

# CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES AND STATE ELECTION OUTCOMES

Susan E. Howell

This research first clusters campaign activities in state legislative elections into five empirically justified and conceptually meaningful clusters: direct attempts to persuade voters, obtaining the support of other elites, attempts to increase turnout, seeking endorsements from other political officials, and fund raising. Indices created from these clusters are then compared to the situational factors of incumbency and competition as predictors of election outcomes. Data are surveys of candidates for the Louisiana legislature in which they were asked about the conduct of their campaigns and their relative emphasis on various activities. Incumbency was by far the best predictor of what percentage of the vote a candidate obtained, and in open seat contests, expenditures and competition best predicted outcome. Overall, the campaign activities had very little relationship to outcome when controlling for situational factors. Variations occurred between the House and Senate races with implications for challengers' strategies and campaign financing.

Since campaign management has become more professionalized a body of prescriptive literature has emerged that attempts to describe how to run an effective campaign. This type of literature is typically based on one person's experiences in managing or observing campaigns, or a compilation of others' experiences. Political scientists have lagged behind the prescriptive writings in providing systematic studies of the impact of campaigns and specific campaign activities. Perhaps it is because trying to describe coherently a political campaign is like trying to "package fog" according to Theodore White. Campaigns are seen as a whirlwind of events in which there are so many variables to consider that quantification would necessarily only capture a fraction of the activity. Furthermore, many of the most crucial determinants of election outcomes are unchange-

Susan E. Howell, University of New Orleans. Department of Political Science

able aspects of the situation that campaigning will not affect. For whatever reason, the fact remains that campaign activity and its impact remain one of the most neglected areas of research on the electoral process.

This research is prompted by a dissatisfaction with the state of research on the effects of campaign activities. Existing empirical studies have centered on the effects of the personal contact methods (Kramer, 1970-71; Crotty, 1971; Eldersveld, 1956; Conway, 1968; Price and Lupfer, 1973; Blydenburgh, 1971) and the impact of media advertising (Atkin and Heald, 1976; Patterson and McClure, 1976; Mendelsohn and O'Keefe, 1976; Grush, et al., 1978; Kaid, 1976; Johnston, 1979; Donohue, 1973; DeVries, 1975; Hofstetter and Buss, 1980; Wanat, 1974). Most of these studies examine one type of campaign activity as the independent variable without assessing the confounding effects of other activities. In order to make conceptual progress in the study of campaign activities, single indicators should be grouped into empirically and theoretically meaningful clusters. With such clusters one can describe campaigns using more inclusive variables and use the clusters as independent variables to examine the impact of campaign activities on the outcomes of elections. Furthermore, it is not just the campaign activities that must be considered when studying election outcomes. The earliest studies of voting behavior and casual observation tell us that most election outcomes are decided before campaigning begins by situational factors such as the presence of an incumbent or the party composition of the constituency. The crucial research question is, What impact can campaigns have in the face of these uncontrollable factors?

At the state and local level, the presence of an incumbent is probably the most influential factor. Study after study recites the advantages of incumbents in acquiring nearly every campaign resource. The efficacy of campaign activities relative to incumbency has clear practical implications for challengers and theoretical implications for representation. For a challenger or any candidate with limited resources, information on the targeting of scarce resources would be welcome. Although there is the body of prescriptive books on "how to," these are typically based on a small number of campaigns and lack the rigor of a systematic study. Also, to the extent that campaign activities are ineffective against an incumbent, government at the state and local level is less permeable. One of the reasons incumbents are so successful is that they seem to be able to utilize campaign resources more effectively. With a large number of cases one can estimate the unique effects of campaign activities compared to the effects of campaign activities that are a part of the advantage of incumbency.

In 1978 an exploratory study of campaigning was conducted in a New Orleans local primary (Howell and Oiler, 1981) in which campaign activi-

ties were clustered and compared to situational factors as to their impact on election outcomes. Most of the campaign activities fell into five clusters:

1. Research—gathering information on the constituency
2. Personal contact—direct contact with potential voters such as speeches and appearances, excluding advertisements
3. Mass mobilization—get-out-the-vote activities
4. Elite mobilization—seeking support from political organizations and officials.
5. Advertising—newspaper and radio advertising

Incumbency was by far the best determinant of election outcome, explaining 60% of the variance in percentage of the vote obtained. Elite mobilization and personal contact emerged as the most promising campaign activities, but much of their impact on outcome was shared with the uncontrollable factor of incumbency (Howell and Oiler, 1981, p. 157).

This research both expands and replicates the New Orleans study. First, the setting is moved from elections for local offices to elections for the state legislature. As a result, the case size is greatly increased, giving one more confidence in multivariate analyses. Second, the cluster solutions in the two locations can be compared, thus making conceptual progress in the description of campaign activity. It is entirely possible that different levels of office are best described by different clusters of campaign activity and that the impact of the clusters of activities on outcome might differ from local to state offices. Third, the state elections contain many open seat races, enabling an examination of the effects of campaign activities in the absence of an incumbent as well as in the presence of an incumbent. Finally, the impact of financial resources can be included in the analysis because only two office levels are contained in the study, the State House of Representatives and the State Senate. At the local level so many offices are involved that a dollar spent at one level cannot be compared to a dollar spent at another level.

In the following section, the relationships among campaign activities at the state level will be examined for empirically justified and conceptually meaningful clusters. If such clusters are located, they will be compared to each other and to incumbency as determinants of state election outcomes.

## PROCEDURE

Questionnaires were mailed to 423 candidates for the Louisiana House of Representatives and Senate in the Fall 1979 election; 38% responded.<sup>1</sup> The election is termed a *primary*, which is somewhat deceptive since by

obtaining over 50% of the vote in this primary a candidate would win the election. Without a winner, a runoff election was held between the top two candidates. Thus, Democrats (146) and Republicans (16) alike ran on the same ballot in this primary with one result being more than two candidates per race. In fact, there was an average of 3 candidates per Senate seat with an incumbent, and 3.6 candidates per open seat. Comparable House figures were 2.8 and 4.4 candidates, respectively.

Given the small number of Republican candidates, the fact that most ran in a Democratic milieu, and the large number of candidates per race, the results of this study are best generalized to one-party primaries in other states.<sup>2</sup> From the standpoint of internal validity the one-party environment has the advantage of minimizing the impact of party voting patterns as confounding factors that have been shown to be important in other settings (Williams and Adrian, 1959; Adrian, 1952; Eulau et al., 1966; Caldeira and Patterson, 1982). Furthermore, the literature suggests that if we are going to detect effects of campaign activities, it is most likely to be in local and state elections and when party is not a factor.

The data contained 39 separate campaign activity variables with enough variance to make them useful in statistical analyses.<sup>3</sup> The campaign activity variables are ordinal level items including questions about what types of information were used in planning the campaign, in rating various acquaintances, groups, and elites as to their helpfulness, and in estimating the emphasis on various campaign activities. These measures are *perceptions* by the candidates of how their own campaigns were conducted. They are not objective measures of campaign activity. Some evidence was needed that these perceptions were capturing real differences between the campaigns. Two propositions are generally supported in the literature relating characteristics of candidates to their activities. First, incumbents do less research and conduct a less rigorous turnout effort than challengers, and second, competition increases the overall campaign effort. Both of these were borne out in the Louisiana survey; so although these measures are "soft," they have some construct validity.

Obviously, the use of 39 separate variables in the models would be too unwieldy, so cluster analysis was employed to reduce the data. Inter-item correlations (Pearson product moment) and McQuitty's elementary linkage analysis (Bailey, 1978, pp. 376-377) were used to group the activities into empirically justified clusters.<sup>4</sup> In order to minimize "noise" in the clusters resulting from the inclusion of too many variables, a lower limit of .5 was set for the core correlation of each cluster.<sup>4</sup> This necessarily excluded variables from the final clusters, but a balance had to be struck between many poorly fitting clusters and the possibility that an important variable was excluded. Upon examination of the final clusters, they seemed to have

TABLE 1. Description of Campaign Activity Clusters

Cluster	Item Descriptions <sup>a</sup>
Voter contact	Emphasis on newspaper ads Emphasis on public speaking Emphasis on informal appearances before small groups Emphasis on press releases
Elite mobilization	Emphasis on distributing literature Helpfulness of other public officials Helpfulness of staff of other public officials Helpfulness of members of political organizations Helpfulness of businessmen Helpfulness of good government organizations
Endorsements	Did the candidate attempt to obtain endorsements from political officials? Success in winning endorsements from political officials
Fund raising	Emphasis on seeking officials' endorsements Emphasis on formal fund raisers Emphasis on general appeals for funds
Turnout	Emphasis on voter registration drives Emphasis on get-out-the-vote appeals

<sup>a</sup>Clustered items were obtained through the following survey questions: "Thinking about all the people who helped throughout the campaign, please estimate the contribution of each of the following." (List of relevant elites and non-elites followed.) "Here is a list of some of the activities you might have engaged in during the campaign. Did you and your campaign organization spend a lot of time, some time, a little time, or no time at all on each activity?" (List of activities followed.) "Which of the following types of information did you use in planning and running your campaign?" (List of information sources followed.) "Did you attempt to get the endorsement of any political organizations officials?" "How successful were you?"

considerable face validity in that they contained the major types of campaign activity described in the literature.

To ensure that the clusters were distinctive from the other inter-item correlations, the Leege and Francis (1974, p. 378) distinctiveness coefficient was utilized. This test determines whether the inter-item correlations within the clusters are significantly stronger than the inter-item correlations outside of the clusters.<sup>5</sup> The distinctiveness coefficient for the five clusters derived was .83.

Five conceptually meaningful and statistically distinct clusters of campaign activity at the state level were derived containing 17 of the 39 original variables: Endorsements, voter contact, fund raising, elite mobilization, and turnout. The items contained in these clusters are presented in Table 1.

The voter contact cluster is one that we would expect to find, since it consists of persuasion efforts that we normally consider to be the heart of a campaign. These activities are designed to reach one's constituency either directly or through campaign workers and are the part of a campaign most visible to the public. The prescriptive literature emphasizes the voter contact effort and how to conduct it more effectively. Voter contact activities are termed by other researchers as the *difficult* activities in that they simply require more hard work, especially on the part of the candidate, and are more rigorously pursued by challengers and open-seat candidates.

Elite mobilization involves receiving support from organizations, political officials, and private business people. These are all attempts to get other relevant elites involved with the campaign. Candidates and their campaign leaders attempt these tactics for a number of reasons. They enlarge the base of the campaign; group commitment or political official commitment means political, financial, organizational, and electoral support. They absorb knowledgeable political activists who hopefully will assist the leaders in creating a more effective organization. They increase the number of potential financial contributors, and they may have a persuasive effect by associating the candidate with the community's elites. Elite mobilization is not by itself a direct appeal to voters; rather it should be considered a campaign resource that helps a candidate more effectively conduct other activities through money, manpower, and information.

The endorsements cluster contains one very specific form of elite mobilization, the search for and success in obtaining officials' public endorsements. Notice that while one of the items measures *receiving* endorsements, most of the cluster involves *seeking* endorsements. This probably explains why it is distinct from the elite mobilization cluster, which is exclusively a measure of *success* in obtaining the support of other elites. This distinction highlights a basic difference between incumbents and their opponents. Incumbents were more successful in obtaining elite support than challengers, illustrated by the .41 correlation between incumbency and elite mobilization. In comparison, incumbency had less to do with the seeking of endorsements (.12) because nearly every candidate sought them to some degree.

Fund raising is a key component in any campaign. Although we normally think of fund raising as a means to finance the other activities such as voter contact and turnout, fund raising in itself is a primary means of reinforcing one's supporters. Research has shown that persons who can be persuaded to contribute are highly likely to turn out to vote (Milbrath and Goel, 1977, p. 18), and contributing money is related to contributing time among volunteers (Buchanan and Bird, 1966, p. 83). At the more elite level, the fund-raising dinners serve much the same purpose. It is impor-

tant to note that this cluster does not measure success in fund raising; actual expenditures will be considered later. It is the *emphasis* on that activity in the campaign.

Researching the constituency and targeting resources to the most supportive areas and demographic groups is common practice. One of the key components of this effort is the drive to increase turnout among sympathetic groups. Indeed, the relative importance assigned to the get-out-the-vote drive is usually a key strategic decision made early in the campaign. Typically a great emphasis on turnout means that the candidate is disadvantaged in some way, while a sure winner will not need a large turnout effort. In the Louisiana study incumbency is predictably negatively related to turnout (-.21).

The campaign clusters derived from the Louisiana state elections were similar to the clusters derived from the New Orleans study, even though different clustering criteria and slightly different variables were used. Turnout, labeled mass mobilization by Howell and Oiler, emerged as a separate campaign activity in both settings. Voter contact combined two clusters from the prior study, personal contact activities and advertising, both of which are aimed at voter persuasion. The mobilization of elites and groups, which existed as only one cluster in the New Orleans study, emerged as a more refined set of two conceptually distinct activities in the statewide study; one cluster primarily measured soliciting elite support, and the other measured receiving it. Solicitation and actual success in elite mobilization are best dealt with as separate activities, since many candidates, especially challengers, certainly solicited without success. Only the fund-raising cluster had no counterpart in the original research.

Thus there seems to be a basis for empirically grouping four general types of campaign activities: attempts to increase turnout, voter persuasion activities, elite mobilization, and fund raising. Variations on these basic clusters will certainly occur in different settings; however, these may serve as a starting point in the empirical description and analysis of campaigns.

#### CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES AND ELECTION OUTCOME

This section is an attempt to estimate the impact of the clusters of campaign activities on election outcomes over and above the effect of uncontrollable factors of the situation. More specifically, it estimates the degree of association between the campaign activity clusters controlling for situational factors. At best this is an indirect approach to measuring the effectiveness of various campaign activities. From this evidence one can say that campaigns that place a greater emphasis on a particular activity (or

**TABLE 2. The Impact of Situational Factors on Election Outcome (Standardized Regression Coefficients)**

Y=Election Outcome— Percentage of the Vote Obtained	Races with Incumbents (N=92)	Open Seats (N=57)
X <sub>1</sub> Incumbency	.74	
X <sub>2</sub> Competition	-.37	.60
X <sub>3</sub> Years of political experience	-.04 <sup>a</sup>	-.10 <sup>a</sup>
X <sub>4</sub> Prior elective office	.16	.28
	R <sup>2</sup> =.76	R <sup>2</sup> =.46

<sup>a</sup>Insignificant at the .05 alpha level.

that are more successful at another depending on the cluster referred to) tend to get more votes.

Election outcome is operationalized simply as *the percentage of the vote obtained*. Incumbency, of course is the major situational factor, especially in primaries (Welch, 1976, p. 352), but three other possibilities are explored to avoid neglecting other significant situational forces. Since most races contain more than two candidates, the percentage of the vote obtained is contaminated by the amount of competition that a candidate faced. To correct for competition, the number of candidates in the race will be entered as another uncontrollable variable that campaigning will not affect. Second, holding another elective office, while not as powerful an advantage as incumbency, might provide the candidate with some name recognition that the inexperienced do not have; and name recognition is acknowledged by scholars and candidates as essential to making a good showing in the election. Finally, a candidate's total years of involvement in politics, regardless of holding elective office, may translate into contacts with public officials and political activists; and with years of political experience a candidate may be better able to assess the situation and exercise political judgment simply because he or she is more knowledgeable.

Immediately, we can observe from Table 2 that factors outside a candidate's control determine a large proportion of election outcome. In incumbent races, *the four situational factors account for three-quarters of the variance in percentage of the vote obtained*, and incumbency alone accounts for 56%. Even without an incumbent in the race, competition, prior elective office, and years of experience account for nearly half the variance. Table 2 provides an interesting backdrop for the subsequent analysis. In the presence of an incumbent *any* campaign activity that exerts an independent impact on outcome is certainly worth the attention of



**TABLE 3. The Impact of Campaign Activities on Election Outcome: Standardized Regression Coefficients**

Y=Election Outcome - Percentage of Vote Obtained	Races with Incumbents (N=90)	Open Seats (N=55)
Incumbency	.74	
Competition	-.38	-.62
Prior elective office	.14	.23
Voter contact	-.05 <sup>a</sup>	-.13 <sup>a</sup>
Elite mobilization	-.04 <sup>a</sup>	-.15 <sup>a</sup>
Fund raising	.12	.21
Turnout	-.04 <sup>a</sup>	.00
Endorsements	-.00	-.19
	R <sup>2</sup> =.78	R <sup>2</sup> =.53

<sup>a</sup>Insignificant at .05 alpha level.

a challenging candidate. However, the open-seat races are relatively "open" in the sense of permitting a test of the campaign activities against each other.

Additive indices were created from the items in the campaign activity clusters by first standardizing the variables in the clusters, then simply summing the responses of each candidate.<sup>6</sup> From this point on, reference to the campaign clusters will mean these indices of ordinal variables. To assess the impact of these campaign clusters in relation to incumbency and situational factors, standardized regression equations were formulated with election outcome as the dependent variable.

The results in Table 3 reaffirm the tremendous advantage of incumbent status. No campaign activity has near the impact on election outcome. As a whole the campaign activities do not fare well at all against incumbents; only fund raising exerts a positive independent impact. The open-seat results are no more encouraging. The best determinant of outcome is simply how many candidates are in the race and beyond that it would help if a candidate held another elective office. The little variance explained by campaign activities is mainly a function of performing fund-raising activities as it is in incumbent races. This strikes a weak note of optimism for candidates disadvantaged by situational factors. Even though the impact of fund raising is small, in any particular race that margin could be crucial.

This raises the question, Fund raising for what purpose? Through what other activities does fund raising affect outcome? The answer differs from incumbent to open-seat races and clarifies the role played by other elites in local campaigning. In open-seat contests, fund raising is associated with

being more successful at elite mobilization (bivariate  $r = .50$ ) and conducting an ambitious voter contact effort (.38), in other words being more competitive. However, in incumbent races fund raising is not nearly as potent. It is related moderately to voter contact (.29) and not at all to elite mobilization. Elite support seems to flow to incumbents without their having to do much besides be incumbents. In fact, of all the situational factors and campaign clusters, only two show significant direct relationships to incumbency: elite mobilization (.41) and outcome (.78). Thus, it seems that the network of elites is accessible to incumbents without much competition, but in open-seat races, elite mobilization goes to the candidate conducting the most vigorous campaign as evidenced by voter contact and fund-raising activities.

To further explore the nature of incumbent advantage and possibly shed more light on open-seat contests, campaign expenditures will be added to the analysis. Although no discussion of campaigns, particularly primaries (Welch, 1976, p. 348) should be without mention of finance, expenditures have been purposely excluded up to this point because the primary interest was on the relationship of campaign activities to outcome regardless of the cost of those activities.

#### EFFECTS OF CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES

Evidence of the impact of money on election outcomes is inconclusive. Most agree that while it is a most useful resource, there is no single factor that will assure victory (Heard, 1962, p. 17; Agranoff, 1976, p. 226). Money is useful because it is transferable to other resources (Adamany, 1972), although there are limits to this convertibility. Buchanan and Bird (1966), in a study of spending in Tennessee primaries, found that candidates with money but few other resources could not easily convert money into personal qualities or visibility.

Money is generally referred to as an interdependent resource, one that both attracts and produces other resources (Agranoff, 1976, p. 228). No phenomenon illustrates this better than incumbents' greater ease in fund raising (Jacobson, 1978; Agranoff, 1976, p. 228; McDevitt, 1979; Welch, 1979), which results from numerous political contacts, a perceived chance of victory, and superior organizational resources. Financial advantage, in turn, contributes to these other assets. If one asks challengers about the major factors in their defeat, one of the most common replies is that they could not raise enough money and were outspent by the incumbent.

Three questions are raised by both challengers' comments and the research. If challengers had access to the same amount of money as incumbents, would the advantage of incumbency diminish and by how much?<sup>7</sup>

Which campaign activities are most effective against an incumbent? And how do expenditures compare to other activities and the situational factors as determinants of outcome? The answers to these questions bear upon the permeability of state government, upon the elite nature of campaigns revealed in the data so far, and upon the issue of public funding of campaigns. If incumbent advantage remains substantial when the effects of their financial advantage are removed, as is suggested by Welch (1976, p. 351), the outlook for challenging an incumbent legislator remains pessimistic, and although public financing of state legislative elections is far in the future, its impact may well not have the effect of boosting a challenger's chances. If, on the other hand, the power of incumbency is greatly decreased by eliminating the financial advantage, state legislative elections could well become more competitive and one of the purposes of public financing would be served.

To estimate the extent to which outcome is a function of an incumbent's access to money as opposed to other advantages, two standardized regression equations were formulated that represent outcome as a function of incumbency alone and outcome as a function of incumbency and expenditures. House and Senate incumbent races are separate because of the incomparability of expenditures at the two levels. For House races the equations are as follows:

$$\begin{array}{ll} \text{OUTCOME} = .763 (\text{INCUMBENCY}) & N=70 \\ \text{OUTCOME} = .736 (\text{INCUMBENCY}) + .204 (\text{EXP}) & N=68 \end{array}$$

Amazingly, expenditures do not diminish the impact of incumbency at all and these results are generally confirmed in the equations for the Senate incumbency races.

$$\begin{array}{ll} \text{OUTCOME} = .827 (\text{INCUMBENCY}) & N=26 \\ \text{OUTCOME} = .734 (\text{INCUMBENCY}) + .387 (\text{EXP}) & N=26 \end{array}$$

In Senate races, incumbency is reduced by only 11% (.827 - .734/.827). Advantages besides finances constitute the bulk of an incumbent's head start, with expenditures having a respectable independent impact. So the assertion of challengers that they could have won if they had had more money is exaggerated in most cases, but they probably could have made a better showing.

Challengers would undoubtedly want to know how they should spend their money; i.e., through what activities does money produce votes? In House incumbent races, only one campaign cluster is related to both expenditures and outcome, elite mobilization (.34 and .30). Yet it is precisely

this cluster on which incumbents' and challengers' campaigns differ most dramatically. There is undoubtedly circularity in the flow of elite support to incumbents and the flow of money to these same candidates. That is, because incumbents are perceived winners because of money and other factors, groups and officials support them,<sup>8</sup> which in turn creates a large base for fund raising. A challenger is faced with the extremely difficult task of breaking this circle.

In Senate incumbent races, the conclusions are a bit more optimistic. The fund-raising effort is related to both outcome and expenditures (.40 and .47). This would seem a promising avenue for a challenger disadvantaged by either lack of funds or visibility. It may seem obvious to say that fund raising leads to greater expenditures, but the connection is not so straightforward. Fund-raising activities (Table 1) involve attempts to contact, persuade, and reinforce prospective voters. This does not necessarily lead to money. Fund raising is also related to elite mobilization (.44) and voter contact (.33); that is, it is one of several activities engaged in by candidates putting forth a large campaign effort, typically not incumbents. But at least a fund-raising *effort* is more controllable by the Senate challengers than *obtaining* elite support is for House challengers. However, it remains to be seen if fund raising retains an independent impact in a full multivariate analysis.

When campaign expenditures are added to the regression equations with all the campaign activity clusters and the situational factors, it retains a significant independent positive impact in House races (Table 4). Money is important in gaining access to this "lower" level of elective office. Many House candidates (67%) had never held another elective office, so the resources of a previous incumbency in terms of group and elite support were not readily available.

In the House open-seat races, we find the most revealing results about expenditures, situational factors, and campaign activities. With incumbency removed, other factors can operate more freely on outcome. But the findings are no more encouraging or helpful to a candidate disadvantaged by situational factors who is willing to work hard. First, it would be most helpful if he or she held a prior office before running for the Louisiana House. Second, the candidate needs money. Money in House open-seat races is related to elite mobilization but *not* to the more traditional activities in the voter contact cluster. Even in open-seat contests the variables over which a candidate has the most control have the least positive relationship to outcome.

Senate incumbent races present a different picture, one consistent with a higher level of office. Simple expenditures have no independent impact, nor are they related to elite mobilization. For a challenger, access to the

**TABLE 4. Campaign Expenditures, Activities, Situational Factors, and Election Outcome: Standardized Regression Coefficients**

Y=Election Outcome – Percentage of the Vote Obtained	House Incumbent Races (N=65)	House Open Seats (N=40)	Senate Incumbent <sup>a</sup> Races (N=25)
X <sub>1</sub> Incumbency	.76	—	.89
X <sub>2</sub> Competition	-.37	-.63	-.03 <sup>b</sup>
X <sub>3</sub> Prior elective office	.05 <sup>b</sup>	.25	.45
X <sub>4</sub> Expenditures	.21	.33	.04 <sup>b</sup>
X <sub>5</sub> Voter contact	-.04 <sup>b</sup>	-.16 <sup>b</sup>	.15
X <sub>6</sub> Elite mobilization	-.09 <sup>b</sup>	.06 <sup>b</sup>	-.17
X <sub>7</sub> Fund raising	.09 <sup>b</sup>	.17 <sup>b</sup>	.19
X <sub>8</sub> Turnout	-.04 <sup>b</sup>	-.02 <sup>b</sup>	-.04 <sup>b</sup>
X <sub>9</sub> Endorsements	-.06 <sup>b</sup>	-.17 <sup>b</sup>	.27
	R <sup>2</sup> =.79	R <sup>2</sup> =.61	R <sup>2</sup> =.95

<sup>a</sup>Senate open-seat contests were excluded because of the small number of cases (15).

<sup>b</sup>Insignificant at .05 alpha level.

Senate is not expenditures, per se, but having held a prior elective office, a variable highly correlated with money (.53). Again, money is an interdependent resource. Those with some public exposure and contact are best able to raise funds.

At least in this higher level office, some controllable campaign activities retain independent impacts. More importantly, prior elective office is actually *negatively* related to all of these activities (vote contact, fund raising, and seeking endorsements). This confirms that those who engage in the more difficult activities are disadvantaged from the outset, but at least in these races such efforts are accompanied by results.

In sum, money seems very important to getting a start in politics; but as the level of office increases, candidate background and certain campaign activities overcome the influence of expenditures relative to the other factors. From the standpoint of policy, more money in the hands of challengers through public financing would seem to enhance competition in lower level offices by opening up the possibility of elite mobilization to candidates other than incumbents. At the lower levels of office, money is a launching device for a political career. After some point, money's impact on outcome is eclipsed by a candidate's political experience and by what he or she does in the campaign. Public financing of congressional and senatorial campaigns has been a public issue for years. However, these results would suggest that in terms of opening up the political arena and encouraging participation, lower level offices are where each public dollar would have the most impact.

## CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this paper the search has been for some relationship between clusters of campaign activities and the percentage of votes a candidate received. The painfully obvious conclusion is that campaigning, in many instances, is a waste of time. Of course it was no surprise that incumbency was a very powerful predictor of vote. Beyond that, having held some other elective office also retained a greater independent impact than the campaign activity clusters. One of the main components of incumbency and prior elective office is access to a network of elites. The support of other officials, their staff, business people, and members of political organizations rarely went to challenging candidates, thus excluding them from captive groups of workers, easy publicity, and sources of funds.

Breaking into this network is no easy task, but money seems to be one avenue. Expenditures were clearly related to mobilizing elites in House races. But this begs the question of where to obtain the money. The traditional fund raisers bring in some money, but we know (Agranoff, 1976, p. 234) that most local candidates rely primarily on their own funds and friends' funds. Thus we are faced with another uncontrollable factor, the personal wealth of a candidate, his or her family, and friends.

Admittedly, objective measures of how a candidate campaigns would be more valid indicators than candidates' self-reporting. However, that does not change the fact that in incumbent races the uncontrollable factors explained three-quarters of the variance and in open seats, one-half. Furthermore, the effects uncovered by other studies using more "objective" measures have not been noted for their large magnitude. Outcomes of local elections are largely a function of factors outside a candidate's control, and anyone entering a local race has limited mastery of his or her fate.

## NOTES

1. The breakdown of the response rates is as follows:

	Total Number	Returned	<i>n/N</i>
Incumbents	93	30	.32
Challengers	205	70	.34
Open seat	125	62	.49
Total	423	162	.38

2. The few Republican respondents (16) remained in the analysis because, first, none of the goals of the study concerned party-related matters. Second, such a small number would have had negligible impact on the ultimate results, even if one assumes that they systematically differed from candidates of a similar type (incumbent, open seat, challenger). In an open primary system like Louisiana's there is little reason to make that assumption. When all bivariate correlations with outcome were examined without the Republicans, 14 out of

15 of the Pearson coefficients were virtually identical. The one difference was that turnout and outcome were not related in incumbency races among Democrats alone. This difference simply confirms the ultimate conclusion.

3. Any item in which 95% or more of the cases were in one category was excluded.
4. McQuitty's elementary linkage analysis begins by identifying the largest correlation in each column of a correlation matrix. After locating the single largest coefficient (the core correlation for the first cluster), one examines the rows involving the two highly correlated variables for other correlations which are the largest in their columns. If one is found a new variable is added to the cluster, and its row is similarly examined. When no more of the large coefficients can be located through this process, one begins another cluster with the largest coefficient connecting variables not in the first cluster.
5. The correlation matrix is available from the author upon request.
6. Only the endorsements cluster required collapsing variable categories. The first indicator, "Did candidate attempt to obtain endorsements from political officials?" is a dichotomy. The other two items were collapsed as follows:
 

Success in endorsements	
Over half	2
1/4 to 1/2	1
Less than 1/4	1
Emphasis on endorsements	
A lot of time	2
Some	2
Little	1
No time	1
7. Incumbents definitely spent more than their opponents, with House incumbents spending an average of 30% more and Senate incumbents spending 64% more.
8. Since the reforms in campaign finance law, studies of political actions committees (PACS) have shown their greater tendency to contribute to incumbent campaigns (McDevitt, 1979; Congressional Quarterly, 1980).

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