CONSTITUENCY CAMPAIGNING: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND A CASE STUDY OF OTTAWA CENTRE, 1997

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CONSTITUENCY CAMPAIGNING: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND A CASE STUDY OF OTTAWA CENTRE, 1997

by
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ABSTRACT

This study assesses the effectiveness of traditional campaign activities known as "constituency campaigning." It comprises a comprehensive review of the literature and a single-district case study.

The literature review incorporates scientific conclusions with an assessment of practitioners' beliefs. Because few examinations of constituency campaigning have been conducted in Canada, conclusions are also drawn from British and American research. The investigation considers the effects of traditional activities such as canvassing and literature distribution, while investigating variables such as incumbency, personal voting, marginal contests, and technological innovations. The section is organized as a series of propositions, which are diversely supported by evidence in the literature.

The case study includes a descriptive overview of the 1997 federal election contest in Ottawa Centre, and four waves of structured interviews with a representative panel of voters. This is supplemented by qualitative data collected from the panel, candidate interviews, and an assessment of candidate returns. The analysis concludes that although local newspapers indicated an intense constituency contest, local issues were not significant in determining voter choice. Local campaign effort also had little demonstrable effect, and the least active campaign was most rational from a cost-benefit standpoint.

However, Ottawa Centre was not a close contest. The final chapter argues that local campaign efforts were likely to be more rational in marginal districts across the country in 1997 and other elections.

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Sincere gratitude and appreciation is extended to my thesis advisors, Mark Graesser and Stephen Tomblin, of the Department of Political Science at Memorial. Both were very encouraging, helpful and willing to offer advice when needed. In particular, Professor Graesser was extensively involved in this project's development, through regular meetings and advice on its structure and content.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Campaigning for votes is democracy's way of ensuring elected officials maintain contact with the electorate. But campaigning is not limited to influencing voter choice. It stimulates political awareness and interest, politically educates, and informs the public of policy positions.[1] This contact is most noticeable on the national stage, wherein the media focuses on sound bytes and footage of party leaders at symbolic events attended by the most politically active. However, a more personalized battle for votes takes place at the constituency level, where local candidates seek out voters of all levels of political activism, often without the media's attention.

Within broader national campaigns, local activists fervently organize riding campaigns. Here, a series of grassroots operations attempt to increase the local candidate (or party) vote share and turnout among supporters. Although these activities are concentrated in the identification of supporters through door-to-door and telephone contacts (known as "canvassing"), other activities such as literature and sign distribution, direct mail, and rallies (e.g. coffees, meetings, debates, shopping mall blitzes) are common. Efforts climax on election day, when patterned get-out-the-vote ("GOTV") activities are conducted: party or candidate scrutineers / poll watchers make lists at polls and inform the campaign headquarters which potential supporters have not yet voted. Canvassing records are then used to encourage (usually by telephone) "for" or "possible" supporters to vote. The most organized campaigns typically provide baby-sitting services or transportation to ensure highest possible turnout amongst potential supporters.

Although the ultimate goal is to ensure victory, the aim of these operations is to raise awareness about the political party/candidate's program, policies and ideology; to generate commitment; to create a sense of identity among party workers; to reinforce support or partisanship and sway the undecided; and to encourage the participation of volunteers and those willing to display a sign, contribute financially, or offer other support. When the victor is declared, winners are congratulated for a strong campaign and for understanding the electorate, while losers attribute defeat to factors beyond their control.

Why are these local activities increasingly ignored by the media, academics, and voters? Generally, political scientists recognize the weight of national campaigns, party leaders and platforms over the local candidate in vote decisions. This has caused many academics to dismiss the effects of local activities on election outcomes, although there are relatively few recent studies to support this belief. Typically, the importance of measuring the effects of sub-national electioneering Western countries has decreased as television has nationalized campaigns. Since World War II, political parties and their leaders have become increasingly influential at the expense of candidate considerations. Moreover, modern technology has reduced the effectiveness of activities carried over from periods without television, party labels on ballots, or party involvement in registering voters.

Nevertheless, constituency activities continue, and so their impact is an unsettled matter: some studies imply that they are an irrational use of valuable resources, while others indicate that they are a valuable tool. The debate is therefore not restricted to one between

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[1] Steven E. Finkel, "Reexamining the 'Minimal Effects' Model in Recent Presidential Campaigns," *The Journal of Politics* (Feb. 1993): 1-21.

political practitioners and political scientists, but rather extends to one within the scientific community.

But a paradox emerges: if most researchers have been adamant that constituency campaigning is ineffective in all but the most marginal of races, then why do political parties continue to pour vast resources into such customary activities? This raises further questions. Exactly how effective are local efforts in influencing voter choice and riding outcomes? When is constituency campaigning most important? How does challenging an office holder alter campaign effects? Is constituency campaigning generally a rational activity?

There is an acute need for analysis of local activities in the Canadian political climate of the 1990s, where voter volatility has progressively increased and has been spurred by regionalism. The 1993 general election marked an electoral transition, where over half of 1988 voters voting in 1993 switched parties, likely the most switchers between any two elections in Canadian history;[2] these party changers were typically former supporters of the governing Progressive Conservatives and the New Democratic Party. A case can be made that the Reform party has offered English Canadian voters an alternative to non-traditional parties. Building upon voter alienation caused in part by elite-driven constitutional accords and the implementation of the unpopular Goods and Services Tax, Reform's success is rooted in its promise to reform the traditional politician-voter relationship.

The Reform grassroots approach is exemplified in its promotion of direct democracy, the precedence of constituent views over party platforms, and its coordination of constituency

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[2] Alan Frizzell, Jon H. Pammett and Anthony Westell, *The Canadian General Election of 1993* (Ottawa: Carleton U Press, 1994): 1; Jon. H. Pammett, "Tracking the Votes," in Alan Frizzell et al., *The Canadian General Election of 1993*. Ottawa: Carleton U Press, 1994: 145.

campaigns within the national campaign in 1993.[3] Its actions have arguably renewed the importance of the individual candidate's campaign because traditional parties are now more likely to emphasize local-level consultation. Indeed, the Liberal government which replaced the Conservatives has occasionally provided its members free-voting on moral issues and the PC party used a grassroots consultation process to rebuild itself after its defeat in 1993. When we consider that around 15 percent of votes are from new voters or previous non-voters,[4] constituency campaigns appear to have increasing potential.

Although there is a need for the analysis of Canadian constituency campaigns, experts are concentrated among British and American political scientists. British researchers include Bochel, Butler, Denver, Fieldhouse, Hands, Johnston, Kavanaugh, Norton, Pattie, Seyd, Whiteley, and Wood; American experts include Cain, Conway, Crotty, Cutright, Eldersveld, Jacobson, Katz, and Rossi. Canadian examinations have been conducted by Black, Blake, Cunningham, Docherty, Eagles, Irvine, Krashinsky, Milne, and some contributors to the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing. No Canadian political scientist appears as seasoned as some of the British, American or Australian academics who have produced multiple works and contributed to the topic. To study the effects of constituency campaigning in Canada, comparisons with other studies are necessary.

Kavanaugh has argued that constituency campaign effectiveness can be measured in many ways: it can be improvement over past results; maintaining or improving party support; increasing turnout; educate the electorate; or pacification of party workers.[5] In this study we consider such measures of effectiveness while focusing on the element that social scientists

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[3] Faron Ellis and Keith Archer, "Reform: Electoral Breakthrough" in Alan Frizzell et al. *The Canadian General Election of 1993* (Ottawa: Carleton U Press, 1994): 63.

[4] Pammett 144.

are most concerned with: what, if any, causal relationship is there between constituency campaigning and vote choice? In an attempt to bridge the lack of Canadian literature, this study explores the overall wisdom of constituency contest activities and their application in a Canadian context.

The first of this study's two sections is a comprehensive review of the British, American and Canadian literature. The review is organized as a propositional inventory, examining findings for specific contentions and investigating the variables which influence the effectiveness of the constituency campaign and its study. This review suggests that scientific conclusions are not exhaustive and do not generally permit direct comparison between countries. It reveals inconsistent inferences among political scientists, many of which conflict with the beliefs of practitioners. Most importantly, it indicates that academics should never dismiss local campaign effects when a riding contest has the potential to be marginal (where the margin of victory is under 10 percent).

The second section complements this review with a study of a constituency campaign in the 1997 Canadian general election. The overview of the Ottawa Centre contest is based upon print media coverage, but a panel study with Ottawa Centre constituents provides a deeper understanding of the effects of local activities and issues. Moreover, the quantitative data analysis is complemented by the qualitative data which was gathered through participant diaries and candidate interviews. The study then applies some of the propositions developed in the previous section. Although it is impossible to generalize based on a single case study,

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[5] Kavanaugh 73.

we hope to find Canadian evidence for the propositions developed in Britain and the United States and discover the importance of constituency activities within a volatile electorate.

Section I: A Review of Constituency Campaigning Literature

CHAPTER 2
PARTIES, LEADERS, AND CANDIDATES

Generally, the importance of the local candidate and his or her campaign within a broader national campaign is unclear. Although electoral studies show that political parties and party leaders have a decisive impact on the outcome of constituency contests, local media and campaigns typically promote a competition of candidates. In this context, the perception proliferates that the local contest is in doubt and victory may be decided by a few crucial votes. It defies reason, but even those candidates' campaigns with little hope of victory may intensify activities to a climax on polling day.

If campaign activities are reward-oriented, why do they continue if studies have indicated a diminishing impact? Although electoral analyses suggest that most voters are not influenced by constituency campaigns, we cannot automatically assume that local candidate efforts are inconsequential to the outcome.

1.1 Macro-level campaign factors override micro-level voting criteria.

The perceived importance of micro-level (local) campaign variables among Canadian and non-Canadian political scientists has declined yearly since the mid-1940s, when television began to emerge as a nationalizer of campaigning.[1] The absence of a focus on local

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[1] E.A. Fieldhouse et al., "Tactical Voting and Party Constituency Campaigning at the 1992 General Election in England," *British Journal of Political Science* (July 1996): 403-404; Jorgen Elklit, "Sub-National Election Campaigns: The Danish Local Elections of November 1989," *Scandinavian Political Studies* (14, 3: 1991): 219; Jerome H. Black, "Revisiting the Effects of Canvassing on Voting Behaviour," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (June 1984): 352-353; Peter Desbarats, *Guide to Canadian News Media* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990): chapter six.

effects is due to the documented importance of macro-level (national) factors. Bell and Fletcher have commented on the lack of academic discussion:

> Canada's single-member constituency, simple-plurality electoral system guarantees that the outcome of national elections depends on the individual electoral outcomes in each constituency. Yet there is a remarkable dearth of electoral studies of individual constituencies...Although this literature acknowledges the importance of learning more about the impact of constituency-level factors...few systematic studies have been done to explore these factors.[2]

Constituency campaigning has been somewhat of a ritual in Canada since the mid-1800s, when its primary goal was to prepare voters' lists so that scrutineers could challenge votes.[3] An argument can be made that this function has been antiquated since name recognition was obviated by the inclusion of party labels on the federal ballot in 1974.[4]

Canadian national media and caucus discipline have contributed to a decline in the perceived importance of the local candidate among voters in all but a few select ridings. Although up to 25 percent of voters might *claim* that the local candidate is the most important factor in their vote decision, scientific analyses have shown that there is a collection of vote criteria other than the local candidate;[5] this has also been found in other

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[2] V.J. Bell and Frederick J. Fletcher, "Electoral Communication at the Constituency Level: A Framework for Analysis," *Reaching the Voter: Constituency Campaigning in Canada*. David V.J. Bell and Frederic J. Fletcher, eds. Vol. 20 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (Ottawa and Toronto: RCERPF/Dundurn Press, 1991): 3.

[3] Joseph Wearing, *Strained Relations: Canadian Parties and Voters* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988) 111.

[4] David C. Docherty, *Mr. Smith Goes to Ottawa: Life in the House of Commons* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997): 64.

[5] Robert Cunningham, "The Impact of the Local Candidate in Canadian Federal Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (June 1971): 287; Robert J. Drummond and Frederick J. Fletcher, "Political Communication and Orientation to Legislators among Ontario Voters," *Parliament, Policy and Representation* Harold D. Clarke et al., eds. (Toronto: Methuen, 1980): 115; Harold D. Clarke et al., *Absent Mandate: Interpreting Change in Canadian Elections*. 2nd ed. (Toronto: Gage Educational Publishing, 1991): 114-115; William P. Irvine, "Does the Candidate Make a Difference? The Macro-Politics and Micro-Politics of Getting Elected," *Canadian Journal of*

Western democracies.[6] In making a decision, voters must consider national leaders (particularly of the governing party), party platforms, past party support, national campaigns and issues, national conditions, and national mass media (coinciding with a decline in coverage of constituency campaigns); demographic factors and bandwagon voting are also documented factors. These considerations are compounded when national issues become local ones, a product of incumbency and campaigning interacting with leadership, party and candidate considerations.[7]

Moreover, a "strategic politicians theory" implies that national conditions affect local candidates' decisions to run for office and supporters' contribution levels months before the election is called,[8] and national opinion polls can have direct effects on constituency

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Political Science (Dec. 1982): 761; Frederick J. Fletcher, "Mass Media and Parliamentary Elections in Canada," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (Aug. 1987): 342; Richard Johnston et al., *Letting the People Decide: Dynamics of a Canadian Election* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1991): 198-200; Andrew Beh and Roger Gibbins, "The Campaign-Media Interface in Local Constituencies: Two Alberta Case Studies from the 1988 Federal Election Campaign" in *Reaching the Voter* 62; Luc Bernier, "Media Coverage of Local Campaigns: The 1988 Election in Outremont and Frontenac" in *Reaching the Voter*; D. Keith Heitzman, "Electoral Competition, Campaign Expenditure and Incumbency Advantage," *Issues In Party and Election Finance in Canada* F. Leslie Seidle, ed. Vol. 5 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (Ottawa and Toronto: RCERPF/Dundurn Press, 1991): 106-107.

[6] Dennis Kavanaugh, *Constituency Electioneering in Britain* (London: Longmans, 1970): 10 and 28; Charles J. Pattie, Ronald J. Johnston and Edward A. Fieldhouse, "Winning the Local Vote: The Effectiveness of Constituency Campaign Spending in Great Britain, 1983-1992," *American Political Science Review* (Dec. 1995): 969-983; Charles Pattie, Paul Whiteley, Ron Johnston and Patrick Seyd, "Measuring Local Campaign Effects: Labour Party Constituency Campaigning at the 1987 General Election," *Political Studies* (Sept. 1984): 469-479; Fieldhouse et al. 403-404; Clive Bean, "The Personal Vote in Australian Federal Elections," *Political Studies* (June 1990): 255; Bruce E. Cain et al., "The Constituency Service Basis of the Personal Vote for U.S. Representatives and British Members of Parliament," *American Political Science Review* (Mar. 1984): 111.

[7] Heitzman 107; Beh and Gibbins 62; Leonard Preyra, "Riding the Waves: Parties, the Media and the 1988 Federal Election in Nova Scotia," in *Reaching the Voter* 143-149 and 154; Bell and Fletcher 5.

[8] Gary C. Jacobson and Samuel Kernell, *Strategy and Choice in Congressional Elections* 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1983).

campaigners' morale.[9] In Britain, these ingredients are nearly impossible for local candidates to overcome, be they "party hacks or colourful rebels, established incumbents or novices, national personalities or mere local worthies."[10] There is a similar conundrum in Canada:

> the local candidate is usually the least important factor in the minds of [Canadian] voters when they make a decision about casting their ballot...Winning or losing has little to do with local races and everything to do with national effects. If a member loses — it is due to a poor party performance, if they enjoy a long and fruitful career — it is because they have been blessed with one of the few safe seats their party has, and has little to do with their own work and reputation.[11]

Upon revisiting the hypothesis that the Reform party has increased the importance of the local candidate, we see that declining partisanship has not reduced the importance of the political party in decision criteria. While it might be expected that volatility increases the consideration of other factors, instead recent indications are that party switchers have tended to do so because of the appeal of other parties rather than their candidates. While the local candidate is of primary concern to under 30 percent of the electorate, it has been shown that increasing numbers have considered the party as a whole: 49 percent in 1984, 53 percent in 1988, and 57 percent in 1993. That the local candidate was of minimal importance to Reform and Bloc Québecois voters in 1993 should not be surprising due to the limited number of incumbents and party appeal (Table 1).

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[9] Bernier 127.

[10] Kavanaugh 10 and 28.

[11] David C. Docherty, "Nothing Personal: The Impact of Incumbency in Canadian Politics," Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, St. John's Newfoundland, June 8-10, 1997.

Table 1
Effects of local candidates on vote choice, 1993

Party voted	Local candidate most important factor in decision	Local candidate reason for vote switch from 1988
BQ	5%	3%
Liberal	7	3
NDP	21	17
PC	20	28
Reform	2	1
Other	14	—

Source: Jon H. Pammett, "Tracking the Votes" in Alan Frizzell et al., *The Canadian General Election of 1993*. Ottawa: Carleton U Press, 1994: 148-151.

A significant degree of support received by NDP and PC parties in 1993 was due to the saliency of local candidates (primarily incumbents). We can expect that analysis of the 1997 election will reveal more extensive party voting among those parties (due to only 9 and 2 incumbents, respectively) and the increased importance of local candidates among the Bloc Québecois, Liberal and Reform parties.

1.2 The single-member plurality system reduces the importance of candidates in decision criteria.

At the macro level, rationality theories of voter choice assume the existence of rational voters who vote for those candidates who will produce the most for them. Here, a decline in party identification (the underlying orientation a voter has with a party) increases candidate partisanship (the act of voting for a candidate over party). When candidate criteria are given less weight, a decline of candidate partisanship increases party affiliation. This suggests that a self-perpetuating pattern should develop, where voters must continually weigh the costs and benefits of prioritizing candidate over party.

But this theory is impractical. When decision criteria other than party identification are considered, often the extra effort required to seek candidate information is unrewarding. Instead, voters place confidence in political parties, platforms or leaders. To the voter, this is the most efficient method of decision-making.[12] Consequently, electoral systems and party affiliations influence voter behaviour, constituency contests and incumbency advantages.[13]

In theory, the single-member plurality (SMP) system should allow the electorate to distinguish between the actions of the local candidate and those of the political party to which the candidate may belong.[14] SMP systems should incorporate micro-level criteria more than proportional representation systems, for in those systems parties select the "local" representative. But it has been argued that the SMP system increases the importance of party-oriented criteria at the expense of the constituency-level criteria. It has been argued that proportional representation systems encourage competitions of differences, but SMP systems increase the influences of political parties and compel candidates to build personal votes (electoral support received on local merit without the benefit of partisanship) to circumvent partisanship.[15] We are thus left to conclude that both proportional representation and SMP systems restrict the electability of the local candidate based on his or her own merit.

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[12] John C. Blydenburgh, "A Controlled Experiment to Measure the Effects of Personal Contact Campaigning," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* (15, 1971): 380-381; Cain et al. 111-123.

[13] R. Johnston et al. 197; Michael Krashinsky and William J. Milne, "Some Evidence on the Effects of Incumbency in the 1988 Canadian Federal Election" in *Issues In Party and Election Finance in Canada* 46-47.

[14] Cain et al. 111-123; Bruce Cain, John Ferejohn and Morris Fiorina, *The Personal Vote: Constituency Service and Electoral Independence* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1987).

[15] Kavanaugh 16; Cain et al. 111-123; David V.J. Bell and Catherine M. Bolan, "The Mass Media and Federal Election Campaigning at the Local Level: A Case Study of Two Ontario Constituencies" in *Reaching the Voter* 106-7; Shaun Bowler et al., "Constituency Campaigning in Parliamentary Systems with Preferential Voting: Is there a Paradox?" *Electoral Studies* (Nov. 1996): 471.

Moreover, system variations effect constituency activities themselves. Australia's compulsory voting and rank-ordering can reduce the need for increased voter turnout so practitioners concentrate on the distribution of "how to vote" cards outside polling stations to influence vote choice.[16] In Canada, where political parties broker regional interests, SMP encourages the electorate to vote for the party most likely to represent them, regardless of candidate saliency.[17] Caucus discipline — which limits public ability of Members of Parliament to shape public policy, and weakens their relationship with all but the most partisan of their constituents — produces tension between voters and politicians. This has encouraged the development of personal votes, regional parties, increased volatility and strategic voting.[18]

1.3 Constituency activities create a paradox between political scientists and practitioners.

As noted, there is a distinction between political scientists and practitioners on the subject of constituency effects. Academics believe that election results are "determined by forces other than the actual election campaign": they examine campaigns retrospectively, and

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[16] Donley T. Studlar and Ian McAllister, "The Electoral Connection in Australia: Candidate Roles, Campaign Activity, and the Popular Vote," *Political Behavior* (Sept. 1994): 389; Bowler et al. 468.

[17] John Wilson, "The myth of candidate partisanship: the case of Waterloo South," *Journal of Canadian Studies* (Nov. 1968): 21-22.

[18] David V.J. Bell et al., "Electoral Communication at the Constituency Level: Summary and Conclusion" in *Reaching the Voter* 196; Richard G. Price and Maureen Mancuso, "Ties That Bind: Parliamentary Members and Their Constituencies," *Introductory Readings in Canadian Government and Politics*. 2nd ed. Robert M. Krause and R.H. Wagenberg, eds. (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1995): 218-222; Michael M. Atkinson, "Parliamentary Government in Canada," *Canadian Politics in the 1980s* M.S. Whittington and Glen Williams eds., (Toronto: Methuen, 1984); Docherty *Mr. Smith* chapter 6; Donald E. Blake, "Party Competition and Electoral Volatility: Canada in Comparative Perspective," *Representation, Integration and Political Parties in Canada*, Herman Bakvis, ed. Vol. 14 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing. (Ottawa and Toronto: RCERPF/Dundurn Press, 1991): 262-263.

consider the roles of partisanship, incumbency, candidate image and issues. Practitioners approach elections prospectively, believing that campaigns determine election results: they believe that the most successfully executed campaign plans win elections, and consider the influences of strategies, messages, media, field organizations, scandals, and get-out-the-vote activities (among others). While researchers seek to understand outcomes and explain events *after* they have occurred, practitioners attempt to influence election outcomes and deal with problems *as* they occur.[19]

The approach of these groups is considerably different at the micro level. Predictably, academics generally dismiss the constituency contest as ineffective in all but marginal contests (where the margin of victory is under 10 percent, thus increasing the potential impact of the campaign). Meanwhile, practitioners generally believe that local campaign activities are quintessential to the result. Although practitioners' beliefs may be self-reinforcing because they rely on personal experiences or those of others, political scientists cannot conclusively refute such beliefs.

Canadian and other political scientists have often suppressed the patterned techniques of constituency campaigning as "rituals" which are inconsequential to election outcomes.[20] They tend not to believe that politicians are victorious because of a "more clever or

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[19] Marni Erza and Candice J. Nelson, "Do Campaigns Matter?" *Campaigns and Elections American Style* James A. Thurber and Candice J. Nelson, eds. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995).

[20] Kavanaugh 12; Wilson 30; David Butler and Gary King, *The British General Election of 1966* (London: Macmillan, 1966): 191; William Mishler and Harold D. Clarke, "Political Participation in Canada," *Canadian Politics in the 1990s*. 3rd ed. Michael S. Whittington and Glen Williams, eds. (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1990): 177; David Denver and Gordon Hands, "Constituency Campaigning in the 1992 General Election: The Peculiar Case of the Conservatives," *British Elections and Parties Yearbook 1996*. David M. Farrell et al., eds. (London: Frank Cass, 1996): 85.

sophisticated calculation about the electorate,"[21] but rather that they campaign by "instinct and shrewd guessing."[22] Consequently, constituency campaigns are either irrelevant distractions or of critical consequence, because it has not yet been proven that canvass and election day activities alter the outcome.[23] The inability of academics to instinctively understand campaigns is exemplified by a Canadian practitioner's claim that "an academic left alone to come up with the campaign plan... [produces one] in a form that no one can comprehend."[24]

Despite scientific cynicism, practitioners continue to extensively promote local campaign activities. Practitioners generally become an integral part of a campaign, and believe that candidate voting is considerable. For candidates, the campaign is a means of stability and motivation, particularly for those who are unsuccessful and who attribute defeat to factors beyond their control. The campaign has many practical functions: it enables solid supporter morale; offers voters and volunteers an opportunity to meet the candidate; permits impressing influential people; suggests momentum through the media; dramatically portrays the candidate; and integrates ethnic communities.[25] An example of typical practitioner campaign advice:

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[21] John W. Kingdom, *Candidates for Office: Beliefs and Strategies* (New York: Random House, 1968): 147-150.

[22] Alexander Heard, *The Costs of Democracy* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1960): 20.

[23] Richard Johnston, "Party Identification and Campaign Dynamics," *Political Behavior* (Sept. 1992): 312-313; J.M. Bochel and D.T. Denver, "Canvassing, Turnout, and Party Support: An Experiment," *British Journal of Political Science* (July 1971): 258-259.

[24] Tom Brook, *Getting Elected in Canada* (Stratford, Ontario: Mercury Press, 1991): 164.

[25] Bernier 125-129; Brook 100; Kavanaugh 112; Kingdom 147-150; Robert Agranoff, *The Management of Election Campaigns* (Boston: Holbrook Press, 1976): 284-287; Peter L. McCreath, *The People's Choice: The Inside Story on Being an MP* (Tantallon, Nova Scotia: Four East Productions, 1995): 21.

> No candidate wins on good looks or publicity or good stands on issues alone. To win the election campaign workers [must] contact voters personally, ask for their vote, and remind them of their duty on election day. The other side will be working too, but they can be beaten if enough volunteers are willing to put in the time and if they work systematically and effectively.[26]

Conversely, some practitioners are aware of their activities' futility:

> You get out on the knocker and you see that the voters are like Pavlov's dogs: they are for you or against you, when you mention the party, and that's that. The candidates may as well go to bed for three weeks; the final swing would still be the same and they would have saved themselves a lot of trouble.[27]

However, encouraged by the SMP system where potential vote-splitting allows candidates to be elected with as little as one-third of the vote,[28] Canadian practitioners believe that a competitive campaign offers the opportunity for victory for those who exert a strong effort. In its extreme, some Canadian candidates have flown into areas only accessible by air; one cabinet minister walked over thin ice and then ankle deep in mud for two miles to solicit support.[29]

Despite researchers' contentions, political parties continue to promote constituency contests. An inconsistency exists where political scientists habitually discount the impact of the constituency contest but political parties emphasize its importance through local organizations, resource support, campaign colleges , candidate schools tutorial camps, sub-national strategy meetings, campaign manager training, and the employment of regional coordinators. Parties characteristically offer policy directives and services packages to

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[26] Dick Simpson, *Winning Elections: A Handbook in Participatory Politics* (Ohio: Ohio UP, 1981): 131.

[27] As quoted by a British Member of Parliament in Kavanaugh 48.

[28] Docherty *Mr. Smith* 76-77.

[29] John Meisel, *The Canadian General Election of 1957* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1957): 92.

constituency organizations, and encourage the use of party campaign materials.[30] Clearly, the variance between academics and practitioners begs examination.

[30] Preyra has reported that political parties offer (at minimal cost) generic party "signs, advertisements, letterheads, pamphlets, flyers, brochures, newsletters, press releases, statements and speeches, answers to interest-group questionnaires and other prepackaged material." See Preyra 150. See also Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley, "The Influence of Local Campaigning on the Conservative Vote in the 1992 General Election," *British Elections and Parties Yearbook 1994* David Broughton et al., eds. (London: Frank Cass, 1995): 92.

CHAPTER 3
THE CONTEXT OF CONSTITUENCY CONTESTS

Although local practitioners tend to encourage personal voting, studies suggest that local success depends on the context of the campaign. While many political scientists have found that the effects of all local activities is over 5 percent, it appears that effects tend to peak at about 10 percent. Far from reducing its importance, this suggests that the constituency campaign is a valuable tool in marginal contests.

2.1 Campaigning is the reinforcement, activation, or conversion of partisanship.

Lazarsfeld et al. found evidence of three effects from an American Presidential campaign in the late 1940s: "reinforcement" prevents the loss of partisan votes and likely does not change vote choices; "conversion" is infrequent and limited to the doubtful; and "activation" — the most common product of campaigning — arouses political predispositions within the indifferent and stimulates vote support. They found that activation has four continuous steps: (1) increasing levels of propaganda arouses interest among those who have not been interested; (2) aroused interest increases exposure and awareness of the campaign; (3) selective attention reinforces predispositions; and (4) a decision is made, where the voter's uncertainty has crystallized into a vote choice.[1]

Various types of evidence exists for these effects at the constituency level. An early 1970s American municipal study found evidence of reinforcement,[2] and activation has been

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[1] Paul Lazarsfeld et al., *The People's Choice: how the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign*. 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia UP, 1948): 75-76 and 101.

[2] David E. Price and Michael Lupfer, "Volunteers for Gore: The Impact of a Precinct-Level Canvass in Three Tennessee Cities," *Journal of Politics* (May 1973): 437.

found at the national level in Canada and in the United States.[3] The prominence of activation over conversion has been identified in Britain and the U.S.[4]

Different terms can be applied to voters prone to these effects. Voters whose support does not change over the course of the campaign and who appear to be unaffected by campaign activities have been labeled "core supporters;" voters who initially intend to vote for a party, but whose support changes over the course of the campaign because they appear to be affected by campaign activities or local candidates, or have experienced changes in objectives, expectations and conduct, have been called "switchers," "party changers," or "floating voters;" those who initially do not know how they will vote, but develop a preference, are known as "crystallizers;" and, those who indicate a vote intention, then switch intentions, then return to their original intention, are called "waverers."[5] At the constituency level, those who place a greater degree of importance on the candidate than his/her party in voting criteria are typically referred to as "candidate partisans" or "candidate-oriented" voters.[6]

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[3] Finkel 1-21; Richard Johnston 312-313; Wilson 29.

[4] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 969-983; Samuel J. Eldersveld and Richard W. Dodge, "Personal Contact or Mail Propaganda? An Experiment in Voting Turnout and Attitude Change," *Public Opinion and Propaganda*, Daniel Katz et al., eds. (New York: Dryden Press, 1954): 532-542, especially 540.

[5] Lazarsfeld et al. x-xii; Patricia A. Hurley and Rick K. Wilson, "Strategic Campaigning and Voter Shifts: A Panel Analysis of Houston's 1985 Mayoral Race," *Social Science Quarterly* (Mar. 1987): 41-42; E.J. Dionne, "What Technology Has Not Changed: Continuity and Localism in British Politics," *Changing Campaign Techniques: Elections and Values in Contemporary Democracies*, Louis Maisel, ed. (Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications, 1976): 265-269. One-third of switchers between the 1975 and 1977 Ontario provincial elections did so for local candidate reasons. See Drummond and Fletcher 119. Based on 1988 Canadian election data, we can classify 57 percent of voters as core supporters or waverers, and 43 percent as crystallizers or switchers. See Lawrence LeDuc, "The Canadian Voter," *Introductory Readings in Canadian Government and Politics*. 2nd ed. Robert M. Krause and R.H. Wagenberg, eds. (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1995): 377.

[6] Wilson 30; Angus Cambell et al., *The Voter Decides* (Evanston, Illinois: 1954).

2.2 Incumbents attract the majority of candidate partisans.

The ability to attract a vote based upon a candidate's local merit influences the potential effectiveness of constituency campaigning. Levels of candidate partisanship are abnormally pronounced when a party leader, present or former cabinet minister, veteran incumbent, or other prominent candidate is fielded, although this can be a detriment to members of an unpopular governing party.[7] Prominent candidates benefit from personal votes which are conditioned by national visibility compensating for riding absence[8] and can benefit from unique contribution levels.[9]

But the extent of candidate partisanship is disputed. For example, in Australia it is believed that it is a "candidate-induced myth" which is not empirically demonstrable and that candidates can obtain a maximum of 500 personal votes.[10] Some academics also believe in the existence of "safe seats" where particular ridings elect party candidates regardless of the individual. While such seats are more common in Britain and the United States, they are

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[7] D. Munroe Eagles, "Political Ecology: Local Effects on the Political Behaviour of Canadians," *Canadian Politics: An Introduction to the Discipline*, Alain-G. Gagnon and James P. Bickerton, eds. (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1990): 301; Morris Davis, "Did they vote for party or candidate in Halifax?" *Papers on the 1962 Election*, John Meisel, ed. (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1964): 19-32, especially 28; Meisel *The Canadian General Election* 260. Canadian MPs have a personal vote of 3.3% to 10.5% which is developed over time and is more significant among cabinet ministers. See Docherty "Nothing Personal."

[8] Krashinsky and Milne "Some Evidence on the Effects of Incumbency" 67.

[9] In the 1997 general election, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien received two $10,000 and five $5,000 corporate donations for his constituency campaign. A single $5,000 contribution is rare among most Canadian candidates. See John Saunders, "Giving the gift of political life," *Globe and Mail* (15 Dec. 1997): A8.

[10] David M. Wood and Philip Norton, "Do Candidates Matter? Constituency-specific Vote Changes for Incumbent MPs, 1983-1987," *Political Studies* (June 1992): 227; David Wood and Philip Norton, "Constituency Service by Members of Parliament: Does it Contribute to a Personal Vote?" *Parliamentary Affairs* (Apr. 1990): 196.

more likely to exist in rural rather than urban Canadian ridings.[11] Complicating our understanding is that personal vote measures are concerned only with victorious candidates.

2.3 Candidate partisanship increases with marginal contests and tactical voting.

Collectively, studies of marginal contests and tactical voters (those voting for a party/candidate which is not their first preference) substantiate a hypothesis that the effectiveness of constituency campaigning increases with the marginality of the race. The marginal contest is reputed to have a variety of characteristics: increased voter interest; occasionally increased turnout produced by maximized campaigning efforts of candidates and canvassers who have perceived the marginality; increased vote share for efficient campaigns; decreased voter information costs; and votes with increased importance from tactical and rational voting.[12]

Canadian and other political scientists have reported evidence that party spending levels and canvassing activities increase with the marginality of the riding, and that

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[11] J.A.A. Lovink, "Is Canadian Politics Too Competitive?" *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (6,2: 1973): 341-79; Docherty "Nothing Personal;" Bean 253-68; C.E.S. Franks, *The Parliament of Canada* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1987); Docherty *Mr. Smith* 8; Lawrence S. Grossman, "'Safe' Seats: The Rural-Urban Pattern in Ontario," *Voting in Canada*. ed. John C. Courtney. (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1967): 99-103.

[12] Fieldhouse et al. 403-418; Will Robinson, "Organizing the Field," *Campaigns and Elections American Style*, James A. Thurber and Candice J. Nelson, eds. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995): 151; Lazarsfeld et al. xvii; Paul Whiteley and Patrick Seyd, "Labour's Vote and Local Activism: The Impact of Local Constituency Campaigns," *Parliamentary Affairs* (Oct. 1992): 582; Samuel C. Patterson and Gregory A. Caldeira, "Getting Out the Vote: Participation in Gubernatorial Elections," *American Political Science Review* (Sept. 1983): 675-689; William J. Crotty, "Party Effort and Its Impact on the Vote," *American Political Science Review* (June 1971): 445-447; Munroe D. Eagles, "Voting and Non-Voting in Canadian Federal Elections: An Ecological Analysis," *Voter Turnout in Canada*, Herman Bakvis, ed. Vol. 15 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (Ottawa and Toronto: RCERPF/Dundurn Press, 1991): 13-14; Howard Margolis, *Selfishness, Altruism and Rationality* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982): 82-95.

intensified campaigning and increased tactical voting are typical in marginal contests.[13] Moreover, parties often pay for non-local campaign employees and provide outside campaign managers to marginal contests, and have been increasingly supporting both marginal and poorer ridings.[14]

Other discussions have found that American incumbents in marginal constituencies have better images and higher job evaluations,[15] and that superior campaign organization can be "of overwhelming importance" to the outcome of American marginal contests.[16] It has been discovered in Britain that a "downside risk" can emerge where a party has more support to lose by not campaigning than it has to gain by campaigning;[17] Based on the evidence, it has been concluded by British social scientists that it is only in marginal contests that highly-organized constituency efforts are rational.[18]

Generally, marginal contests are intensified by increased numbers of voters who vote for a party other than their preference. In Canada, voters must engage in some degree of tactical voting, for in federal elections a government, a Prime Minister, and a local

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[13] Johnston "Information Provision" 131-139; Peter C. Coyte and Stuart Landon, "The Impact of Competition on Advertising: The Case of Political Campaign Expenditures," *Canadian Journal of Economics* (Nov. 1989): 816; R.J. Johnston and C.J. Pattie, "The Impact of Spending on Party Constituency Campaigns at Recent British General Elections," *Party Politics* (1,2: 1995): 263; Munroe D. Eagles, "Money and Votes in Canada: Campaign Spending and Parliamentary Election Outcomes, 1984 and 1988," *Canadian Public Policy* (Dec. 1993): 438; Kavanaugh 47; Paul Whiteley et al., *True Blues: The Politics of Conservative Party Membership* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994): 191; R. J. Johnston, "Information Provision and Individual Behavior: A Case Study of Voting at an English General Election," *Geographical Analysis* (Apr. 1986): 131-139. However some evidence to the contrary has been found. See Drummond and Fletcher 118.

[14] R.K. Carty, *Canadian Political Parties in the Constituencies*, Vol. 23 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (Ottawa and Toronto: RCERPF/Dundurn Press, 1991): 157-65; Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning in the 1992 General Election" 85; R.J. Johnston, "A Further Look at British Political Finance," *Political Studies* (Sept. 1986): 468; Fletcher 350; Bernier 124; Michael Krashinsky and William J. Milne, "The Effect of Incumbency in the 1984 Federal and 1985 Ontario Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (June 1986): 339; David Butler and Dennis Kavanaugh, *The British General Election of 1979* (London: Macmillan, 1980): 316.

[15] Bruce E. Cain, "Blessed Be the Tie That Unbinds: Constituency Work and the Vote Swing in Great Britain," *Political Studies* (Mar. 1983): 104-7.

[16] Phillips Cutright and Peter H. Rossi, "Party Organization in Primary Elections," *American Journal of Sociology* (Nov. 1958): 269.

[17] Seyd and Whiteley "The Influence of Local Campaigning" 92-109. See also Whiteley et al. 215-217.

[18] Pattie et al. "Measuring Local Campaign Effects" 479; Kavanaugh 31.

representative must be considered with one vote. Pure tactical voting evolves from considerations such as minority versus majority governance, "sending a message" to the governing party, or ousting the incumbent. Tactical voting reacts to the fluctuations of expectations of a party's chances of winning the riding.[19]

A theoretical explanation for tactical voting in marginal contests has been offered for application in other countries. The "rational tactical party" suggests that more a rational party has to gain, the more it campaigns and spends in ridings where it has a chance of winning. Comparably, the "rational tactical voter" votes tactically only when his or her preferred party is not in first or second place, and the number of tactical voters increases with the marginality of the seat. Tactical voters are relatively uncommon, forming less than 10 percent of those who vote. But because tactical voters can be swayed by constituency campaigning, they should be targeted in marginal contests by the campaign running second.[20]

2.4 Generally, the constituency contest's influence on vote share is under 10 percent.

The dialectic of the constituency campaign's importance is not limited to a polarization between political scientists and practitioners. Because of the countless variables and uniqueness of each campaign environment, the lack of a definitive measurement has produced conflicting findings over time and across locations. This has produced inconsistent conclusions among researchers. For example, Eldersveld's examination of American local election apathetics determined that 10 hours of canvassing is required for each successful induction to vote. Understandably, this caused him to question canvassing's time/cost

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[19] R. Johnston et al. 198.
[20] Fieldhouse et al. 416-418.

value.[21] Conversely, the authors of a British study of canvassing determined that it is "a weapon of considerable potential."[22] Complicating the methodological problem is that many researchers have focused on single elements of a constituency campaign, rather than the combined effect of all local activities on vote decisions.

Studies which have clearly expressed the latter in numeric values can be generalized into three categories of potential effects on the outcome: *limited potential impact* (negative to under +2% change in vote share), *moderate potential impact* (+2% to under +5% increase), and *high potential impact* (+5% or over increase). As their names attest, these categories assume that the context of the campaign is a marginal contest.

The generalization that constituency contest activities have a negligible net impact is supported by an insubstantial collection of studies. The most credible of the *limited potential impact* findings was recently produced by Denver and Hands in their article "Constituency Campaigning in the 1992 General Election: The Peculiar Case of the Conservatives." They determined that the local activities of British Conservatives in 1992 had no net positive impact, uniquely because Conservative supporters voted regardless of campaign strength and because support levels had peaked in previous campaigns.[23] Other American studies have also found limited effects.[24] The most skeptical social scientist is probably Swaddle, whose

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[21] Samuel J. Eldersveld, "Experimental Propaganda Techniques and Voting Behavior," *American Political Science Review* (Mar. 1956) 165.

[22] Bochel and Denver "Canvassing" 257-269.

[23] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning in the 1992 General Election": 85-105.

[24] Price and Lupfer 429-433; Gerald H. Kramer, "The Effects of Precinct-Level Canvassing on Voter Behavior," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* (Winter 1970-71): 560-572.

because support levels had peaked in previous campaigns.[23] Other American studies have also found limited effects.[24] The most skeptical social scientist is probably Swaddle, whose British study of canvassing found limited effects, leading him to assert that unorganized canvasses are "an unequivocal waste of time" which are an irrational use of party resources.[25]

Few studies have found evidence that the constituency campaign has *moderate potential impact*. Controlled canvass testing in Britain and the U.S. have increases in partisan voting of between 4 and 4.5 percent.[26] Indications of increased voter support, fewer defections, and a "very small" canvassing effect have been detected in national British elections.[27] In local American elections, it has been found that personal contact and elite mobilization produce minimal effects which are worthwhile activities.[28]

Despite those studies which have found limited effects, most specialists have determined that activities have generally *high potential impact*, particularly if the contest is expected to be marginal. In the United States, Cutright and Rossi have concluded that grass roots activities in the 1950s are worth about a 5 percent vote margin,[29] while Crotty's early 1970s evidence suggested that party activity makes a difference of between 4 and 20

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[23] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning in the 1992 General Election": 85-105.

[24] Price and Lupfer 429-433; Gerald H. Kramer, "The Effects of Precinct-Level Canvassing on Voter Behavior," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* (Winter 1970-71): 560-572.

[25] Kevin Swaddle, "Doorstep Electioneering in Britain: An Exploration of the Constituency Canvass," *Electoral Studies* (Apr. 1988): 41-66.

[26] Bochel and Denver "Canvassing" 257-269; Blydenburgh 374-375.

[27] Pattie et al. "Measuring Local Campaign Effects" 479; Martin Harrop et al., "Does neighbourhood influence voting behaviour — and why?" *British Elections and Parties Yearbook 1991*, Ivor Crewe et al., eds. (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992): 112-113.

[28] Susan E. Howell and William S. Oiler, "Campaign Activities and Local Election Outcomes," *Social Science Quarterly* (March 1981): 155-158.

[29] Phillips Cutright and Peter H. Rossi, "Grass Roots Politicians and the Vote," *American Sociological Review*, Apr. 1958: 179.

percent.[30] In Britain, Denver and Hands claim that above average campaign efforts can raise vote shares by up to 6.2% and believe that findings of lesser effects are "revisionist literature."[31] Studies have shown that British Labour party activity significantly mobilizes the Labour vote share,[32] and Pattie et al.'s examination of British elections from 1983 to 1992 found a relationship between party effort, its vote levels, and decreasing opponent vote levels.[33] Other British researchers have claimed that constituency campaigning has "an influence,"[34] and that it is rational because increased party spending produces higher turnout among supporters.[35] In Australia, it has been calculated that intense campaigning by a challenger can translate into 5 percent more vote share than an identical challenger.[36] These studies may serve to further motivate practitioners:

> following the evidence of such early researchers as Katz, Eldersveld, Cutright, and Rossi, many experienced campaigners think in terms of a 5-percent rule. That is, if a substantial effort is put forth, other things being equal, it will bring the campaign an increment of up to a 5-percent margin; in the absence of any opposition efforts, it may be slightly higher.[37]

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[30] Crotty 447; A.H. Taylor, "The Effect of Party Organization: Correlation Between Campaign Expenditure and Voting in the 1970 Election," *Political Studies* (Sept. 1972): 331.

[31] David Denver and Gordon Hands, "Measuring the intensity and effectiveness of constituency campaigning in the 1992 general election," *British Elections and Parties Yearbook 1993*. David Denver et al., eds. (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993): 229-242; Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning in the 1992 General Election" 85-105.

[32] Paul F. Whiteley and Patrick Seyd, "Local Party Campaigning and Electoral Mobilization in Britain," *Journal of Politics* (Feb. 1994): 242-252; J.M. Bochel and D.T. Denver, "The Impact of the Campaign on the Results of Local Government Elections," *British Journal of Political Science* (Apr. 1972): 239-260.

[33] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 969-983.

[34] R. J. Johnston et al., "The Impact of Constituency Spending on the Result of the 1987 British General Election," *Electoral Studies* (Aug. 1989): 143-155; R. J. Johnston, *Money and Votes: Constituency Campaign Spending and Election Results* (London: Croon Helm, 1987): 206-208.

[35] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 969-983; Eldersveld and Dodge 532-542.

[36] Studlar and McAllister 402-404.

[37] Agranoff 416.

British and American researchers have found evidence that increased turnout is produced by party contact. These contacts maintain interest in a campaign, particularly in historically-low turnout areas where a significant majority are sympathetic to the position of the canvasser and which attract the most highly-organized efforts.[38] Contrary to the beliefs of practitioners, constituency activities are more likely to increase voter turnout than convert voters in those countries,[39] possibly because of choice crystallization before receiving canvassing information or media reminders of the obligation to vote.[40] In Britain and the U.S., constituency campaigning's dominant effect is to increase turnout levels by up to 10 percent.[41] Denver and Hands' use of an index of campaign intensity found that intense campaigning likely increases turnout by 5 percent,[42] and canvassing has been found to increase turnout by up to 3.9 percent.[43]

But is there a full consensus? While controlled testing of British Labour canvassing found that it increased turnout by 10 percent,[44] another study found that turnout did not increase with Labour canvassing.[45] Moreover, Black tested whether competition in Canada increases canvassing efforts and the profile of the constituency campaign. He discovered that

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[38] Alice S. Kitt and David B. Gleicher, "Determinants of Voting Behaviour," *Public Opinion and Propaganda*, Daniel Katz et al., eds. (New York: Dryden Press, 1954): 415; Kavanaugh 31; Price and Lupfer 434.

[39] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 969-983; Eldersveld and Dodge 532-542.

[40] Blydenburgh 380-381.

[41] Eldersveld 158; Kramer 560-572; M. Margaret Conway, "Voter Information Sources in a Nonpartisan Local Election," *Western Political Quarterly* (21, 1968): 75; Bochel and Denver "The Impact of the Campaign" 239-260.

[42] Denver and Hands, "Constituency Campaigning," *Parliamentary Affairs* (Oct. 1992): 542-543.

[43] Price and Lupfer 429-433.

[44] Bochel and Denver "Canvassing" 257-269.

[45] Whiteley and Seyd "Local Party Campaigning" 242-252.

candidate contact among nonvoters *decreased* turnout and that the effects of canvassing on turnout is dependent on competition levels and past voting patterns.[46]

[46] Black 353-374.

CHAPTER 4
THE EFFECTS OF CONSTITUENCY ACTIVITIES

It is believed that some constituency activities are more effective than others, particularly where the candidate is able to directly contact the voter. If the candidate is physically unable to contact all voters during the campaign, surrogate activities such as literature distribution, advertising, and party worker contacts are used. Because resources are limited and efficiency is vital, constituency campaigners would be wise to consult the scientific analyses of the effectiveness of each surrogate activity while considering who their target audience is. This last consideration is particularly important where new technology is supplementing traditional activities.

3.1 Constituency contest activities have ranges of effectiveness.

The constituency campaign comprises many independent activities which have the potential to affect vote outcome. The principal activity is the door-to-door or telephone canvass (by the candidate or party workers). Although canvassing is the most visible activity of the local candidate — most other activities are primarily organizational and do not involve direct contact with voters[1] — identifying supporters is potentially an exercise in futility. This is because the number of actual supporters is deceptive if based on inaccurate voter responses.

The most common surrogate for personal contact is literature distribution. The most basic form of campaigning is the random delivery of brochures to residences in the constituency. These pamphlets provide an overview of the party or candidate's platform; an

overview of the candidate's qualifications and goals; campaign headquarter information; and the election date is usually included. More sophisticated distribution occurs through direct mail, which is personalized material or literature sent via the postal system to a past or potential supporter, and is a characteristic method of initial fund-raising activities or candidacy announcement. Further, common other activities employed involve advertising (primarily print, radio, television or signage) or rallies (e.g. all-candidates debates, public meetings, shopping mall blitzes, or simply waving to commuting traffic).

Voter contact can be "high impact" or "low impact." In high impact activities (e.g. direct contacts such as canvassing or direct mail) contact is personalized and technology enables direct two-way conversations with voters. Low impact voter contact — often through literature distribution or signage — is less persuasive and less personalized than high intensity activities but still creates candidate awareness.[2] In the quarter-century since it was noted that "little is known about the effect of different means of political communication in accomplishing their goal" in constituency contests,[3] numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of specific activities. However, there are still many questions to be answered about the effectiveness of specific high or low impact activities.

3.2 Organized personal contact with a voter is the most effective means of contact.

Practitioners believe that direct contact with the candidate is the most effective; failing that, poll captains (campaigners who are responsible for a particular section of the riding) try to organize support through friends, neighbours or relatives living in the riding.

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[1] As exemplified in Kavanaugh's survey of British politicians' activities. See Kavanaugh 43.
[2] Robinson 139-143.
[3] Blydenburgh 365.

Research surveys of Canadian candidates, campaign managers and constituency associations have found the canvass to be the most highly rated campaign activity and important communication method.[4]

Studies in other countries have confirmed that direct contact is one of the most effective election efforts. Multiple examinations have found that canvassing positively affects vote levels.[5] It is believed to increase the awareness in an election over time, encourages support from voters' friends, and is a means of identifying volunteers, donors, or those who will display a lawn sign.[6] In campaigns where constituency campaigning is the only source of information (e.g. where the news media have ignored the local campaign), there is a reduction in conflicting information and increased effectiveness of personal contact.[7] In Canada, direct contact is thought to have a "stronger influence" and be "substantially more important" than incumbency.[8]

But not all social scientists concur. American researchers have found that that personal contact increases turnout but does not alter preference,[9] while Kavanaugh has found that most candidate contact is among partisans due to the tendency for candidates to focus on supportive areas.[10] Moreover, the effectiveness of all canvasses has been placed in doubt by

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[4] Bell and Bolan 101; Carty *Canadian Political Parties* 185.

[5] For an overview of such literature see Eagles "Money and Votes" 434-5 and Johnston "A Further Look" 466-73.

[6] Bochel and Denver "Canvassing" 257-269; Swaddle 41-66; Lazarsfeld et al. 157; Agranoff 284-287.

[7] Blydenburgh 380-381.

[8] Heitzman 113-14.

[9] Swaddle 41-66; Kramer 560-572.

[10] Kavanaugh 29.

the documentation of an American case study's high levels of misreporting in identifying voter support.[11]

3.3 Door-to-door contact is more effective than telephone contact.

If campaigners are unable to reach all constituents, why do they not focus on telephone canvassing? Simply because although the telephone canvass has some advantages over the door-to-door canvass, the latter is generally believed to be the more effective method. The advantages of telephoning includes contacting those who do not answer their doors or live in apartment complexes; it enables canvassing during harsh weather; and it is more time/cost efficient. Telephone canvassing is useful in unsafe ridings; repeated attempts at non-contacts are easier; and unpresentable, private, disabled, or elderly volunteers are able to canvass.[12]

Nevertheless, it has been shown that these advantages are offset by the increased personal contact provided by door-to-door contact. In the United States, Blydenberg's controlled experiment found door-to-door canvassing increased partisan voting by 4.5 percent but telephone canvassing's effects were negligible.[13] Although a by-product of an Eldersveld municipal study was the finding that telephone, student and party worker canvassing all produced similar turnout effects,[14] only Blydenberg has specifically studied the differences of personal contacting. It is worth noting that in Canada, the NDP is believed to be the best

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[11] Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, *Political Parties in Action: The Battle of Barons Court* (New York: Free Press, 1968): 227-230.

[12] Brook 69 and 188-89.

[13] Blydenburgh 374-375.

[14] Eldersveld 160-161.

practitioner of the door-to-door canvass, and the Progressive Conservative party executes the most effective telephone canvass.[15]

3.4 Literature distribution performs best as a supplement to direct contact.

Although random literature distribution is believed to have some limited effects, personally addressed direct mail is more efficient. Although more costly, it has novel advantages: it can be well-targeted through demographics, polling or voter files; repeat contacts to targeted groups are cost-efficient; and it is difficult for challengers to counter effectively.[16] Despite these distinct benefits, studies indicate that all forms of literature distribution perform best as *supplements* to direct contact.

In the U.S., Eldersveld and Dodge's study found that personal contact is more effective than mail contact,[17] as did Eldersveld's field experiment. There, turnout in the control group was 33 percent, 59 percent among those who received mail propaganda and 75 percent among those who were personally contacted by canvassers; further, Eldersveld's results showed that 25% of "hard core of local election apathetics" were activated to vote through personal contact, compared to 10 percent of those contacted by mail or the 6 percent in the control group.[18]

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[15] Carty *Canadian Political Parties* 177 and Krashinsky and Milne "Some Evidence on the Effects of Incumbency" 63.

[16] Robinson 142.

[17] Eldersveld and Dodge 541. See also Harold D. Clarke et al., *Political Choice in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1979): chapter 9.

[18] Eldersveld believes that literature is either "rational mail propaganda" (emphasizing facts and intellectual appeal) or "moral mail propaganda" (emphasizing civic duty). See Eldersveld 157-160.

In Canada, it has been found that information provided in a constituency campaign has "some influence" on voters,[19] although literature distribution may be ineffective.[20] There is a weak positive relationship between contact (literature alone or literature with personal) and party vote support,[21] and Black has found mail and flyer distribution to be generally effective.[22]

3.5 The impact of campaign paraphernalia is scientifically untested.

Constituency contests are invariably outfitted with a range of paraphernalia, such as signs (lawn or window), bumper stickers, balloons, pins, magnets, posters, hats, T-shirts, and innumerable others. These promotions likely provide reinforcement rather than conversion, although there has been little study of their effects.

An American study determined that the primary effects of signs and bumper stickers is that they reinforce neighborhood perceptions and increase the importance of party activity.[23] Some Canadian academics have mused that such political paraphernalia might increase vote share and stimulate the morale of canvassers.[24] However, it must be repeated that there appears to have been no scientific examination of the precise effects (if any) of these paraphernalia on vote share.

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[19] Johnston "Information Provision" 140.

[20] Heitzman 111.

[21] As reported in table 9.13 "Reported Contact by the Parties in 1974 Campaign, by Voting Behaviour in 1972 and 1974" in Clarke et al. *Political Choice* 295.

[22] Black 351-374.

[23] Robert Huckfeldt and John Sprague, "Political Parties and Electoral Mobilization: Political Structure, Social Structure, and the Party Canvass," *American Political Science Review* (Mar. 1992): 82-83. Brook believes same. See Brook 72-74 and 140.

[24] Seymour Isenberg, "Can you spend your way into the House of Commons?" *Optimum* (11,1: 1980): 36-38; Desmond Morton, "The effectiveness of political campaigning: the NDP in the 1967 Ontario election," *Journal of Canadian Studies* (Aug. 1969): 25.

3.6 Repeated contacts increase effects.

It is widely believed that the effects of an initial personal contact increase with subsequent contacts. For example, practitioners within Canada's New Democratic Party have claimed use of a "secret weapon" of constituency campaigning: one to two personal visits before an imminent election call, followed by three personal contacts during the campaign, supplemented with candidate participation in canvassing, rallies and other political activities, with an aim of developing a "personal relationship of confidence between the canvasser and the elector."[25]

Most evidence contradicts an American finding that repeated contacts have little additional effect.[26] British studies show that contact effects increase as campaigning levels increase,[27] and that repeated canvassing increases turnout and likely increases share of the vote.[28] If contacts focus on known supporters, then another American study has substantiated their hypothesis. In Conway's late 1960s case study of a municipal election turnout was 75 percent among those contacted 4 or more times, 60 percent among those contacted 1-3 times, and 40 percent among those not contacted.[29]

3.7 Contact with non-supporters should be avoided.

Although practitioners are advised to concentrate high impact voter contact in areas where the candidate or party's support is low,[30] contacting non-supporters is not a rational exercise. This approach of concentrating resources in favorable areas produces lower turnout

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[25] Morton 24.
[26] Kramer 560-572.
[27] Whiteley et al. 209.
[28] Bochel and Denver "Canvassing" 257-269.
[29] Conway "Voter Information Sources" 75.

in the candidate's worst polls, and encourages leads in a majority of polls. A Canadian practitioner explains this theory:

> by showing little visibility, there is less reason for supporters of the opponent to get out and work and contribute money. When the opponent's supporters do not perceive much threat to their candidate, they are less motivated to turn out and vote. This strategy is particularly effective if it is already known who most of the supporters are in these poor polls, from identification in previous elections. A campaign following this plan would then contact only these known supporters, and leave others alone.[31]

In Canada, Black's examination of "competitive contacting" led him to determine the importance of an opponent's contacts with a party's known supporters. He reasoned that reinforcement is a consequence of multiparty canvassing. Because a single contact from the "preferred" party has little impact, but contact from all parties encourages activation, he concluded that the party which removes and destroys opposition leaflets and signs in areas of known support denies the critical benefits of opposition contact (which implies that the destruction of opposition leaflets and signs in areas of known weak support is productive). However, canvassers should avoid counter-productive contacting in areas where support is weakest. When controlling for competitive contacting in a 1974 federal election dataset, Black found that contact from opposition parties incited traditional party supporters to support their own party.[32] Canadian campaigners should also consider findings from other countries. For example, those American campaigns focusing on marginal areas or soft partisans should first use a telephone canvass to eliminate confirmed opponents. Otherwise, constituency campaign contacts may unintentionally activate opposing votes.[33]

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[30] Robinson 139-143.
[31] Brook 51.
[32] Black 353-374.
[33] Price and Lupfer 437-438.

3.8 Election day activities are scientifically untested.

There is a significant lack of testing of the effectiveness of the climax of constituency campaigning, GOTV activities. British opinion surveys in the 1950s indicated that 8 percent of voters were driven to the polls by party workers, causing Kavanaugh to allege that 6 percent of voters would not have voted without such transportation.[34] Although GOTV efforts are believed by Canadian practitioners to be crucial to the result,[35] it appears that no controlled testing of the impact of such efforts has been organized and that studies incorporate this activity into overall analysis. As the climax of constituency campaign organization, clearly election day activities deserve more analysis.

3.9 Print advertising is most effective and efficient in constituency contests.

The print media are among the most powerful and cost-effective conditioners. Academics, in countries considered here, agree that dollar-for-dollar newspaper advertising is the most efficient and effective medium. It is also likely more effective at increasing candidates' vote share than radio or television advertising.[36]

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[34] Kavanaugh 31. Scarrow has noted that in Canada 22% of voters reported being driven to the polls by political parties during the 1949 federal election, although certainly this dependency is not the case with modern voters (but transportation demands should increase with an aging population). See Howard A. Scarrow, "Three Dimensions of a Local Political Party," *Papers on the 1962 Election*, John Meisel, ed. (Toronto: U of T Press, 1964): 57-58.

[35] A survey of candidates and campaign managers revealed this perception. See Bell and Bolan 102.

[36] Isenberg "Can you spend" 36-38; Jeffrey B. Abramson et al., *The Electronic Commonwealth: The Impact of New Media Technologies on Democratic Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 1988): 114-15; Ronald T. Rust et al., "Efficient and Inefficient Media for Political Campaign Advertising," *Journal of Advertising* (13, 3: 1984): 45-49; Seymour Isenberg, "Spend and Win? Another Look at Federal Election Expenses," *Optimum* (12,4: 1981): 5-15; Kristian S. Palda, "Does Advertising Influence Votes? An Analysis of the 1966 and 1970 Quebec Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (Dec. 1973): 638-653.

In the United States, Conway has found that the print media is a strong source of constituency campaign information. Most interestingly, she discovered a correlation between newspaper subscriptions/coverage and voting turnout.[37] We must thus reason that print media advertising or news coverage is a strong counterpart of the canvass.

Numerous other studies have been conducted in the United States on the subject. One examination of political advertising found that canvassing and advertising interact in low-level races where voters welcome it, but not in highly competitive ones where voters react negatively to promotions.[38] A 1985 study of the Houston mayor's race suggests that advertising is particularly effective in municipal elections. Because the municipal electorate tends to be ignorant of issues, candidate image factors are most critical: those who switched their vote intention to the winner did so as a result of the candidate-provided information which influenced her image.[39] In Canada, it has been determined that the most volatile and latest to decide voters are the most influenced by the media.[40]

Worth considering is Lazarsfeld et al.'s belief that propaganda merely reinforces party supporters' decisions through partisan arguments and reassurances[41] or the position that candidate partisans are the most likely to develop word-of-mouth communication.[42]

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[37] Conway "Voter Information Sources" 71.

[38] Michael Rothschild, "Political Advertising: A Neglected Policy Issue in Marketing," *Journal of Market Research* (Feb. 1978): 58-71.

[39] Hurley and Wilson 35.

[40] Fletcher 365.

[41] Lazarsfeld et al. 88.

[42] Drummond and Fletcher 116.

3.10 Spending in constituency contests increases voter support.

There is a general consensus outside Canada that a positive relationship exists between increased spending by constituency campaigns and vote levels. It has been found in Britain and the United States that increased party spending typically produces a higher turnout of supporters.[43] In the latter, it has been found that that spending — whether direct, such as television advertising, or indirect, such as increased canvassing levels — increases contact levels and voter support, although many financial expenditures do not necessarily affect electoral outcome.[44] In the former, Pattie et al. have found that spending increases vote share regardless of opponent spending levels. They have also found that challengers' votes increase with spending levels and a party's votes increase rather than diminish opponent vote levels.[45] However, others have found that spending increases one's own support and opponent spending depresses it.[46] This last suggestion can also be applied to Canada.[47]

In Britain, relationships between spending and increased canvassing levels have been documented.[48] Seyd and Whiteley, for example, found that for every percent increase (of the maximum) in British Conservative spending in 1992, there would have been a 0.133 percent increase in the Conservative vote share. A similar increase by Labour would have decreased the Conservative share by 0.079 percent, and a similar increase by Liberal Democrats would have reduced the Conservative vote by 0.061 percent. Had the Conservative party increased

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[43] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 969-983; Eldersveld and Dodge 532-542.
[44] Johnston et al. "The Impact of Constituency Spending" 143-155; Johnston *Money and Votes* 178 and 206-208.
[45] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 975.
[46] Johnston and Pattie 269.
[47] Eagles "Money and Votes" 441.
[48] Whiteley et al. 201-203.

its average spending levels by 10 percent, it would have increased its overall vote share by 1.3 percent, making marginal seats more winnable.[49] In Canada, federal election data from 1979 to 1988 suggests that every 1 percent increase in spending produced a one-fifth percent increase in vote share, up to a potential vote increase of 16 percent.[50]

Up to 80 percent of constituency campaign spending in Britain and Canada is on information provision such as printing, stationary, and advertising.[51] Those parties spending the most on such advertising fare the best versus incumbent parties and candidates.[52] Western political parties tend to concentrate their resources in marginal ridings, producing the most efficient results;[53] those that do not — such as Progressive Conservatives in 1984 and 1988 — do not receive a significant increase in vote share from spending.[54] Most parties are thus rational in their fundraising and spending, further challenging the view that constituency campaign activities are rituals. Johnston and Pattie comment on the situation in Britain:

> First, it is clear that parties are rational in their campaigning activity: they raise and spend more money for the campaign in the seats that they are defending and in the more marginal constituencies. Second, the pattern of activity indicated by spending levels is clearly related to the distribution of votes: in general terms, the more that a party spends (relative to the maximum allowed) the better its relative performance. Finally, because of variations in how much parties spend, increasing expenditure to the maximum could influence the outcome in a not insignificant number of seats. The ritual, it seems, has both purpose and consequence.[55]

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[49] Seyd and Whiteley "The Influence of Local Campaigning" 92-109.

[50] Heitzman 132.

[51] Isenberg "Can you spend" 33; Johnston "Information Provision" 131; Johnston and Pattie 270-1; Preyra 168; F. Leslie Seidle and Khayyam Zev Paltiel, "Party Finance, the Election Expenses Act and Campaign Spending in 1979 and 1980," *Canada at the Polls 1979 and 1980*, Howard R. Penniman, ed. (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1981); Johnston "A Further Look" 468.

[52] Johnston "Information Provision" 140.

[53] Coyte and Landon 795-818; Johnston and Pattie 263; Eagles "Money and Votes" 438.

[54] Eagles "Money and Votes" 441-445.

[55] Johnston and Pattie 271.

In Canada, incumbents who do not spend at least 80 percent of the legal spending limit (or challengers not spending at least 90 percent) are significantly disadvantaged. Isenberg's examination of the 1979 Canadian election found that candidates spent an average of 40 percent of spending limits (59 percent among those belonging to any of the four major parties), but that winning candidates spent approximately 83 percent of the limit, while losing candidates spent approximately 29 percent. Moreover, candidates who spent the most won in 57 percent of ridings; those who spent the second most won 38 percent; and those who spent the third most won only 5 percent. Moreover, he found that winning candidates spend approximately three times more on advertising than losing candidates. This led him to conclude that candidates must spend approximately 80 percent of their limit to have a chance of victory, and that challengers may have to spend even more.[56]

But there is a point where spending produces diminishing returns. Canadian practitioners are reputed to remark that "the first dollar spent on a campaign will have as much impact as the last five."[57] Outside of Canada, this belief has been scientifically confirmed. Although spending in American Congressional elections can increase challengers' vote shares by up to 12 percent, it has been found that it can also decrease shares by the same percentage.[58] In Britain, only fractions of a percent of vote shares have changed for spending increases of up to 22 percent, suggesting that increased spending produces (at best) a very low number of votes gained.[59] In addition, increased expenditures by incumbents have an inconsequential impact on support levels of either themselves or their opponents.

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[56] Isenberg "Can You Spend" 32-34; Isenberg "Spend and Win?" 5-15.

[57] Brook 136.

[58] Gary C. Jacobson, "The Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections: New Evidence for Old Arguments," *American Journal of Political Science* (May 1990): 357.

[59] Taylor 330.

Further, this might produce tactical voting, increasing support levels for both the incumbent and another candidate.[60]

3.11 District association activity levels are generally indicators of success.

An indicator of a party's potential constituency campaign success is the size and activity level of its constituency organization. This has been well documented in Britain.

Students of British politics have found that increased local party membership can increase a party's vote.[61] There, the structural strength of the organization is more important than the candidate nominated or campaign activity, particularly for minority parties.[62] District association activities are so important that British local campaign activities are only rational if one's party organization is very efficient and the others are very inefficient.[63]

British local parties are generally more effective in areas where they already have support. Denver and Hands have found that British parties campaign better in these ridings.[64] Seyd and Whiteley's extensive study of party membership found that the number of voters canvassed was linked to the activity level of the constituency party; that an augmenting party membership suggests an increasing vote share; that a relationship exists between party membership and constituency party activism, and between party activism and vote share; and that membership recruitment drives by constituency parties are apt to increase the party share

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[60] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 975; Johnston and Pattie 263.

[61] Ben Pimlott, "Does Local Party Organization Matter?," *British Journal of Political Science* (2, 1972): 381-3; Ben Pimlott, "Local Party Organization, Turnout, and Marginality," *British Journal of Political Science* (3, 1973): 252-5; Whiteley et al. 194.

[62] John P. Frendreis et al., "The Electoral Relevance of Local Party Organizations," *American Political Science Review* (Mar. 1990): 230-231. See also Daniel Katz and Samuel J. Eldersveld, "The Impact of Local Party Activity Upon the Electorate," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Spring, 1961): 24.

[63] Kavanaugh 31. See also Harold F. Gosnell, *Getting Out the Vote: An Experiment in the Stimulation of Voting* (Chicago, Illinois: U of Chicago P, 1927): 47.

in the ensuing election.[65] They have concluded that because local activities mobilize the vote, political parties need to maintain active constituency organizations to best ensure constituency campaign success.

In Canada, there is evidence that larger local organization membership and more active fund-raising activities exist in incumbents' ridings.[66] Moreover, it has been found that active local party associations, particularly in marginal contests, may have determined the outcome in some ridings in the 1993 general election.[67]

3.12 As durable partisanship decreases, constituency campaigning effectiveness increases.

The decline of partisanship in Canada[68] has produced increased levels of electoral volatility, turnover, and low inter-election support for governments. This decline has occurred more rapidly than in Britain,[69] and significantly more than in the United States where partisanship facilitates the decision-making process in frequent elections and

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[64] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning in the 1992 General Election" 85-105.

[65] Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley, *Labour's Grass Roots: The Politics of Party Membership* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992): 184-200; Whiteley and Seyd "Labour's Vote" 582-595; Seyd and Whiteley "The Influence of Local Campaigning" 92-109.

[66] R.K. Carty, "Party Organization and Activity on the Ground," *Canadian Parties in Transition*. 2nd ed. A. Brian Tanguay and Alain-G. Gagnon, eds. (Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1996): 191-199; Carty *Canadian Political Parties* 33-40.

[67] Bill Cross, "Local Party Association Activity and Electoral Success," *Canadian Parliamentary Review* (Spring 1998): 14-16.

[68] Lawrence LeDuc et al., "Partisanship, Voting Behaviour, and Election Outcomes in Canada," *Comparative Politics* (July 1980): 401-417; Clarke et al. *Absent Mandate* 46-49; Clarke et al. *Political Choice* 136-137 and 383-385; Blake "Party Competition" 253-273; John Ferejohn and Brian Gaines, "The Personal Vote in Canada," in *Representation, Integration and Political Parties in Canada* 280; Joseph Wearing, ed. *The Ballot and its Message: Voting in Canada* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991).

[69] Philip Norton, "The Growth of the Constituency Role of the MP," *Parliamentary Affairs* (Oct. 1994): 716.

inconspicuous offices.[70] Although consistent party support measurement in Canada is difficult because of different party identifications at the federal and provincial levels, the lack of durable federal party allegiance is startling: 24.3 percent of those who voted in the 1984 Canadian election voted for a different party in 1988, and 42 percent of 1988 voters supported a different party by 1993. During this time, the number of durable partisans decreased from 52 percent to 34 percent.[71] This points to a weakening partisanship which has likely not peaked,[72] for it is thought that once a voter has voted for another party it becomes easier each time, and the increasing importance of candidate factors further detract from party considerations.[73]

In an environment of declining partisanship, candidate factors increase in voting importance. This has caused the effects of constituency campaigning to increase within expanding volatility levels. In Britain, this increase is partially due to the declining link between class and party choice over the last twenty years.[74] In Canada, although its effects remain limited among durable partisans, it has many significant effects on flexible partisans and non-party identifiers.[75] This has been explained:

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[70] Blake "Party Competition" 255-259; Richard Johnston et al. 80. An overview of volatility research in the United States can be found in Gary C. Jacobson, *Money in Congressional Elections* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1980).

[71] Heitzman 119-120; LeDuc "The Canadian Voter" 372-381.

[72] Himmelweit et al.'s longitudinal panel study indicates that voter volatility will continue to increase and that the influence of past voting decisions will diminish over time. See Hilde T. Himmelweit et al., *How Voters Decide: A model of vote choice based on a special longitudinal study extending over fifteen years and the British election surveys of 1970-1983* (Milton Keynes, England: Open U P, 1985): 204-205.

[73] Wilson 29; Cain et al. 111-123; Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina; Price and Lupfer 438.

[74] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning" 528-529.

[75] LeDuc et al. 411; Cunningham 287-290.

> In recent decades, dealignment in voters' attachments to political parties have led voters to rely increasingly heavily upon other voting cues. Prominent among these cues may be specific candidate appeals, where candidates make direct and well-defined appeals to their voters, or constituency service, with elected representatives providing personal services for their constituents. To the extent, then, that voters become increasingly swayed by local candidates rather than by national trends or partisanship, it follows that candidates will place more emphasis upon their individual, constituency-based campaigns and that these campaigns, in turn, will have an increasing impact upon the result.[76]

This environment has increased the value of personal contact and candidate considerations.[77] and challenger activities are especially more important, because incumbents' efforts to increase personal voting intensify.[78]

Constituency campaigners must adjust their activities to capitalize on the expanding numbers of candidate partisans by targeting those who are in the stages of becoming volatile.[79] However, they will have to do this with fewer personnel, for declining numbers of volunteers accompanies receding partisanship.[80] They must also consider that between 8 and 12 percent of voters at the federal level are new voters[81] who may not have developed party loyalty.

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[76] Bowler et al. 461. To substantiate this claim, the authors refer to Thomas M. Holbrook, *The Sound and the Fury: The Impact of Campaigns in Contemporary Presidential Elections* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996); and Martin P. Wattenberg, *The Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics: Presidential Elections of the 1980s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1991).

[77] Jacobson *Money* 35.

[78] Heitzman 118-119.

[79] Price and Lupfer 437-438.

[80] Whiteley et al. 231. For example, American campaigns are increasingly recruiting consultants and focusing on television advertising. It was reported in the recent high-profile New York city mayoral campaign that "so few election signs and posters in Manhattan that no visitor would even know there is a campaign under way without turning on the television set." See Brian Milner, "Money's the name of game" *Globe and Mail* (1 Nov. 1997): A13.

[81] LeDuc "The Canadian Voter" 381.

3.13 Contact effects increase among the least interested, undecided, or least likely to vote.

It has been argued that the effectiveness of personal contact is increasing because campaigns have become "impersonal, centrally-directed, media dominated affairs."[82] Surely, contacts are more effective among some voters than others? In the U.S., it has been determined that national-level campaigning is most effective among the undecided, the least interested, or those otherwise unlikely to vote. Lazarsfeld et al. found that voters who make a complete change in their voting decision are the least interested, the least politically aware, the last to decide, and the most likely to be persuaded by personal contact.[83] Further, it has been determined that voters who are undecided at the beginning of a campaign are most influenced by constituency campaigning.[84]

There are gains to be made among potential non-voters, the undecided or the uninterested, where the candidate's importance is heightened and voters are more susceptible to candidate activities. Potential nonvoters have been classified into five groups: "boycotters" (opposed to the political system and/or those involved in it), "retired voters" (former voters now too elderly or unhealthy), "barbarians" (lowest level of political knowledge, perhaps more likely to be younger voters), "poorly informed spectators" and "well informed spectators" (low-levels of political involvement and voting cross-pressures). To different degrees, all potential nonvoters are potential voters; the challenge for constituency campaigners is to mobilize potential candidate partisans. As boycotters and barbarians require the most effort to mobilize, strategists might consider providing

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[82] Price and Lupfer 410.
[83] Lazarsfeld et al. 69.

transportation for retired voters and attempting multiple personal contacts — particularly by the candidate — with spectators to induce voting based on known potential support. Such mobilization might induce boycotter or barbarian voting. Therefore, where there is a couple comprising of a barbarian and a poorly informed spectator, mobilizing one to the polls might result in both being mobilized.[85]

3.14 Contact effects increase as jurisdiction size decreases.

Because canvassing seeks to limit abstentions rather than convert, and there is significantly more abstention in municipal elections than national elections, the potential effects of local campaign activities are greater in municipal contests than sub-national contests. The effects of activity in municipal contests have been examined by many American academics (Conway, Howell and Oiler, Hurley and Wilson, Price and Lupfer, Sheffield and Goering, Eldersveld) and British researchers (prominently Bochel and Denver). But there is much less research on Canadian municipal campaigns. This is an oddity because, unlike most American and British municipalities, Canadian municipal campaigns are typically non-partisan (with the notable exceptions of Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Québec's municipalities), removing important voting factors which exist at the national or provincial level. Conversely, constituency campaign studies have been conducted in the United States or Britain *because* of the role of political parties in municipal campaigns. Canadian studies examining the effectiveness of uniform campaign activities in non-partisan settings are sorely needed.

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[84] Hurley and Wilson 38.

[85] J.A. Laponce, "Non-Voting and Non-Voters: A Typology," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* (Feb. 1967): 82-86.

3.15 Neighborhood and demographic effects.

Political scientists and sociologists —both within and outside of Canada — have determined that vote choices are a result of a multitude of social or cultural influences, where culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status, family background, traditions, class, gender, language, regionalism and/or other divisions create psychological attachments to a political grouping.[86] Examples of different approaches to personal contacts, spending and differences between ridings indicate that political cultures — combinations of political knowledge, values, evaluations, political beliefs, and attitudes towards political symbols, institutions, or other members of the electorate[87] — alter constituency activities between and within countries. For example, Canadians are more likely to be personally contacted by candidates or party workers than Britons.[88]

Whereas Canadian candidates typically present historic links with a riding where they live and are heavily involved with the local party association, British politicians' mobility is greater as they regularly run or are placed by their party in ridings where they think they have the better chance of winning.[89] Also, American campaigns are renowned for their lavish

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[86] Wearing *The Ballot and its Message*; Himmelweit et al. 48-49; Lazarsfeld et al.; Bernard R. Berelson et al., *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a Presidential campaign* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1954); D. Campbell et al., *The American Voter* (New York: Wiley, 1960); G.M. Pomper, *Voters' Choice* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1975); Wilson 23; Richard Johnston et al.; Clarke et al. *Absent Mandate*.

[87] Neil Nevitte, "The Dynamics of Canadian Political Culture(s)," *Introductory Readings in Canadian Government and Politics*, 2nd ed. Robert M. Krause and R.H. Wagenberg, eds. (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1995): 2.

[88] Irvine found that 67% of Canadian political activists and 41% of all Canadians were contacted, while 20% of British activists and 10% of all Britons were contacted. See Irvine 767. Eldersveld has different evidence for the United States. See Eldersveld 154-165.

[89] Philip Norton and David Wood, *Back from Westminster: British Members of Parliament and Their Constituencies* (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1993); Madelaine Drohan, "Riding switches common in U.K. elections," *Globe and Mail* (18 Apr. 1997): A1. However, the importance of residency in Canadian ridings, particularly urban, may be diminishing. See Fletcher 357; Brook 13.

spending but British and Canadian officials limit campaign expenditures. For example, in recent New York re-election campaigns the Mayor spent close to $10-million and a Senator was expected to spend up to $30-million; conversely, the limit of Toronto mayoral campaigns is $800,000.[90]

A few generalizations can be made about the effectiveness of local activities on demographic clusters. However, because of conflicting findings, a profile of the target voter for constituency campaigners cannot be drawn. For example, it has been found that British Labour canvassing stimulated support from men more than women and from those over 40 than younger people.[91] But in the United States and Canada, younger and better-educated voters are less likely to be strong partisans and thus more apt to consider personal information about candidates[92] (although this does not mean that they are more likely to vote as a consequence, and issue criteria may prevail over candidate criteria). Conversely, in Canada it is believed that those with lower socio-economic status and who were less politically informed are most likely to be candidate partisans.[93] It has also been detected that higher education levels increase turnout probability, but that increasing levels of income (which one would imagine accompanies increasing education) decreases turnout.[94]

Blake has noted the significant differences between Canadian electoral ridings which affect the potential of the constituency campaign. These include physical size and population, voter turnout levels, religion, ethnicity, diversity, population stability or

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Also, Docherty found that roughly 80% of PC, Liberal and NDP 1993 candidates had held executive positions with their local party organizations. See Docherty *Mr. Smith* 70.

[90] Milner A13.

[91] Bochel and Denver "Canvassing" 257-269.

[92] Drummond and Fletcher 112; Himmelweit et al. 195.

[93] Cunningham 287-290.

transience, competitiveness, turnover, number of candidates, and viable alternative choices. This may be a consequence of ridings developing their own political culture. He contends that "environment" differences vary *between* provinces and ridings,[95] but others have found evidence that sub-groupings emerge *within* ridings, producing "neighborhood effects" which alter campaign effects in different areas of the riding.

Social scientists in Canada and elsewhere agree that the ecological aspects of neighborhoods increase support for particular parties due to societal pressures to conform.[96] Evidence has been found in Britain of electoral polarization through migration[97] and of class cleavaging.[98] Some have recorded that the success of British constituency campaigning[99] and the behaviour of Canadian local candidates[100] is related to the political culture of each individual riding. In American municipal contests, local electoral environments — such as socioeconomic status levels or issue conflicts — directly affect candidates.[101] Unfortunately, studying the distinctions between ridings is hindered by demographic statistics (often known

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[94] Randall G. Chapman and Kristian S. Palda, "Electoral Turnout in Rational Voting and Consumption Perspectives," *Journal of Consumer Research* (Mar. 1983): 344.

[95] Donald E. Blake, "Constituency Contexts and Canadian Elections: An Exploratory Study," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (June 1978): 280-302.

[96] David Butler and Donald Stokes, *Political Change in Britain* (London: Macmillan, 1974); Berelson et al.; Harrop et al. 103-120; John Meisel, "Religious Affiliation and Electoral Behaviour: A Case Study," *Voting in Canada*, John C. Courtney, ed. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1967): 144-161; Huckfeldt and Sprague 70-86; Katz and Eldersveld 13; Phillips Cutright, "Measuring the Impact of Local Party Activity On the General Election Vote," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Fall 1963): 372-386.

[97] David Denver and Keith Halfacree, "Inter-Constituency Migration and Party Support in Britain," *Political Studies* (Sept. 1992): 571-580.

[98] R.J. Johnston, C.J. Pattie and A.T. Russell, "Delignment, spatial polarization and economic voting: an exploration of recent trends in British voting behaviour," *European Journal of Political Research* (Jan. 1993): 67-90.

[99] Price and Lupfer 435-436; Cutright 372-386.

[100] Eagles "Political Ecology" 285-307.

[101] James Sheffield Jr. and Lawrence K. Goering, "Winning and Losing: Candidate Advantage in Local Elections," *American Politics Quarterly* (Oct. 1978): 453-468.

as "demographic proxies") which do not consider nondemographic factors such as local media coverage and local political culture.[102]

3.16 By-elections distort constituency campaign effectiveness.

Are by-elections indicative of the effectiveness of organized campaigns? It has often been suggested that by-elections offer the most potential for constituency campaigning because resources and national campaign efforts are concentrated in one riding.[103] They are also believed to be the best test of candidate partisanship because control of the government is rarely at stake, local issues become more significant, members of the electorate are more willing to change their vote to support the candidate,[104] and the governing party can time influential decisions to coincide.[105] The result is, as one practitioner noted, that voters "tend to be promiscuous."[106]

But despite the saliency for potential testing this creates, broad conclusions regarding the effects of constituency activities cannot easily be applied nationally because of their very uniqueness. Not only does lower turnout result from the lack of national intensity, exposure,

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[102] William M. LeoGrande and Alana S. Jeydel, "Using Presidential Election Returns to Measure Constituency Ideology: A Research Note," *American Politics Quarterly* (Jan. 1997): 4.

[103] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning" 528-531.

[104] Wilson 23. Wilson supports his contentions by referring to W.D. Young, "The Peterborough Election: The Success of a Party Image," *Dalhousie Review* (Winter 1961): 514; and Peter Regenstreif, "Some Aspects of National Party Support in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* (Feb. 1963): 68.

[105] This was recently seen in a federal by-election in British Columbia's riding of Port Moody-Coquitlam. There, the Liberal candidate was facing strong opposition from Reform, when two days before polling the Liberal government reversed its unpopular four year-old position on the automation of West Coast lighthouses. See "Feds reverse decision to automate B.C. lighthouses," *The Evening Telegram* (29 Mar. 1998): 6.

[106] Brian Land, *Eglinton: The Election Study of a Federal Constituency* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1965): 7.

election fever, or the ability to change government,[107] but the "normal political alignment" of voters is distorted[108] and there is abnormal focus on local issues.[109]

3.17 Use of new technology in constituency campaigns deserves current study.

In Western countries, national and sub-national campaigns are increasingly adopting new technological innovations. These profoundly transform communication methods and improve the efficiency of local activities.[110] Early transformations began with telephones, television and opinion polling. To consider the widespread impact of emerging technologies, one need only look to the widely-adopted personal computer. Not only is the Internet threatening to become a significant component of constituency campaigns (particularly with increasingly sophisticated and common World Wide Web pages and electronic mail use), but computers are also facilitating office tasks through database programs and direct mailings targeting groups.[111] Use of computer technology is supplemented with a multitude of other technological innovations such as faxes, photocopiers, VCRs, hand-held video recorders, telephone and video conferencing, pagers, and mobile phones.

The adoption of new technologies directly influences the economics and efficacy of daily politics, and are adopted quickly by politicians seeking electoral advantages. For example, while the Canadian Parliamentary Channel (C-PAC) has increased the visibility of Canadian politicians and House proceedings, United States Congressmen and Senators

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[107] Turnout in Canadian federal by-elections is 10-30% lower than federal elections. See Eagles "Voting and Non-Voting" 10-11.

[108] Whiteley et al. 206.

[109] Howard A. Scarrow, "By-Elections and Public Opinion in Canada," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Spring 1961): 88.

[110] Bell et al. 193; Preyra 140.

[111] Abramson et al. 50-52.

already send cable companies floor speeches recorded by the American equivalent (C-SPAN) and video newsletters. Such rapid transition to technology in an increasingly global and electronic age demands examination.

At the constituency electoral level, the implementation of new technologies is slowly emerging. With some usage difficulties, we can see that traditional local-level campaign activities are often being supplemented by new efforts to reach constituents, which have increasing potential. However, the effects of new technologies at the micro-level are relatively undocumented, although it is known that they are being increasingly used in constituency contests,[112] where they are most likely to be adopted in manufacturing and urban areas,[113] and particularly in marginal seats.[114]

There is ample evidence of new technology's rapid expansion, which is principally rooted in information technology. This field — which includes computing and telecommunications — has quickly become the United States' largest industry, surpassing automobile manufacturing, construction, and food products.[115] Its key component is the international network (Internet) of computer information, whose expansion is so rapid that its use may soon be as common as VCRs or other recent technological innovations with mass appeal. In the United States, 13 million households had access in 1996; within five years this number is predicted to be 40 million. In Canada surveys have shown that approximately 15

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[112] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning" 529; Carty *Canadian Political Parties* 178-84.

[113] Barbara Norrander, "Determinants of Local Party Campaign Activity," *Social Science Quarterly* (67, 3: 1986): 569.

[114] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning" 529.

[115] As reported by a study commissioned by the Nasdaq stock exchange and American Electronics Association and based on U.S. Commerce Department data. See *New York Times* (18 Nov. 1997).

percent of households currently have access,[116] and it is the main reason that Canadians buy personal computers:[117] access is much higher if we consider that many people use the Internet at work.

The household expansion of Internet accessibility is linked to the growth of Internet service providers (ISP), of which there are 300 to 400 in Canada with an average growth rate of 100 percent or more annually. Comparatively, in the United States the number of ISPs tripled to four thousand between May 1996 and November 1997. Already, a more expedient Internet service dubbed "Internet2" is being developed in the United States (a similar project is named "CA*net II" in Canada), which will significantly expand Internet applications and service speed.[118] The Internet itself is expected to fuel industry, for global Internet business-to-consumer trade is expected to increase to $7 billion by 2000 and $76 billion by 2005.[119]

Political scientists have not yet extensively researched the impact of new technologies and the Internet, and there is a suspicion that Internet campaigning has limited effects on the already-informed.[120] Moreover, despite their distinct advantages, technological innovations can create significant complications at the constituency level. Unreliable computer systems, a shortage of skilled workers, strained time demands, communication problems with party

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[116] *Investor's Business Daily* (13 Nov. 1997); Mary Gooderham, "There's now an ISP 'everywhere you look'," *Globe and Mail* (9 Dec. 1997): C8; Gordon Arnaut, "Internet connections will be faster, more flexible," *Globe and Mail* (10 Mar. 1998): C2.

[117] Patrick Brethour, "Internet tops education as reason to buy PC: survey," *Globe and Mail* (16 Mar. 1998): B9.

[118] Grant Buckler, "It's back to the future with Internet2," *Globe and Mail* (9 Dec. 1997): C17.

[119] Kevin Marron, "Business-to-business E-commerce set to take off," *Globe and Mail* (9 Dec. 1997): C8.

[120] David Akin, "First steps into cyberspace: Few candidates campaigning on Internet," *Hamilton Spectator* (25 Oct. 1997): A12.

headquarters, and a lack of advance training have all been documented problems.[121] Not only is new technology expensive to rent and often not used efficiently by local campaigns,[122] but frequently traditional methods are still relied upon:

> with the exception of the telephone and fax machine, campaign communication strategies at the riding level focus on print (brochures, billboards, lawn signs), canvassing and town hall meetings. The newer technologies in campaign communication such as television advertising, public opinion polls, videotaped messages, telemarketing and computerized information management are not nearly as prominent at the constituency level (if they are used at all) as are the more traditional methods.[123]

Nevertheless, rapidly expanding information technology should significantly alter future constituency campaigning and reduce the focus on traditional election activities, particularly if it targets a more educated or younger electorate. The Internet is one of the new communication devices which are predicted to have an important role in future campaigns, where the local campaign will be further centralized due to the virtually instantaneous communication between national party headquarters and constituency offices.[124]

The Internet may be an integral part of future campaigns as a provider of information, and as a means of communication between party headquarters with voters and constituency campaigns. Because of its significant cost advantages, Internet faxing between headquarters should become more relied upon.[125] We may see that traditional campaign news media

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[121] Bell and Bolan 88; Brook 71.

[122] Bernier 126. More candidates do not use videotapes because of the production costs before donations arrive, between $10,000 and $15,000. White, Letter to the author.

[123] Preyra 169.

[124] Denver and Hands "Constituency Campaigning" 529; Bell and Bolan 88.

[125] Grant Buckler, "Savings big draw to Internet faxing," *Globe and Mail* (27 Mar. 1998): C2. It is predicted that the number of faxed pages will increase from 44 million in 1997 to 5.6 billion by 2000 in the U.S. *Investor's Business Daily*, 11 Nov. 1997.

sources increasingly compete with news available from Internet sites.[126] Electronic mail may be a preferred means of communication as it is cost-efficient, quick, and its use is becoming more common;[127] this may cause future candidates to send out unsolicited e-mail (or "spam") to voters.[128] The use of "Webcasting" — broadcasting events through the Internet — has growing appeal because of its economical ability to transmit visually live information to an audience scattered over a large geographical area.[129] Webcasting particularly appears geared to improving communication links between national, regional and local campaign headquarters.

Increased use of personal communication devices such as cellular and analog phones have improved mobile communication links. The Internet may cooperate and compete with this industry as well. We are seeing new advanced digital phones (or "smart phones") equipped with a keypad and screen which can access the Internet, use email and fax.[130] But an emerging cause of concern for long-distance carriers is the Internet telephony market, where analog telephone signals are digitalized, sent through the Internet and converted back to analog. This sector is expected to expand in the United States from $30-million in 1998 to $2-billion by 2004, offering a reduction in long-distance rates of 80- to 90-percent (primarily international until regulations are changed) compared to average phone company rates for

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[126] Currently on one Canadian site 55,000 pages are viewed daily. See Kevin Marron, "Internet users bypass media," *Globe and Mail* (9 Dec. 1997): C13.

[127] At post-secondary education institutions use has increased from 8 percent in 1994 to 33 percent by 1997. See *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 17 Oct. 1997.

[128] Akin A12.

[129] Tracy Barron, "Delivering news live on the Internet," *The Evening Telegram* (29 Mar. 1998): 5.

[130] Andrew Allentuck, "E-mail, fax terminals go miniature," *Globe and Mail* (9 Dec. 1997): C4; "Getting even smarter," *Report on Business Magazine* (Apr. 1998): 35.

those using the service;[131] however the reduced costs are only a temporary advantage compared with the ability to integrate voice and data information.[132] Such personal communication devices are particularly useful on polling day.[133]

The development of Web sites is becoming increasingly common and is also cost-efficient. Not only does Web publishing allow 24-hour user access, but its use is economically driven, with producer cost savings in printing, storage and distribution.[134] One report of the 1997 Hamilton municipal campaign revealed that candidate Web sites were common and typically contained a candidate's photo, resume, and policy positions, as well as icons to access the candidate's e-mail, to request a sign, or to volunteer on the campaign.[135] More complex and costly sites — such as the one developed for the Conservative candidate in Ottawa Centre — have offered "real audio" and "real video" which enable the user to hear and/or see a candidate giving a campaign speech, meeting with voters, or discussing a platform point. Existing technology could permit voters accessing the Web page of a party or candidate to make a voice connection with a party worker, who could answer questions and "push" Web pages to appear on the caller's computer screen.[136]

Interestingly, the Internet may also be used as an alternative to poll-voting — and adding a dramatic twist to the traditional canvass in the process. We are currently witnessing

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[131] Geoffrey Rowan, "Phone companies rally against Internet threat," *Globe and Mail* (14 Jan. 1998): B27; Lawrence Surtees, "The Net comes closer to findings its voice," *Globe and Mail* (27 Mar. 1998): C2.

[132] Kevin Marron, "Threat, opportunity in Internet calls," *Globe and Mail* (10 Mar. 1998): C10.

[133] As described by an Ottawa-area municipal politician, Joan O'Neill, Survey, Aug. 1997.

[134] Maureen Martyn, "Comparing Legislative Internet Sites," *Canadian Parliamentary Review* (Autumn 1997): 29.

[135] Akin A12.

[136] Grant Buckler, "Web pages begin offering voice connection features," *Globe and Mail* (10 Mar. 1998): C4.

the emergence of electronic voting: not only are student elections adopting Internet voting,[137] but the national government of Costa Rica is testing a national election on-line with computer terminals in schools throughout the country, aspiring that by 2002 ballots will be eliminated entirely.[138]

Presently, one of the pioneers of new technology in Canada is the Reform Party. In the 1993 federal election, (successful) Reform candidate Ted White did not participate in traditional canvassing activities. Rather, he was stationed daily at his campaign headquarters answering phones and relied on the rotational delivery of 2,000 five-minute videotapes to enable voter-convenient contact. In 1997, almost half the homes in his riding received a videotape, and he had an office pool of cellular phones, posted a Web site, and had planned to produce a CD ROM. Using a database program, known supporters could be sent a fax, direct mail or email with ease and sign requests could be organized.[139] In that election, his party planned to distribute videos to 20 percent of voters outside Québec (but which was employed only by some candidates in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario), and each candidate was instructed to establish a home page with a link to the party's Web page. The party also contemplated airing a 30-minute infommercial.[140]

Despite its impressive growth, the effects of the Internet clearly depend heavily on its accessibility and usage. Its availability will likely increase with the emergence of fibre optics

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[137] *The Muse*, Nov. 14, 1997: 3.

[138] *New York Times CyberTimes*, 22 Oct. 1997.

[139] Ted White, "Interactive Government: Sorting out Fads and Fundamentals," *Canadian Parliamentary Review* (Winter 1996-97): 7-10. However his own website and email were used sparingly, even though the information appeared in his brochures, the videotape, and newspaper columns. Ted White, Letter to the author, 18 Sept. 1997.

[140] Reform's video blitz was to be based on Ontario Premier Mike Harris' successful use, and the infommercial based on U.S. Presidential candidate Ross Perot's use. See Miro Cernetig, "Reform planning blizzard of videos," *Globe and Mail* (Feb. 3, 1997): A1.

technology, which will cost-efficiently transmit telephone, television, radio, interactive video and other data signals through "digital bursts of light down thin strands of super-transparent glass."[141] This technology will soon allow "digital boxes" to be attached to televisions to enable more convenient Internet access.[142] These changes will produce unknown changes to accessibility and its potential influence on traditional campaign activities, particularly in an environment of expanding volatility.[143] However, as those with higher income[144] and education levels are more likely to be computer users, currently the incorporation of the Internet into constituency campaigns will impact only a section of the electorate. It remains to be seen how significant that impact will be.

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[141] Abramson et al. 4 and 63.

[142] Chris Flanagan, "When TVs and computers collide," *The Evening Telegram* (20 Mar. 1998): 11.

[143] Dionne 265-269.

[144] A study has found that 45% of all homes had a personal computer in 1997, and increase of 5% from 1996; but while almost 80% of households with annual incomes over $100,000 had one, 25% of households with an income of less than $30,000 owned one. See "News Bits: Technology in brief," *Globe and Mail* (11 Mar. 1998): B27.

CHAPTER 5
THE ADVANTAGES OF INCUMBENCY

Office-holders seeking re-election hold an immediate advantage over other candidates. Name recognition, constituent service provision, financial resources, experience and other benefits limit the effects of challengers' constituency campaigns. However, some disadvantages may accompany the position, and the extent of Canadian incumbency advantages are significantly reduced compared to their American counterparts. Although this makes generalizations about incumbency effects difficult, the influence of practitioner activities are nevertheless typically constrained by the presence of an incumbent.

4.1 Incumbents benefit from electoral advantages due to their condition.

All local campaign activities are influenced heavily by the most significant determinant of local vote outcome, an incumbent.[145] Although their ability to capitalize on their condition differs, numerous electoral advantages exist for all incumbents. It has been noted that incumbency is not an automatic advantage, but a "resource" incumbents attempt to exploit.[146] These resources begin with incumbents' position as an office-holder, where they are essentially able to campaign by repeated exposure through newsletter and press release distribution at constituents' expense. They are able to develop an understanding of riding issues and concerns, can better measure the positions of interest groups, and receive briefings from experienced office staff. They can establish contacts with voters, groups, reporters, and

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[145] Howell and Oiler 155-158.

[146] Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, "The Republican Surge in Congress," *The American Elections of 1980*, Austin Ranney, eds. (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1981): 265.

other politicians (even potential opponents), and are able to contact constituents more frequently through the use of free mailing and telephone, paid staff, and free transportation. Moreover, people who might not become politically involved contact the incumbent for help with problems.[147] Table 2 summarizes incumbents' primary advantages over challengers.

Table 2
Steinberg's incumbency matrix of incumbent advantages over challengers

Incumbent advantages	Challenger disadvantages
♦ Stature, position of responsibility	♦ Has no record of experience
♦ Access to media	♦ Has difficulty getting media coverage
♦ Ability to generate news	♦ Probably lacks name recognition
♦ Probably has name identification	♦ Lacks government-provided staff and privileges
♦ Record of accomplishment	
♦ Staff, perquisites, travel allowance, franking, research personnel, etc.	♦ Probably has a less organized campaign and fewer financial resources
♦ Can point to experience	

Source: Modified from Arnold Steinberg, *Political Campaign Management: A Systems Approach*. (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1976): 196.

Further incumbency advantages emerge during a re-election campaign. Incumbents can usually argue that they are more qualified for the position and can claim credit for riding projects. As candidates who have already won an election, they are experienced campaigners who have campaign teams familiar with issues and previous mistakes. Hershey believes that the most significant advantage is their proven strategies which facilitate even the most elementary of decisions, such as which function to attend. She has identified a "learning advantage," where the experiences of winning an election aids in re-election, although eventually success breeds an inability to learn.[148] Further, American incumbents attract numerous "benefit of the doubt" votes from those who prefer a challenger's position but who

[147] Marjorie Randon Hershey, *Running for Office: The Political Education of Campaigners* (Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1984): 103-105.
[148] Hershey 103-105.

vote for the incumbent because of experience, personal service provision or fear of change. As an incumbent's policies gravitate towards the political centre, the less benefit of the doubt votes are needed to ensure re-election.[149]

The preeminent advantage of incumbents is their documented fundraising ability and access to capital. For example, parties in the 1983 British election raised more funds in their incumbent ridings, as well as where their incumbent was running for re-election rather than a new party candidate.[150] The economic benefits of incumbency are augmented because incumbents inhibit challengers' ability to fundraise; thus incumbents are wisest if they focus their fundraising efforts on challengers' potential financial supporters.[151] Moreover, because equal spending levels benefit challengers rather than incumbents,[152] spending restrictions might indirectly benefit incumbents. The relationship between spending and votes creates a challengers' conundrum: although they need a currency advantage to overcome their other disadvantages, challengers typically have less finances than incumbents.[153]

Name recognition is an incumbency advantage which is most important in non-partisan elections and in many American elections. Studies there have resolved that incumbents build name recognition through mailing[154] and advertising,[155] and that candidate

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[149] Scott L. Feld and Bernard Grofman, "Incumbency Advantage, Voter Loyalty and the Benefit of the Doubt," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* (3.2: 1991): 115-137.

[150] Johnston "Information Provision" 131.

[151] Jacobson *Money* 105 and 122; Donald Philip Green and Jonathan S. Krasno, "Rebuttal to Jacobson's 'New Evidence for Old Arguments,'" *American Journal of Political Science* (May 1990): 363-372.

[152] Howard R. Penniman and Ralph K. Winter, Jr., *Campaign Finances: Two Views of the Political and Constitutional Implications* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1971): 53; Jacobson *Money* 49; Jacobson "The Effects of Campaign Spending" 357.

[153] Rothschild 58-71.

[154] Interviews with people for opinions of a Congressman who had mailed out a government pamphlet on infant care to families with newborn children found that name recognition and

vote levels increase as voter awareness of them increases.[156] Pollster Allan Gregg, who follows a rule of thumb that incumbents will lose in three-way races when over 65 percent of voters believe it is time for a change, believes that the name recognition provided by incumbency is more important than credentials or community contributions in Canada:

> in almost every instance, barring a powerful national trend, the candidate with the highest level of name recognition wins the election. This finding offers proof of the maxim that it does not matter what the press writes about a politician, as long as it spells his or her name correctly. Only when two or more candidates have the same level of name awareness, Gregg says, do their favorable-unfavorable ratings (admirers versus detractors) come into play. Then the candidate with the highest "net favorable" rating will win. Generally, however, if a well-known but not beloved candidate is running against a less-well-known but better-liked candidate, the former will win virtually every time.[157]

But contrary to practitioner beliefs, name recognition does not significantly affect vote outcome in Canada, although increased knowledge of local candidates likely increases their importance in the voting decision, particularly in party nominations.[158] Students of incumbency have documented other advantages. Among them:

1. Increased media coverage: Incumbents may benefit from twice as much print media coverage as challengers.[159]

2. Experience: Constituents recognize incumbents' provision of experience and ability.[160]

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incumbency saliency decayed over time, but could be improved with subsequent mailings. See Albert D. Cover and Bruce S. Brumberg, "Baby Books and Ballots: The Impact of Congressional Mail on Constituent Opinion," *American Political Science Review* (June 1982): 347-359.

[155] Dennis C. Mueller and Thomas Stratman, "Informative and Persuasive Campaigning," *Public Choice* (81, 1994): 55-77.

[156] M. Margaret Conway, "Political Participation in a Nonpartisan Local Election," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Fall 1969): 427.

[157] John Laschinger and Geoffrey Stevens, *Leaders and Lesser Mortals: Backroom Politics in Canada* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1992): 7 and 77.

[158] Carty *Canadian Political Parties* 176; Ferejohn and Gaines 296-297; Drummond and Fletcher 114-15; Fletcher 344.

[159] P. Clarke and S.H. Evans, *Covering campaigns: Journalism in Congressional elections* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1983); Preyra 165.

3. Not running against another incumbent: This may increase incumbency advantage by about 1 percent in Canada.[161]

4. Not facing quality challengers: In addition to a "direct effect" (staff and mailing advantages) and "quality effect" (where the party vote share benefits from incumbency), there is evidence of a "scared-off effect" where quality challengers are scared off by incumbency and an incumbent is less likely to be challenged than non-incumbents.[162]

5. Riding advantage: The incumbent enjoys a "partisan electoral advantage" simply because many voters in the riding support, or considered supporting, the political party of the incumbent.[163]

6. Government manipulation: Incumbents belonging to the governing party enjoy further advantages because the governing party can manipulate the economy, time elections to coincide with a prosperous economic climate, and can manipulate the media so that government activity becomes political coverage.[164]

7. Party nomination: Incumbents are less likely to face a nomination contest than non-incumbents.[165]

8. Municipal effects: The length of residence for non-partisan municipal incumbents is possibly irrelevant, producing no vote benefit or harm. Many incumbents benefit from their condition because opinion leadership and upper social status is a predictor of success. They have an important added advantage because when constituents are not actively unsatisfied they are unconcerned with replacing their representative.[166]

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[160] James E. Campbell, "The Return of the Incumbents: The Nature of the Incumbency Advantage," *Western Political Quarterly* (Sept. 1983): 442.

[161] Krashinsky and Milne "Some Evidence on the Effects of Incumbency" 61.

[162] Gary W. Cox and Jonathan N. Katz, "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?" *American Journal of Political Science* (May 1996): 478-497; Johnston "Information Provision" 129-141.

[163] James L. Payne, "The Personal Electoral Advantage of House Incumbents, 1936-1976," *American Politics Quarterly* (Oct. 1980): 465-466.

[164] Jeremy Moon and Michael Lusztig, "Post-War Patterns of Incumbency in Australian States and Canadian Provinces," Campbell Sharman, eds. *Parties and Federalism in Australia and Canada* (Canberra: Federalism Research Centre, Australian National University, 1994): 220.

[165] Docherty *Mr. Smith* 65.

[166] Sheffield Jr. and Goering 453-468.

4.2 A handful of disadvantages accompany incumbency.

Incumbency advantages significantly outweigh all disadvantages, except one: the association with a government which has fallen out of favour with the electorate. If voters wish to "throw the rascals out" a government incumbent's advantages are all but neutralized, the most extraordinary example being 1993 Progressive Conservative government incumbents, all of whom but one seeking re-election was defeated. In these cases, increased media coverage is damaging if there is a perceived government error; weak partisanship leads to a loss of support from marginal voters; and the government might be blamed for economic or social problems particularly when changes in personal or disposable income directly affect incumbent support.[167]

Although they benefit elsewhere, non-government incumbents jointly suffer when a government is rejected, for they are unable to capitalize on running against a government incumbent voters wish to defeat.[168] Furthermore, while challenger campaigning has been found to be productive, incumbent campaigning may have few effects and increased incumbent spending may produce anti-incumbent voting and produce tactical votes.[169] Table 3 summarizes advantages that challengers have over incumbents.

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[167] Moon and Lusztig 220; J.R. Happy, "Economic Performance and Retrospective Voting in Canadian Federal Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (June 1989): 377-87.

[168] Michael Krashinsky and William J. Milne, "Additional Evidence on the Effect of Incumbency in Canadian Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (Mar. 1985): 155-165.

[169] Jacobson *Money* 45; Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 975.

Table 3
Steinberg's incumbency matrix of challenger advantages over incumbents

Challenger advantages	Incumbent disadvantages
♦ Can be active in district while incumbent is away	♦ Image of invisibility, especially compared to campaign periods
♦ Can go on offensive, challenging incumbent's record	♦ Staff or privileges can be attacked
♦ Has no record of his own to defend	♦ Associated with present problems
♦ Able to stress citizen, nonpolitical stance vs. professional politician	♦ Official business obligations
♦ Able to go on offensive without necessity to offer solutions to problems	♦ Record is apparent to media, opposition; can be attacked
	♦ "Politician" and "establishment" image

Source: Modified from Arnold Steinberg, *Political Campaign Management: A Systems Approach*. (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1976): 196.

4.3 The magnitude of Canadian incumbents' advantages differs from their American or British counterparts.

Depending on the political arena, the electoral advantages which accompany incumbency are diffuse. American incumbents' formidable financial advantage and their reduced party discipline constraints has encouraged the development of personal voting support. But while American incumbency advantage is considerable — about 2 percent before 1950 and up to 12 percent since[170] — it is less formidable in Canada and Britain (although Conservative incumbency was one of the most significant influences in the British election of 1992[171]). In those parliamentary arenas, incumbency is constrained by electorate and member partisanship, by reduced individual power, and by an absence of

[170] Johnston *Money and Votes* 184-185; Andrew Gelman and Gary King, "Estimating Incumbency Advantage without Bias," *American Journal of Political Science* (Nov. 1990): 1142-1150. For an overview of incumbency advantage literature in the United States, see Cox and Katz 480-482; Jacobson *Money* 1-8; King 119.

[171] Seyd and Whiteley "The Influence of Local Campaigning" 92-109.

gerrymandering.[172] A comparison of American, British and Canadian incumbency is shown in Table 4.

Although patterns of Canadian and American incumbency are similar, its advantages in Canada have not been increasing over time in part due to election spending restrictions.[173] The belief that the electoral advantage of Canadian incumbents is between 3 and 14 percent[174] has been substantiated by empirical investigations. Krashinsky and Milne's analysis of the ten federal elections between 1926 and 1980 found an electoral benefit of 3.4 to 4.3 percentage points for Conservative, Liberal and New Democrat incumbents.[175] In those elections between 1979 and 1988, Heitzman found incumbency advantages to be 6.4 percent for NDP incumbents, 5.5 percent for Conservative, and 3.2 percent for Liberals; moreover, he found that running against an incumbent during this period reduced candidate vote share by almost 2 percent.[176] While their studies have found indications of significant advantages, their findings are not unassailable. In the 1988 federal election, Krashinsky and Milne found that incumbency was worth 3.5 percent to New Democrats, 4.3 to Conservatives, and for reasons unclear, 12.1 percent to Liberals.[177] However, in that election Heitzman had calculated the advantage to be 9 percent to New Democrats, 10 percent to Conservatives, and 15 percent to Liberals.

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[172] Pattie et al. "Winning the Local Vote" 969-983; Edward R. Tufte, "The Relationship Between Seats and Votes in Two-Party Systems," *American Political Science Review*, 67 (1973): 540-54.

[173] Michael Krashinsky and William J. Milne, "Increasing Incumbency?" *Canadian Public Policy* (Mar. 1985): 107-110; Fletcher 368; Krashinsky and Milne "Some Evidence on the Effects of Incumbency" 47.

[174] Eagles "Money and Votes" 441; Bell and Fletcher 13.

[175] Krashinsky and Milne "The Effect of Incumbency" 338-342.

[176] Heitzman 114 and 130-31.

[177] Krashinsky and Milne "Some Evidence on the Effects of Incumbency" 60.

Table 4
Incumbency differences, American House versus British and Canadian MP

United States	Britain	Canada*
❶ Staff, office space, long-distance telephone, mailing, and travel perqs (totals up to $1 million per term).	❶ MPs have little support; average MP shares a secretary and might work with a party agent within the constituency.	❶ MPs have up to 5 office staff (more for cabinet members) but less support than U.S. counterparts.
❷ Strong incumbents might deter strong challengers; this might make strong incumbents even stronger.	❷ MPs tend to wait to get party nomination in a winnable seat.	❷ Incumbents are usually unchallenged in party nomination in represented riding.
❸ Much more campaign funding for incumbents than challengers. ❹ Increased constituency service in dealings with larger government.	❸ Campaigns are cheaper, constituency spending is very limited, candidates do not individually raise funds, spending decisions are more centralized.	❸ MPs more involved in fundraising than British counterparts, but less than American incumbents.

Source: Modified from Bruce E. Cain et al., "The Constituency Service Basis of the Personal Vote for U.S. Representatives and British Members of Parliament," *American Political Science Review*, Mar. 1984: 113.
*Canada information added for comparison

At the provincial level, Krashinsky and Milne have used riding election returns to estimate incumbency benefits in Ontario. They found that over three elections and across parties incumbency added "a significant and stable effect" of between 6 and 12 percentage points for incumbents seeking reelection in their riding; in the 1985 Ontario election, they found that incumbency added 5 percent to the vote of Liberal and Conservative incumbents, and 7.5 to NDP incumbents. But their findings may be particular to Ontario because although incumbency does not appear to be affected by urban or rural ridings, it can differ significantly between regions.[178]

[178] Michael Krashinsky and William J. Milne, "Some Evidence on the Effect of Incumbency in Ontario Provincial Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (Sept. 1983): 489-500;

4.4 Incumbents attract more personal votes than challengers.

Personal voting exists where a candidate attracts a personal electoral advantage among select voters who vote for the candidate as an individual. While a partisan electoral advantage belongs to all candidates of the favoured party, the personal vote is restricted to the individual candidate, principally the incumbent.[179] Because they endeavor to build personal votes by utilizing their office resources and because they have already been elected, incumbents have a significantly higher personal electoral advantage than challengers. Those studies focusing on incumbents' personal votes have documented its importance.

Docherty has found that personal voting increases with the duration of incumbency. From 1980 to 1993 first-term Canadian MPs attracted a personal vote of between 3.3 and 5.9 percent, mature MPs (2 to 4 terms served) attracted 3.7 to 8.8 percent, and veteran MPs (5 or more terms) attracted 7.5 to 10.7 percent;[180] similar results have been found in Britain.[181] In the United States, "retirement slumps" have been found, where there is a vote loss for parties whose candidates won an election but not the one previous to the current one.[182] Although this does not appear to exist to any great extent in Canada,[183] evidence of its existence and a "sophomore surge," where a party's share of the riding vote increases in the election that a first-time winner ran for re-election, have been found.[184] This surge exists in Britain, where it is believed to be caused by first-term incumbents' focusing efforts on developing a personal

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Krashinsky and Milne "The Effect of Incumbency" 337-340; Krashinsky and Milne "Some Evidence on the Effects of Incumbency" 63-65.

[179] Payne 465-466; Ferejohn and Gaines 275.

[180] Docherty *Mr. Smith* 213.

[181] Philip M. Williams, "The M.P.'s Personal Vote," *Parliamentary Affairs* (1966-1967): 25.

[182] Gelman and King 1144-1145.

[183] Ferejohn and Gaines 289.

[184] David Breaux, "Specifying the impact of incumbency on state legislative elections: a district-level analysis," *American Politics Quarterly* (July 1990): 271-286.

vote base which produces the largest personal gains in the subsequent election.[185] In Australia, it is believed that the maximum personal vote advantage a politician can gain is 3 percent.[186]

4.5 The effects of constituency service provision in Canada are low.

Invariably with an eye towards re-election, incumbents maintain a range of constituency services which incorporate them into their constituency representative role. Specific services provided includes addressing constituent correspondence, answering phone calls, scheduling constituent appointments, recording television programs, writing for community newspapers, maintaining constituency offices, attending ceremonial functions and constituency gatherings, dealing with constituents' concerns (which often means directing them to the proper official), distributing congratulatory letters, and engaging in informal contacts with constituents. Naturally, some incumbents focus on constituency work more than others. Because riding population levels influence expectations, service provision ranges widely between legislatures, political parties, and incumbents (regardless of party affiliation).[187] While faith in personal vote cultivation has increased the number of American local representatives,[188] Canadians' demands for their politicians to be loyal to their constituents has helped produce incumbents who are frequently motivated by a desire to

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[185] Wood and Norton "Do Candidates Matter?" 228.

[186] Bean 253-68. For a review of studies of Australian candidate partisanship see Studlar and McAllister 389.

[187] Price and Mancuso 219; Harold D. Clarke, Richard G. Price, and Robert Krause, "Constituency Service among Canadian Provincial Legislators: Basic Findings and a Test of Three Hypotheses," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (Dec. 1975): 520-42.

[188] Cain et al. 110-125.

serve their community.[189] Moreover, an emphasis on constituency work is likely inherent within MPs and provincial politicians, who typically have previously worked for a political party or have been elected at the municipal level.[190]

Incumbents have been categorized along three dimensions: the "local representative," who represents local or regional constituency interests and is a locally involved constituency person; the "partisan," who promotes party policies and the party leader; and the "legislator," who emphasizes policy work in Parliament.[191] Although partisan and legislator incumbents are less preoccupied with service provision than the more common local representatives, they do not ignore their constituents. It has been argued that incumbent-constituent interaction occurs through "symbolic responsiveness" (communication through newsletters, quarterly householders, and congratulatory messages), "policy responsiveness" (attempts to represent the constituents' views and opinions), "service responsiveness" (interception with bureaucrats to improve government), or "allocative responsiveness" (lobbying for projects, grants or contracts for the constituency).[192] Incumbents must balance several constituent-focused roles: the "case work" role (where staff obtain information for, and forward the concerns of, constituents), the "constituency-based policy" role (where the MP searches for constituency benefits in programs or legislation), the "national policy concerns" role (where the MP expresses the views of constituents in policies), and the "social" role (where the MP attends constituency events).[193]

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[189] Price and Mancuso 214-216; Table 5.3 "Factors influencing community service as motivation to seek office" and Table 5.4 "Local service as a preference activity for members of the 34th Parliament" in Docherty *Mr. Smith* 121-123.

[190] Price and Mancuso 217.

[191] Studlar and McAllister 391-395.

[192] Price and Mancuso 211-12.

[193] Miller 4.

Multiple Canadian studies have found that incumbents believe in their ability to shape voter support and that the importance of providing constituency services has been increasing over time.[194] Docherty has found that Canadian MPs — particularly rural ones — and their office staff devote many resources and over 40 percent of their working day to constituency services, although cabinet members and more senior MPs tend to distance themselves.[195] His surveying of MPs from the 34th and 35th Parliaments found that most believe that they can control their own fate (Table 5).

Table 5
Canadian MPs' perception of the electoral influence of constituency service

Re-election factor	Perceived importance for personal re-election	
	34th Parliament	**35th Parliament**
Parliament work	28%	32%
Party association	23	43
Party leader	25	45
Riding work	68	59

Source: David C. Docherty, *Mr. Smith Goes to Ottawa: Life in the House of Commons* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997).

Common findings suggest that although constituency service provision is not an *essential* component to re-election, it does increase incumbents' re-election chances.[196] Although

[194] Allan Kornberg and William Mishler, *Influence in Parliament* (Durham: Duke UP, 1976): 88-94; Harold D. Clarke and Richard G. Price, "Freshmen MPs' Job Images: The Effects of Incumbency, Ambition and Position," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (Sept. 1980): 583-606; Bob Miller, "On the Front Lines," *Parliamentary Government* (6,2: 1986): 3; Brook chapter 14. A similar perception exists in Britain, where over 80% of MPs surveyed believed that casework activities have an impact on the vote. See Cain et al. 80-82; Cain 104.

[195] As explained in Figure 5.2 "How an MP spends the day" in Docherty *Mr. Smith* 129. Docherty's Chapter 7 provides a useful overview of Canadian MPs' constituency services.

[196] Allan Kornberg et al, "Parliament and the Representational Process in Contemporary Canada," *Parliament, Policy and Representation*, Harold D. Clarke et al., eds. (Toronto: Methuen, 1980): 16; Drummond and Fletcher 117; Cain 103-111; Frederick J. Fletcher and David Taras,

constituency services likely do not sway non-supporters, they may maintain previous supporters and constituents who are satisfied with the service.[197] Generally, incumbents must provide constituency services or else they face being voted out by constituents who are angered by inactive representation.

But the effects of constituency service provision are limited. In SMP systems constituency services do not ensure re-election because party dominance frequently limits the rewarding or punishment of incumbents.[198] In Canada, Heitzman has found that with the notable exception of NDP incumbents, constituency service provision did not significantly influence vote shares in the 1988 Canadian election.[199] At its extreme, increasing amount of Australian MP services produced a net *loss* of votes in the 1993 federal election.[200] However, incumbents are advised to focus on constituency service provision given the current pattern of declining partisanship to protect from unfavorable national electoral party waves.[201]

4.6 Constituency campaigning is more important for challengers than incumbents.

Studies indicate that constituency contests are more meaningful for challengers than incumbents. Generally, in constituency contests the incumbent has the most to lose while challengers have the most to gain: challengers are provided the opportunity to overcome incumbent advantages and to develop a personal vote, and the incumbent's performance is

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"Images and Issues: The Mass Media and Politics in Canada," *Canadian Politics in the 1990s*, M.S. Whittington and Glen Williams, eds. 3rd ed. (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1990); Gary King, "Constituency Service and Incumbency Advantage," *British Journal of Political Science* (Jan. 1991): 127-128.

[197] Norton 716; Ferejohn and Gaines 296-297. Irvine has calculated that an MP's personal assistance to an additional third of the studied constituency would have changed the candidate's support base by up to 5%. See Irvine 779.

[198] Irvine 782.

[199] Heitzman 113.

[200] Bowler et al. 464-465.

scrutinized by challengers, constituents and the media. In Canada, Heitzman has found that incumbency advantage may be overcome as direct contacts by challengers and their spending increases. We can apply his finding that increasing volatility and turnout benefits challengers more than incumbents,[202] to the argument that incumbents must avoid becoming the focus of a constituency contest for fear of attracting an intense campaign.[203] Moreover, while all-candidates debates likely increase the importance of local candidate considerations in vote choice, they tend to benefit those candidates — typically challengers — who have the most to gain.[204] Comparative results support this pattern. American studies have determined that incumbents fare worse as they spend more and dollar-for-dollar spending benefits challengers,[205] and it has been reported that lesser-known British parties obtain a measurable electoral gain from local activities.[206]

Constituency contests provide challengers an opportunity to obtain campaign experience, increase name recognition, and attract supporters in an effort to build a support base for a second attempt.[207] A study of challengers in U.S. Congress elections found that repeat challengers become more successful as they are able to benefit from previous attempts, where they are able to build on public relations, name recognition and their support base. Although repeat challengers are victorious less than 20 percent of the time, the strategy of running successive races leads to more effective success versus first-time challengers: 11.1 percent of repeat challengers were victorious, while 5.7 percent of first-time challengers won

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[201] Cain et al. 97.
[202] Heitzman 110-116, 122 and 137-39.
[203] Jacobson *Money* 123.
[204] Drummond and Fletcher 118; Bernier 123; Preyra 168; Brook 123-4.
[205] Jacobson *Money* 49 and 141-153; Penniman and Winter Jr. 53.
[206] Johnston and Pattie 269.
[207] Jacobson *Money* 110-112.

in the races examined. However, the authors concede that success is most plausible for those who received at least 40 percent of votes in their previous defeat. Moreover, they find that repeat challengers are not significantly more successful than first-time challengers, and those who do win are the benefactors of national tides. Significantly, repeat challengers are most successful when they are candidates where there is no incumbent.[208]

Challengers stand to benefit from longer campaigns by culturing name recognition. An examination of the 1987 British election showed that most voters had heard about their local candidates by the time they voted. At the outset of the campaign about 15 percent of voters had heard of the local candidates; by midway it was close to 30 percent; within two days of the election it was 50 percent; and by election day it was 60 percent.[209] However, just as if the incumbent does not devote resources to constituency needs, the candidate who decides not to canvass risks being negatively labeled.

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[208] Peverill Squire and Eric R.A.N. Smith, "Repeat Challengers in Congressional Elections," *American Politics Quarterly* (Jan. 1984): 51-70.

[209] William L. Miller et al., *How Voters Change: The 1987 British Election Campaign in Perspective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) 156-160.

CHAPTER 6
METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The lack of consensus on constituency campaigning's effectiveness is likely because of the inability of researchers to devise a thorough method of measurement. As Jorgen has realized, the problem facing social scientists is to determine "*how much* local election campaigning matters."[210] The complexity of measuring constituency campaigning's effectiveness is due to its countless variables and the limited impact of each of these activities. It can be measured in a multitude of ways: effectiveness can be improvement over past results; maintaining or improving party support; increasing turnout; education of the electorate; or pacification of party workers.[211] In an effort to definitively assess its effectiveness, we have seen that researchers have employed numerous techniques, with a range of findings. Most evidence is inconclusive because comparative analysis is hindered by a lack of duplicated methods and conditions.

While some political scientists have examined the direct effectiveness of constituency campaigning on candidate vote share, others have examined specific elements which contribute to candidate vote share, such as personal voting, tactical voting, voter turnout levels or party activity. Measurement of the effectiveness of constituency campaigning can be direct (such as studying political parties or party members), or indirect (such as examining election results, constituency voting or constituency level spending).[212] The dilemma in direct or indirect measurements is the difficulty in ruling out the effects of other variables.[213]

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[210] Jorgen 237.
[211] Kavanaugh 73.
[212] Seyd and Whiteley "The Influence of Local Campaigning" 93-98.
[213] Katz and Eldersveld 6.