the differing dynamics of their separate constituencies provide small hope of forging a coherent, disciplined program with minimal defections.

Alternative theories of congressional elections, however, allow for a greater role of national-level variables, particularly economic conditions and the level of popularity of a party's presidential candidate (Jacobson, 1990; Jacobson and Kernell, 1990; 1983). Moreover, a growing body of literature suggests that voters in both Senate and House elections are capable of making not only retrospective evaluations of which party has delivered good economic conditions, but prospective evaluations of future performance, as well (Kuklinski and West, 1981; Lockerbie, 1991).

**Party Unity and the 1992 Elections**

The circumstances of 1992 were atypical enough to suggest that the gulf between the presidential and congressional elections might be less wide than is normally the case. The unusual presidential-year recession, the independent candidacy of Ross Perot, with his locally organized "volunteers," along with the breakup of the Soviet Union and the waning of the Cold War, all contributed to the unusually high salience of domestic issues at all levels of the 1992 campaign. Then, Bill Clinton's surprisingly vigorous campaign put him in the strongest position of any Democratic presidential candidate since 1976. This combination of circumstances created the real prospect of unified Democratic control of government. Certainly, Clinton and his advisors adopted this position in the presidential campaign, and tried to turn it to their advantage by suggesting that unified Democratic government would eliminate gridlock. This article asks whether congressional candidates might similarly have viewed the 1992 race as one that, more than usual, required them to appeal to the voters' prospective evaluations of party competence.

## Method

Our study examines the degree to which presidential and congressional candidates' own perceptions of electoral self-interest may have converged by looking at one plausible indicator–the issues that candidates themselves bring to their electorates. We apply a content analysis to the campaign issues of a sample of Democratic congressional candidates for the House of Representatives during the 1992 elections. One would expect the level of party unity under President Clinton to be foreshadowed in the degree to which the issues and themes used by congressional candidates were similar to those of candidate Clinton. To catalogue the predominant themes and issues used by Clinton, we drew on his standard "stump speech," his Democratic nomination acceptance speech, and his campaign tract, Putting People First. In a few cases, the common use of synonyms resulted in multiple descriptors for some of the themes. The final set, which should be understood as issue themes rather than specific rhetorical phrases or images, included the following twelve categories: reinventing America, New Covenant, universal/national health care, New Democrat, "we can do better," abortion rights, reducing the deficit, the American Dream, helping middle class America, family leave, national service, and investing in public infrastructure.[1]

The data on congressional candidates' campaign issues were drawn from articles published in fifteen of the thirty-eight regional newspapers available in the Dialog computer database. Over 13,000 articles were published in these fifteen papers between January and election day in 1992 that made mention of "congress" and "campaigns" or "elections." These were then searched for each of the above themes mentioned by Clinton. The computerized word search eliminated over 11,400 articles. Each of the remaining articles was reviewed and coded if the context of the discussion was consistent with campaign rhetoric. In

instances were the key words were used but in entirely different contexts, the article was deleted from the final sample. A case was a Democratic candidate quoted or attributed with adopting any of the same themes as Bill Clinton in one newspaper article. More than one theme could be attached to a candidate; and each article could be the source of several cases. We also identified whether a case represented incumbents and/or eventual winners, as well as whether they were attributed as a candidate, or as part of the House leadership.[2]

Our sample of newspapers represent states that fall into two categories. One set represents states in which Clinton was by September considered the favorite; the other set represents states in which the outcome of the presidential campaign was still considered a tossup at that time.[3] Although we do not include newspapers from states where Clinton was perceived as a certain loser, this was intentional. The strategy was to look for a sample reflecting those congressional campaigns most likely to adapt the issues and themes of Bill Clinton. In fact, however, the one hundred twenty-one separate congressional districts covered by these newspapers represent the full range of outcomes--from Clinton landslides to Clinton disasters.[4]

## Findings and Analysis

As Table 1 shows, of the themes stressed by the Democratic presidential nominee, in general, health reform and abortion rights were the most popular among Democratic congressional candidates. Several of Clinton's other themes--deficit reduction and public infrastructure investment, the appeals to "middle-class America" and advocacy of family leave--appeared as well, but less frequently. In the case of the latter two, references more than likely reflected ongoing legislative battles in Washington. Candidates were more likely to refer to "middle-class America" in the context of the debate over middle-class tax cuts in early 1992;

references to family leave tended to reflect President Bush's veto of legislation in the fall. In both cases, incumbents, and especially incumbents identified as leadership, were much more likely to cite these issues than were challengers, the opposite of the pattern for the other themes.[5]

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**Table 1 here**

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**Popularity**

Governor Clinton moved into the lead in the public opinion polls in July, after Ross Perot dropped out of the race on the eve of the Democratic convention in New York. When the Republican convention in August failed to provide George Bush with a sustained public opinion boost, Clinton's position solidified (Elving, 1992). We would expect to find more use of themes associated with Clinton in the period after he became the presidential front-runner, since the party's candidates for other offices would have a greater incentive to identify themselves with a popular nominee at the head of the ticket. In support of this expectation, the bulk of our observations occurred after Clinton's ascendance to front-runner status. As reported in Table 2, approximately 56 percent of our year-long sample--all of which was targeted to reflect the use of some of Clinton's themes by a congressional candidate--is drawn from articles published only in the final two-plus months of the campaign, i.e., from September onward.

That finding, however, could simply be the result of the general increase in news coverage as the elections drew nearer. In fact, when we look at the average number of Clintonian themes cited in any single case, there is little difference over time (Table 2). Both before and after Clinton established poll

dominance, the modal number of themes mentioned by a candidate citing any of his themes was the minimum–one.

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**Table 2 here**

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Few relevant differences emerged in terms of which substantive issues were likely to be attributed to Democratic congressional hopefuls. In Table 3 we can see some increase after September in the proportion of congressional candidates citing the theme of family leave, and a smaller (non-significant) increase in those supporting abortion rights as a campaign issue. The greatest relative decline was in the theme of middle class America. In the cases of family leave and middle-class America, as noted above, these patterns reflected the timing of the specific legislative battles with which they were associated.

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**Table 3 here**

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One might also expect that differences in the tendency to use Clintonian themes would emerge between congressional hopefuls running in states and districts where Clinton was strong, and those in states and districts where the Democratic presidential candidate was weak. In the former, Clinton's popularity could provide an incentive for Democratic congressional candidates to identify themselves with the presidential candidate. In the latter, Democratic candidates might need to appeal for votes from a more politically diverse constituency in

order to win election. The results were ambiguous. As one can see from Table 4, the expectation that Democratic congressional candidates would be more likely to identify themselves with Clinton in states where Clinton was relatively popular was confirmed in only two instances--the issues of the deficit and of family leave. There was, however, a slight increase in the number of Clintonian themes mentioned by congressional candidates in the swing states (Table 5).

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**Table 4, Table 5 here**

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We also asked about the potential impact of district political dynamics on the phenomenon of interest. Lacking district-level prospective polling data on the presidential race, we used the final district presidential vote as a proxy for Clinton's pre-election popularity in the district. As reported in Table 6, the analysis yields a significant difference in the tendency to cite a Clintonian theme according to the district presidential vote. The pattern, however, tends to disconfirm the hypothesis that Democratic congressional candidates would be more likely to use Clinton's themes in their own campaign appeals in those jurisdictions where Clinton might be expected to do well.

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**Table 6 here**

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**A Third Model: The Media and the Agenda**

These findings suggest an alternative dynamic at work. The Clinton campaign, we know, allocated more resources to swing states.[6] Thus, despite the presidential candidate's lower poll ranking in these swing states, they are precisely the sites where a blitz of Clinton campaign advertising and appearances would be most likely to shape political discussion and media agendas. In such circumstances, it would be likely that even candidates for lower offices would find it necessary to respond to questions and fashion positions on the themes stressed by the Clinton campaign. The data support these expectations, especially when the crucial period immediately preceeding the election is scrutinized. In states where Clinton was viewed as the likely winner, the number of Clintonian themes cited by those congressional hopefuls who cited any of his themes changed very little over the course of the campaign. In the tossup states, on the other hand, the tendency of candidates to cite multiple issues emphasized by Governor Clinton increased significantly (Table 7).

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**Table 7 here**

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In fact, when the legislation- and incumbent-linked issue of family leave is removed from the calculations, the pattern is even more striking (Table 8). Clearly, many of the candidates attributed with only one issue were quoted in articles focussing on the legislation itself, rather than on the congressional candidate or district race. In that context, it is not surprising that they had less opportunity to raise other campaign issues.

TABLE 8 HERE

We must conclude that a popular presidential nominee is not by itself enough to entice a party's candidates for lower offices to identify themselves with the the same issues and themes stressed by the top of the ticket. Nor, however, is the choice of campaign issues by a local candidate determined entirely by personal commitments or purely local concerns. There is a relationship, one that seems to be driven by the amount of media and campaign resources allocated by the presidential campaign in an attempt to seize the public agenda.

**Incumbency**

Scholarship of congressional elections has often found that sitting Representatives are able to use their advantages as incumbents to campaign in ways that emphasize personal and local issues. Indeed, a number of differences between incumbent members of Congress and challengers was also apparent.[7] As noted previously, the rate with which particular themes were used varied according to incumbency. The themes of family leave and "middle-class America"--both of which were linked to ongoing legislation in 1992--were significantly more likely to occur when the reference was to an incumbent, with the opposite true of the themes of national health reform, abortion rights, and infrastructure investment. Incumbents and challengers were equally likely to cite a position in favor of deficit reduction.

Perhaps more important, 45 percent of the cases of non-incumbents were attributed with two or more of the themes of interest, as compared to only 27

percent of the incumbents (Table 9). This supports Jacobson's contention that national issues are injected into congressional campaigns to the extent that challengers are able to raise them (Jacobson, 1990). Interestingly, this pattern was not as marked in the swing states, where incumbents were somewhat more likely to cite more than one of the Clintonian themes.

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**Table 9 here**

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These findings help to explain the paradox of why Democratic candidates from strong Clinton districts showed less inclination to adopt his issues. These candidates were elected (often, reelected) in high proportions. Clinton's strongest districts were, not surprisingly, safe Democratic districts in general, where Democratic candidates had little need to link their electoral fortunes to the presidential nominee. As Table 10 indicates, there was a clear and significant tendency for these candidates to be incumbents.

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**Table 10 here**

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**The Perot Factor**

One of the defining characteristics of the 1992 elections was the presence of Ross Perot. It is possible, of course, that his high-profile third-party bid was a more important influence than was the top of the party ticket on congressional campaigns in 1992. Like Governor Clinton, Perot based his campaign on

economic issues. Unlike Clinton, Perot emphasized the deficit above all. As one might expect, the budget deficit was a more frequent theme of Democratic House candidates in states where Perot's campaign attracted relatively high levels of support than in states where Perot's support was below the national average.[8] On the other hand, candidates' references to family leave were relatively more common in the states where Perot attracted less support than his national average (Table 11).

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**Table 11 here**

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Overall, there appears to be at least some limited evidence that the issues of Democratic congressional campaigns were shaped not only by the party's presidential candidate, but by the strength and influence of the Perot candidacy as well. Health reform was the most commonly adopted theme in all of our states, regardless of the strength of Perot's candidacy. In strong Perot states, incumbents were very likely to use the theme of the deficit--more likely than their fellow incumbents in weak Perot states, and more likely than non-incumbents in general. In weak Perot states, however, the pattern was reversed--non-incumbents were more likely to raise the issue of deficit reduction (Table 12).

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**Table 12 here**

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## Election Outcomes

The 1992 congressional campaign resulted in an overall reelection rate of 88 percent (93 percent in the general election). Our study also indicates that incumbents were returned to Washington in a high proportion, with 81 percent of our cases of attributions to incumbents also representing attributions to winning candidates.

Except for family leave and middle class America, the legislation-linked themes, losing candidates were at least as likely to adopt a Clintonian issue as were winning candidates (Table 13). For example, national health care, a popular issue for winners and losers alike, was attributed to winners only about one quarter of the time. Losers showed more enthusiasm, citing national health care in about 44 percent of the articles in which they were attributed with any of Clinton's themes. After health care and family leave, the relative frequencies with which eventual winners cited other issues were all comparable, with none appearing in more than 20 percent of the citations and none falling below 10 percent. On the other hand, a definite hierarchy emerged for eventual losers. For the latter, the issue of abortion rights was raised even more often than health care, followed by the deficit, family leave, investment in infrastructure, and middle-class America. Only one clear deviation to the pattern shows up. In strong Perot states, we found that eventual winners were relatively more likely than eventual losers to cite the deficit as an issue.

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**TABLE 13**

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These same patterns tended to hold as election day approached. Eventual losers were somewhat more likely than winners to cite a Clintonian issue after

August. Losers were attributed relatively more often with the issue of abortion rights and family leave after August, relatively less often with the issue of national health care. Eventual winners were more likely than losers to be attributed with family leave; less likely to cite the middle class as an issue, both of which once again reflect the timing of ongoing legislative debates.

## Conclusion

The questions we have explored here bear on dimensions of democratic accountability and governance that are intrinsically interesting from a theoretical point of view. Many believe that coherent, disciplined political parties are one necessary foundation of accountable democratic government. For only the second time in twenty-four years, these questions are also of immediate political importance. Our findings provide little reassurance for democrats or, for that matter, for Democrats.

Some have pointed out that the Democratic Party in the 103rd Congress has, after all, provided Clinton with high levels party unity, the highest in decades (Rhode, 1990; 1992; also Cox and McCubbins, 1991). Only unprecedented unanimous bloc voting by congressional Republicans has obscured this, they argue, by focusing attention on a handful of Democratic defectors. Nevertheless, Clinton has been repeatedly compelled to modify his initiatives for lack of support by congressional Democrats in the face of the unified Republican opposition. First, the stimulus component of his economic recovery strategy was lost when Senate Democrats could not end a Republican filibuster; then, Democratic legislators of both chambers extracted concessions on some of the administration's strongest commitments in the budget bill before they would agree to support it. Similarly, the administration's inability to count on Democratic support within Congress has forced the President to scale back, or preemptively

shape his proposals across the range of issues, from civil liberties, to NAFTA, to health reform and the crime bill.

We asked whether the congressional Democrats' mixed record of supporting their President was foreshadowed in the 1992 campaign. Our data indicate that most Democrat congressional candidates in the 1992 race were not especially apt to adopt the issues or themes of their own party's presidential candidate. This was true despite the gale forces of national and international transformation that swept America in 1992. It was true despite a sample intentionally biased to unearth evidence of partisan coherence. Thus, our overall conclusion supports previous work that views the electoral dynamics of congressional elections as insulated from the direct impact of national issues, and more dependent on local concerns and the personal characteristics of the candidates (Cain et al., 1987). The advantages that accrue to incumbency in this kind of electoral arena can be substantial. Our data tend to confirm those expectations, as well, and support previous findings that incumbents and winning candidates are unlikely to emphasize policy in their campaigns (Raymond, 1987a). Non-incumbents and losing candidates in our sample were more likely to cite multiple issues than were incumbents and winners. As Jacobson has suggested, the route that national issues take into congressional campaigns is by way of the challenger (Jacobson, 1990). Despite a larger than usual number of competitive races in 1992, that route did not easily lead to Washington (Kaplan and Berenson, 1992).

Some of our findings arguably could say more about the nature of news coverage of congressional elections than about the nature of candidates' electoral appeals. The disproportionate number of cases drawn from the September to November time period is as likely to reflect the editorial allocation of press resources as it is to indicate the impact of Clinton's popularity on candidate

campaign strategies. That conclusion is reinforced by the finding that it was in the tossup states, where Clinton's popularity was less solid and the campaign most fiercely contested, that lower-level Democrats were most inclined to adopt portions of their presidential nominee's platform. The likely explanation is that the commitment of extra national campaign resources to those states shaped the environment for all levels of elections. Because no national candidate can possibly commit those levels of resources to every jurisdiction, in most places the press and local candidates define the political agenda in more parochial terms. Likewise, the tendency of candidates in strong Perot states to cite concerns about the deficit could be a function of media interest in Perot, rather than the candidates' identification of self-interest in that issue. The intervening factor of media coverage raises considerable obstacles to partisan, rather than personal campaigns, even when conditions may appear ripe for the former, as they did in 1992.

In sum, whatever the level of Democratic support Clinton has been able to obtain from the House, it seems unlikely that its origins lie in a prior judgement by Democratic Representatives that their electoral self-interest coincided with the campaign promises of the President. Rather, congressional Democrats' willingness to support Clinton probably depends on the more proximate influences of presidential persuasion, and particularly on Clinton's ability to define the terms of debate. The President's success in defining the terms may in turn depend on the mediating role of the press.

## NOTES

[1]It quickly became apparent that a few of the categories were superfluous, however, as the essentially symbolic themes of "we can do better," "reinventing America," or "the American Dream," were never attributed to a congressional candidate. Substantive issues fared somewhat better, as detailed below.

[2]In addition, the articles from which the references were taken were coded for the substantive focus of the article (on the presidency, the congress, or the congressional candidates) as well as other identifying elements such as length, source, and article type. Over 90 percent of the articles appeared in the news pages rather than on the editorial pages. From the 1,600 articles that met our criteria, we obtained for our sample a total of 460 cases, though for certain calculations, the N varied. For example, attributions to out-of-state candidates (usually leadership and virtually always incumbents) were not coded for home district or eventual victory or loss.

[3]We have measured the competitiveness of a state according to prospective analyses available in early September (see, e.g., Tower, 1992).

[4]Papers from all regions of the country were represented. The specific papers were: from the northeast; the Boston Globe and New York Newsday; from the Great Lakes region, Chicago Tribune and Cleveland Plain Dealer ; from the midwest, St. Louis Post Dispatch, and Minneapolis Star-Ledger; from the northwest, Portland Oregonian and Seattle Pilot-Intelligencer; from the mountain region, Denver Rocky Mountain News; from the west coast, Los Angeles Times and San Francisco Chronicle; from the border states, Baltimore Sun; and from the south, New Orleans Times-Picayune, Memphis Commercial Appeal, and Charlotte Observer. The papers included also shared the following attributes: each represented readership that

extended to several congressional districts; none are perceived as national papers; and each was the largest circulation publication meeting the above criteria in its area. Our study was constrained by the papers available through the Dialogue database, which may, of course, have imparted some undetermined biases to our findings. Paul Bradford Raymond (1987b) has noted how difficult it is to compile databases of this type, as well as how necessary they are for continued extensive work in this area.

[5]We coded incumbent members of congress as "leadership" if they were identified as holding a formal position in the Democratic leadership or as a committee or subcommitte chair. If that identification was not given in the article, they were coded as non-leadership. Thus, Leon Pannetta, or Dan Rostenkowski were coded differently according to the context of the particular article in which the attribution occurred. Approximately 25 percent of our cases were coded as leadership.

[6]As noted, we identified the competitiveness of a state according to the prospective analyses available in early September. An alternative method would be to measure competiveness retrospectively, according to either Clinton's share of the final vote, or the according to the closeness of the finish. Since the relevant hypothesis involves decisions made prior to the election by the Clinton campaign, the former seems more appropriate. When measured in the latter fashion, there is virtually no distinction between states where Clinton did relatively well and those where he did not do so well in terms of the propensity of Democratic congressional candidates to use themes associated with their presidential candidate.

[7]For the purposes of this discussion "challenger" and "non-incumbent" are interchangeable. Limitations in the data do not allow us to distinguish non-incumbent candidates in primaries from non-incumbents in the general electon. Our sample of attributions to candidates includes just under 60 percent incumbents.

[8]Nine of the newspapers in our sample were from states where Perot's proportion of the presidential vote was higher than the national average of 19 percent, six were from states where the Perot percentage was lower. The nine in the above-average group were Oregon (25%), Minnesota (24%), Washington (24%), Colorado (23%), Massachusetts (23%), Missouri (22%), Ohio (21%), California (two papers, 21%). The six in the below-average group were Illinois (17%), New York (16%), Maryland (14%), North Carolina (14%), Louisiana (12%), and Tennessee (10%).

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## TABLES

(Throughout, percentages have been rounded)

**TABLE 1: RELATIVE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES CITED CLINTON THEMES (percentages)**

| Issue | Frequency Cited |
|---|---|
| Health reform | 32 |
| Abortion rights/choice | 24 |
| Family leave | 20 |
| Deficit/balanced budget | 17 |
| Infrastructure | 11 |
| Middle-class America | 10 |

**TABLE 2: THE EFFECT OF THE STAGE OF CAMPAIGN ON THE PERCENTAGE OF DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES CITING ONE OR MORE CLINTON ISSUES**

| | Number of Issues Cited | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Stage of Campaign** | **One** | **Two** | **Three or more** |
| **Before Poll Lead** (Jan.-Aug.) | 66 | 25 | 9 |
| **After Poll Lead** (Sept.-Nov. 3) | 66 | 20 | 14 |

**TABLE 3: THE EFFECT OF THE STAGE OF CAMPAIGN ON RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF AN ISSUE BEING CITED (Percentages)**

| | **Before Poll Lead** (Jan.-Aug) | **After Poll Lead** (Sept.-Nov. 3) |
|---|---|---|
| **Health reform** | 34 | 31 |
| **Abortion** | 21 | 26 |
| **Deficit** | 19 | 16 |
| **Middle Class** | 16 | 5 |
| **Family Leave** | 6 | 31 |
| **Infrastructure** | 12 | 11 |

**TABLE 4: THE EFFECT OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE ON THE RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF AN ISSUE BEING CITED (Percentages)**

| | Clinton States | Swing States |
|---|---|---|
| Health reform | 33 | 32 |
| Abortion | 24 | 22 |
| Deficit | 15 | 26 |
| Middle Class | 9 | 14 |
| Family Leave | 17 | 33 |
| Infrastructure | 11 | 14 |

**TABLE 5: THE EFFECT OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE (STATE-LEVEL) ON THE PERCENTAGE OF DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES CITING ONE OR MORE CLINTON ISSUES**

| | One | Two | Three or more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strong Clinton States | 67 | 24 | 10 |
| Swing States | 62 | 20 | 18 |

**TABLE 6: THE EFFECT OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE (DISTRICT LEVEL) ON THE PERCENTAGE OF DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES CITING ONE OR MORE CLINTON ISSUES**

| Clinton Percentage in District | One | Two | Three or more |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 - 40 | 51 | 37 | 12 |
| 41 - 50 | 59 | 25 | 16 |
| 50 + | 72 | 20 | 8 |

**TABLE 7: THE EFFECTS OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE (STATE-LEVEL) AND STAGE OF THE CAMPAIGN ON THE PERCENTAGE OF DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES CITING ONE OR MORE CLINTON ISSUES**

| | | One | Two | Three or more |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strong Clinton States | Before Poll Lead (Jan-Aug) | 66 | 23 | 11 |
| | After Poll Lead (Sept-Nov) | 68 | 23 | 9 |
| Swing States | Before Poll Lead (Jan-Aug) | 66 | 31 | 3 |
| | After Poll Lead (Sept-Nov) | 60 | 11 | 30 |

**TABLE 8: THE EFFECTS OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE (STATE-LEVEL) AND STAGE OF THE CAMPAIGN ON THE PERCENTAGE OF DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES CITING ONE OR MORE CLINTON ISSUES (FAMILY LEAVE REMOVED)**

| | | One | Two | Three or more |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strong Clinton States | Before Poll Lead (Jan-Aug) | 70 | 21 | 10 |
| | After Poll Lead (Sept-Nov) | 64 | 26 | 10 |
| Swing States | Before Poll Lead (Jan-Aug) | 71 | 26 | 3 |
| | After Poll Lead (Sept-Nov) | 40 | 37 | 23 |

**TABLE 9: EFFECT OF INCUMBENCY ON THE THE PERCENTAGE OF DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES CITING ONE OR MORE CLINTON ISSUES**

| | Number of Issues Attributed | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | One | Two | Three or more |
| Incumbent | 73 | 15 | 12 |
| Nonincumb | 55 | 32 | 12 |

TABLE 10: CLINTON'S PERCENTAGE OF DISTRICT PRESIDENTIAL VOTE AND THE LIKELIHOOD THAT ATTRIBUTION IS TO AN INCUMBENT

| | INCUMBENT | NON-INCUMBENT |
|---|---|---|
| 0 - 40 | 36 | 64 |
| 41 - 50 | 47 | 53 |
| 50 + | 63 | 37 |

TABLE 11: EFFECT OF STATE PEROT VOTE ON THE RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF AN ISSUE BEING CITED (Percentages)

| | High Perot States | Low Perot States |
|---|---|---|
| Health reform | 37 | 40 |
| Abortion Rights | 31 | 26 |
| Deficit | 24 | 12 |
| Middle Class | 7 | 10 |
| Family Leave | 13 | 21 |
| Infrastructure | 13 | 11 |

TABLE 12:EFFECT OF INCUMBENCY AND STATE PEROT VOTE ON THE RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF AN ISSUE BEING CITED (Percentages)

| | Incumbents | | Non-Incumbents | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | High Perot States | Low Perot States | High Perot States | Low Perot States |
| Health reform | 29 | 26 | 45 | 58 |
| Abortion | 24 | 13 | 38 | 44 |
| Deficit | 31 | 9 | 18 | 17 |
| Middle Class | 11 | 13 | 4 | 3 |
| Family Leave | 21 | 22 | 7 | 19 |
| Infrastructure | 11 | 6 | 14 | 19 |

**TABLE 13: THE EFFECT OF FINAL OUTCOME ON THE RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF AN ISSUE BEING CITED (Percentages)**

| | Winners | Losers |
|---|---|---|
| **Health reform** | 25 | 44 |
| **Abortion** | 17 | 46 |
| **Deficit** | 17 | 19 |
| **Middle Class** | 13 | 6 |
| **Family Leave** | 25 | 13 |
| **Infrastructure** | 12 | 11 |