RATIONality and Information
In Strategic Voting

Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, third parties and independent candidacies have become an important part of the American political system. Yet few of these parties or candidates have been able to win office. Strategic voting by supporters of third party and independent candidates often siphons off potential votes for those candidates, and leads to their loss. Much of the work that has been done on strategic voting leaves out some crucial elements of the voting process.

In this dissertation I fill some of the gaps in the extant literature. Using data from the 1998 Gubernatorial election in Minnesota and the 1994 U.S. Senate election in Virginia, I show how the amount of strategic voting was drastically different in the two elections. I then use the Virginia data to model the vote choice of supporters of the third-place candidate with the correct, theoretically-based model. Next, I content analyze newspaper coverage of the two elections, in order to examine the role of the media in shaping the decision to vote strategically or sincerely. I find that there was more coverage of candidate negativity and more coverage of the horserace aspect of the campaign in Virginia than in Minnesota. That type of information in the political environment would be likely to activate strategic concerns in the electorate. There was more issue-based coverage in Minnesota, which might encourage more sincere voting.
Finally, I demonstrated that strategic factors dominated more traditional vote determinants among Coleman supporters in the Virginia election. Coleman’s supporters were not particularly distinct from supporters of Robb or North, except that Independents, moderates, and those who did not follow the campaign were more likely to support Coleman than to support Robb or North. When the sample was restricted to Coleman supporters, the only new variable that significantly predicted strategic voting was opinion on abortion, where pro-choice voters were more likely to vote strategically than pro-life voters. These results suggest that analyses of multi-candidate elections that do not address strategic voting are missing some key factors that impact the decisions of third-party supporters.
Dedicated to Elaine
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1994, three candidates ran for the United States Senate from Virginia. Democrat Charles Robb was a scandal-plagued incumbent. Former Reagan National Security staffer Oliver North, infamous from his role in the Iran-Contra scandal, was his Republican challenger. The third candidate in the race, Marshall Coleman, was a well-liked and respected politician, who had nearly won a Gubernatorial election five years earlier. Both major party candidates faced challengers in the nomination process, both easily winning the nominations, but still vulnerable candidates. The fall campaign, between Robb, North, and Coleman, was characterized by high levels of dissatisfaction with the major party candidates and high approval of Marshall Coleman. However, on election day, Coleman only received eleven percent of the vote.

In 1998, three candidates ran for Governor of Minnesota. The two major party candidates, Democratic Attorney General Hubert Humphrey III, and Republican mayor of St. Paul Norm Coleman, were not nearly as controversial as Robb and North in Virginia. The independent candidate, former professional wrestler and Brooklyn Park mayor Jesse Ventura, was very popular within the state. Somehow, Ventura avoided the fate of Marshall Coleman four years prior in Virginia, and won the election.
Scholars who study strategic voting argue that some voters will be better off if they do not vote for their most preferred candidate, if that candidate stands little chance of winning. Voters who behave this way are considered rational, as they are behaving in such a way as to maximize the expected utility they will receive from their vote. But much of the work that has been done on strategic voting leaves out some crucial elements of the voting process, and leaves several questions unanswered. In this dissertation, I answer some of these questions. Specifically, I focus on the following elements. First, I show differences in the behavior and attitudes of Virginia and Minnesota voters along important strategic variables. Second, I model the vote choice of voters in the 1994 Virginia election with the correct, theoretically-based model. Third, I examine the role of the media in shaping voters’ evaluations of the candidates and their perceptions of the candidates’ chances of winning. Fourth, I examine differences between strategic and sincere voters on a number of important political variables, and compare the effects of those variables with the effects of variables measuring strategic considerations. In the end, I show that voters behave rationally in such multi-candidate contests, and hypothesize that differences in the amount of strategic voting are dependent on coverage of the election.

**Motivation and Justification**

There is ample theory for why voters would be strategic, but little direct evidence that presents a full picture of the roles of the voters’ motivations, the information environment, and the nature of the candidates. I believe that there is much work to be done on strategic voting in the United States. Much of the past work on the topic has focused on a single election, in an attempt to explain the outcomes of that election. By
focusing on one election, scholars are essentially limiting the explanatory power of their work. Additionally, such empirical work is often plagued by flaws in the models used to estimate the effects of strategic considerations, or by not presenting a full picture of the election. In contrast to previous work done on strategic voting, I seek not to explain why a particular candidate won or lost, but rather why the individual voters made the choices they did. Unfortunately, adequate survey data do not exist to examine strategic voting across several elections. I hope that this work shows strategic voting to be worthy of more rigorous analysis than what has already been conducted.

One goal of my research agenda is to model strategic voting across different theoretically significant electoral environments, especially elections in which a third-party candidate is victorious. Such elections may often be thought of as disproving the existence of strategic voting. I intend to show that the electoral environment can be a strong determinant of whether strategic voting occurs or not. While previous work (such as Abramson et al., 1992) has predominantly focused on one model and one election, this dissertation takes a step toward the examination of strategic voting across multiple election environments. The ultimate goal is to build a broader theory of political behavior in multi-candidate elections. Not only is it important to move beyond single-case studies, but it is important to examine cases that vary in theoretically interesting aspects. One question I hope to eventually answer is whether strategic voting plays a role in elections where there is no distinct underdog candidate. I believe that strategic behavior can manifest itself in such elections, but that it is often difficult to observe. While I have not been able to obtain data on many such elections, I believe I make maximal use of the data that are available.
A secondary goal is more methodological. As mentioned earlier, authors tackling the question of strategic voting often use vastly different models of voter behavior. In this project, I use theory to guide my attempt to unify these models in order to best examine the question of strategic voting in the United States. The literature varies widely in this aspect. Some of the empirical literature is very well grounded in the theoretical work done on rationality and voting. On the other hand, some of the work is either lacking in theoretical foundations, or fails to use the theory to guide the statistical models. For example, scholars often look for strategic voting amongst the whole population of voters, rather than in the only sub-population where strategic voting would produce a different vote than sincere voting (Riker, 1986). I intend to illustrate how the results of such analysis are different when focusing on just those voters in the position to vote strategically (i.e., who favor an underdog candidate) instead of focusing on all voters in an election, some of whom may have no reason to think strategically about their vote.

A third goal of this project is to present a fuller picture of the information environment in multi-candidate elections. How much attention do the media pay to the horserace aspects of the campaign versus the policy issues advanced by the candidates? Do the media focus on personal aspects of the candidates rather than their stances on issues important to the voters, and is the coverage of the candidates’ personalities negative or positive? By analyzing the media coverage of the election as well as public opinion polls, I offer an explanation for why voters appear to vote strategically in some elections and not in others.
Consequences of Strategic Voting

The obvious consequence of strategic voting in the United States is the lack of a viable third party. While independent candidates have occasionally done well at the presidential level, they have yet to win office. Independent candidates and minor parties have had more success at lower levels of government. Of course, just because a party is a minor party on the national scene does not mean that it must be minor in every state, congressional district, county, or city. So, the occasional success of independent candidates does not violate Duverger’s law.

Duverger’s psychological and mechanical effects combine to under-represent supporters of minor parties. This under-representation feeds upon itself each election cycle. For example, in 1992, Ross Perot received 19 percent of the popular vote for president, yet he received 0 percent of the electoral vote. Perot supporters may have realized the futility of a Perot candidacy after witnessing Duverger’s mechanical effect in action. As a result, many of them probably voted strategically in 1996, thus ensuring Perot’s loss. Perot only received 8 percent of the vote in 1996.

In Liberalism vs. Populism, Riker contemplates the consequences of strategic voting. Riker suggests that if Taft supporters had voted strategically in 1912, Teddy Roosevelt may have been elected instead of Woodrow Wilson (Riker, 1982a). In chapters 3 and 5, I argue that if Marshall Coleman’s supporters had not voted strategically, Coleman could have won Virginia’s 1994 U.S. Senate election instead of Democrat Charles Robb. Riker concludes that it is impossible to judge whether strategic voting is good or bad for the political system, only that strategic voting outcomes often differ from sincere voting outcomes.
Riker also argues that strategic voting occurs frequently, and because so, “that the meaning of social choices is quite obscure” (Riker, 1982a, 167). Since we can never know whether the outcome of an election is the result of sincere or strategic voting, we can never know whether the outcome is the true social choice or not. Riker states that this affects all social choices, because we can never truly know if and when someone is voting strategically, since we must rely on their own statements to assess their vote (Riker, 1982a).

**Chapter Outline**

In the next chapter I review the relevant literature on strategic voting. I first focus on the theoretical and formal and literature, and then discuss previous empirical findings on strategic voting. In chapter three, I focus on the 1994 Virginia Senatorial election and the 1998 Minnesota Gubernatorial election. The analysis in chapter 3 shows the degree of strategic voting among supporters of the third-party candidates in the two elections. The data show vastly different behavior between the two groups of voters, as over half of the Virginia voters who favored the independent candidate voted strategically, while less than ten-percent of the Minnesota voters who preferred Ventura voted strategically.

In chapter four, I introduce a new model of strategic voting which uses five theoretically important variables. First, following Riker’s advice, I limit my analysis to those voters who are at risk of voting strategically. Second, I regress strategic voting on the respondents’ perceptions of their most preferred candidate’s chances of winning, their ratings of him, their perceptions of the closeness of the race, the difference in their ratings of the two most viable candidates, and the interaction between the closeness and
the favorability difference. The results confirm hypotheses of the causes about strategic voting, and test of predicted probabilities show that prior deficiencies in strategic voting models have been overcome.

In chapter five I present a content analysis of the major newspaper coverage of the two campaigns. I hypothesize that increased coverage of the horserace or the negative aspects of the campaign will increase the percentage of voters who behave strategically. As news outlets focus more on strategies and polls, supporters of underdog candidates become more aware of their candidate's likelihood of losing, and either vote strategically or do not turn out on election day. Coverage of negativity between the frontrunners during a campaign will increase the difference between the voter's evaluation of those two candidates, leading them to see more at stake in the election than if the campaign was largely positive. As a result, supporters of underdog third-party candidates seek to avoid letting their least-favorite candidate win the election, and vote strategically. The results of the content analysis support these hypotheses by finding systematic differences in newspaper coverage of the Virginia and Minnesota races.

In chapter six I use a Virginia survey to analyze the determinants of strategic voting at the individual level. I show that support for Marshall Coleman in Virginia was based more on a negative reaction to the major party candidates than to any particular issue position or demographic group that Coleman supported. The results of this analysis suggest that Coleman’s supporters were a diverse group, both demographically and politically. It is no surprise, then, that so many of these voters were only weakly aligned with Coleman, and chose to vote to keep their least favorite candidate from winning. Further analysis at the end of the chapter shows that the strategic variables used in
chapter four were much stronger predictors of the vote than more traditional vote
determinants. Among all the issue variables and demographic traits, only opinion on
abortion was a significant predictor of the vote, once the strategic nature of the decision
was accounted for. This analysis suggests that studies of multi-candidate races that do
not use strategic variables may be missing an important determinant of the outcome of
the election.

In the final chapter, I summarize the results and discuss their implications more
broadly. Overall, the results show that previous studies have not sufficiently accounted
for the factors leading to strategic voting. Aside from the methodological flaws with
previous studies, other studies have failed because they did not follow the advice of
theorists analyzing voter behavior. While I hope to add more cases the future, the
comparison of the Virginia and Minnesota cases illuminates the determinants of strategic
voting. These determinants illustrate not only why some voters vote sincerely and some
vote strategically, but also why some third-party candidates are successful and why most
fail. Strategic voting involves issues that are at the core of debates about voter
rationality, third-party success, and the role of information in voting, so improved
analysis of strategic voting is an important step toward greater understanding of politics.
CHAPTER 2

THEORIES OF AND EVIDENCE FOR STRATEGIC VOTING

The fundamental theoretical basis for the study of strategic voting (sometimes referred to as “sophisticated voting”) in the electoral context is Duverger’s law. Duverger writes that “the simple-majority single-ballot system encourages a two-party system with alternation of power between major independent parties” (Duverger, 1963, p. 205). Riker (1982b) and Cox (1997) show, without loss of generality, that Duverger’s law can be expanded to simple-plurality systems as well as simple majority systems, as long as there is a single ballot. Duverger elaborates his theory with a discussion of the nature of political choice – that it is often a choice between two alternatives. According to Duverger, the “centre,” if it exists, cannot stand on its own, for it is “divided against itself.” The centre is composed of the “right wing of the Left and the left wing of the Right,” and will be split if a majority must be reached in order to win. However, if a candidate only needs a plurality to win, the centre (or third party) may not be as vital as in a simple majority system, because its votes may not be needed to win.¹ In this case, the major parties will attempt to sway the voters of the non-major (or centre) parties in

¹This is not to imply that the same general idea does not hold for non-centrist parties. Non-centrist parties, however, would be less likely to be split, but there would be more pressure for those voters to vote for the major party, in order to avoid electing a party that is farther away from their own ideal policy.
order to gain a plurality. Winning a majority is, of course, still to the advantage of the major parties. One party can never be sure that anything less than a majority will be enough to win the contest.

Numerous authors have used deductive theoretical methods to prove, modify, or illustrate properties of Duverger’s Law. Palfrey provides a mathematical proof of the law (1989). Riker has examined Duverger’s Law and the few exceptions to the principle (1976, 1982b). Recently, Neto and Cox (1997) have shown that the number of parties in a country’s party system can be modeled as a product of the interaction between the country’s electoral laws and its social cleavages. Cox (1997) also demonstrates that Duverger’s Law does not hold in situations where candidates are allowed to file their candidacy with more than one party.2

Despite this formal evidence in favor of Duverger’s Law, the Law and its application have not gone unchallenged. Seymour Martin Lipset notes, in a recent review of Aldrich’s Why Parties, that “Aldrich relies heavily on Maurice Duverger” in his analysis of the development of the American Party system (Lipset, 1996, p. 170). Echoing one of the critiques by many political sociologists, Lipset argues that Duverger’s Law does not apply to “first-past-the-post” systems, citing the English-speaking democracies as prime examples of “first-past-the-post” systems that do not obey Duverger’s Law. The country that comes closest to a two-party system, according to

2Such a system, Cox notes, can be found in New York State, but is rarely found elsewhere.
Lipset appears to include India as an English-speaking country, probably due to their long colonial relationship with England. According to Lipset, there are 23 parties in the lower house of India's parliament.

The answer to the critique by Lipset (and other sociologists) can be found in some of the work by Riker. Riker (1982b) traces the history of the debate surrounding the number of parties in a political system and how that relates to the preference aggregation mechanism. Through this process, Riker notes some exceptions to Duverger's law (Canada and India) and offers explanations as to why these systems differ from the norm. Riker revises Duverger's law to incorporate these two exceptions, into a deterministic phenomenon. Riker writes “Plurality election rules bring about and maintain two-party competition except in countries where (1) third parties nationally are continually one of two parties locally, and (2) one party among several is almost always the Condorcet winner in elections.” In a 1998 article, Chhibber and Kollman show how Duverger’s Law applies to India and the United States. Duverger’s original statements applied to the local, or district level, not necessarily to the national level. Chhibber and Kollman argue that national party aggregation is the link from Duverger’s conclusions to the modern American party system. As candidates and voters coordinate their actions across districts, the number of national parties is reduced.

Riker also divides Duverger’s law into two effects of the plurality system, the “mechanical effect” and the “psychological effect.” The mechanical effect has been

3 Lipset apparently includes India as an English-speaking country, probably due to their long colonial relationship with England. According to Lipset, there are 23 parties in the lower house of India’s parliament.
described in two ways. One way the mechanical portion operates is that it affects politicians’ partisan loyalties, since strategic politicians have a strong incentive to desert losing parties. The other part of the mechanical effect deals with the allocation of seats in the legislature. Plurality systems, or “winner-take-all” systems do not reward parties that do not win a plurality of the vote. These parties become under-represented in the legislature, and politicians desert them for better electoral fortunes. The psychological portion affects voters, and, as mentioned above, leads people to vote for a lesser preferred candidate who is more viable. This is the effect with which this project is most concerned.

Theories of Individual Behavior in Multi-Candidate Elections

The first question that needs to be asked is why someone would vote if their favorite candidate has no chance of winning. In *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, Anthony Downs presents a theory of the voter as a rational actor, seeking to use their vote to maximize their “utility income from government activity,” (Downs, 1957, p. 37) or, since there is a degree of uncertainty in judgements about future government performance, the expected utility of future government actions. In a large electorate, Downs argues, the value of one vote is reduced so much that it may be rational not to vote. For some citizens, the benefits gained by the act of voting are enough to outweigh the costs. But for citizens interested in using their vote as an instrument of electoral control, it is often irrational to vote. Tullock (1967) extended the analysis into the mathematical formulation of the decision to vote. The utility of voting, $U$, is equal to
where $P$ equals the probability of one vote deciding the election, $B$ equals the differential benefits of electing one candidate over the other(s), and $C$ equals the cost of voting.

Riker and Ordeshook (1968) addressed the paradox that arises from Downs’ and Tullock’s economic analyses. First, they add a term that adds to the rewards of voting and is not dependent on the probability of the voter’s vote making a difference in the outcome. This term, the well-known $D$ term, encompasses such benefits as regime stability, compliance with civic duty, and perhaps most importantly, some notion of expressive rather than instrumental voting (p. 28). Riker and Ordeshook also demonstrate how an individual’s perceived chance of affecting the outcome is a function of how certain they are of what that outcome will be.

Riker and Ordeshook focus on the calculus of voting – specifically on the decision to vote. But the principles they discuss can easily be applied to the decision how to vote when there are more than two candidates. When a voter believes her candidate has a good chance of winning, and the voter has already decided to vote, it is rational to vote for that candidate. However, when she does not believe that her most preferred candidate has a legitimate chance to win, her vote will depend on her certainty about the outcome, and the relative benefits she would receive from the candidates.

Sophisticated voters will abandon their most preferred candidate if: 1) they perceive that candidate to be a sure loser, 2) they are uncertain about who will win, but 3) they perceive that their least favorite candidate does have a chance to win, and 4) they believe
that with their vote, someone other than their most preferred candidate will be able to
defeat their least preferred candidate. If the voter votes strategically, she can avoid
“wasting” her vote.

Indeed, Downs addresses the existence of strategic voting in elections with more
than two candidates. Downs notes that in 1948, some voters who preferred the
Progressive candidate Henry Wallace to Democrat Harry Truman, Republican Thomas
Dewey, and States Rights candidate Strom Thurmond voted for Truman. The logic,
according to Downs, is that these voters expected two things about Wallace’s support.
First, they expected that he would not win the election. Second, they expected that most
Wallace supporters favored Truman over Dewey, therefore Wallace’s candidacy was
drawing support away from Truman. If Wallace supporters voted sincerely, Dewey
might win the election. According to Downs, this would have been the worst outcome
for the Progressives. However, if they voted strategically, and voted for Truman, they
could help Truman win.

It should be noted that a “sincere” vote for a candidate who has very little chances
of winning is not necessarily a wasted vote. These voters could be voting expressively
rather than instrumentally – they use their vote as their political voice rather than a device
to alter the short-term outcome of the election. By expressing a preference for a losing
candidate, they still make a statement that the candidate has some support, and can derive
benefits from that expression.

Other authors, such as Farquharson (1969) and Niou (1998) have placed strategic
and sincere voting into a game theoretic framework. Farquharson examines the results of
sincere and strategic voting in situations where there are three voters (or voting blocs)
and three options from which they can choose. One of the key results in Farquharson’s work is that some voters will fare better when they do not vote sincerely. Niou extends Farquharson’s analysis to a more realistic situation when there are three options – that there are six voting blocs.4

McKelvey and Ordeshook (1972) have shown that in three-candidate elections, it is often rational for one to vote for a candidate other than one’s most preferred candidate. Given a situation where a voter’s most preferred candidate has little or no chance of winning the election, McKelvey and Ordeshook prove that the voter’s expected utility from a vote for their next favorite candidate exceeds that from a vote for their favorite candidate. Furthermore, McKelvey and Ordeshook write “the citizen’s revealed preference is a function of choices made by other citizens. Conversely, one would expect that the choices of others are affected by the citizen’s decision.” (McKelvey and

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4Farquharson assumed that preferences for the blocs, over options A, B, and C, would be ordered (A,B,C), (B,A,C), and (C,B,A). This assumption essentially forces voters to hold single-peaked preferences. However, it is possible that voters could hold preferences over candidates, or policy proposals, that are not single-peaked. In the recent Senate impeachment trial of President Clinton, one could assume that the alternatives could be arrayed along a single-dimension of severity of punishment. At one end would be conviction, at the other end would be acquittal without censure. In between would be acquittal with censure. If one were to assume that Senators possessed single-peaked preferences, then a Senator who prefers conviction over the other two alternatives would prefer acquittal with censure over acquittal without censure. But several conservative senators viewed censure as only an option to let Democratic senators off the hook for supporting Clinton, and preferred acquittal without censure to acquittal with censure. This suggests a second dimension over which senators were deciding their vote. On a similar note, one could imagine strong partisans who dislike the idea of independent candidates winning office, and would rather see the candidate of the opposition party win a seat than the independent candidate win. To avoid the problem of single-peaked preferences, Niou allows six voting blocs, with preferences (A,B,C), (A,C,B), (B,A,C), (B,C,A), (C,A,B), and (C,B,A). In such a case, a voter would not have a “straightforward strategy” and would be likely to consider voting strategically.
Ordeshook, 1972, 44). Given that strategic voters rely on information about the choices of other citizens, the next section is devoted to the exploration of the sources of that information.

**Empirical Studies of Strategic Voting – United States**

There have been several recent empirical studies of strategic voting. Most of these studies have dealt with one election at a time. If the authors expand their analysis beyond one election, they usually only treat one type of election (U.S. presidential, U.K. House of Commons, etc.) One of the most well known studies of strategic voting was conducted by Abramson, Aldrich, Paolino, and Rohde. Abramson et al. (1992), examined the 1988 Presidential Primaries using data from a survey of Super Tuesday voters. This system meets several of the criteria necessary for strategic voting, because there are usually several candidates running in the early stages of the primary system. The number of viable candidates is strategically narrowed as the campaign lingers on, and voters weigh each candidate’s chances of winning the nomination, as well as their chances of winning the presidency, in their voting calculus. Intuitively, Cox’s (1997) notion of “strategic coordination” applies to this system, because not only do voters strategically narrow down the number of viable alternatives by gradually deserting minor candidates, but the media, political elites, and campaign donors also narrow down the alternatives by thinking and behaving strategically. Abramson et al., do not find a trend toward strategic voting as election day nears, but they examined strategic voting in the context of a relatively early presidential primary.

The main contribution of the Abramson et al., article is the expected utility framework within which they analyze primary voting. The authors find that over 80
percent of their respondents voted “rationally,” and about 13 percent voted strategically. Overall, their article is a good test of strategic voting in a presidential primary, but that does not tell us much about how voters behave in non-presidential or non-primary elections. Voters who participate in nomination contests are more politically interested and aware than general election voters. Additionally, even though the predominant definition of strategic voting incorporates a term for utility, Abramson et al., do not test other measures of preference in their model, such as which candidate would have the best chance of winning a general election. Also, since primary elections are intra-party contests, partisanship cannot serve as an important cue to voters. Hence the results Abramson et al., obtain cannot generalize to other types of elections.

In another article on strategic voting, Abramson et al. (1995), study the general stage of the presidential selection process. They attribute a large amount of the blame for the lack of viable third parties in American elections to the electoral rules in this country. In this article, Abramson et al., examine whether any of the candidates running in 1968, 1980, and 1992 would have emerged as a Condorcet winner, if every voter had voted sincerely. They find that in paired comparisons in each of the three elections, the winner of each election would also have been a Condorcet winner (i.e., they could not be defeated by majority rule in series of paired comparisons with all other candidates).

Ordeshook and Zeng (1997) examine strategic voting in the 1968, 1980, and 1992 presidential elections. Using a similar expected utility framework as Abramson et al., (1992), the authors find that expected utility terms are statistically significant in modeling the vote choice, while they are not significant in modeling the decision to vote. Additionally, they find that the “right” voters vote strategically – “$PB_{23}$ clearly enters the
voter’s calculus . . . for voters favoring a third-party candidate. That is, as the race tightens between a voter’s second and third preference, as a voter’s preference for the second choice increases relative to that of the last choice, . . . then that voter becomes increasingly likely to cast a strategic vote for the second-ranked candidate.” (Ordseshook and Zeng, 1997, 181)

Magleby, Monson, and Walters (1998) test for strategic voting in a race for the House of Representatives in Utah in 1994. In this situation, a highly visible and viable independent candidate emerged as a strong challenger for the House race. The authors tested for competing theories of voter decision making. Interestingly, they find ample evidence for more than one theory. The implication is that our theories apparently do not have good divergent validity, so it is difficult to tell which one is correct, if there is one and only one correct model. Magleby et al., use the same general framework as Abramson et al. (1992), when operationalizing the models. Utility is measured by an ordinal preference ranking, and the candidate’s projected share of the vote is included in the model to weight the utilities associated with each candidate. Abramson et al., used feeling thermometers for their measures of utility, and Magleby et al., used a seven point scale.

Abramowitz, Rapoport, and Stone (1995), and Tomlinson (1998) have examined the 1994 Senate contest between Charles Robb, Oliver North, and Marshall Coleman using different analytical techniques. Abramowitz et al., found similar results using a more simplified model. They found large levels of strategic voting in the Virginia race,
with the intensity of preference between Robb and North, as well as the relative
evaluation of Coleman versus North showing strong effects on voting for Coleman.
Chapter 4 of this dissertation is a re-examination of these models.

These studies do well in examining a few of the American cases of strategic
election. But situations under which strategic voting is likely to occur are found with
much greater frequency in other countries. Many authors have studied strategic voting in
countries such as Canada (Blais and Nadeau, 1996), Great Britain (Cain, 1978; Galbraith
and Rae, 1989; Johnston and Pattie, 1991; Alvarez and Nagler, 1997), New Zealand
(Vowles, Aimer, Banducci, and Karp, 1998), Germany (Fisher, 1973; Jesse, 1988), and
the Netherlands (Alvarez and Nagler, 1998). For the purpose of this section of the
chapter, I will concentrate on the research on Great Britain. The British electoral system
for the House of Commons is similar to that of the United States House of
Representatives. Both are single-member-simple-plurality systems. The main
difference, of course, is the fact that the United States has a presidential system of
government, while the United Kingdom has a parliamentary system.

**Empirical Studies of Strategic Voting – European Cases**

One of the early critics of Duverger was Shively (1970). Shively argued that
Duverger’s psychological effect had not been convincingly empirically tested. Using
data from British and German elections, Shively found evidence of a ‘psychological
factor,’ but the operationalization of that factor did not exclude the “breakage effect” or a
“parallel psychological factor.” The “breakage effect” refers to the effect of social
pressures to vote with one of the more popular parties. While this social desirability
factor may have strong effects on the measurement of public opinion (see, for example,
Noelle-Neuman, 1993), it is questionable how much this might affect voting by secret ballot. The “parallel psychological factor” has to do with the chances the party has of controlling the government as a result of the election. Thus, the strategic voter is not voting based on their expectations of the outcome of the constituency election, but on their expectations of the aggregated outcomes of the constituency elections. This is similar to the situation facing voters in American primaries. Some voters may vote based on short-term viability, some may vote based on long-term electability. Shively does not find much evidence for either version of the psychological factor of Duverger’s Law, and he argues that political scientists need to expand their choice of models beyond utility maximization models.

Cain (1978) addresses critiques of expected utility modeling from Ferejohn and Fiorina (1974, 1975), who argue that strategic voting is not “minimax regret optimal” (Ferejohn and Fiorina, 1974, 534). Cain’s evidence from aggregate and survey data support the strategic voting hypothesis and undermine the minimax regret hypothesis. Other authors have recently examined the extent of “tactical” voting in Great Britain during the 1987 election campaign (Galbraith and Rae, 1989; Johnston and Pattie, 1991). For the most part, these authors find evidence of some strategic voting, but not much. It is unclear whether what they have found is enough to have made a difference in the outcome. Additionally, these recent studies of strategic voting in Great Britain have relied on aggregate data for their analysis rather than individual-level survey data. Finally, the existence of the Liberal Alliance party as viable in some districts while not
viable in others makes this analysis difficult, since the Liberal party has little, if any, chance of winning control of the government. So, it is unclear whether voters are voting strategically at the district level or the national level.

Alvarez and Nagler (1997, 1998) have argued that strategic voting can be modeled using advanced methodological tools available to political science. They choose to examine strategic voting in European systems, such as British and Dutch electoral systems, and use multinomial probit to predict the vote in these countries. While their statistical advances are certainly welcome, they leave out key variables which intuitively seem important, especially in their model of strategic voting in Great Britain, where they leave party identification out of their model. But they do present evidence of strategic voting in Great Britain, and their results are based on more rigorous analytical techniques than the previous studies they cite.

**Conclusion**

From these, and other empirical studies, we can conclude that strategic voting does take place. The degrees to which it occurs differ by the type of election, the political environment, the electoral system, and the candidates involved. Strategic voting has been measured in numerous ways. The most persuasive analyses are those that use individual-level survey data to illustrate that people who vote for someone other than their most preferred candidate follow a pattern when they do so. In the next chapter, I explore such survey data to illustrate strategic and sincere voting.
CHAPTER 3

FINDING EVIDENCE OF STRATEGIC VOTING

To study strategic voting, it must first be observed. Since we cannot directly observe a voter’s vote or beliefs about the outcome of an election, and since the ability to generalize beyond the individual respondent is desirable, one of the best ways to study strategic voting is through survey interviews. The data analyzed in the next two chapters come from two surveys conducted during the respective pre-election campaigns. The Virginia Peninsula Survey was originally a panel study, with one wave of the survey in early September of 1994, and another wave in late October of 1994. The questions in the survey not only allow me to detect strategic behavior, but also to examine the relationship between beliefs about the viability of the candidates, favorability towards the candidates, and strategic voting. Unfortunately, the St. Cloud State University survey in Minnesota does not have the kind of viability questions one would need to perform the same analysis as I do with Virginia. But it does have valuable feeling thermometer questions that I use to show the level of support for the three candidates, and differences in such patterns between voters in Virginia and Minnesota.

While pre-election surveys may not be ideal in many voting studies, studies of strategic voting may actually benefit from using pre-election surveys. There are several potential problems with using post-election surveys to study strategic voting. First,
sincere voters who supported a losing candidate may say that the voted for a candidate who had better chances of winning. They may not want to admit to backing someone who stood no chance of winning. Second, after the election there is no uncertainty about the closeness of the election and the chances of the third place candidate. Survey questions about each candidate’s chances of winning, questions which are essential to the model I propose in chapter 4, would be irrelevant after the election. Third, the voters’ opinions of the winner of the election may be higher than they would be in the pre-election stage. Measures of how much each voter would prefer her second-favorite candidate over her third-favorite candidate might change after the election. Finally, pre-election surveys measure the process of strategic voting as the voters are considering how to cast their votes.

For these reasons, I feel the use of the pre-election surveys from Virginia and Minnesota are appropriate and justified, regardless of whether the vote intention measured in the surveys matches the actual results of the election. While the surveys do not predict the results of the elections well, it should not affect the results of the analyses presented here. In Minnesota, Ventura’s last-month surge put him ahead, and the survey was taken in the middle of that surge. What it did not pick up was a swing from Humphrey to Ventura. It would not have overestimated or underestimated the amount of strategic voting by Ventura supporters. If anything, more voters in Virginia ended up voting strategically than were estimated in this survey.

I also would not expect the Virginia survey results to exactly match the statewide returns, since the Virginia survey was not a statewide survey. Voters in Northern Virginia may have been more likely to prefer Coleman, but also more likely to vote
strategically to avoid a win by North. Voters in the more conservative central and southern areas of Virginia may have been less likely to support Coleman and more likely to support North because of North’s position on abortion and gun control. The Coleman supporters in those regions may have been more likely to vote strategically in order to help North defeat Robb.

**Strategic Vote Switching in Virginia**

The 1994 United States Senate election in Virginia between Charles Robb, Oliver North, Marshall Coleman, and, briefly, Douglas Wilder, will arguably go down in history as one of the most interesting statewide elections in the postwar era. In an election year that produced the first Republican controlled Congress in forty years, a well-financed, well-recognized, charismatic Republican was not able to defeat a scandal plagued Democratic incumbent in one of the most conservative states in the nation. Both major party candidates faced challengers in the nomination process, both easily winning the nominations, but still vulnerable candidates. The two independent candidates, one a former Attorney General and one a former Governor, offered alternatives to partisans dissatisfied with their party’s candidate. The fall campaign, between Robb, North, and Coleman, was characterized by high levels of dissatisfaction with the major party candidates, equally high approval of Marshall Coleman, but an underlying sentiment that Coleman could not win.

Conditions such as these lead to strategic voting, where voters defect from their preferred candidate to one who has a better chance of winning. The conditions of the 1994 Senate race in Virginia provide near perfect conditions to examine questions related to strategic voting – who voted strategically, and why? The Virginia case also provides
scholars with a valuable context in which models of strategic, or sophisticated, voting may be reexamined. As I show in this dissertation, one of the more well-known methods of examining strategic voting is flawed. This chapter, makes an important contribution to the strategic voting literature, because I present a case where a likely Condorcet winner was actually the plurality loser — a situation not often witnessed by scholars in modern American politics.

The voter’s perception of the candidates’ chances of success is an important variable in the analysis of strategic voting. In the fall of 1994, during the first week of September, and again during the last week of the campaign, students at the College of William and Mary interviewed registered voters from the Hampton Roads area. I choose to use the data from the second wave of interviewing since, by that time, voters had been exposed to the advertisements of each candidate, as well as ample news coverage of the campaign. The number of respondents for the second wave of the survey was 527. The survey data used in this analysis were not collected originally for this project. The main reason I choose to use this survey is the series of questions dealing with the percentage of the vote each respondent expected each candidate to receive. Since many of these responses did not sum exactly to 100 for each respondent, I divided the answers for each candidate’s percentage by that respondent’s sum to obtain a more proper, standardized percentage. The full text of the questions used in the analysis are available in Appendix A.

One key feature of this election which makes a study of strategic voting possible is the lack of esteem for both of the major party candidates during this election. If voters are indifferent between the candidates most likely to win, they may not have enough
motivation to desert their most preferred candidate. However, if they feel they have a chance to help defeat a candidate they dislike, they may be willing to abandon their most preferred candidate in favor of the short-term benefits of helping to defeat someone they do not like.

Lt. Col. Oliver North’s (R) notoriety first grew during the investigation of the Iran-Contra affair. While a White House staff member at the National Security Council, North was involved in trading arms to Iran in exchange for hostages. North was investigated and convicted for lying to Congress about the secret arms deals. North’s convictions were later overturned by a federal judge on a technicality. During the subsequent years, North gained a following among religious conservatives across the country, as well as strong support within the Republican party in Virginia (Abramowitz, Rapoport, and Stone, 1995). North’s path to the nomination was not uncontested, however. Former Reagan Budget Director Jim Miller ran against North, but was defeated soundly during the party convention in the summer of 1994. While Miller was not tainted by scandal as was North, he had no experience in electoral politics. North was also inexperienced, but his notoriety and popularity among conservatives was enough to help him raise more money for his campaign, and to appear more viable for the fall campaign. Despite opposing him for the nomination, Miller endorsed North after the nomination contest was over. Miller had opposed North because of North’s controversial past and his vulnerability against Robb, not because of his positions on issues important
In 1996, Jim Miller ran for the Republican nomination for Senate against incumbent Senator John Warner, easily the most popular politician in Virginia, largely because Warner had opposed North’s candidacy and had publicly backed Marshall Coleman.\(^5\)

Charles Robb’s (D) once promising political career had fallen upon hard times by the early 1990’s. Robb had been a rising star in the Democratic party, until allegations of extra-marital affairs and awareness of drug use at parties surfaced midway through his first term as senator. Even though Robb won his first Senate election in 1988 with over 70 percent of the vote (Cook, 1994), Robb’s chances for re-election were in doubt. Robb also faced a primary challenge, from then State Senator, now Congressman, Virgil Goode, and received 65 percent of the vote in that contest.

The most serious intra-party challenges to Robb and North did not come during the nomination process, but during the general election. Two independent candidates, former Gubernatorial candidate and Attorney General Marshall Coleman, and former Governor and Presidential Candidate L. Douglas Wilder, surfaced in the late summer as viable alternatives to the two major party candidates. In another interesting coincidence, Wilder and Coleman had faced each other before. In 1989, they ran against each other for Governor of Virginia, with Wilder winning by the slimmest of margins. Wilder had held a safe lead throughout most of the campaign season, leading many researchers to suspect that when surveyed, white conservative Democrats reported that they intended to vote for Wilder, who is black, but actually voted for Coleman. Wilder dropped out of the

\(^5\)In 1996, Jim Miller ran for the Republican nomination for Senate against incumbent Senator John Warner, easily the most popular politician in Virginia, largely because Warner had opposed North’s candidacy and had publicly backed Marshall Coleman.
Senate race shortly after Labor Day, but Coleman stayed in the race until the end, leaving the voters with three well-known candidates to choose from. Wilder’s withdrawal from the campaign may have sent signals to potential Coleman voters that independent candidates would not be viable this time around.

Voters were dissatisfied with both major party candidates in 1994. 62 percent said that the election “reflected poorly on Virginia,” (Jenkins, 1994). In the Virginia Peninsula Survey, conducted by the College of William and Mary, the percentage of respondents who held a favorable opinion of North hovered around 40 percent, as it did for Charles Robb as well. Over the course of the campaign, the percentage of respondents with a favorable opinion of Coleman rose from 42 percent in September, to 49 percent just before the election. Abramowitz et al., provide data to suggest that if the voters had voted sincerely, according to the preference rankings generated by their answers to “favorable/unfavorable” ratings, Coleman would emerge as not only a Condorcet winner, but as an outright winner in the three way race. I replicated their analysis, and present the results in Table 3.1.

--Table 3.1 about here--

As we see in Table 3.1, Coleman would have had enough support to defeat both Robb and North in two-way races, and to at least tie North, if not narrowly defeat him, in a three-way race, if voting were based strictly on the utility/preference ratings used here. However, when asked how they would vote in the election, which was less than a week away at the time of the survey, only 17 percent of the respondents claimed that they would cast their vote for Coleman. This is evidence not just of strategic voting, but of strategic coordination. The fact that Coleman was the favorite candidate of over one-
third of the sample is remarkable in and of itself. But the fact that his vote share was reduced by almost twenty percentage points when people named who they would vote for suggests that Coleman supporters were expecting Coleman to lose, and for other Coleman supporters to avoid wasting their vote. Their dominant strategy became to vote for their second favorite candidate, because they knew that they would not be likely to gain any short-term benefits by voting for Coleman (for an explanation of strategic voting as a game theoretic problem, see Niou, 1998). To examine whether they were truly worried about wasting their vote, it is useful to see how well they expected Coleman to do during the campaign. Respondents were asked “Approximately what percentage of the vote do you think (candidate’s name) will receive?” The answer was then divided by the sum of the percentages, given by each respondent, so that the values would add to 1. Table 3.2 shows some summary statistics for these variables.

---Table 3.2 about here---

So, as we see from Table 3.2, voters perceived Coleman to have much less support among the electorate than the other two candidates. The mean level of expected vote for Coleman was almost thirty percentage points lower than that for either North or Robb. This perception would naturally dissuade people who are highly favorable toward Coleman from voting for him, or even intending to vote for him. Not only did people perceive Coleman as not viable, but they perceived Robb and North as locked in a dead heat. The mean expectations of Robb’s and North’s vote totals were equal.

So far we have seen that many respondents had a positive opinion of Marshall Coleman, that the average respondent had a low expectation of his chances of winning, and that the average respondent indicated that she expected a very close race between
Robb and North. The final indicator of conditions of strategic voting is that those respondents who preferred Coleman also had a strong preference of either Robb or North over the other. To obtain this, we simply look at the average absolute difference in utility between Robb and North for those voters who favored Coleman. A quick examination of the data shows that over 70 percent of the respondents who rated Coleman the highest expressed a clear preference between Robb and North, while only 29 percent listed Robb and North at the same level of favorability. Again, an indicator of the potential for strategic voting, but not yet conclusive evidence.

Finally, it is useful to examine how the favorability rankings compare with reported vote intention. In Table 3.3, I present this comparison, and we see that an overwhelming percentage of respondents who rated Robb or North first also voted for that candidate. However, only 45 percent of those who rated Coleman first also voted for Coleman.

---Table 3.3 about here---

From this table, we see not only that over half of Coleman’s supporters voted for another candidate, but that they defected to Robb at a rate of 2.5 to 1. We can easily see that if everyone had voted sincerely, Robb would have finished a distant third. But, Coleman voters were strategically defecting from Coleman, largely to support Robb and help him defeat North. It may seem odd that voters who favor a candidate with a conservative Republican background would desert him in favor of Robb, rather than North. But, when one considers that the emergence of the Coleman campaign was brought about by opposition to North’s candidacy, it makes intuitive sense that strategic
Coleman supporters would opt for Robb rather than North. By supporting Coleman, many of them had already decided that they would not vote for North. They eventually decided that their votes would be better spent on Chuck Robb.

The Virginia election represents perhaps an ideal case study of strategic voting. It is difficult to find similar cases for several reasons, among them the lack of well-known independent candidates in statewide elections and the lack of data from surveys designed for the study of strategic voting. More multi-candidate elections should be analyzed in order to demonstrate the existence of this electoral phenomenon and to understand its causes and consequences. In the next section, I analyze the 1998 Minnesota Gubernatorial election from this perspective. Although data similar to the Virginia Peninsula Survey do not exist, the argument that the Minnesota election fits the theory of strategic voting can be supported. In chapter 5, I present content analysis of the newspaper coverage of the two elections to illustrate a possible cause of the different outcomes of the two elections.

**Strategic Loyalty in Minnesota?**

Unlike the 1994 Virginia Senate election, the 1998 Minnesota Gubernatorial election presents a situation where an independent candidate actually won a statewide election. Such events are rare in modern elections, but a few notable cases exist (Angus King’s victories 1994 and 1998 in Maine, Walter Hickel’s 1990 victory in Alaska, Lowell Weicker’s victory in 1990 in Connecticut, and Bernie Sanders’ victories in House
elections in Vermont\textsuperscript{6}.) It is particularly noteworthy that Ventura’s growing base of supporters did not desert him as the election drew near, as is often the case with the supporters of independent candidates (Rosenstone, Lazarus, and Behr, 1996).

In this section, I illustrate the similarities and differences between these two elections. Before turning to the quantitative analysis, I will briefly describe the Minnesota campaign. Then, using the available survey data, I will show what I believe are important differences in the two electorates on key variables related to strategic voting. First of all, many Minnesota voters saw little reason to support Humphrey or Coleman, and would not have voted if Ventura had not been on the ballot. Second, unlike in Virginia, nearly all Minnesota voters cast their vote for the candidate they most preferred. Third, what little strategic switching existed was distributed across supporters of the three candidates, and not concentrated amongst the independent supporters as was the case in Virginia.

The data I use in this section come from the St. Cloud State University fall 1998 survey of Minnesota. The survey was conducted from the 18\textsuperscript{th} through the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of October, and then the 25\textsuperscript{th} through the 29\textsuperscript{th} of October. Unlike the Virginia survey, the St. Cloud State survey used a statewide sample drawn through random digit dialing. The interviewers conducted 629 interviews. The full text of the questions used in this analysis are available in Appendix B.

\textsuperscript{6}Although Sanders runs as a Socialist, he faces little opposition from the Democratic party.
The Campaign

Unlike the major party candidates in Virginia, the Democratic and Republican candidates in Minnesota were not particularly controversial. Several candidates vied for each party’s nomination during the spring and summer. The Democrats eventually nominated Attorney General Hubert H. “Skip” Humphrey III, the son of the former Vice President under President Lyndon Johnson. Humphrey defeated well-known Democrats, such as Mike Freeman and Ted Mondale, in the fall primary, despite Mondale having won the endorsement of the party elites. Republicans nominated St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman. Coleman, a recent DFL convert, defeated conservatives Allen Quist and Joanne Benson, the incumbent Lieutenant Governor (Beiler, 2000).

After attempting to stay out of the race, Jesse Ventura eventually announced his candidacy in January 1998. Despite his term as Mayor of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, Ventura seemed inexperienced when compared to most of the other candidates in the race. However, as Minnesotans would learn later in the campaign, his charisma and public speaking abilities had been developed over several years of performing in front of large audiences. Ventura’s performance in the October debates is widely credited with establishing his credibility as a candidate, and with providing the momentum necessary to catch up to the frontrunners by the end of the month (Beiler, 2000; Lacy and Monson, 2000).

\footnote{The Virginia and Minnesota campaigns examined here are linked not just by the presence of strong independent candidates, but by their link to the Johnson Administration. Senator Chuck Robb, the winner of the 1994 election in Virginia, is married to President Johnson’s daughter, Lynda.}
The key difference between the two campaigns is that Ventura’s supporters did not defect to other candidates as the campaign drew to a close. Ventura’s support in the polls grew steadily after the September major-party primaries. This holding power may have convinced the more politically aware Ventura supporters that Ventura was indeed a viable candidate. By the end of the October, an editorial in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* even speculated that Ventura could win. It was Ventura’s ability to keep the votes of his supporters that allowed him avoid the problems minor party candidates often face with strategic voters.

Table 3.4, similar to table 3.1, shows the results of runoffs based on the feeling thermometer ratings of the three candidates. Just like in Virginia, the independent candidate, Ventura, could be considered the Condorcet Winner if candidate ratings are used to measure sincere preferences. Simulating the 3-candidate race with the feeling thermometer ratings yields inconclusive results, as no candidate has a statistically significant advantage. Finally, like Marshall Coleman in Virginia, Jesse Ventura winds up in third place in a 3-candidate race when respondents are asked for whom they plan to vote. The difference between the preference results and the vote intention results may be a product of two phenomena. First, like in Virginia, Ventura’s supporters may be voting strategically for one of the major party candidates. An alternative possibility may be that voters who rated Ventura equal to one of the major party candidates may say that they plan to vote disproportionately for a major party candidate.

– Table 3.4 about here –

Perhaps the simplest way to distinguish between the two competing explanations is to examine a crosstabulation of the respondent’s most preferred candidate and the
candidate he or she plans to vote for. If the discrepancy is due to strategic voting, we would observe many of Ventura’s supporters intending to vote for one of the major party candidates. This is exactly what was found in table 3.3, where 55% of Marshall Coleman’s supporters claimed they would vote for someone else. Additionally, table 3.5 shows the vote intentions of voters whose feeling thermometers did not reveal an outright favorite candidate. As table 3.5 shows, evidence of strategic voting is sparse, and voters who rated their favorite candidates equally disproportionately intended to vote for the major party candidates.

– Table 3.5 about here –

Again, similar to in Virginia, an overwhelming majority of the major party candidates’ supporters claimed to vote for that candidate. But unlike Marshall Coleman’s supporters in Virginia, Jesse Ventura’s supporters behaved like the major party candidate supporters and intended to vote their preference. These voters are clearly voting sincerely. Their behavior may also be considered strategic, since by the end of October, it was clear that Ventura was a viable contender. If Ventura had still been polling in the low-to-mid teens, it is entirely possible that a large portion of his supporters may have cast their votes for a different candidate. If one of the other candidates had fallen far behind in the polls, his supporters may also have cast their votes for other candidates. Strategic voting is not necessarily a problem that plagues third-party candidates, but one that hurts longshots.8

8For an example of an election where a major party candidate’s supporters voted strategically for the other major party candidate or the independent candidate, see Magleby, Monson, and Walters, 1998.
Conclusion

The two elections examined here are different in many ways. They were held in different years, different issues were debated, the elections were held in different states in different regions of the country, and the elections were for different offices. There are important similarities as well. Both elections were statewide elections with three candidates on the ballot. The independent candidates in each election were well-known, high profile public figures. Both independent candidates also appeared to be longshots early in the campaign. Yet the most important difference is difficult to explain based on the factors listed above. Jesse Ventura was able to come from third place to win the election, while Marshall Coleman stayed in third place, even in surveys in which he was the most preferred candidate of a plurality of the respondents.

Some demographic differences between the two states may account for why more of Coleman’s supporters deserted him on election day. Some of these explanations will be explored in chapter six, but they also deserve discussion here. First, Minnesota has a longer tradition of political independence and participation than Virginia. A typical state in the peripheral South, the Democratic political machine ran the state throughout much of the 20th century through suppression of African-American and rural Republican turnout. On the other hand, Minnesota’s major political parties (Democrat Farmer-Labor and Independent Republican) have roots in political independence. Minnesota also has election-day registration, which certainly helped Ventura’s campaign. The election-day registration system made it possible for Ventura to bring new voters into the political system. His late surge in the polls may have been impossible if many of his voters had been required to register a month before the election, as in most other states.
Virginia also has a much larger African-American population than Minnesota. Traditionally loyal to the Democratic candidates, some African-American voters may have been attracted to Coleman as an alternative to Robb and North, but may have stuck with Robb in the end. Wilder’s withdrawal from the campaign and subsequent endorsement of Robb surely did not help Coleman’s campaign, although the survey data suggest the endorsement had little effect.

Similarities between the states include large rural areas and strong religious right movements. How these similarities relate to strategic voting is unclear, although religious conservatives in Virginia would be more likely to support North than Coleman, and in Minnesota would be unlikely to support Ventura, who is pro-choice on abortion. According to Lacy and Monson (2000), much of Ventura’s support came from urban areas and their suburbs. Rural residents of Virginia might find North’s positions on gun control preferable to Robb’s pro-gun control stance.

According to the surveys analyzed here, Ventura’s supporters were more steadfast than Marshall Coleman’s supporters. While over 90 percent of those who rated Ventura highest on feeling thermometers reported that they would also vote for Ventura, less than half of Marshall Coleman’s supporters said that he would get their vote on election day. In the next chapter, I examine why this happened more thoroughly. First, and perhaps most important, is that Ventura became a viable candidate during the fall of 1998. Marshall Coleman was unable to accomplish that feat in 1994. As the analysis shows, the voters’ perceptions of Coleman’s chances of winning had a significant effect on whether Coleman’s supporters would vote strategically. The voters’ perceptions of the closeness of the election, as well as the difference in their ratings of Robb and North, also
had predictable effects on the vote choice of Coleman’s supporters. The results suggest that many of Coleman’s supporters in Virginia may have been more concerned with not electing their least favorite candidate than with electing Marshall Coleman.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Supported</th>
<th>Coleman vs. Robb</th>
<th>Coleman vs. North</th>
<th>Robb vs. North</th>
<th>3-Way Pref.</th>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
<th>Actual Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robb</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tie</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>476</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>25th %ile</th>
<th>75th %ile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robb</td>
<td>.4212</td>
<td>.4171</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.07325</td>
<td>.3994</td>
<td>.4571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>.4219</td>
<td>.4171</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.08362</td>
<td>.3900</td>
<td>.4539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>.1569</td>
<td>.1589</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.08653</td>
<td>.1000</td>
<td>.2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
<th>Candidate Rated Most Favorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robb</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: Vote Intention by Candidate Rated Most Favorable: U.S. Senate Election, Virginia, 1994. Source, Virginia Peninsula Survey. Cell entries are Column Percentages, except for the Total row, followed by n’s.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Supported</th>
<th>Ventura vs. Coleman</th>
<th>Ventura vs. Humphrey</th>
<th>Coleman vs. Humphrey</th>
<th>3-Way Pref.</th>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
<th>Final Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ventura</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humphrey</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tie</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>537</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4: 3-way race and 2-way races based on preference rankings: Minnesota Gubernatorial Election, 1998. Source, St. Cloud State University Survey. Ties in the 3-way preference runoff were not broken due to oddities with the partisanship question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
<th>Candidate Rated Most Favorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ventura</td>
<td>92.9% 131 4.1% 6 2.5% 4 21.2% 12 30.3% 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>2.8 4.00 91.9 136 6.3 10 35.1 20 33.7 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humphrey</td>
<td>4.3 6 4.1 6 91.2 145 43.9 25 36.0 182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27.9 141 29.3 148 31.5 159 11.3 57 100.0 505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5: Vote Intention by Candidate Rated Highest on Feeling Thermometers: Minnesota Gubernatorial Election, 1998. Source, St. Cloud State University Survey. Cell entries are Column Percentages, except for the Total row, followed by n’s.
CHAPTER 4

MODELING STRATEGIC BEHAVIOR

In the last chapter, I identified that there is strong evidence of strategic voting in the 1994 Virginia election. In this chapter, I analyze the determinants of strategic voting in the 1994 Virginia election. Abramowitz et al., have shown that Coleman’s vote can be predicted from some of the variables we have already examined. However, I choose to analyze the data using the same general framework as Abramson et al. (1992) and estimate the probability of voting for one’s preferred candidate. To properly model the phenomenon, I propose a different specification of the model, and present the development of that model in the section titled “Improving the Models.” In the next two sections, I illustrate the problems with previous models that can be seen with careful scrutiny. In illustrating these problems, I propose various potential solutions that involve mathematical manipulation of the variables. These solutions are then shown to be problematic, leading to the model I advocate.

Problems with Past Analyses – Measuring Viability

As Abramson et al. (1992) and Magleby et al. (1998), have done, I will first examine the effects of the difference in viability of candidates 1 and 2, and candidates 1 and 3. Candidate 1 is defined as the respondent’s preferred candidate. Candidate 2 is her second-most preferred candidate, and Candidate 3 is the least preferred for that voter. In
the Abramson et al., notation, the independent variables for this model are $P_{12}$ and $P_{13}$.

The subscripts stand for the preference order of the candidates. $P_{jk}$ denotes the percentage of the vote that the voter expects candidate $j$ will receive, minus the percentage of the vote that the voter expects candidate $k$ will receive. So $P_{12}$ represents the difference in the expected received percentage of the vote between the voter’s most preferred candidate and second-most preferred candidate. I expect both coefficients to be positive and significant, since as $P_{12}$ and $P_{13}$ increase, candidate 1 is becoming more and more likely to win. Thus the likelihood of a strategic vote should decrease. The probit results are presented in Table 4.1, along with the results obtained by Abramson et al. (1992) for the same model.

As we see in Table 4.1, the coefficients are significant at the .05 level (one-tailed test), and in the expected direction. Additionally they match well with the coefficients obtained by Abramson et al. (1992) and Magleby et al. (1998). So, as the perception of a preferred candidate’s viability increases, so does the likelihood of voting for that candidate. The difference between the viabilities of the most preferred and the next-most preferred candidates has a greater effect on the vote than the difference between the most preferred and the least preferred candidates.

---

9I use one-tailed significance tests to determine statistical significance in this chapter. One-tailed tests can be used when testing directional hypotheses. If one expects a coefficient to be positive, there is no reason to test for statistical significance on both sides of the hypothetical distribution of $\hat{\beta}$. A one-tailed $p$-value of .05 is equivalent to a two-tailed $p$-value of .10. Hence, from the statistical output which uses two-tailed tests as a default, any $p$-value lower than .10 is statistically significant with 95 percent confidence.
These coefficients produce a problem that is not evident by just looking at the results. To illustrate these effects, I construct a hypothetical case based on the 1994 Virginia Senate Election. Suppose Voter A believes that Coleman will receive 20 percent of the vote, Robb will receive 42 percent of the vote, and North will receive 38 percent of the vote. Suppose also that Voter A’s most preferred candidate is Marshall Coleman and that Voter A prefers Robb to North. In this case, $P_{i2} = -.22$, and $P_{i3} = -.18$. From the probit analysis, the predicted probability of Voter A voting for Coleman would be 0.527. Suppose now that the day before the election, a poll comes out which has Coleman at 20 percent and Robb and North at 40 percent each. Voter A’s perceptions of the viability and the relative viability of each candidate should change. If surveyed, Voter A might well say that Coleman will get 20 percent and that North and Robb will get 40 percent each. $P_{i2}$ changes to -0.2, and $P_{i3}$ also becomes -0.2. Since North and Robb are perceived as being closer than before, one might expect that the probability of voting for Coleman (the preferred candidate) will decrease, since the likelihood of the least preferred candidate winning has increased. In fact, this does not happen. Instead, Voter A’s probability of voting for Coleman actually increases from 0.527 to 0.535. This is not much of an increase, but it is in the opposite direction from what we would expect. But when one thinks about what is happening with the coefficients and the variables, it makes sense.

In this particular situation, when Voter A’s perceptions of viability change, her $X\beta$ – the sum obtained by multiplying coefficients by the values of the variable, adding these products, and adding the constant -- changes. It increases by .02*\beta_1, and decreases by .02*\beta_2. Since $\beta_1 > \beta_2$, this results in a net increase in $X\beta$ and thus a movement to the
right along the cumulative normal curve. Therefore, Voter A’s probability of voting for her most preferred candidate increases. To further illustrate this problem I have constructed several other hypothetical examples that do not fit the theory. These are presented in table 4.2. As one can see, when there is unidirectional movement in the expected vote share of the second and third most preferred candidates, the change in predicted probabilities fits the hypothesis. However, when the expected vote share of the favorite candidate stays the same and the expected vote shares of the other candidates change in equal magnitude but opposite directions, the results obtained are inconsistent with hypotheses.

– Table 4.2 here –

There is no simple way to fix this problem. If we take the absolute value of $P_{12}$ and $P_{13}$ and run the probit equation on those variables, we get different values of Beta. As we can see in Table 4.3, with the new specification of this model, one of the coefficients has changed direction. With these new coefficients, Voter A’s predicted probability of voting for Coleman decreases by .04, or 4 percentage points, as she gains this new information about the relative viabilities of the candidates. Voter A’s initial probability of voting for Coleman is .75, and it decreases to .71. However, the model is grossly underspecified, since there has yet to be any mention of utility gained by a candidate’s victory. Additionally, it is missing one of the key components in the theory of strategic voting. The $P_{23}$ term was not included, but is certainly at least as important as the other two terms in the model.

– Table 4.3 here–
Problems with Past Analyses – Incorporating Utility

At this point, I add utility to the model of strategic voting. My utility terms vary from 0 to 1, because I divided them by the distance in utility between the most preferred candidate and the least preferred candidate. Normalizing the measures this way ensures that all of the values of utility in the model are being computed over the same scale. As mentioned earlier, the most appropriate way to incorporate both utility and viability is to multiply them together. This interaction captures the expected utility aspect of theories of strategic voting. Thus, like Abramson et al. (1992), I have created $PB_{jk}$ terms, which are the product of $P_{jk}$ and $U_{jk}$. $P_{jk}$ is defined as before, and $U_{jk}$ is the difference in utility between candidate j and candidate k, divided by the difference in utility between candidate 1 (most preferred) and candidate 3 (least preferred). I impose the restriction that j<k, so that $U_{jk} < 0$. I also depart from previous studies by estimating probit models for alternative specifications of these variables. I include a model with the absolute value of $P_{jk}$, instead of the raw $P_{jk}$, and also a model with $1-|P_{jk}|$, in order to make sure that an increase in the first part of the $PB_{jk}$ term and an increase in utility are both leading to an increase in the probability of strategic voting.

This is a clear problem with the earlier studies as well. When creating interaction terms between two variables, we should keep in mind the theoretically important directions of movement along those variables. What we are interested in is when the utility difference increases and when the viability difference (at least of the second and third candidates) approaches 0. Taking 1 minus that difference gives us the appropriate direction of this variable. I present the results in Table 4.4. They are not compared with...
those of Abramson et al. (1992), because we are using different measures for utility. Their measures will be more precise than mine and may lead to different coefficients or p-values.

– Table 4.4 here –

The results of these probit equations show significant effects, most of which are in the directions anticipated. In the first and third models, an increase in the expected utility of voting for candidate 2 over candidate 3 leads to a decrease in the probability that a voter votes for candidate 1. We must keep in mind, of course, that these expected utility scores are not independent of one another. For example, as $U_{12}$ increases, $U_{23}$ decreases because $U_{13}$ stays constant. $U_{13}$ remains constant because it is necessary to keep the scale constant. So, it might appear counterintuitive that the coefficients on $PB_{12}$ and $(1-|P_{12}|)U_{12}$ are negative, because that would mean that the greater the expected utility of voting for candidate 1 over candidate 2, the less likely you are to vote for candidate 1. But, if that change is a result of a change in $U_{12}$, then $U_{23}$ will change in an equal and opposite direction, since the bounds of the scale are set at 0 and 1. Therefore, since the coefficient for the third variable in the equation is the same direction as the coefficient for the first variable in the equation, and since the variables are changing in opposite directions, the changes will counteract each other. Additionally, you will notice that the coefficient for the third variable is farther from 0 than the coefficient for the first variable, so it has a greater effect on the overall $X\beta$ than does the first variable. Since a movement of candidate 2, either in their perceived viability or utility, will produce equal and opposite movements in the first and third variables, the net effect of the movement will be in the expected direction. Another hypothetical example may be useful here.
Let us take Voter A again. First, I will change her perceptions of viability, as I
did before, and then I will change her utility ratings as well. Under the same situation as
before, Voter A modifies her perceptions of North’s and Robb’s chances of winning to an
equal chance for both. The original percentages assigned were 0.2 for Coleman, 0.42 for
Robb, and 0.38 for North. I then changed the probabilities to 0.2 for Coleman, 0.4 for
Robb, and 0.4 for North. Now, let us specify her utilities. Since Coleman is her favorite,
I’ll give Coleman an original utility of 5, a 3 to Robb, and a 1 to North. Since the
difference between the maximum and minimum values is 4, I will divide all the
differences in utilities by 4. The variables take the following values:

\[
\begin{align*}
U_{12} &= \frac{2}{4} \quad U_{13} = \frac{4}{4} \quad U_{23} = \frac{2}{4} \\
P_{12} &= -0.22 \quad P_{13} = -0.18 \quad P_{23} = 0.04 \\
1 - |P_{12}| &= 0.78 \quad 1 - |P_{13}| = 0.82 \quad 1 - |P_{23}| = 0.96
\end{align*}
\]

After multiplying the utility differences by the viability differences, plugging those
values into our equation for \(X\beta\), and evaluating it with the cumulative density function of
the normal distribution, we find that the probability that Voter A votes for Marshall
Coleman is 0.73. When we change the viability ratings, which increases \(P_{12}\), and
decreases \(P_{23}\), we find that the probability that Voter A votes for Coleman becomes 0.67,
a drop of 6 percentage points. So, even though Voter A perceived Coleman to be more
viable, relative to Robb, she also perceived both Coleman and Robb to be losing ground
to North. According to the magnitudes of this probit equation, the viability of Robb
relative to North takes precedence over the viability of Coleman relative to Robb.

A similar manipulation of Robb’s level of utility yields similar results. Changing
Robb’s rating from “neutral” to “somewhat unfavorable” changes \(U_{12}\) from 0.5 to 0.75,
but it also changes $U_{23}$ from 0.5 to 0.25. The coefficient that corresponds with the $U_{23}$ term is stronger, and in the same direction as, the coefficient that corresponds with the $U_{12}$ term. Thus, $X\beta$ in this situation increases, and Voter A’s probability of voting for Coleman actually increases, from 0.73 to 0.85. So, the net effect of the model is to move the probability of voting for one’s preferred candidate in the expected direction, even if the coefficient is not in the expected direction.

This problem reflects the inherent inadequacy of the most commonly used expected utility framework of strategic voting. It is impossible to really tell if a change in the independent variable caused the change in the dependent variable when you naturally have two changes occurring to your independent variables every time you try to change only one. The central lesson to take away from this is that we cannot approach the strategic voting problem the way Abramson et al. (1992) do. In the complex political systems in their models, too many collinear variables are covarying to tell which variable has the desired effect. If anything, we should think about which of those terms are the most important to the strategic voting hypothesis, include those in our model, and exclude all the rest.

Besides the problem that results from the size of the coefficients, the Abramson et al. model presents us with an improper combination of the effects of the viability and utility items. We would expect, based on rational choice theory, that the closer the voters saw the race, the more likely they would be to vote strategically. So, as the race is closer between the two frontrunners, $P_{23}$ becomes smaller (assuming that our voter is most favorable toward the last place candidate), and the voter is more likely to vote strategically. Conversely, voters would be more likely to vote strategically if there
existed a large difference in their favorability toward the candidates. The bigger the
difference in their ratings of the candidates, the more they should see at stake in electing
one over the other. So, as the ratings of the two frontrunners diverge, $U_{23}$ increases, and
the voter is again more likely to vote strategically.

These dynamics make it very difficult to interpret the coefficients associated with
$PB_{23}$. If $PB_{23}$ increases, we do not know whether that is a result of the race widening, or
the voters’ opinions diverging. Additionally, if both terms changed in a direction
consistent with strategic voting (or with sincere voting), they would be changing in
opposite directions, producing values smaller than if one term changed in a direction that
would lead to a strategic vote, and vice versa. In order to figure out these proper effects,
we must re-identify the model.

One place to look is Ordeshook and Zeng’s article on strategic voting (1997).
Instead of subtracting one candidate’s probability from the other, they multiply them.
This means that the closer the race is, the higher the value of this measurement. On its
face, this is a step in the right direction. It is not problem-free, however. As an example,
we can imagine two different voters in a three-candidate race. The first voter expects
candidates A and B to each receive 40 percent of the vote, and she expects candidate C to
receive 20 percent of the vote. If $P_{23}$ is the product of the proportion of the vote the voter
expects her second and third choice candidates to receive, and she most prefers candidate
C, then $P_{23}$ equals 0.16 for her ($0.4 \times 0.4 = 0.16$). The second voter might have a vastly
different view of the race. She may believe that candidate A is going to win in a
landslide, with 80 percent of the vote. She believes candidate B will receive 20 percent
of the vote. Finally, candidate C will get no votes, for whatever reason. If she most
prefers candidate C, then \( P_{23} \) will also be 0.16 for her (0.8 x 0.2). While this scenario is somewhat out of the ordinary, in that two voters in the same election would see things so vastly differently, it still presents a problem that must be solved.

A final problem with these models is that they pool all respondents, expecting all of them to behave strategically. This is simply not the case. In a presidential primary contest, that may be a rational expectation, since candidates may not have had much time to build up momentum, or to define their image to the public. One would expect a lot of strategic voting in an early primary contest, because viability expectations may still be in flux in these systems. Campaigns which occur over several months are different. Congressional and Senate campaigns start picking up steam in early September. Presidential general election campaigns do so in the mid-summer of the Presidential year. With that amount of time, perceptions of viability may become more stable than in a shorter campaign, like a primary campaign. Indeed, the answers to the viability questions for respondents who answered both waves of the survey showed lower variance in the second wave of the survey. This suggests that people may have learned more about the candidates’ viability. Additionally, this election was different from other elections where strategic voting might become a consideration, in that only supporters of one candidate would be expected to vote strategically. Robb and North were far ahead of Coleman and Wilder throughout the campaign, so there would be no incentive for Robb or North supporters to vote for anyone other than their preferred candidate. Coleman voters, however, had to decide whether to vote strategically or sincerely. Major party voters did not.
Developing the Model

I now restrict the analysis to individuals who preferred Coleman over the other two candidates, since these are the voters one would expect to vote strategically. As noted earlier, only 45 percent of Coleman supporters stated that they would vote for him. Thirty-nine percent said they would vote for Robb, and only 16 percent said that they would vote for North. So, two questions remain to be answered. Why did Coleman supporters leave their favorite candidate? And why did most of them leave in favor of Chuck Robb? I believe that the answers to the first question lie in the different utilities associated with Robb and North and also with Coleman’s viability.

For Coleman supporters, viability was an important variable. Those supporters who stated they would vote for Coleman expected that he would receive 20.4 percent of the vote. On average, those who deserted Coleman thought that he would only receive 14.8 percent. This difference is statistically significant at p=0.0001. Coleman deserters and loyalists also differed on how they viewed Robb and North. One extension of the strategic voting literature is that if you would not gain much more utility from your second favorite candidate than from your third favorite candidate, you will have less incentive to vote for your second preference over your first. To test this idea, I compared the absolute difference between Coleman loyalists’ ratings of Robb and North to that of the Coleman deserters. These data are presented in Table 4.5.

– Table 4.5 here –

These data show that Coleman supporters who rated Robb at least two points higher on the favorable/unfavorable scale than they rated North, or vice versa, were much more likely to vote for their second preference rather than for Coleman. Those who saw
Robb and North as more equally favorable or unfavorable were more likely to stay with Coleman. The implications of these findings are clear. Respondents who saw a larger difference between their second and third favorite candidates saw more at stake in the election than did those who saw only a slight difference or no difference at all.

While comparisons between the Virginia and Minnesota survey data are difficult, there are some that can be made. By collapsing feeling thermometers into five-point scales, it is possible to compare the relationship between favorability difference and sincere voting between the two states. So few Ventura supporters voted strategically, however, that comparisons between table 4.5 and its Minnesota replicant are uninformative.

In table 4.6 I present comparisons of favorability difference ratings of the two major candidates for sincere third-party voters in Virginia and Minnesota. If the amount that third-party supporters see at stake in an election affects their likelihood of voting strategically, then we would expect that strategic voters saw a big difference between Chuck Robb and Oliver North in Virginia, or that they saw a big difference between Skip Humphrey and Norm Coleman in Minnesota. The opposite would be true for sincere voters. They would be more likely to see little, if any, difference between the major party candidates. If a voter has no reason to fear her least favorite candidate’s election, or if the election of her second-favorite candidate would not be much better than the election of her least favorite candidate, she would have no reason to vote against her preferences.

– Table 4.6 here –
As this table shows, sincere voters in both states were more likely to have weak preferences between the two major candidates than to have strong preferences. Seventy percent of the sincere voting Ventura supporters in Minnesota and 80 percent of the sincere voting Coleman supporters in Virginia rated the other two candidates equally or one point apart. This test supports the hypothesis that the difference in strategic voting in Virginia and Minnesota was in part due to the differences between the candidates in the two states. Third-party supporters who had strong preferences between Chuck Robb and Ollie North were more likely to vote strategically. Those who had weak preferences and those who were indifferent voted sincerely. In Minnesota, the vast majority of third-party supporters had weak preferences or were indifferent between Skip Humphrey and Norm Coleman. These voters cast sincere votes for Jesse Ventura.

As an added test of this hypothesis, I conducted a similar analysis of the 1992 presidential race. While several problems prevent me from using data from the 1992 presidential election to conduct a full replication of the model developed in this chapter, I can use the data that are available to add support to the above claims about major-party candidate difference and strategic voting. Ross Perot’s candidacy in 1992 was notable for its success (he received nearly 20 percent of the popular vote nationwide) and also for the unique nature of his campaign. The 1992 National Election Study (NES) contains some questions about Perot, but not many, as the questionnaire was written before Perot re-entered the race in the fall. The pre-election questionnaire did include a feeling thermometer question on Perot and the post-election questionnaire offered Perot as a response category for the vote question. I use the post-election vote question because Perot was not offered as a response category in the pre-election vote question.
The third and fifth rows of table 4.6 show interesting patterns. The third row shows that sincere-voting Perot supporters were also unlikely to have strong preferences between Clinton and Bush. This pattern echoes the patterns exhibited by sincere-voting Marshall Coleman supporters and sincere-voting Jesse Ventura supporters. Nearly three-quarters of the sincere-voting Perot supporters held weak preferences or were indifferent between Clinton and Bush. The results for strategic-voting Perot supporters are not as promising, as they do not match the results for strategic-voting Marshall Coleman supporters in Virginia. Still, despite the weaker relationship, the strategic-voting Perot supporters were still less likely to hold weak preferences between the two major party candidates than the sincere-voting Perot supporters. And those with no preference or weak preferences were far more likely to vote sincerely, while those with strong preferences were about equally likely to vote sincerely or strategically.

**Measuring the Closeness of the Election**

In order to properly specify the model I developed a way to measure the closeness of the election and still avoid the problems of Abramson et al. We can measure how close the voter’s least favorite candidate is to winning the election by using the respondent’s judgement of the share of the “frontrunner” vote she expects the candidate to receive. By “frontrunner” vote, I mean all votes for the top two candidates. So, if a voter expects Robb and North to each receive 40 percent of the vote, then the “frontrunner” vote, is 80 percent, or just the sum of the voter’s expectations for the two frontrunning candidates. If Robb is her least favorite candidate, then the proportion of the “frontrunner” vote the respondent expects Robb to receive is 0.5. This is found by
just dividing the proportion the voter expects Robb to receive by the sum of the proportions the voter expects Robb and North to receive. The closer the election is, the closer this value approaches 0.5.

Adjustments still need to be made to this variable. What if, for example, we have two voters who each expect Coleman to receive 20 percent of the vote, and Coleman is their favorite candidate. Additionally, each voter expects Robb to receive 20 percent of the vote, but the first voter prefers Robb to North, while the second voter prefers North to Robb. They both expect North to receive the remaining 60 percent of the vote. Using the measure above, the first voter would have a value of 0.75 (60/80 = 3/4) for this closeness measure, while the second voter would have a value of 0.25 (20/80 = 1/4). To take care of these situations, we can fold the measure around 0.5, the closest the contest can get, by subtracting 0.5, and taking the absolute value. That would give both voters a value of 0.25 for their perception of how close the election will be. With this variable, we remain in the situation where low values represent close elections and high values represent landslides (i.e., the closest elections would have each candidate receiving equal portions of the vote, or 0.5 with the first measure, which would turn into 0 after subtracting 0.5. A complete unanimous vote would result in a value of 0.5). To switch this, we can again subtract this value from 0.5, so now the closest elections approach 0.5, and landslides approach 0.

Model Estimation and Results

In estimating the model, I first restrict the sample to the respondents who named Marshall Coleman as their most preferred candidate. These are the voters who would be faced with the pressures of having to choose between sincerely voting for Coleman, or
strategically voting for their next-most preferred candidate. The initial model has five variables, as well as a constant term. The closeness measure, described above, is interacted with the difference in the respondent’s ratings of the two frontrunner candidates. The interaction term and the main effects are included in the model. Additionally, the respondent’s rating of her favorite candidate, as well as that candidate’s expected proportion of the vote, are also included in the model. The dependent variable is a dichotomous variable indicating whether the voter intended to cast her vote for the candidate she most preferred, as determined by her ratings of the three candidates.

I expect the coefficients associated with the closeness of the election and the differences between the two frontrunners to be negative and statistically significant. The closer the election, the less likely these voters should be to stick with Coleman. Similarly, the bigger the difference they perceive between Robb and North, the less likely they should be to cast a sincere vote for Coleman. Contrarily, the more they like Coleman, the more likely they should be to vote sincerely. Also, as voters perceive Coleman to be gaining in the polls, the more likely they should be to cast a sincere vote for him, as his candidacy may not seem like a lost cause. Therefore, I expect the coefficients on the variables measuring Coleman’s viability and favorability to be positive and significant.

– Table 4.7 here –

Table 4.7 shows the results of the logit model. As expected, the coefficients for the closeness of the election and for the frontrunner ratings difference are negative and statistically significant above the 95 percent confidence level. The model correctly predicts the vote of 76.8 percent of the respondents. Additionally, the variables
associated with the voters’ impressions of Marshall Coleman are positive and statistically significant. The interaction term provides an unexpected result in the opposite direction of the main effects. This result is difficult to interpret without examining how the predicted probabilities of sincere voting change as the values of the independent variables change. Further examination reveals that this may be evidence of a bandwagon effect.

– Table 4.8 here –

Table 4.8 shows how the predicted probability of a respondent voting for their sincere preference, Marshall Coleman, changes as I change their evaluations of the other candidates and those candidates’ chances of winning. In calculating these percentages, I have held the ratings of Coleman and his chances of winning constant. As expected, when respondents perceive the election as a tie, they are less likely to vote sincerely than when they think one candidate has an advantage. Similarly, when respondents have no clear preference between the two frontrunning candidates, they are more likely to vote sincerely than when they do express a preference.

The bandwagon effect can be seen in the last two rows of the table. When the respondent expresses a large difference in favorability toward the two frontrunners (a value of 2 or more), she actually becomes less likely to vote sincerely when one of those frontrunners pulls ahead. As seen in the first two rows, the same difference in closeness results in a change in the opposite direction when the respondent only mildly favors one frontrunner over the other. As tables 4.5 and 4.6 show, one would expect voters who express a large difference in favorability of the two frontrunners to vote strategically.
The effect of this difference clearly dominates the effect of perceived closeness of the
election, since the effect of changes in closeness switches directions at different levels of
the favorability difference variable.

To examine the effects of opinions about Coleman, I calculated predicted
probabilities and present them in table 4.9. These effects are tamer than those discussed
above, and fit my expectations well. While examining these effects, I have held the
closeness measure and the favorability measure constant at their means. The first row
presents a simulation of a voter who has slightly more than average confidence in
Coleman’s campaign, and who is slightly more favorable toward Coleman than the
average Coleman supporter. In the next two rows, we see that as the voter expects
Coleman to do better, or likes Coleman more, her likelihood of voting for him increases.
The next two rows present a slightly more pessimistic voter than the average Coleman
supporter, and we see that the effects of changing her opinions about Coleman and his
chances still fit expectations. Finally, a voter who believes Coleman will only receive
five percent of the vote, but who is very favorable toward Coleman, is slightly more
likely than not to vote for Coleman.

– Table 4.9 here –

**Conclusion**

The results of this analysis show that strategic voting was an important factor in
the 1994 Virginia Senate election. Expected utility calculations appear to have a strong
effect on whether an individual votes sincerely or strategically. However, such models
are fraught with multicollinearity because of the very manner in which their variables are
defined. Additionally, strategic voting may have been the cause of Oliver North’s defeat
in Virginia. If voters who preferred Coleman to the other candidates had remained in the Coleman camp, instead of defecting to Robb, Oliver North could be the junior Senator from Virginia. So, strategic voting does have consequences aside from reducing the number of competitive political parties in an electoral system. Under certain circumstances, strategic voters can swing an election.

When modeling strategic voting, I restricted my sample to those voters with the potential to vote strategically. Supporters of the last-place candidate, Marshall Coleman, should be much more sensitive to strategic considerations than supporters of the frontrunning candidates. Following Riker’s advice, the subset of potential strategic voters was analyzed. This allows me to get better estimates of how the strategic variables impact the decisions of voters likely to consider such variables.

My analysis also shows some interesting methodological effects of modeling strategic voting. First and foremost, when modeling strategic voting, we must select a model that allows us to change key independent variables and to keep all other variables constant. When examining how the change in one independent variable affects the dependent variable, the researcher should keep in mind how that change affects other values of independent variables. Failure to do so could lead to misinterpretation of coefficients, and misspecification of the model. Ideally, the values of the independent variables would be independent from values of other independent variables. I again direct attention toward tables 4.2 and 4.7. Table 4.2 presents the predicted probabilities generated from the Abramson et al., model run with Virginia data. Predictions generated from this model are inconsistent with the theory underlying strategic voting. In rows 5 and 6, as the election becomes closer between the voter’s two lesser-preferred candidates,
the voter is more likely to vote sincerely. The theory would predict the opposite effect. In table 4.7, I present the results of the more properly specified model of strategic voting. In the identical situation, shown in rows 1 and 2, the voter now appears more likely to vote strategically as the election is closer.

The basic implication of this is that we need to think about when the *ceteris paribus* assumption can be applied to our model and when it cannot. If it cannot be applied to our model, we need to re-examine our research design for flaws that might induce some of the problems encountered here. The introduction of the closeness measure improves the model and allows the *ceteris paribus* assumption to be made. Not only do the results of the analysis fit the theoretical predictions, I believe I have also uncovered a bandwagon effect. These effects, I believe, have been neglected thus far in strategic voting research.

In tables 4.5 and 4.6, I show important effects of differences in voter rankings of the two frontrunning candidates. I expect voters who see a larger difference between the two candidates to be more likely to vote strategically than voters who see little or no difference between the two candidates. More is at stake for those who perceive large differences. On the other hand, voters who see little or no difference have no reason to prefer the victory of either candidate over the other. The data from Virginia support my claims about strategic voters seeing large differences between the candidates. The data from Minnesota and from the 1992 NES support claims about the indifference of sincere voters.

Although there is no direct empirical evidence to support a game theoretic view of the decision to switch one’s vote to Robb or North, there is strong convergent, indirect
evidence in the data that Coleman’s supporters based their behavior on their expectation that other Coleman supporters would vote strategically as well. It resembles a prisoner’s dilemma game, because voting strategically becomes each Coleman voter’s dominant strategy. But if enough Coleman voters act strategically, the result is an equilibrium where they do not receive their preferred outcome. Thus the victory of Robb, who finished in third place in a hypothetical three-way contest based on preference rankings, in order to defeat the Condorcet loser, Oliver North. The implication: strategic voting exists, and, given the right circumstances, it makes a difference.
### Table 4.1: Probit estimates of the effects of viability on voting for the respondent’s most preferred candidate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>1988 Presidential Primaries</th>
<th>1994 Virginia Senate Election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( P_{12} )</td>
<td>2.715* (0.552)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( P_{13} )</td>
<td>1.413* (0.818)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.121* (0.113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi^2 (df=2)</td>
<td>111.99*</td>
<td>161.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Cases</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Std. Errors in Parentheses. * p < .05, one-tailed.

* Abramson et al. (1992), table 5.

### Table 4.2: Predicted Probabilities of Voting for One’s Most Preferred Candidate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Preferred’s Vote Share</th>
<th>Middle’s Vote Share</th>
<th>Least Preferred’s Vote Share</th>
<th>Pr (Vote for Most Preferred)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.475</td>
<td>0.475</td>
<td>0.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>0.406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.375</td>
<td>0.375</td>
<td>0.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.771</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Predicted Probabilities of Voting for One’s Most Preferred Candidate
### Table 4.3: New probit estimates for table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>1994 Virginia Senate Election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>P_{j2}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>P_{j3}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.135* (0.163)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2$ (df=2)</td>
<td>56.57*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Cases</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$, one-tailed.

### Table 4.4: Probit Estimates for 3 specifications of Independent Variables

| Independent Variables | Model 1: $PB_{jk}$ | Model 2: $|PB_{jk}|$ | Model 3: $(1-|P_{jk}|)*U_{jk}$ |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| $PB_{12}$             | -1.734* (0.657)    | –                  | –                              |
| $PB_{13}$             | 5.818* (0.734)     | –                  | –                              |
| $PB_{23}$             | -6.561* (1.237)    | –                  | –                              |
| $|PB_{12}|$            | –                  | 4.276* (0.991)     | –                              |
| $|PB_{13}|$            | –                  | -3.975* (0.599)    | –                              |
| $|PB_{23}|$            | –                  | 5.180* (0.844)     | –                              |
| $(1-|P_{12}|)U_{12}$  | –                  | –                  | -2.929* (0.831)                |
| $(1-|P_{13}|)U_{13}$  | –                  | –                  | 3.778* (0.589)                 |
| $(1-|P_{23}|)U_{23}$  | –                  | –                  | -4.246* (0.708)                |
| Constant              | 1.173* (0.130)     | 0.566* (0.186)     | 0.710 (0.738)                  |
| $\chi^2$ (df=2)       | 179.53*            | 112.78*            | 130.00*                        |
| Number of Cases       | 373                | 372                | 372                            |

* $p < .05$, one-tailed.
### Table 4.5: Vote for Coleman by utility difference between Robb and North, Coleman supporters only. Entries are column percentages, with n in parentheses. Entries in “Total” row are row percentages. Coleman Deserters defined as respondents who ranked Coleman more favorable than Robb or North, and who said they would not vote for Coleman. Coleman Loyalists defined as respondents who ranked Coleman more favorable than Robb or North, and who said they would vote for Coleman.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Coleman Supporter</th>
<th>Absolute Value of Robb Favorable ratings minus North Favorable ratings</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cole. Deserters</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.2% (11)</td>
<td>43.5 (20)</td>
<td>79.4 (27)</td>
<td>78.8 (26)</td>
<td>100.0 (3)</td>
<td>55.1 (87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cole. Loyalists</td>
<td></td>
<td>73.8 (31)</td>
<td>56.5 (26)</td>
<td>20.6 (7)</td>
<td>21.2 (7)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44.9 (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>26.6 (42)</td>
<td>29.1 (46)</td>
<td>21.5 (34)</td>
<td>20.9 (33)</td>
<td>1.9 (3)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4.6: Difference in Favorability Ratings of Third-Party Supporters by Election and Type of Voter. Entries are row percentages, with n in parentheses. Sincere voters are defined as those who voted for their most preferred candidate, as determined by favorability ratings. Strategic voters did not vote for their most preferred candidate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election and type of Voter</th>
<th>Absolute Value of the Difference between Ratings of Major Party Candidates</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota – Sincere</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.8% (43)</td>
<td>34.2 (41)</td>
<td>20.7 (25)</td>
<td>8.3 (10)</td>
<td>1.0 (1)</td>
<td>100% (121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia – Sincere</td>
<td></td>
<td>43.7 (31)</td>
<td>36.6 (26)</td>
<td>9.9 (7)</td>
<td>9.9 (7)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.1 (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992 Presidential – Sincere</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.4 (51)</td>
<td>36.1 (52)</td>
<td>21.5 (31)</td>
<td>6.3 (9)</td>
<td>0.7 (1)</td>
<td>100 (144)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia – Strategic</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.6 (11)</td>
<td>23.0 (20)</td>
<td>31.0 (27)</td>
<td>29.9 (26)</td>
<td>3.4 (3)</td>
<td>99.9 (87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992 Presidential – Strategic</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.3 (21)</td>
<td>30.0 (24)</td>
<td>31.3 (25)</td>
<td>12.5 (10)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>(z)</td>
<td>(p)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closeness</td>
<td>-33.73</td>
<td>15.66</td>
<td>-2.15</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorability Difference</td>
<td>-11.23</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>-2.37</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>20.88</td>
<td>9.77</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman’s Proportion</td>
<td>9.03</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman Favorability</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>12.31</td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7: Logit results, with standard errors, \textit{z}-scores, and \(p\)-values. 76.8 percent correctly predicted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2\textsuperscript{nd} fav’s proportion</th>
<th>3\textsuperscript{rd} fav’s proportion</th>
<th>Closeness</th>
<th>Favorability Difference</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>P(Vote for Coleman)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.4375</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4375</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8: Predicted probability changes involving Closeness and Favorability Difference variables. For rows 1-4 and 6, Coleman’s proportion of the vote is held at .20, and the favorability rating of Coleman is held at its mean.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coleman’s proportion of the vote</th>
<th>Favorability rating of Coleman</th>
<th>P(Vote for Coleman)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.2</td>
<td>Somewhat favorable</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.2</td>
<td>Very favorable</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.3</td>
<td>Very favorable</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.15</td>
<td>Somewhat favorable</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.15</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.05</td>
<td>Very favorable</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9: Predicted probability changes involving opinions about Coleman. All other variables held at their means when possible. When Coleman’s proportion of the vote changes, so do Robb’s and North’s. Closeness is held constant in this situation.
CHAPTER 5

THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

I now turn to the topic of where voters get information that leads to strategic considerations. Many political scientists have examined information sources, using a variety of innovative techniques. Huckfeldt and Sprague have examined the role of communication and social context in South Bend, Indiana, during the 1984 campaign (Huckfeldt and Sprague, 1995). Huckfeldt et al., (1995) have studied the effects of communication and discussant interaction within cohesive social groups and have shown that discussions with people with whom they have “weak ties” (coworkers and friends as opposed to spouses and relatives) have strong effects on public opinion. The authors demonstrate that discussions with citizens outside of the boundaries of one’s social group also convey information about public opinion in the aggregate. The role of political discussants in strategic voting is an important one. While voters certainly obtain information about a candidate’s standing in the polls from the media, they are likely to obtain information about what other voters intend to do through discussion with like-minded voters.

Several scholars have examined various media effects such as agenda setting and priming (Iyengar and Kinder, 1986), framing (Iyengar, 1991; Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley, 1997), and the effects of negative advertising (Ansolabehere, Iyengar, Simon, and
Valentino, 1995; Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1996; Goldstein, 1997; Finkel and Geer, 1998). While informative, most of the media effects literature deals with information about candidates, issues, or events. For the study of strategic voting, I am most interested in how people obtain information about the prospective actions of other citizens and the consequences of those actions. Most recently, Diana Mutz has conducted many studies on the influence of the “impersonal other” (1998).

Mutz documents the ubiquitousness of public opinion polls during election campaigns. Given the media’s focus on horse race aspects of the modern campaign, it is likely that citizens with only slight interest in the campaign will have a fairly accurate idea about the outcome of the election. Additionally, citizens believe that the media has the power to influence other citizens. The groundwork for strategic considerations is there, regardless of the voter’s actual beliefs about the outcome of the election. If the voters recognize the media’s portrayal of one candidate in last place (whether or not the voter believes this portrayal), they may believe that others will accept this portrayal, and desert the last place candidate. Thus, the media’s portrayal of a candidate as not having a chance to win becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Most studies have focused on two sources of information: discussants and the media. While both are clearly important, one must also wonder where a voter’s discussants get their information. It is certainly interesting, and important, to examine the patterns of discussant influence during an election campaign, but for the purposes of this chapter I assume that the media are the main source of information about collective opinion. Even people who never read the newspaper or watch television news are influenced by the media’s coverage through discussants who do read the newspaper or
watch television news. Discussants are most important in that they can convey information about what other voters might do strategically. A supporter of a last-place candidate who intends to vote for that candidate might rethink that vote after a discussion with a coworker who intends to vote strategically. The media provides the information about the probability of a tie between the top two candidates and about the last-place candidate’s chances. Discussants obscure that information when they declare that they, and others, might vote strategically, adding uncertainty as to the outcome of the election.

Another set of important sources of information are the candidates and their spokespersons. Candidate speeches, press conferences, newsletters, and advertisements can send important signals to the voters. The convenience of analyzing media coverage of the campaign is that the media tend to cover candidate speeches, press conferences, and even advertisements. It would be difficult for candidates to try to disperse large amounts of information without it being covered in the media. Therefore, content analysis of the media is not simply to explain how the media influences strategic voting. Instead, it is used here to explain how information influences strategic voting. That information may originate with the candidates. Their focus on issues, personality, character, and negativity in their campaigns will be picked up by the media. The media certainly make tough choices about which aspects of information to focus on, but that information is inherently generated by the candidates themselves.

Cox argues that the media plays an essential role in Duverger’s Law. According to Cox (1997), “common knowledge” of which candidates are the front-runners and which are trailing the pack is a necessary condition “to generate pure local bipartism.” In
other words, for the number of parties to be reduced to two, the voters must have knowledge of which two are likely to win. Cox sums up the importance of information nicely:

“If voters are exposed to lots of free information (e.g. frequently published polls) which reveals some candidates to be clearly trailing the others, and this information seeps out to a large portion of the instrumental electorate, then one expects that trailing candidates will be left with not much more than their noninstrumental support. If voters have no information regarding candidate chances (and diffuse priors), then sincere voting is consistent with expected utility maximization, and one does not expect objectively trailing candidates (those who have fewer voters ranking them first) to lose their instrumental support. If, to take a third example, voters have conflicting information regarding candidate chances, then strategic voting by some voters may ‘cancel out’ strategic voting by others, leaving little or no observable impact on the aggregate distribution of votes.” (Cox, 1997, p. 79)

There have been other recent innovations in the study of strategic voting and information. Clough (2001) used computational modeling to simulate voting in multi-candidate campaigns where voters only receive local information. In other words, if voters had no information about how voters outside their neighborhood would vote, would there be any strategic voting? In such cases, voters can use prior election results to guess each party’s chances of winning the next election. Clough finds some ability among these voters to reduce the number of parties from three to two, but in most of the simulation runs three parties remained viable. Upon expanding the neighborhood size (which amounts to increasing the amount of information the voters receive about other voters’ intentions), Clough finds the opposite result. In a majority of the simulations, the voters reduced the number of viable parties from three to two. These results suggest that
in multi-party systems where information is abundant, strategic voting can occur to reduce the number of viable parties. When there is little information on other voters’ preferences, strategic voting can still occur over time, but is not as likely to happen.

The media are clearly important actors in the puzzle of strategic voting. Coverage of election campaigns provides voters with information on the $P$ and $B$ terms of the calculus of voting. Voters then use this information to determine whether their preferred candidate has a chance of winning and whether their vote could make a difference in the election. If voters are short-term instrumentally rational (a key assumption of the strategic voting literature), they then make expected utility calculations and act in accordance with maximizing that expected utility. Some voters will find it advantageous to vote for their second favorite candidate. In the remainder of this chapter, I demonstrate how coverage of two multi-candidate state-wide elections can be vastly different and argue how those conditions could lead to different levels of strategic voting in these elections.

**The Elections Being Studied**

The 1998 Minnesota Gubernatorial election and the 1994 Virginia Senatorial election were by no means typical multi-candidate elections. The Virginia election had a typical outcome (the independent candidate lost), but an atypical campaign, loaded with allegations of dishonesty and extramarital activity. The Minnesota election was atypical in its outcome, and the campaign was probably somewhat more issue-oriented than most. But these deviations from the typical election only help to illustrate the potential effects of media coverage on voter behavior.
My analysis of the Minnesota election begins with Jesse Ventura’s entry in late January of 1998. Ventura declared his intention to run on the Reform party ticket. With the party primaries in mid-September and no real challengers to the nomination, Ventura had ample time to campaign and raise funds before the general election campaign began. Ventura’s campaign focused on taxes, education, and Ventura’s independence from special interests. Hubert Humphrey III, the Attorney General of Minnesota, won the DFL nomination in a crowded primary election in mid-September. St. Paul mayor Norm Coleman won the Republican nomination with no major challenge.

One particular interesting aspect of the campaign was that Coleman was a former employee of Humphrey. Coleman had been a Democrat and had worked for the Attorney General’s office until 1993, when he switched to the Republican party and ran for the Mayor’s office in St. Paul. The fact that the two of them had worked closely together for many years may have led them to pull some of the punches that are usually thrown in modern campaigns.

Figure 5.1 shows the pattern of public poll results in the 1998 Minnesota Gubernatorial race. Ventura struggled to achieve similar levels of name recognition as his two major challengers. Throughout the early months of the nomination campaigns, there was a sizeable gap between Humphrey and Coleman in trial heats, with Humphrey usually at least ten points ahead. On the eve of the Democratic primary in mid-September, Humphrey held a 20 point lead over Coleman.

Ventura’s campaign began to pick up steam during the fall debates between the three candidates. According to several news sources, he was able to “rise above the
fray,” and his performing experience as an actor, radio talk-show host, and professional wrestler paid off. By mid-October, he was polling over 20 percent, and by the end of the campaign, newspapers were speculating whether he could win, not from which major party candidate was he taking the most votes.

In contrast, the Virginia campaign was characterized by negativity and attack. Voters were reminded over and over again that North had been at the center of the Iran-Contra scandal and could not be trusted. North repeatedly tied Robb to the Clinton administration in an attempt to portray the junior Senator as out-of-touch with his own state. North’s ads also focused on allegations of marital infidelity, indifference towards drug abuse, and illegally taping political adversaries. Marshall Coleman, endorsed by the state’s senior Senator, John Warner, argued that neither of the major party candidates was fit to hold office, and that he provided the best alternative. Recent studies, including the previous chapter, have shown the prevalence of strategic voting in this election (Abramowitz et al., 1995). The survey evidence from this research shows that if voters had voted sincerely, Coleman would have defeated Robb and North in pairwise contests and would also have won a three-way election. However, over half of Coleman’s supporters voted for another candidate. As I showed in chapter 4, the interaction of the perceived gap between the two frontrunning candidates and the difference in favorability ratings of those candidates is a statistically significant predictor of strategic voting among Marshall Coleman’s supporters.

As figure 5.2 shows, Marshall Coleman was performing fairly well in polls conducted before the Republican convention and Democratic primary, both held in June of 1994. Once the nomination process was over, however, the race clearly split into a
two-tiered contest, with Robb and North leading the pack. Marshall Coleman and former
governor Douglas Wilder (who dropped out of the race in September) each polled
between 10 and 15 percent of the vote during the summer polls. When Wilder dropped
out of the race, much of his support seemed to go to Robb. Coleman had trouble
exceeding 15 percent in the polls throughout the fall, and with few televised debates and
no party to support his efforts, he only drew 11 percent on election day.

— Figure 5.2 here —

Content analysis of media coverage

To analyze the coverage of the two campaigns, I gathered stories about the
candidates and the election from Lexis/Nexis. For the Minnesota election, I chose to
code articles from the Minneapolis Star Tribune, the major newspaper in the state. For
the Virginia election, I used articles appearing in the Washington Post. Originally, I had
hoped to include more newspapers from each state, but changes in the database made that
virtually impossible. Both papers have large circulations in each state, and are
considered the major newspaper in the state. Other papers which may have emphasized
different aspects of the campaign exist (such as the Richmond Times-Dispatch in
Virginia), but they do not have the same circulation or geographic reach as the papers
used here. Comparisons of circulation figures are somewhat misleading. The Audit
Bureau of Circulations reports the circulation of the daily Washington Post (Monday
through Saturday) at over 1.07 million, but that includes Maryland, the District of
Columbia, and other states as well as Virginia. Circulation of the Washington Post in
Virginia is certainly greater than the next largest Virginia paper, the Richmond Times-
Dispatch. The Times-Dispatch’s daily circulation is over 194,000, and the Virginian
Pilot’s daily circulation is just over 192,000. In Minnesota, the Minneapolis Star Tribune lists its circulation at almost 337,000 Monday through Wednesday, and 399,000 Thursday through Saturday. Its largest competitor, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, only has a daily (Mon.-Sat.) circulation of 201,500. While it is possible that papers besides those examined here would produce different results, there is no reason to suspect that the results would be so different that I would reach different conclusions about media coverage and strategic voting.

My original plan was to content-analyze stories from the fall campaign, but upon viewing the June split in the Virginia polls, I decided that it would be best to analyze the whole year’s coverage. I coded articles for mentions of a candidate’s viability (or lack thereof), the role of the spoiler, usage of polls, and mentions of the candidates. I also coded articles for mentions of campaign issues such as taxes, education, crime, and health care reform. Finally, I coded the articles for mentions of scandals and generally negative traits of the candidates. My hypotheses are as follows:

\textit{H1: The Negativity Hypothesis -- Campaigns with high levels of negativity will produce more strategic voting than more positive campaigns.}

Negative campaigns lead voters to dislike the candidates involved in those campaigns. Disaffected voters may then turn to third party or independent candidates to address issues of concern to them. Yet, while they may favor these candidates over the

\footnote{Two other coders assisted me with the coding. Each additional coder did a full code of one election. For the newspaper articles on Virginia, our coding matched on 96.2 percent of the article-term dyads. For the newspaper articles on Minnesota, our coding matched on 97.1 percent of the article-term dyads.}
major party candidates, they believe there is more to lose with the election of their least favorite candidate. Coverage of mudslinging, attack advertising, allegations, and scandals will decrease voter affect towards the target of that coverage.

H2: The Lack of Viability Hypothesis -- Coverage that emphasizes the horse-race aspect of the campaign and the lack of viability of the third-place candidate will produce more strategic voting than issue- and event-based coverage.

As voters who favor the last-place candidate perceive the race to be close between the other two candidates, the perceived probability of their least favorite candidate winning increases. In order to keep that candidate out of office, they vote for the candidate most likely to defeat their least favorite option. Coverage of polls will alter their perceptions of the closeness of the race. Additionally, coverage of the non-viability of the third-place candidate will devalue a vote for that candidate, leading his or her supporters to search elsewhere for an effective vote.

With the current data set, these hypotheses can neither be confirmed nor rejected. Two cases are simply not enough from which to generalize. However, in the sections that follow, I intend to demonstrate how the coverage of these campaigns differed along these dimensions and then argue why I believe these hypotheses to be true. With further research, it may be possible to build a stronger case for the theory.

Results: Minnesota

Tables 5.1 through 5.3 present the results of the coding of the Star Tribune’s coverage of the 1998 Minnesota gubernatorial election. I have also included counts of articles mentioning Ventura, Humphrey, and Norm Coleman. These results show a clear
The coding was done by counting articles which addressed certain issues or topics. The table entries are the raw counts of the articles, followed by the percentage of the articles the count represents. The results are divided into two sections, based on whether the articles were written before or after the primary election. The percentages were computed within each section, so, for example, the first column in table 5.1 shows that Jesse Ventura was mentioned in 32 percent of the pre-primary articles, Humphrey was mentioned in 71 percent of the pre-primary articles, and Norm Coleman was mentioned in 73 percent of the pre-primary articles. In this and other tables, the percentages will not add to 100 because there may have been mentions of more than one issue in some articles or because there were some articles which mentioned issues that we did not code for or did not report. One example of this is the issue of flying the Confederate flag over buildings in Virginia. This issue was covered in eight articles during the campaign but was not included in the table because of its obscurity in the campaign.

Table 5.1 shows that Ventura was featured in slightly more than half as many stories as his major party opponents, but the gap between the candidates appears to exist mainly in the pre-primary stage of the campaign when Ventura was running unopposed for the Reform party nomination. After the primaries, Ventura nearly received as much

\[\text{Table 5.1 here}\]

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11. The coding was done by counting articles which addressed certain issues or topics. The counts presented are not counts within articles (i.e., if crime was mentioned 15 times one article, but only in that article, the count for crime would be 1, not 15).
coverage as the major party candidates. His campaign’s surge in the polls occurred at the same time, and both may have been spurred by his performance in the debates and by his unique campaign ads.

When referring to Ventura, reporters often attached labels. Surprisingly, though, this did not occur as often as I had expected. Ventura was only labeled as a wrestler (or ex-wrestler) in about 14 percent of the articles. His wrestling nickname, “The Body,” was only used in 6 percent of the articles. His previous political experience as mayor of Brooklyn Park was referred to almost as much as his wrestling career.

Table 5.2 shows the newspaper coverage of the public polls as well as the number of articles where Ventura was mentioned as a spoiler or where the idea of a vote for Ventura being a “wasted vote” was addressed. As the table shows, very few articles were written that mentioned the possibility of Ventura spoiling another candidate’s chances of winning. The few articles that did mention a vote for Ventura as being wasted on a losing candidate also included rebuttals from Ventura or a spokesperson for the campaign.

– Table 5.2 here –

The articles that covered the public polls in the campaign came mostly in the last six weeks of the campaign. Most articles that mentioned polls before the primary were covering polls written for the primary elections. Only ten of these articles also focused on polling for the fall campaign.

Table 5.3 shows the number of articles that focused on specific campaign issues and the number of articles that addressed candidate negativity or scandals. The campaign coverage was predominantly issue-based, with 2/3 of the stories featuring public policy
issue coverage. Additionally, much of the issue coverage was non-negative. Candidates were rarely referred to as “attacking” their opponent on one of these five issues. Indeed, candidates seemed to seldom be on the attack at all, with only 17 percent of the articles mentioning attacks, negativity, accusations, or allegations. Scandals were nonexistent in this campaign. There were few references to Norm Coleman’s drug use in his youth, and the most controversial issue of the campaign was Ventura’s suggestion, when asked by a reporter about the legalization of drugs and prostitution, that those ideas at least deserve to be studied.

– Table 5.3 here –

Taken on their own, these results only show half the story. On their own, they initially support my hypotheses, but, without additional analysis of other multicandidate campaign coverage, just show interesting patterns of news coverage in an important election. When compared with the coverage of the Virginia election, and, hopefully, more elections in future work, we see how abnormal these patterns are.

**Results: Virginia**

The patterns in the coverage revealed by the content analysis of Washington Post articles on the 1994 U.S. Senate election in Virginia are remarkably different from the patterns in the coverage of the 1998 Gubernatorial race in Minnesota. The most similar aspect of the two campaigns is the pattern of mentions of the three candidates. As in Minnesota, independent candidate Marshall Coleman received very little press coverage before the major party primaries. But after the primaries, Coleman was mentioned in almost as many articles as his major party opponents.

– Table 5.4 here –
The press coverage of the Virginia campaign was also similar to the coverage of the Minnesota campaign in its coverage of Marshall Coleman as a spoiler, or a vote for Coleman being wasted on a losing candidate. Polling, however, dominated the post-primary coverage, as poll results or the standings of the candidates in the polls were featured in 65 articles between July and November. The results of this section of the content analysis are presented in table 5.5.

– Table 5.5 here –

Table 5.6 presents the results focusing on the issue coverage in the Virginia campaign. The Virginia election contained less issue-based coverage than the Minnesota election. While 2/3 of the Minnesota Star Tribune articles mentioned the candidates’ stands on at least one issue, only about half of the articles on the Virginia election did so. The predominant issues in the election were the economy and abortion. The differential emphasis of the two newspapers on issues such as crime (27 percent of the articles in Minnesota and 11 percent of the articles in Virginia), the economy (35 percent of the articles in Minnesota and 24 percent of the articles in Virginia), and education (35 percent of the articles in Minnesota and seven percent of the articles in Virginia) shows that reporters in Virginia were focused on other aspects of the campaign.

– Table 5.6 here –

Those aspects, without a doubt, were character based. As table 5.7 shows, nearly three-quarters of the articles on the 1994 Virginia Senate election contained references to North’s role in the Iran-Contra affair, to candidates lying, to scandals, or contained references to the candidates issuing or being the targets of attacks, allegations, accusations, and other negative comments. Nearly half (44 percent) of the articles on the
Virginia campaign contained references to North’s involvement in the Iran-Contra scandal. Over half (55 percent) mentioned candidate attacks, accusations, allegations, or contained the word “negative” when referring to the campaign or the candidates’ tactics.  

– Table 5.7 here –

One might argue that it is unfair to compare the two elections on this dimension. Since there were no Iran-Contra scandals or extra-marital affairs to write about in the Minnesota election, the coverage of the Minnesota campaign could not have been as negative as the coverage of the Virginia campaign. But that’s part of the point of the analysis. Aside from geography, the biggest difference between these two campaigns can be seen by looking at the candidates themselves. The major party candidates in Virginia were drowning in scandal and negativity. The major party candidates in Minnesota were bland in comparison. The independent candidate in Virginia, while experienced and popular, could hardly be described as inspirational. The independent candidate in Minnesota, while inexperienced and controversial, brought a breath of fresh air to the last two months of a long campaign.

Conclusion

The content analysis of these campaigns demonstrates the different emphasis placed upon various aspects of the modern campaign. In one election, candidates and reporters dealt with many complex issues and were predominantly focused on those issues. The press also covered the strategic and horserace aspects of the campaign, but did so mostly by referring to public opinion polls about vote intention. In the other election, the candidates and the press focused on scandals and attacks. They also dealt with a host of issues, but apparently not as many as in the other campaign. The election
characterized by negativity produced one of the few examples political scientists have where a candidate favored by a plurality of voters finished badly in third place. The election characterized by issue-based coverage produced the first statewide campaign victory in Reform party history. What does this say about the media and multi-candidate elections?

I believe that the content analysis presented here supports my hypothesis regarding the role of negative campaigning and strategic voting. The Virginia campaign was highly negative, and voters felt like they had to choose the candidate most likely to defeat the candidate they most despised. As Niou suggests (1998), these voters engaged in a strategic game. If Marshall Coleman’s supporters had stayed together and voted for Coleman, as Jesse Ventura’s supporters apparently did for him, it is likely that Marshall Coleman would have won the election. However, they would rather keep their least favorite candidate out of office than vote Marshall Coleman in. The negative coverage of the press, and the behavior of the candidates, led to this result.

In the Minnesota election, the coverage was not as negative and did not focus as much attention on the candidates’ chances of winning. Instead, the Minnesota coverage focused more on issues. As a result, Ventura’s supporters did not have as much of an incentive to vote strategically. The consequences of expressive voting, instead of instrumental voting, must not have seemed as severe in Minnesota as they must have seemed in Virginia. The Minnesota coverage also provided voters with less information about Ventura’s chances of winning. By the end of the campaign, Ventura had a very real chance of winning, and that was newsworthy.
The analysis so far has shown that strategic considerations can account for the vote decisions of Marshall Coleman’s supporters in the 1994 Virginia Senate election. Unlike Coleman in Virginia, Jesse Ventura was able to keep his support through election day. The analysis in this chapter shows the source of the beliefs of Virginia and Minnesota voters – the campaigns and the coverage of the campaigns. Voters in Virginia could not help but know that Marshall Coleman stood no chance against Robb and North. Voters in Minnesota, however, received little information about Ventura’s chances of winning before the major-party primaries, but were informed of his surge in popularity during the fall campaign. Voters in Virginia may have held strong preferences between Robb and North because they were well-informed of the nefarious actions of their least favorite candidate. Reporters in Minnesota did not have the luxury of writing about scandals, and the coverage of the 1998 election focused much more on issues than did the coverage of the 1994 Virginia election.

In the next chapter, I examine the effects of alternative, more traditional, determinants of the vote in the 1994 Virginia election. First, I examine the effects of these determinants on support for Marshall Coleman, in order to determine whether his supporters had anything in common with him or with each other. If Coleman did have some particular issue- or demographic-based support, then the erosion of that support is even more puzzling. If, however, his supporters were only linked by their disgust with one or both of the major party candidates, then we might not expect Coleman’s supporters to be loyal to him. I also examine the effects of different variables on the probability that Coleman’s supporters cast their votes for him. If voting for or against Coleman can be better explained by traditional vote determinants, such as issue opinions
or partisanship, then perhaps strategic voting is not so important after all. However, if only strategic variables are significant in predicting the votes of Coleman’s supporters, then standard analyses of voting behavior in multi-candidate contests have been neglecting important variables in the voting process.
Figure 5.1: Public Polls in the 1998 Minnesota Gubernatorial Race
Figure 5.2: Public Polls in the 1994 Virginia Senatorial Race
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre-primary count (pct. of pre-primary articles)</th>
<th>Post-primary count (pct. of post-primary articles)</th>
<th>Total (pct. of total articles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name mentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Ventura (R)</td>
<td>48 (32%)</td>
<td>29 (71%)</td>
<td>77 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrestler</td>
<td>17 (12)</td>
<td>10 (24)</td>
<td>27 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn Park Mayor</td>
<td>15 (10)</td>
<td>8 (20)</td>
<td>23 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Body”</td>
<td>7 (5)</td>
<td>5 (12)</td>
<td>12 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsider/Fresh</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
<td>4 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubert Humphrey III (D)</td>
<td>104 (71)</td>
<td>35 (85)</td>
<td>139 (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm Coleman (R)</td>
<td>107 (73)</td>
<td>34 (83)</td>
<td>141 (75)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Minnesota Candidate Name Coverage. Total number of stories = 187. Pre-primary total=146, post-primary total=41. Articles could be coded more than once if they overlapped categories. For example, a story about Ventura attacking Humphrey’s statements on crime would be coded as mentioning Ventura, Humphrey, crime, and “attack.” Newspaper articles were collected from Lexis/Nexis and were originally published in the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre-primary count (pct. of pre-primary articles)</th>
<th>Post-primary count (pct. of post-primary articles)</th>
<th>Total (pct. of total articles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horserace Coverage</td>
<td>12 (8)</td>
<td>18 (44)</td>
<td>30 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasted Vote/Spoiler</td>
<td>4 (3)</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
<td>5 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positions in Polls</td>
<td>10 (7)</td>
<td>18 (44)</td>
<td>28 (15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Minnesota Newspaper Coverage of General Election Polling and Strategic Considerations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Pre-primary count (pct. of pre-primary articles)</th>
<th>Post-primary count (pct. of post-primary articles)</th>
<th>Total (pct. of total articles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Issues</td>
<td></td>
<td>95 (65)</td>
<td>29 (71)</td>
<td>124 (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td></td>
<td>35 (24)</td>
<td>15 (37)</td>
<td>50 (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes/Economy</td>
<td></td>
<td>48 (33)</td>
<td>18 (44)</td>
<td>66 (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td></td>
<td>22 (15)</td>
<td>6 (15)</td>
<td>28 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td></td>
<td>35 (24)</td>
<td>6 (15)</td>
<td>41 (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>45 (31)</td>
<td>21 (51)</td>
<td>66 (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Negativity/Attack</td>
<td></td>
<td>23 (16)</td>
<td>9 (22)</td>
<td>32 (17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Minnesota Newspaper Coverage of Campaign Issues, Scandals, and Negativity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Jan.-June count (pct. of articles)</th>
<th>July-Election count (pct. of articles)</th>
<th>Total (pct. total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name mentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Coleman (I)</td>
<td></td>
<td>39 (33%)</td>
<td>81 (70%)</td>
<td>120 (51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Robb (D)</td>
<td></td>
<td>102 (86)</td>
<td>101 (88)</td>
<td>203 (87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver North (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td>94 (79)</td>
<td>107 (93)</td>
<td>201 (86)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4: Virginia Candidate Name Coverage. Total number of stories = 234. Total through June = 119, total after June=115. The Democratic primary and Republican convention were held in June, but on different dates. Articles were gathered on Lexis/Nexis and were originally published in the *Washington Post*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Jan.-June count (pct. of articles)</th>
<th>July-Election count (pct. of articles)</th>
<th>Total (pct. total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horserace Coverage</td>
<td></td>
<td>41 (34)</td>
<td>65 (50)</td>
<td>106 (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasted Vote/Spoiler</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td>9 (8)</td>
<td>11 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positions in Polls</td>
<td></td>
<td>41 (34)</td>
<td>65 (57)</td>
<td>106 (45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: Virginia Newspaper Coverage of General Election Polling and Strategic Considerations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Jan.-June count</th>
<th>July-Election count</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(pct. of articles)</td>
<td>(pct. of articles)</td>
<td>(pct. total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>53 (45)</strong></td>
<td><strong>57 (50)</strong></td>
<td><strong>110 (47)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>8 (7)</td>
<td>17 (15)</td>
<td>25 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes/Economy</td>
<td>25 (21)</td>
<td>30 (26)</td>
<td>55 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>30 (25)</td>
<td>20 (17)</td>
<td>50 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>8 (7)</td>
<td>11 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6 (5)</td>
<td>11 (9)</td>
<td>17 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun Control</td>
<td>13 (11)</td>
<td>12 (10)</td>
<td>25 (11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6: Virginia Newspaper Coverage of Campaign Issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Jan.-June count</th>
<th>July-Election count</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(pct. of articles)</td>
<td>(pct. of articles)</td>
<td>(pct. total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Negativity/Attack/Scandals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>84 (71)</strong></td>
<td><strong>90 (78)</strong></td>
<td><strong>174 (74)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran-Contra</td>
<td>51 (43)</td>
<td>53 (46)</td>
<td>104 (44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robb’s Affair</td>
<td>11 (9)</td>
<td>15 (13)</td>
<td>26 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Taping of Wilder</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>5 (4)</td>
<td>8 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandal</td>
<td>22 (18)</td>
<td>20 (17)</td>
<td>42 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lying</td>
<td>31 (26)</td>
<td>48 (42)</td>
<td>79 (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>64 (54)</td>
<td>65 (57)</td>
<td>129 (55)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7: Virginia Newspaper Coverage of Scandals, Candidate Negativity, and Candidate Attacks. Uses of words such as “attack,” “negative,” “accused,” and “alleged,” or similar words are included in the “Other” category.
CHAPTER 6

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ATTITUDINAL FACTORS RELATED TO STRATEGIC VOTING

In chapter 4, I demonstrated how the probability of voting strategically is related to the voter’s perception about the closeness of the election, the favorability difference between the two most viable candidates, the voter’s affect toward her most preferred candidate, and her belief about that candidate’s chance of winning. In this chapter, I examine other factors that could be related to strategic voting in the 1994 Virginia Senate election. These factors include demographic variables related to voting, the voter’s level of attention to the campaign, opinions about public policy issues, partisanship, ideology, and attitudes toward government.

In this chapter, I first examine the relationships between these variables and support for Marshall Coleman. I intend to show that Coleman did not have any sort of natural constituency. His support was generated by dissatisfaction with the two major party candidates and not by support for any particular issue position or demographic group. Then, among those Coleman supporters, I analyze the relationships between these variables and voting for Coleman. I show how strategic factors were the most important determinants of Coleman’s supporters’ votes. Other demographic and attitudinal variables had no significant impact on the probability of voting for Coleman. Because of
the dominance of strategic factors in determining the votes of Coleman’s supporters, we can be confident in labeling their behavior “strategic.” If other factors were deemed more important, the voting behavior of third-party supporters might not warrant attention separate from the behavior of major party supporters.

In their study of the 1998 Minnesota Gubernatorial election, Lacy and Monson find that Jesse Ventura’s voters resembled those who had voted for well-known, third-party supporters in other electoral contexts. According to Lacy and Monson, Ventura’s supporters were likely to be young, white, male, socially liberal, and economically conservative (Lacy and Monson, 2000). These traits mirror those of Ross Perot’s supporters, as well as those who supported John Anderson’s independent bid for president in 1980. Ventura’s win should provide some measure of hope to members of the third-party movement, since he did not have trouble holding onto their votes. The traits of Coleman’s supporters may give important clues about his popularity and his ultimate failure in the election. In the next three sections, I examine the demographic, attentive, and political factors related to Coleman support.

**Demographic Determinants of Coleman Support**

Not much research has been done on the relationship between demographic factors and strategic voting. Some scholars have, however, documented the relationships between demographic factors, partisan independence, and voting for independent or third party candidates. For example, similar to the gender gap in partisanship, there is a gender gap in independence (Norrander, 1997). When asked their partisanship, women are more likely than men to consider themselves “weak partisans,” while men are more likely to be independents leaning toward a party. Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1996)
find no statistical relationship between gender and voting for third party candidates between 1952 and 1980. They do, however find modest effects of gender on related factors, such as evaluations of the major parties. We would not expect to find a strong relationship between gender and support for Coleman. Table 6.1 summarizes the relationships between gender and respondents’ rating Coleman higher than the other two candidates.

As table 6.1 shows, there is no significant relationship between gender and support for Marshall Coleman in the Virginia Peninsula sample. While a higher percentage of women than men rated another candidate higher than Marshall Coleman, the difference is not statistically significant ($\chi^2= 1.1867$, $p=0.276$). The relationship is even weaker when controlling for party identification. Gender and preference for the independent candidate were clearly unrelated in the 1994 Virginia Senate election.

Coleman’s supporters were not atypical along gender lines. I expect the same results along racial lines. Douglas Wilder’s October endorsement of Chuck Robb was designed primarily to energize the Left. If Robb had the traditional Democratic base locked up, then North and Coleman were mainly competing for traditional Independents and Republicans. The survey data, while showing a greater tendency among African-Americans to prefer a candidate other than Coleman, do not show a significant difference from the expected counts. Only 25 percent of African-Americans preferred Coleman over the other candidates, while only 38 percent of Whites preferred Coleman to Robb or North ($\chi^2=2.2718$, $p=0.321$).
Education, Awareness, and Coleman Support

John Zaller has argued that political awareness plays a key role in opinion change (Zaller, 1992). Individuals who are highly politically aware are unlikely to have their opinions changed by new information because they are able to counterargue information that contradicts their existing opinions. Individuals who are not politically aware are not likely to have their opinions changed by new information because they are not likely to receive the new information. Individuals with some political awareness, but who are not highly politically aware, are most likely to change their views when presented with new information. They are aware enough to receive the information, but not enough to counterargue the new information. Based on Zaller’s work, we might suspect political awareness to be related to support for Coleman and voting for Coleman. Politically aware voters may be unlikely to support or to vote for Coleman due to his lack of viability. Coleman’s late-campaign insistence that he was a viable choice would have fallen on deaf ears. Similarly, voters who did not follow politics would not have received the same message.

In this survey, political awareness may be approximated by education, following the campaign, and following the polls. Coleman’s supporters tended to be more educated than the supporters of his opponents. Thirty-seven percent of voters with some college education preferred Coleman. Only 34.5 percent rated North highest, and 28.5 percent rated Robb highest. Of those who had never been to college, 45.2 percent preferred North, 19 percent preferred Robb, and 35.7 percent preferred Coleman.

Table 6.2 shows the relationship between support for Coleman and campaign interest. Coleman’s support steadily declined with voters who had been following the
campaign more closely. This pattern exists across Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. For the other two candidates, the pattern is reversed. The percentage of voters who rated Robb and North highest was larger among those who claimed to follow the campaign “very closely” than among those who only followed “fairly closely” or “not too closely.” It is impossible, however, to tell whether following the campaign made people less likely to rate Coleman the highest, or whether Coleman supporters, sure that their candidate would not win, were simply less likely to follow the campaign closely as were Robb and North supporters.

– Table 6.2 here –

The relationship between following the polls and voting strategically is more central to the theories expressed in chapter 2, and to the ideas outlined in chapters 4 and 5. Voters who followed the polls should not be any more or less likely to support Coleman; although, as was just observed in table 6.2, those who followed the polls less frequently may be less likely to support Coleman. Table 6.3 shows the breakdown of Coleman support by how closely respondents claimed to follow the polls during the campaign.

– Table 6.3 here –

Over 70 percent of voters who claimed to either have followed the polls “very closely,” or not to have seen any polls rated Robb or North higher than Coleman. Voters in the middle, who either followed the polls “not too closely” or “fairly closely” were more positive toward Coleman, with 42.4 percent and 38.9 percent rating him higher than they rated Robb or North. With the exception of the first column, these results match those found in table 6.2.
Issues, Partisanship, Ideology, and Coleman Support

If Coleman’s supporters were united in opinion behind a particular issue, and if the two major-party candidates did not take opposing sides on the issue, then we might expect to find many loyal Coleman supporters. While not widely emphasized in coverage of the Minnesota Gubernatorial election, the issue of abortion is partly responsible for Jesse Ventura’s victory. Ventura was the only pro-choice candidate in the race, and according to Lacy and Monson, pro-choice voters were more likely to vote for Ventura than for Humphrey or Norm Coleman (Lacy and Monson, 2000). If Marshall Coleman’s supporters were not unified on any important issues, like abortion, then it is unreasonable to expect them to have much solidarity.

Respondents were asked their opinions on four major issues of the fall 1994 campaign. They were asked how strongly they favored or opposed passage of a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion, increased regulation of guns, a government sponsored universal health care plan, and across-the-board spending cuts to reduce the deficit. The full text of these questions is available in Appendix A.

The results suggest that Coleman attracted his supporters from a wide array of political backgrounds. While 36.3 percent of those who strongly opposed an anti-abortion amendment preferred Coleman, 37.9 percent who strongly favored such an amendment preferred Coleman. Across all answers to the abortion question, there is only a 4 percentage point difference between the group most supportive of Coleman and the group least supportive of Coleman (40.3 percent mildly pro-choice preferred Coleman, and 36.3 percent of strongly pro-choice preferred Coleman). Abortion was clearly not as important an issue to Coleman supporters as it was to Ventura supporters.
Similarly, there is no apparent relationship between support for increased gun control and support for Marshall Coleman. The only noticeable result is that those who were strongly opposed to increased gun regulation were the least likely to support Coleman, probably because they were the group most likely to support Oliver North. Examinations of the relationships between health care and Coleman support, and spending reductions and Coleman support tell the same story. Coleman was no more likely to pick up support from those opposed to a government-run health care plan as he was to get support from those in favor of such a plan. Nor was he able to appeal to a particular side of voters on the issue of government spending cuts.

– Table 6.4 here –

While issues were clearly not a factor in support for Marshall Coleman, partisanship and ideology may have been important. Table 6.4 shows the breakdown of Coleman support by party identification. As would be expected, independent voters were most likely to support Coleman, followed by Republicans, since Coleman had run as a Republican his whole career. Nearly sixty percent of independents preferred Coleman, but only about 30 percent of Republicans preferred Coleman. The relationship between the respondent’s ideology and her candidate preference is presented in table 6.5. This relationship conforms with expectations, as moderates are most likely to support Coleman, and those who answered “very conservative” or “very liberal” are least likely to support Coleman.

– Table 6.5 here –

In some ways, Coleman’s supporters were similar to third-party or independent voters in other elections. Asher notes that Perot’s supporters in 1992 were not united
around a particular issue, even though Perot emphasized economic issues during his campaign (Asher, 1995). Like Perot’s support, Ventura’s support came from those who were dissatisfied with government. Lacy and Monson point toward dissatisfaction with Minnesota’s state government in particular as an important factor in Ventura’s support (Lacy and Monson, 2000).

– Table 6.6 here –

The Virginia survey does contain one question about trust in government. The relationship between respondents’ answers about how often they feel they can “trust the government in Washington to do what’s right” and their candidate preference are presented in table 6.6. Coleman’s support actually rises with trust in government, and is lower with voters who do not trust the government to do what is right. Of the respondents who said they trusted the government “most of the time,” 47.6 percent rated Coleman higher than they rated Robb or North. Only 31 percent of those who said they “hardly ever” trusted the government rated Coleman highest.

In summary, Coleman’s supporters were not a distinctive group. Independents and moderates were more likely to support Coleman than partisans and ideologues. Voters who did not follow the campaign were also more likely to support Coleman – perhaps Robb and North turned them off so much, that they chose not to pay attention to the campaign. Gender, race, education, and political issues seemed irrelevant in determining support for Marshall Coleman. Voters trusting the government were more likely to support Coleman than anti-government voters. Coleman was an establishment candidate. Oliver North, despite his previous government experience, was more adept at appealing to voter anger and distrust of the government. In the next section, I address
whether these traits and attitudes were related to the votes of the Coleman supporters. The analysis in the next section limits the sample to Coleman supporters only, so the number of cases in each table will drop from around 475 to around 150.

**Determinants of Strategic Voting**

As I showed in chapter 3, Ventura’s supporters were also Ventura’s voters. In contrast, Marshall Coleman’s supporters in Virginia were did not necessarily vote for him. In fact, in the Virginia Peninsula Survey, over half of Coleman’s supporters voted for Robb or North. The factors that led voters to support Coleman may be different than the factors that led Coleman’s supporters to vote for him. We might not expect Marshall Coleman’s supporters to resemble the typical independent voter, since so many of them voted strategically. Were the Coleman loyalists more like the contemporary independent voter than the strategic-voting Coleman supporter? If so, then perhaps Coleman’s loss should not be as surprising as it is. If a large group of his supporters were more traditional partisans who were attracted to Coleman out of disgust toward the other two candidates, maybe we should suspect that they would vote strategically, rather than align themselves with traditional independent voters. These voters, seeing so much at stake, ideologically, may have been more concerned with the short-term outcome than the long-term benefits of expressing their true preferences.

Due to the weak ties shown by Coleman’s supporters, I expect that their behavior was largely motivated by strategic concerns. According to Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1996), third party success is caused by major party failure. Voters with allegiances to the major parties will only look to third party candidates when the major party candidates are unacceptable in some way. In the Virginia case, many voters
perceived at least one of the major party candidates as unacceptable, largely due to character flaws. These voters ranked Marshall Coleman higher than the other two candidates. To test this, I include the strategic variables from chapter 4 in a model with other variables that are statistically significantly related to strategic or sincere voting among Coleman’s supporters.

While I expect the variables analyzed in chapter 4 to be strong predictors of strategic voting, one could pose alternative explanations for those votes. Voters may have cast their votes based on issues, partisanship, ideology, or demographic factors. In the remainder of this chapter, I intend to show that standard determinants of the vote were largely irrelevant to Coleman’s supporters. With the exception of the issue of abortion, strategic considerations end up having the only statistically significant effects on Coleman supporters’ votes.

**Demographics and Strategic Voting**

Earlier in this chapter, I showed that there was no relationship between gender and support for Coleman. While men are generally more likely to support independent candidates, they were no more likely than women to support Marshall Coleman. Given the lack of a relationship between gender and preference for Coleman, we might also suspect no relationship between gender and voting for Coleman. We might suspect, however, that once men are supporters of Coleman they may be more likely to vote for him, according to Norrander’s independence gap hypothesis. Table 6.7 shows the relationship between gender and voting for Coleman (among Coleman supporters only). Men are more likely than women to vote strategically, although the relationship is only marginally statistically significant at p=0.086. Just over half of Coleman’s female
supporters said they would vote for him, while only 37.5 percent of Coleman’s male supporters said they would vote for him. The reasons for this are apparent when the favorability ratings for the candidates are broken down by male and female Coleman supporters. Over 18 percent of female Coleman supporters gave Coleman a rating of “very favorable” while only eight percent of male Coleman supporters gave him that rating. Also, 57.5 percent of female Coleman supporters gave Oliver North a rating of “very unfavorable,” while only 44.9 percent of male Coleman supporters gave him the lowest rating.

These results indicate that Marshall Coleman’s supporters, and voters, did not follow the same pattern as Ventura’s supporters did. Lacy and Monson (2000) show that, all else held constant, men were more likely than women to vote for Ventura than for the other two candidates. Whether out of esteem for Marshall Coleman, or out of dislike of Oliver North, women were more likely than men to stick with Marshall Coleman in Virginia.

Due to racial issues associated with the major party candidates, African-American Coleman supporters might be more likely to vote for Robb than White Coleman supporters. Among White Coleman supporters, only 55 percent voted strategically. But among African-American Coleman supporters, 80 percent voted strategically. While this is a large difference, it is not statistically significant, in part due to the low number of African-American Coleman supporters.

The relationship between education and voting for Coleman is more complex than the previous two relationships. Sixty-one percent of Coleman supporters with no college
education voted strategically. Similarly, 59.6 percent of Coleman supporters with some post-graduate education also voted strategically. But the voters in the middle (those with some college education and those with a college degree) were less likely to vote strategically than the voters at the extremes. Only 52.8 percent of Coleman supporters with college degrees voted strategically, and only 46.2 percent of Coleman supporters with just some college voted strategically. While interesting, these differences are again not statistically significant.

While Coleman’s voters exhibited interesting demographic patterns, only the gender-based differences between strategic and sincere voters proved mildly significant. The fact that Coleman’s female supporters appeared more loyal to his candidacy than his male supporters suggests that Coleman supporters were not typical supporters of third-party or independent candidates. This is part of the reason why Coleman’s task was so difficult. The next part of the analysis deals with political awareness and strategic voting.

**Education, Awareness, and Voting Strategically**

Expectations about the relationships between campaign interest and strategic voting could go either way. On one hand, we would expect people who closely follow the campaign to know Coleman has no chance of winning, and perhaps to eliminate him from consideration, even if they prefer him over Robb or North. North’s supporters might even rate Coleman lower, considering him a spoiler. Coleman supporters who most closely followed the campaign could also be more aware of the policy differences between the two major-party candidates and would vote strategically. On the other hand,
people who closely follow the campaign were probably well aware of the character
deficiencies of the two major-party candidates, so there would be no lesser of two evils.

Table 6.2 showed how voters became less supportive of Marshall Coleman as they
followed the campaign more closely. Perhaps the more highly aware voters were
aware of Coleman’s lack of viability and tuned his campaign out. Once supportive of
Coleman, were the more attentive voters more or less likely to vote for him? There appears to be no statistically significant relationship between following the campaign closely and voting strategically. Table 6.8 presents these results. The pattern observed in table 6.8 is less pronounced than that in table 6.2, although it is interesting to note that Coleman supporters who followed the campaign “very closely” were approximately ten percentage points more likely to vote strategically than those Coleman supporters who did not follow the campaign “very closely.”

– Table 6.8 here –

More important to the study of strategic voting is whether following the polls was related to voting for Coleman. I expect those Coleman supporters who followed the polls closely to have been less likely to vote for him. They should have been more aware of Coleman’s lack of viability, as well as of the closeness of the race. The results, presented in table 6.9, show a clear increasing pattern of strategic voting as voters know more about the polls. Seventy-five percent of those Coleman supporters who followed the polls “very closely” voted strategically. Only approximately 60 percent of those Coleman supporters who followed the polls “fairly closely” voted strategically. The percentages fall to 50.8 for those not closely following the polls and to 44.4 percent for those claiming not to have seen polls on the campaign.
While these findings are not statistically significant, it may be because there are only 157 observations stretched across eight cells. When the table is collapsed, combining those having not seen any polls with those having not followed them closely, and combining those following polls “fairly closely” and “very closely,” we see that about half (49.4 percent) of the voters who followed the polls less voted strategically, and around five-eighths (62.2 percent) of those who followed the polls more voted strategically. The chi-square statistic for that relationship approaches statistical significance (p=0.108).

The voters who followed the campaign and the polls closely were more likely to prefer a candidate other than Coleman. Even among Coleman’s supporters, those who closely followed the campaign and the polls were more likely to vote strategically than those who did not follow the campaign and the polls closely. This certainly supports the idea that strategic voting is dependent upon voter knowledge about the candidates’ chances of winning. Not only that, but it also suggests that Coleman might have difficulty mobilizing his supporters through the traditional media, as those supporters paid less attention to the news than Robb or North’s supporters did. Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus find that interest in the campaign is positively related to concern with the issues, which in turn is positively related to third party voting (Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus, 1996). These data, however, suggest that the opposite happened. The voters who were more interested in the campaign preferred candidates other than Coleman, and even those who preferred Coleman were less likely to vote for him than to vote strategically.

– Table 6.9 here –
Issues, Independence, Ideology, and Strategic Voting

In the previous section, I showed how issues were largely unrelated to Coleman’s support. Independents and moderates were more likely to support Coleman, but that was most likely a reaction against the major party candidates and not in favor of Coleman. Coleman’s supporters may have been polarized around a particular issue or set of issues. Pro-choice Coleman supporters may have voted for Robb out of fear of North’s anti-abortion stance. Pro-life Coleman supporters may have supported North’s position and may have voted based on that issue. Anti-gun-control Coleman supporters may also have been likely to vote strategically in order to help North advance their positions. Partisan and ideological Coleman supporters might still be expected to vote for their party’s candidate, or for the candidate that matched them ideologically.

There appears to be no relationship between abortion attitudes and strategic voting in this election. While there is more variation in the percentage voting strategically across different answers to the abortion question than there was in the percentage favoring Coleman across those answers, there is still no noticeable pattern. There is also no relationship between support for gun-control and strategic voting, as those who favored increased gun-control were only slightly, but not significantly, less likely to vote strategically than those who opposed increased gun control. On the issues of spending cuts and health care plans, respondents on both sides of both issues were roughly equally likely to vote strategically.

– Table 6.10 here –

Coleman’s independents were truly independent, however, as a higher percentage of independent Coleman supporters voted strategically than either Democratic or
Republican Coleman supporters. As table 6.10 shows, almost two-thirds of independent Coleman supporters voted strategically. This is partly due to how the preference variable was constructed. Since the favorability scale was only a five-point scale, there were many voters who gave the same rating to two or more candidates. Party identification was used to break these ties, so some independents labeled as Coleman supporters also liked at least one other candidate as much as they liked Coleman. But these tables clearly indicate that Coleman could not count on any particular group, even political independents, for support in the voting booth.

Table 6.11 shows the relationship between the ideology of Coleman’s supporters and their votes. As with the relationship between ideology and support for Coleman, voters at the ideological extremes were more likely to vote strategically than those in the middle. Coleman received his strongest support from those who said they were “somewhat conservative” or “moderate.”

– Table 6.11 here –

Somewhat surprisingly, voters who trusted the government more were more likely to have rated Coleman higher. Since these voters have more invested in the political system, we might expect the more trusting of Coleman’s supporters to vote for one of the major party candidates. On the other hand, since North was a more anti-government candidate than Coleman, we might also expect the anti-government Coleman supporters to actually intend to vote for Oliver North. Such votes would appear as strategic, but may in fact be based on trust in government.

Table 6.12 displays the relationship between those Coleman supporters’ votes and their level of trust in government. While trust in government appeared mildly related to
support of Coleman, it is not related to whether those supporters voted for Coleman. Those who trusted government “only some of the time” were most likely to vote for Coleman, and those who trusted government more or less than that were likely to vote strategically.

– Table 6.12 here –

**Multivariate Analysis**

While the bivariate analysis suggests that Coleman’s supporters and voters were different than the supporters and voters of other third-party candidates, a multivariate analysis is necessary to determine the effects of these variables while controlling for other factors. Since most other analyses of third-party voting have been done in a multivariate context, it is only appropriate that this analysis follow that standard.

In the first model, I regress the dichotomous support for Coleman variable on the predictors examined above. In order to accommodate the bivariate relationships observed in the previous sections of this chapter, I have recoded some of the independent variables. For example, table 6.3 shows that those who saw no polls and those who followed the polls very closely were less likely to support Coleman than those in the middle. Dummy variables were created out of this variable, and three were included separately in the model, leaving those who answered “not too closely” as the baseline group. Partisanship was recoded to indicate if the respondent answered “independent” or not. Ideology was folded to represent extremity of ideology, with those answering “very liberal” or “very conservative” at the high end of the scale, and those answering “moderate” at the low end. The two extreme categories of the trust in government variable, each with very few respondents, have been collapsed into their adjacent
categories, creating a three-category variable. Finally, the issue variables have been collapsed to make them dichotomous variables indicating if the respondent is in favor of or opposed to the position in the question.

Table 6.13 presents the results of the multivariate models of Coleman support. The effects uncovered in this model are similar to what was seen in the bivariate analysis. A respondent’s gender made no difference in whether she supported Coleman or someone else. As the respondents followed the campaign more closely, they became less likely to support Coleman. Similarly, the respondents who followed the polls “very closely” were slightly significantly less likely to support Coleman than those who did not follow the polls “too closely.” As shown in table 6.5, those who saw no campaign polls were also less likely to support Coleman than those who had seen polls, but did not follow them “too closely.”

Independents and moderates were more likely to support Coleman than partisans and ideologues were. Trust in government was actually positively related to support for Coleman. Issues were largely unrelated; answering in favor of a government health care plan was the only issue to register a significant relationship with support for Coleman. Those who were in favor of such a plan were less likely to vote for Coleman than those against government health care.

In the second model of table 6.13, the variables that possessed no statistically significant relationship to support for Coleman were excluded in order to get more efficient estimates of the variables that were significantly related to support for Coleman. The coefficients on these variables remain close to the coefficients from the first model,
and the signs on the coefficients remain the same. The only change in statistical significance is for the health care variable, as the coefficient is diminished along with its level of significance.

I then estimated the effects of the same variables on the probability of voting for Marshall Coleman, while limiting the sample to those who most preferred Coleman. The results are reported in table 6.14. Unlike the earlier full model, the variables dealing with attention to the campaign had no statistically significant effect on strategic or sincere voting. Ideology and trust in government also had no effect in this model. Issues, however, played important roles in the vote. Voters who were pro-choice and pro-health care were more likely to vote against Coleman than for him. Voters who were in favor of gun control were more likely to vote for Coleman. Partisanship was also important in this model, as independent voters were actually less likely to vote for Coleman, even though they were more likely to support him. Perhaps Democrats and Republicans who overcame their partisan leanings to rate Coleman higher than Robb or North formed a stronger bond in the process than independents did.

– Table 6.14 here –

The second part of table 6.14 shows the results of the logit model of the vote among Coleman supporters when the non-significant variables were removed. Again, the coefficients and significance levels are stable. Independence and opinions on abortion, gun control, and health care appear to be significant predictors of strategic voting among Coleman supporters.
Combining and Comparing Models

There appear to be two competing explanations for how Marshall Coleman’s supporters voted on election day in 1994. In chapter 4, I showed that strategic considerations were very important in the vote decision. The closeness of the race, the utility difference voters saw between the major candidates, their affect toward Coleman, and Coleman’s chances of winning all had the expected effects on the vote. In this chapter, I have shown that more traditional causal variables – independence and issue positions – appear to be significant predictors of the votes of Coleman’s supporters. Additionally, variables related to the attention voters paid to the campaign were not significantly related to the vote. The last result would seem to put the results from chapter 4 in doubt, since one would expect perceptions of closeness to be related to attention to the campaign. To sort out the effects, I included both sets of predictor variables in the same model. The results are presented in table 6.15.

– Table 6.15 here –

The five variables from chapter 4 are all statistically significant, and in the expected directions. In fact, the magnitudes of the coefficients are not much different from those in table 4.7. Independence is no longer statistically significant. Of the three issue variables, only abortion is significant, with pro-choice voters being less likely to vote for Coleman than pro-life voters.

Conclusion

Coleman’s supporters were neither partisans nor ideologues. Nor do they appear to be particularly alienated or untrusting of the national government. Since Coleman was running without a party label, there was no sense of group interest to which voters could
bond. The campaign lacked a key issue around which Coleman could rally supporters. Robb and North staked out distinctly different positions on most issues, so Coleman could not use an issue, like Ventura had used abortion, to distinguish himself from the other two candidates. The only factor Coleman had in his favor was the public’s disdain for the major party candidates. In the end, many of Coleman’s supporters chose the lesser of two viable evils instead of a non-viable candidate they liked. Strategic considerations were far more important in determining the votes of Coleman’s supporters. Only one political issue, abortion, appeared to have any effect on their votes.

Coleman’s campaign may more closely resemble the many unsuccessful independent campaigns that came before him than the few successful (in terms of support or impact on the race) independent campaigns we have witnessed over the last two decades. The importance of Coleman’s campaign may be that it revealed that the success or failure of independent political candidates may depend more on the nature of the other candidates in the race than on the independent candidates themselves.

As Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1996) have pointed out, third-party support is a reflection of major party failure. If the major parties fail to nominate attractive candidates, or if the candidates fail to make the case that their election is necessary, voters may turn to attractive, interesting third-party candidates. If, as George Wallace stated, “there’s not a dime’s worth of difference” between the two major parties, voters may see no risk to “wasting” their vote. If, however, there is a big difference between the candidates, then voters may not see both major parties as having failed. Even an attractive, independent candidate may not be able to win if voters believe that voting for an independent candidate would not advantage their least favorite candidate. For
independent success, the major parties must fail. Once they have failed, the independent (or third-party) candidate’s success depends on his or her offering an attractive alternative to the voters. Both factors occurred in Minnesota, and Ventura was successful. In Virginia, whether or not the major parties failed is debatable. Both major party candidates were able to attract strong followings. Even if they did fail, Marshall Coleman failed to position himself as an alternative that was attractive enough to risk voting for. In the next, and last, chapter, I summarize the results from chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6. I conclude with a discussion of the merits of studying strategic voting and of the contributions this study and future studies could make to our knowledge of political behavior.
### Table 6.1. Coleman Preference by Gender (All Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Preferred</th>
<th>Gender of Respondent</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(40.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(35.4%)</td>
<td>(37.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other candidate</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(60.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(64.6)</td>
<td>(62.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(42.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(57.7%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1. Coleman Preference by Gender (All Respondents)

$\chi^2 = 1.1867, \ p = 0.276$

### Table 6.2: Candidate Preference and Following the Campaign (All Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Preference</th>
<th>How Closely R Followed the Campaign</th>
<th>Not Too Closely</th>
<th>Fairly Closely</th>
<th>Very Closely</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(49.3%)</td>
<td>(39.5%)</td>
<td>(28.3%)</td>
<td>(37.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(50.7)</td>
<td>(60.5)</td>
<td>(71.7)</td>
<td>(62.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15.8)</td>
<td>(52.2)</td>
<td>(32.0)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2: Candidate Preference and Following the Campaign (All Respondents)

$\chi^2 = 10.4155, \ p = 0.005$
**Table 6.3: Candidate Preference and Following the Polls (All Respondents)**

\[
\chi^2 = 6.8432, \ p = 0.077
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Preference</th>
<th>Had Not Seen Polls</th>
<th>Not Too Closely</th>
<th>Fairly Closely</th>
<th>Very Closely</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(28.6%)</td>
<td>(42.4%)</td>
<td>(38.9%)</td>
<td>(26.5%)</td>
<td>(37.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(71.4)</td>
<td>(57.6)</td>
<td>(61.1)</td>
<td>(73.5)</td>
<td>(62.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14.9)</td>
<td>(36.5)</td>
<td>(38.2)</td>
<td>(10.4)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6.4: Candidate Preference by Party Identification (All Respondents)**

\[
\chi^2 = 60.5380, \ p = 0.000
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Preferred</th>
<th>Respondent’s Party Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democrat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(13.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(86.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Table 6.5: Candidate Preference by Respondent Ideology (All Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Preference</th>
<th>Very Conservative</th>
<th>Somewhat Conservative</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Somewhat Liberal</th>
<th>Very Liberal</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17.8%)</td>
<td>(35.7%)</td>
<td>(50.3%)</td>
<td>(25.0%)</td>
<td>(29.4%)</td>
<td>(37.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(82.2%)</td>
<td>(64.3%)</td>
<td>(49.7%)</td>
<td>(75.0%)</td>
<td>(70.6%)</td>
<td>(62.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9.6%)</td>
<td>(38.6%)</td>
<td>(34.6%)</td>
<td>(13.6%)</td>
<td>(3.6%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 23.8939, \ p = 0.000 \]

### Table 6.6: Candidate Preference by Trust in Government (All Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Preference</th>
<th>Never (volunteered)</th>
<th>Hardly Ever</th>
<th>Only Some of the Time</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25.0%)</td>
<td>(31.0%)</td>
<td>(36.8%)</td>
<td>(47.6%)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>(36.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(75.0%)</td>
<td>(69.0%)</td>
<td>(63.2%)</td>
<td>(52.4%)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(63.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.6%)</td>
<td>(18.6%)</td>
<td>(64.8%)</td>
<td>(13.4%)</td>
<td>(0.6%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 6.8863, \ p = 0.142 \]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender of Respondent</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(37.50%)</td>
<td>(51.16%)</td>
<td>(44.94%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other candidate</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(62.50)</td>
<td>(48.84)</td>
<td>(55.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(45.56%)</td>
<td>(54.44%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.7: Coleman Supporters’ Votes by Gender (Coleman Supporters Only)
\( \chi^2 = 2.9566, p = 0.086 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Closely R Followed the Campaign</th>
<th>Not Too Closely</th>
<th>Fairly Closely</th>
<th>Very Closely</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(51.6%)</td>
<td>(46.5%)</td>
<td>(36.6%)</td>
<td>(44.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(48.4)</td>
<td>(53.5)</td>
<td>(63.4)</td>
<td>(55.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19.6)</td>
<td>(54.4)</td>
<td>(25.9)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.8: Coleman Supporters’ Votes and Following the Campaign (Coleman Supporters Only)
\( \chi^2 = 1.8003, p = 0.407 \)
### How Closely has R Followed Polls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Had Not Seen Polls</th>
<th>Not Too Closely</th>
<th>Fairly Closely</th>
<th>Very Closely</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>10 (55.6%)</td>
<td>32 (49.2%)</td>
<td>25 (40.3%)</td>
<td>3 (25.0%)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8 (44.4)</td>
<td>33 (50.8)</td>
<td>37 (59.7)</td>
<td>9 (75.0)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18 (11.5)</td>
<td>65 (41.4)</td>
<td>62 (39.5)</td>
<td>12 (7.6)</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.9: Coleman Supporters’ Votes and Following the Polls (Coleman Supporters Only)

\[ \chi^2 = 3.7635, p = 0.288 \]

### Respondent’s Party Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Democrat</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Republican</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>7 (58.3%)</td>
<td>29 (34.1%)</td>
<td>33 (56.9%)</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5 (41.7)</td>
<td>56 (65.9)</td>
<td>25 (43.1)</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12 (7.7)</td>
<td>85 (54.8)</td>
<td>58 (37.4)</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.10: Coleman Supporters’ Votes by Party Identification, (Coleman Supporters Only)

\[ \chi^2 = 8.2480, p = 0.016 \]
Table 6.11: Coleman Supporters’ Votes Intention by Respondent Ideology (Coleman Supporters Only)
$\chi^2=8.137$, p=0.087

Table 6.12: Coleman Supporters’ Votes by Trust in Government (All Respondents)
$\chi^2=2.0434$, p=0.563
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Preference Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Preference Model 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta$ (SE)</td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td>$\beta$ (SE)</td>
<td>$p$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.272 (0.247)</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows Campaign</td>
<td>-0.624 (0.204)</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.618 (0.186)</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has Not Seen Polls</td>
<td>-0.770 (0.391)</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>-0.800 (0.345)</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows Polls Fairly Closely</td>
<td>0.013 (0.278)</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows Polls Very Closely</td>
<td>-0.784 (0.499)</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>-0.747 (0.437)</td>
<td>0.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>1.564 (0.251)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.399 (0.232)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremity of Ideology</td>
<td>-0.560 (0.195)</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>-0.513 (0.181)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in Government</td>
<td>0.546 (0.226)</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.495 (0.206)</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Choice</td>
<td>-0.316 (0.269)</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Gun Control</td>
<td>0.324 (0.290)</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Health Care</td>
<td>-0.432 (0.262)</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>-0.312 (0.231)</td>
<td>0.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Budget Cuts</td>
<td>0.326 (0.262)</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.185 (0.560)</td>
<td>0.721</td>
<td>-0.146 (0.339)</td>
<td>0.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2*LL</td>
<td>89.95 (0.000)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>86.40 (0.000)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.13: Coleman Preference Models (All Respondents)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Vote Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Vote Model 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta$ (SE)</td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td>$\beta$ (SE)</td>
<td>$p$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.502 (0.399)</td>
<td>0.208</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows Campaign</td>
<td>-0.235 (0.348)</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has Not Seen Polls</td>
<td>0.838 (0.684)</td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows Polls Fairly Closely</td>
<td>-0.406 (0.450)</td>
<td>0.366</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows Polls Very Closely</td>
<td>-0.655 (0.999)</td>
<td>0.512</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>-1.104 (0.415)</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>-1.119 (0.367)</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremity of Ideology</td>
<td>-0.239 (0.334)</td>
<td>0.475</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in Government</td>
<td>0.088 (0.364)</td>
<td>0.808</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Choice</td>
<td>-0.841 (0.444)</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>-0.760 (0.399)</td>
<td>0.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Gun Control</td>
<td>0.854 (0.468)</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.956 (0.446)</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Health Care</td>
<td>-0.925 (0.415)</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>-0.835 (0.381)</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Budget Cuts</td>
<td>0.011 (0.434)</td>
<td>0.979</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.903 (0.889)</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>-0.574 (0.487)</td>
<td>0.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2*LL</td>
<td>24.46</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>19.81</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.14: Coleman Vote Models (Coleman Supporters Only)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closeness</td>
<td>-35.221</td>
<td>16.392</td>
<td>-2.149</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorability Difference</td>
<td>-10.933</td>
<td>4.949</td>
<td>-2.209</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>20.586</td>
<td>10.222</td>
<td>2.014</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman's Proportion</td>
<td>9.039</td>
<td>3.466</td>
<td>2.608</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman Favorability</td>
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<td>0.376</td>
<td>2.952</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>-0.639</td>
<td>0.517</td>
<td>-1.236</td>
<td>0.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-Choice</td>
<td>-1.223</td>
<td>0.578</td>
<td>-2.115</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Gun Control</td>
<td>0.537</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>0.955</td>
<td>0.340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Health Care</td>
<td>-0.759</td>
<td>0.515</td>
<td>-1.473</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1.855</td>
<td>0.064</td>
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<td>-2*LL</td>
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Table 6.15: Unified Strategic Voting Model (Coleman Supporters Only)
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation I have shown four main results. First, in chapter 3, I showed that some voters in Virginia voted strategically in the 1994 election to the U.S. Senate. These voters, mostly supporters of independent candidate Marshall Coleman, behaved differently than did voters in Minnesota’s 1998 Gubernatorial election. In the 1998 election, voters predominantly voted for the candidate they rated highest on a feeling thermometer. In Virginia, voters who ranked the independent candidate highest were split in how they voted. Slightly fewer than half of them voted for that candidate, while slightly more than half of them voted for one of the two frontrunning candidates.

Second, in chapters 3, 5, and 6, I found several reasons why these voters behaved differently. By the end of October, Jesse Ventura had a much better chance of winning his election than Marshall Coleman did of winning in Virginia. Ventura’s opponents seemed bland in comparison to the former wrestler and mayor. Marshall Coleman’s opponents were controversial, but they were able to energize their parties’ core supporters. Unfortunately for Coleman, he had no base to mobilize.

Third, in chapter 5, I demonstrated that the newspaper coverage was extremely different from one race to the other. In Minnesota, the newspaper articles largely covered the candidates and their positions on the issues. There was very little coverage
of scandal or candidate negativity and attacks. There was also little coverage of campaign strategy and of the candidates’ standings in the pre-election polls. In Virginia, the coverage was focused on the horserace aspects of the campaign and on scandals and candidate attacks. The major issues of the campaign did not receive as much attention as the more sensational details of the candidates character faults.

Fourth, in chapter 4, I showed that perceptions of the closeness of the race, differences in favorability toward the front-running candidates, affect for the underdog, and perceptions of the third-place candidate’s chances of winning were all statistically significant predictors of strategic voting. By limiting the sample to the voters most susceptible to weighing strategy against preference, I am able to obtain an accurate estimate of how the various factors affect strategic voting. By using a more theoretically valid specification in the model, the predictions generated by the model more closely match the predictions from the theoretical work on the subject.

Finding Strategic Voters

In chapter 3, I mainly focused on the description of the Virginia and Minnesota campaigns. Using survey data collected during the last weeks of each campaign, I showed how many of Marshall Coleman’s potential voters actually decided to vote for another candidate. In this sample, more than half of Coleman’s supporters appear to have voted strategically. On the other hand, I used the Minnesota data to show that there was very little strategic vote switching during that campaign.

The process of identifying potential and actual strategic voters is a crucial element of the study of strategic voting. Without first identifying those who would be likely to vote strategically, it is impossible to test hypotheses about strategic voting. The
variables that are theoretically important to strategic voters may be irrelevant to voters who already prefer a candidate with a realistic chance of winning. Those variables may appear unimportant to the voting decision when they may actually be essential to supporters of third-place (or lower) candidates. If there are enough of those voters, the outcome may actually be different than what it would be if all voters behaved sincerely.

Finding potential and actual strategic voters enables the most basic analysis of the process. More variables are needed for more advanced analysis, similar to what has been done in chapter 4, or what has been done by Ordeshook and Zeng (1997) and Abramson et al. (1992). Specifically, one needs to have some estimate of what the voters think of each candidate’s chances of winning. The Virginia Peninsula Survey contained questions about each candidate’s final percent of the vote. It was designed partially for the purpose of studying strategic voting, since the designers of the survey expected strategic voting to play a major role in the results of the election. While the St. Cloud State survey of Minnesota did not have all the questions the strategic voting scholar would wish for, it was superior to the Virginia survey in a couple of ways. The feeling thermometer rating questions that were used in the St. Cloud State survey would have allowed a more precise measure of voter favorability in the Virginia case if they had been used instead of the five-point scales used there.

In future research, I hope to replicate the analysis presented in chapter 3 with surveys from other multi-candidate elections. While there have been several multi-candidate races in recent U.S. elections, few have produced adequate and available data
for this purpose. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to foresee when a multi-candidate race will produce a third-place candidate who attracts enough supporters to have enough strategic voters to permit statistical analysis of the survey data.

**Strategic Voters and Vote Determinants**

In chapter 6, I showed how Coleman’s supporters in Virginia were not typical third-party or independent voters. Coleman’s supporters had very little in common with each other, with the exception of their dissatisfaction with at least one of the major party candidates. Marshall Coleman’s supporters and his voters did not resemble Jesse Ventura’s supporters in Minnesota, who were predominantly younger, male, pro-choice, left-of-center, and dissatisfied with their state government (Lacy and Monson, 2000). While men were more likely than women to rank Coleman first, they were also more likely than women to vote strategically against Coleman. Coleman drew roughly equal support from both sides of the abortion issue. Coleman also fared well with voters in the middle of the ideological spectrum as well as with those who said they were “slightly conservative.”

Marshall Coleman’s supporters were not unified in their opinions on any of the other three issues in the survey. Coleman’s major-party opponents, however, staked out distinct positions on some of these issues. The one issue where Coleman might have had some success was the issue of spending cuts. Both Oliver North and Charles Robb
claimed to support broad spending cuts to reduce the deficit. While there was room for a candidate to the left of Robb and North, taking a liberal stance on this issue might have lost Coleman some support from his slightly conservative base of support.

Coleman’s supporters also appeared less interested in the campaign. Respondents who followed the campaign closely were the least likely to rank Coleman first. On the other hand, respondents who did not follow the campaign closely were the most likely to rank Coleman highest. There was a similar, but weaker, relationship between following the campaign polls and supporting Marshall Coleman. Finally, while those who were less trusting of government were somewhat more likely to support Coleman, those who did support him were not any more likely to vote for him than the supporters who did trust government.

Marshall Coleman’s lack of a unified base of support gives a large clue as to why he was unable to hold onto their support as the campaign drew to a close. The voters had no reason to coordinate their strategies. They may have liked Coleman more than they liked Robb and North, but for some respondents the prospect of a victory by their least favorite candidate was enough to alter their strategy. Others may have believed that Coleman’s candidacy was a waste of time and a waste of their votes.

The results of this election may support the claims of scholars who have found evidence in favor of the directional theory of voting. Under this theory voters are more likely to vote for candidates on their side of the issue than for candidates who are closer

In the first debate, in early September, Robb even went so far as to say that he would “take food from the mouths of widows and orphans” if it would help reduce the federal budget deficit.
to them, even if they are on the other side of the status quo. Voters are also more likely
to vote for a candidate who seems more intense and committed to their side of the issue
than for a candidate who holds positions closer to the voter’s ideal point (Rabinowitz and
MacDonald, 1989). The directional theory is held up in contrast to the spatial theory of
testing, where voters cast their votes based on their proximities to the other candidates’
issue positions. If voters solely based their votes on issue distances, we would expect
Coleman to have done better in this campaign.

Voters may have abandoned Coleman because he lacked an appealing argument
for his candidacy, or they may have abandoned him because they felt he could not win.
Voters may have thought Coleman could not win because he lacked the intensity to
appeal to a die-hard core of supporters. Or, they may have simply thought that an
independent candidate could not win against two major-party, well-funded, well-known
candidates. Since independent candidates are so rarely successful, many potential
Coleman voters may have written his candidacy off simply because he was not running
under a major party label. Such voters would report their intention to vote for Robb or
North, signaling to other voters that Coleman was not a viable choice.

Analyzing the Information Environment

The content analysis reported in chapter 5 showed some important differences
between the Minnesota and Virginia campaigns. The Virginia coverage was more
focused on character and on the horserace. The Minnesota coverage was predominantly
issue-related. These results confirmed my prior expectations about the coverage in the
two states. The backgrounds of the major candidates in each race led me to believe that
there would be much coverage of the scandalous pasts of Robb and North. I also expected more horserace coverage in Virginia than in Minnesota, but I did not expect the difference to be as great as it was.

If the candidates in Virginia had been as straight-laced as the candidates in Minnesota, the results of the content analysis would certainly be different. In reporting these results, I am not laying blame for Coleman’s loss, or the credit for Ventura’s victory, at the feet of the media. Rather, the nature of the frontrunning candidates in a multi-candidate election structures the considerations that supporters of trailing candidates must entertain. When the other candidates are acceptable to supporters of trailing candidates, as they may have been in Minnesota, supporters of trailing candidates may not have the incentive to switch their vote. Or if the candidates are ideologically similar, there may not be any reason to act to keep one from winning. The news media are the major sources of the information that feeds into strategic considerations. If the media are accurately portraying the candidates and campaign events in their coverage, voters should have accurate conceptions of what is at stake if their least favorite candidate wins the election.

The media are also the major source of information about each candidate’s chances of winning. This information is also crucial in helping voters cast effective votes. The more information the media give the voters about candidate viability (or the non-viability of trailing candidates), the more likely voters will develop informed opinions about each candidate’s chances. As Clough demonstrated in her computer simulations, strategic voting is possible without information about the preferences of the
entire electorate (Clough, 2001). But it is more likely when voters do have such information, and the way that information spreads in modern campaigns involves the media.

In my future research, I plan to replicate the content analysis performed here with news coverage of other multi-candidate races. If enough survey data are available, it may be possible to model the amount of strategic voting in an election on the quantity and type of news coverage of that campaign. I would also like to analyze more newspapers per campaign than I have done here. If it is possible to foresee the potential for strategic voting in an upcoming election, I could collect the content to be analyzed as it is produced. Once the election is over, and years go by, it becomes more difficult to find and collect the content from very many news sources.

**Modeling Strategic Voting**

In chapter 4, I showed how several variables deemed important by rational choice theory were significant predictors of whether a supporter of a last-place candidate voted for or against that candidate. Similar analyses have been conducted using data from presidential primary elections (Abramson et al., 1992), from presidential general elections (Ordeshook and Zeng, 1997), and from elections in foreign countries (for example, Alvarez and Nagler, 2000, on Great Britain; Vowles et al., 1998 on New Zealand; and Blais and Nadeau, 1996, on Canada). Expected utility theory tells us that rational actors will weigh the utility they would receive from their actions by the probabilities of different states of the world in which those actions produce different outcomes. In the case of voting, this idea has been applied as voters weighing the differential benefit they receive from helping voting by the probability that their vote is
crucial (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968). Strategic voting has been modeled largely under the expected utility framework. The key terms involve the closeness of the election, the difference the voter perceives between the two frontrunning candidates, and the interaction of the two terms.

An important pair of tables is tables 4.5 and 4.6. These tables show how the nature of the major party candidates conditions third-party supporters to vote sincerely or strategically. As Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1996) have written, third-party support happens in response to major party failure. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 show that when both major parties failed to put up strong candidates, third-party supporters voted sincerely. On the other hand, when both parties nominated candidates who were flawed, but who had the charisma or experience to energize their parties’ bases, third-party supporters who perceived large differences between those candidates voted strategically, and deserted their most preferred candidate.

Many would say that in Virginia, neither party nominated a strong candidate. Both candidates were able to elicit negative opinions from supporters of the other major party candidate. North’s opponents were fearful of his stances on abortion, gun control, and of his history of lying in public. Robb’s opponents disliked his close relationship with the Clinton administration, and were distrustful of him due to the numerous scandals which had become public over the previous six years. In Minnesota, however, neither major party candidate was likely to inspire such fear or distrust in the voters. Both candidates were ideological moderates and, until recently, both candidates were Democrats. In a situation such as the one in Minnesota, sincere voting by the trailing candidate’s supporters should be more likely than in a situation like the one in Virginia.
When there is a strong motivation for voters to cast their votes in order to avoid the election of their least favorite candidate, as was the case in Virginia, one should expect high levels of strategic voting.

To capture the strategic element of the voting decision, I included variables measuring these concepts. The variables had a statistically significant impact on the vote. Additional variables were included to flush out the model. First, I included a measure of the respondent’s perception of how well Coleman would do. A voter should be less likely to vote strategically if she perceives the election to be close between all three candidates rather than just two candidates. I also included a measure of how much she liked Marshall Coleman. A voter may have disliked all three candidates, but she just disliked Marshall Coleman less than the other candidates. In that situation, such a voter should be more likely to vote strategically than a voter who was very favorable toward Coleman.

The results confirm hypotheses about the direction and significance of the estimates. Voters who think the election is close will be more likely to vote strategically than voters who do not think it is close. Voters who have a strong preference between Robb and North are more likely to vote strategically than those who have a weak preference between Robb and North. And voters who think Coleman will do well, or who are more favorable to Coleman, are more likely to vote sincerely than voters who do not think Coleman will do well in the election, or than those who are less favorable toward or even have unfavorable opinions of Coleman. The only unexpected result is that the coefficient for the interaction between the closeness variable and the measure of utility difference between the frontrunning candidates is in the opposite direction from
the coefficients on the pieces of the interaction. Based on the predicted probabilities generated from the coefficients, I have concluded that the best way to think of this result is as a bandwagon term.

The results from chapter 4 were bolstered in chapter 6, when strategic variables outperformed other variables traditionally related to voting behavior. Variables such as partisanship, ideology, and issue positions proved largely insignificant in determining the votes of Coleman supporters. Instead, their votes were determined by how close they believed the race to be, how much more (or less) they liked Robb than North, how much they liked Marshall Coleman, and how well they thought Coleman would do on election day.

**Discussion**

The analyses presented in this dissertation show that strategic voting should be taken seriously. Strategic voting leads to the gradual reduction of the number of parties in an electoral system. Strategic voting occurs when the major parties nominate candidates who are flawed enough to lead to an independent challenger, but when those two candidates are still threats to win. In this case, if voters see enough at stake in the election, and if they believe their vote could be crucial, they will vote strategically. When the major parties fail to nominate appealing candidates, and neither candidate is despised by a segment of the electorate, third-party supporters will vote sincerely.

An implication of these results is that a frontrunning candidates who is worried about a last-place candidate acting as a spoiler should emphasize the differences between himself and the other frontrunning candidate. If effective, a strategy of pointing out how much is at stake, either in issue-based terms or character-based appeals, should influence
his potential voters’ opinions of the difference between the two frontrunning candidates. The candidate should also describe the trailing candidate’s chances of winning as remote, and should emphasize how close the final result may be. A trailing candidate should do the opposite. He should emphasize similarities between the frontrunning candidate, and should highlight how he is different than they are. This strategy may dispel the notion that a vote for him would be wasted, if his supporters perceive there to be no real choice between the top two candidates. Finally, early in the campaign, the trailing candidate should mention previous come-from-behind wins, such as Ventura’s win in Minnesota, in order to give the impression that he can be viable by the end of the campaign.

While the topic of strategic voting has received much attention in countries with more complex electoral systems, it is still important in American elections. Strategic voting is not abundant in all multicandidate elections in the United States but it does occur in some. In some cases, like in Virginia’s 1994 Senate election, strategic voters can determine the outcome of the election. In other elections, they may not make a difference. In cases like the Virginia election, strategic voting may threaten the candidacy of a popular third-party candidate, leaving many voters with a choice between lesser candidates. By gradually diminishing the number of parties in a system, strategic voters reduce the choice that exist in future elections. Although voters may bemoan the lack of a choice in the long-term, it may be the price that strategic voters have to pay to achieve short-term policy goals.

The modeling exercises here have shown the importance of correctly specifying statistical models. Without carefully planned models, we could end up with inconsistent predictions. Correcting the statistical models to eliminate the problems found in
previous work may be difficult, but the results are worth the effort. Comparisons of the results from the models show that the model developed here produce predictions consistent with the theories discussed in chapter 2.

Further analysis of strategic voting is difficult without good survey data. A key variable in this analysis is the closeness of the election. To get individual variation on this variable in a single electoral district context, survey researchers must ask respondents for their perceptions of each candidate’s chances in the election. Aggregate analysis is possible, but the lack of available survey data reduces the opportunities even for aggregate analysis.

Experimental methods may prove valuable in the study of strategic voting. Experiments can overcome some problems with traditional survey analysis. First, it is difficult to foresee conditions that may promote strategic voting long enough ahead of a campaign in order to get the right set of questions on a districtwide or statewide survey. Second, in an experimental context researchers would have enough control over the independent variables to test specific hypotheses about the roles of perceptions of viability, differences in utility, affect toward the least viable candidate, and even the type of news coverage. The main drawback to experimentally manipulating these independent variables is that the subjects may not respond as they would in real life. Since the ideas behind strategic voting essentially deal with risking the personal satisfaction that comes from voting for one’s favorite candidate for the benefit received by electing the most acceptable viable candidate, experimental subjects must feel as if there are consequences
to their actions in the lab. Measures to induce preferences and realism must be used in any experiments on strategic voting. Without taking such precautions, experiments may prove useless.

Finally, it is important to study strategic voting because it gives us unique insights into the decision-making process of the voter. Illustrating that voters take strategy into consideration when casting their votes suggests that voters are rational actors. Two-candidate elections do not present us with this opportunity, although there is potential to study the strategy of abstention in those elections. The empirical study of strategic voting in the United States has been underdeveloped in part because of the effect it produces – the apparent irrelevance of trailing candidates. But as we see time and time again, in elections such as those studied here and even in the 2000 presidential election, the behavior of supporters of third-place and other trailing candidates can have important and lasting effects when an election is close. A greater understanding of the decision-process of these voters will give us valuable insight into the electoral process.
APPENDIX A

FALL 1994 VIRGINIA PENINSULA SURVEY

The following is the text of the first and second waves of the Virginia Peninsula Survey questionnaire. Variables were recoded to perform the analyses in chapters 3, 5, and 6. The data were used with permission from Dr. Ronald B. Rapoport.

WAVE 1

AFTER GETTING CORRECT PERSON ON PHONE: My name is _______________.
I am taking a survey about issues of concern to citizens of Virginia as part of a class project at William and Mary. This survey will take about 10 minutes of your time.

Q1. First, how closely have you been following the U.S. Senate campaign this year--very closely, fairly closely, or not too closely?


Q2. As you know, the candidates for the U.S. Senate are Democrat Charles Robb, Republican Oliver North, independent Douglas Wilder, and independent Marshall Coleman. Regardless of which candidate you support, how would you rate Charles Robb's chances of winning the election--excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor?

Q2a. What about Oliver North, how would you rate his chances of winning the election?
Q2b. What about Douglas Wider? How would you rate his chances?
Q2c. And Marshall Coleman? How would you rate his chances in the Senate race?
Q3. Have you read about or seen any polls on the U.S. Senate race in the newspaper or on television?
   1. Yes  2. No
   GO TO Q3A  GO TO Q 4
Q3A. IF YES: How closely have you been following the polls on the U.S. Senate race--very closely, fairly closely, or not too closely?
Q4. In the 1992 presidential election, did you vote for the Democratic candidate, Bill Clinton, the Republican candidate, George Bush, or the independent candidate, Ross Perot?
Q5. If the U.S. Senate election were being held today, would you vote for the Democratic candidate, Charles Robb, the Republican candidate, Oliver North, independent candidate Douglas Wilder, independent candidate Marshall Coleman, or do you think that you may not vote in this year's Senate election?
Q5a. IF UNDECIDED OR MAY NOT VOTE: Right now, are you leaning toward Robb, North, Wilder, or Coleman?


Q5b. IF PREFERENCE EXPRESSED: How certain do you feel about your choice--very certain, fairly certain, or not too certain?


Q6. Who would be your second choice in the U.S. Senate election--Charles Robb, Oliver North, Douglas Wilder, or Marshall Coleman?


Q7. How would you rate the job that Bill Clinton is doing as President--excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor?


Now I'm going to ask you about some issues in this year's election. Please tell me whether you strongly favor, mildly favor, mildly oppose, or strongly oppose each of these proposals:

Q8a. Increased government regulation of guns. Do you strongly for increased government regulation of guns, do you mildly favor it, do you mildly oppose it or do you strongly oppose increased government regulation of guns?

Q8b. What about a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or danger to the mother's life. Do you strongly favor, mildly favor, mildly oppose or strongly oppose it?


Q8c. A government-sponsored universal health care plan?


Q8d. Across-the-board cuts in all government programs in order to reduce the federal budget deficit?


Q9a. We'd like to know what percentage of the statewide vote you think each candidate will receive in this year's U.S. Senate election. First, what percentage of the vote do you think Charles Robb will receive?_________

Q9b. What about Oliver North? What percentage of the vote do you think he will receive?_________

Q9c. Douglas Wilder?_________

Q9d. And finally Marshall Coleman?_________

Now I'd like to get your opinion about some political figures. After I read each name, just tell me whether your opinion of that person is very favorable, somewhat favorable, neither favorable nor unfavorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable.

Q10a. First, Bill Clinton


Q10b. Ross Perot

Q10c. George Allen, Jr.
Q10d. John Warner
Q10e. Pat Robertson
Q10f. Robert Dole
Q10g. Charles Robb
Q10h. Oliver North
Q10i. Douglas Wilder
Q10j. Marshall Coleman
Q10k. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, or an independent?
Q11. Would you describe your own political views as very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?
1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK
Q12. Now I'd like to ask you about the political views of each of the U.S. Senate candidates. I'd like to know whether you would describe a candidate as very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative? First, how about Charles Robb?

a. 1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK
b. Oliver North
   1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK
c. Douglas Wilder
   1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK
d. Marshall Coleman
   1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK

Q13. How often can you trust the government in Washington to do what's right--just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or hardly ever?


Q14. Compared with a year ago, are you and your family doing better financially, about the same, or worse?


Q15. And compared with a year ago, do you think that the nation's economy as a whole is doing better, about the same, or worse?


Q16. Are you white, black, or some other race?

1. White  2. Black  3. Other

Q17. What was the last year of school that you completed?

Q18. What is your religious preference--Baptist, other Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, something else, or none?


Q19. Would you describe yourself as very religious, fairly religious, not very religious, or not at all religious?


(IF BAPTIST, PROTESTANT, OR CATHOLIC in Q18) Which of the following terms, if any, would you use to describe your own religious beliefs. Are you a born-again Christian?

Q20a. 1. Yes  2. No  3. NA

An Evangelical Christian

Q20b. 1. Yes  2. No  3. NA

A Fundamentalist Christian

Q20c. 1. Yes  2. No  3. NA

Q21. What would you estimate your combined family income will be this year before taxes are taken out--under $20,000, between 20 and $40,000, between 40 and $60,000, between 60 and $80,000, over $80,000?

1. -20  2. 20-40  3. 40-60  4. 60-80  5. 80+  6. Refused

Q22. RESPONDENT'S SEX (DO NOT ASK):

1. Male  2. Female

WAVE 2
AFTER GETTING CORRECT PERSON ON PHONE: My name is _______________.

I am taking a survey about issues of concern to citizens of Virginia as part of a class project at William and Mary. As you may recall, we contacted you at the beginning of the campaign. As part of our class project we are reinterviewing respondents at the conclusion of the campaign. We very much appreciate your cooperation. This survey, which will take less than 10 minutes, concludes our study.

Q1. First, how closely have you been following the U.S. Senate campaign this year--very closely, fairly closely, or not too closely?

Q2. As you know, the candidates for the U.S. Senate are Democrat Charles Robb, Republican Oliver North, independent Douglas Wilder, and independent Marshall Coleman. Regardless of which candidate you support, how would you rate Charles Robb's chances of winning the election--excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor?

Q2a. What about Oliver North, how would you rate his chances of winning the election?

Q2b. What about Douglas Wilder? How would you rate his chances?

Q2c. And Marshall Coleman? How would you rate his chances in the Senate race?
Q3. Have you read about or seen any polls on the U.S. Senate race in the newspaper or on television?
   1. Yes      2. No
   GO TO Q3A   GO TO Q 4

Q3A. IF YES: How closely have you been following the polls on the U.S. Senate race--very closely, fairly closely, or not too closely?

Q4. In the 1992 presidential election, did you vote for the Democratic candidate, Bill Clinton, the Republican candidate, George Bush, or the independent candidate, Ross Perot?

Q5. If the U.S. Senate election were being held today, would you vote for the Democratic candidate, Charles Robb, the Republican candidate, Oliver North, independent candidate Douglas Wilder, independent candidate Marshall Coleman, or do you think that you may not vote in this year's Senate election?
   IF 1,2,3,4 GO TO 5b  IF 5, 6 GO TO 5a

Q5a. IF UNDECIDED OR MAY NOT VOTE: Right now, are you leaning toward Robb, North, Wilder, or Coleman?
   IF 1,2,3,4 GO TO 6  IF 5,6 GO TO 7

Q5b. IF PREFERENCE EXPRESSED: How certain do you feel about your choice--very certain, fairly certain, or not too certain?

Q6. Who would be your second choice in the U.S. Senate election--Charles Robb, Oliver North, Douglas Wilder, or Marshall Coleman?


Q7. How would you rate the job that Bill Clinton is doing as President--excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor?


Now I'm going to ask you about some issues in this year's election. Please tell me whether you strongly favor, mildly favor, mildly oppose, or strongly oppose each of these proposals:

Q8a. Increased government regulation of guns. Do you strongly favor increased government regulation of guns, do you mildly favor it, do you mildly oppose it or do you strongly oppose increased government regulation of guns?


Q8b. What about a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or danger to the mother's life. Do you strongly favor, mildly favor, mildly oppose or strongly oppose it?


Q8c. A government-sponsored universal health care plan?


Q8d. Across-the-board cuts in all government programs in order to reduce the federal budget deficit?

Q9a. We'd like to know what percentage of the statewide vote you think each candidate will receive in this year's U.S. Senate election. First, what percentage of the vote do you think Charles Robb will receive?___________

Q9b. What about Oliver North? What percentage of the vote do you think he will receive?___________

Q9c. Douglas Wilder?___________

Q9d. And finally Marshall Coleman?___________

Now I'd like to get your opinion about some political figures. After I read each name, just tell me whether your opinion of that person is very favorable, somewhat favorable, neither favorable nor unfavorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable.

Q10a. First, Bill Clinton

Q10b. Ross Perot

Q10c. George Allen, Jr.

Q10d. John Warner

Q10e. Pat Robertson

Q10f. Robert Dole

Q10g. Charles Robb

Q10h. Oliver North


Q10i. Douglas Wilder


Q10j. Marshall Coleman


Q10k. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, or an independent?


Q11. Would you describe your own political views as very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK

Q12. Now I'd like to ask you about the political views of each of the U.S. Senate candidates. I'd like to know whether you would describe a candidate as very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative? First, how about Charles Robb?

a. 1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK

b. Oliver North

1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK

c. Douglas Wilder

1. VL  2. SL  3. MOR  4. SC  5. VC  6. DK

d. Marshall Coleman
Q13. How often can you trust the government in Washington to do what's right--just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or hardly ever?

1. Always  
2. Most of time  
3. Some  
4. Hardly ever  
5. Never (vol)  
6. DK

Q14. Compared with a year ago, are you and your family doing better financially, about the same, or worse?

1. Better  
2. Same  
3. Worse  
4. DK

Q15. And compared with a year ago, do you think that the nation's economy as a whole is doing better, about the same, or worse?

1. Better  
2. Same  
3. Worse  
4. DK

Q16. Are you white, black, or some other race?

1. White  
2. Black  
3. Other

Q17. What was the last year of school that you completed?

1. < HS grad  
2. HS Grad  
3. Some coll  
4. Coll Grad  
5. >Col Grad

Q18. What is your religious preference--Baptist, other Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, something else, or none?

1. Baptist  
2. Protestant  
3. Catholic  
4. Jewish  
5. Other  
6. None

Q19. Would you describe yourself as very religious, fairly religious, not very religious, or not at all religious?

1. Very  
2. Fairly  
3. Not very  
4. Not at all  
5. DK

(IF BAPTIST, PROTESTANT, OR CATHOLIC in Q18) Which of the following terms, if any, would you use to describe your own religious beliefs. Are you a born-again Christian?
Q20a.  1. Yes   2. No   3. NA

An Evangelical Christian

Q20b.  1. Yes   2. No   3. NA

A Fundamentalist Christian

Q20c.  1. Yes   2. No   3. NA

Q21. What would you estimate your combined family income will be this year before
taxes are taken out--under $20,000, between 20 and $40,000, between 40 and $60,000,
between 60 and $80,000, or over $80,000?

1. -20  2. 20-40  3. 40-60  4. 60-80  5. 80+  6. Refused

Q22. RESPONDENT'S SEX (DO NOT ASK):

1. Male  2. Female
APPENDIX B

FALL 1998 ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY

The following is the text of the first and second waves of the Virginia Peninsula Survey questionnaire. Variables were recoded to perform the analysis in chapters 3. The data were used with permission from Dr. Steven Frank.

Hello, my name is ______________ (YOUR NAME) at St. Cloud State University. I am calling from our survey research center in St. Cloud. We are conducting a study of Minnesota residents about their views on issues such as drinking and driving and some government related issues. We are not asking for contributions or trying to sell you anything. Your telephone number was drawn by a computer in a random sample of the state.

It is important that we interview a man in some households and a woman in others so that the results will truly represent all the people in your state. According to the method used by our university, I need to interview the ________________________

May I speak with that person?

1. oldest male 18 years of age or older who lives in your household
2. youngest male 18 years of age or older who lives in your household
3. oldest female 18 years of age or older who lives in your household
4. youngest female 18 years of age or older who lives in your household

Before starting the roughly five minute survey, I want to mention that I would be happy to answer any questions about the study either now or later. Also, this interview is completely voluntary. If we should come to any question, which you don't want to answer, just let me know and we'll go on to the next question.

01.) Let us begin by asking, do you think things in the state of Minnesota are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?


02.) What do you think is the single most important problem facing the State of Minnesota today?

[Probe for One Specific Response]

01. Abortion  15 Religious Issue
02. Ag-general  16.politics/politicians
03. Ag- Prob /Farmers  17. Poverty/poor
05. Candidate Character  19. Sports Issues
06. Crimes/gangs/viol  20. Taxes
07. Drugs  21. Welfare
08. Econ. Issues (Jobs-wages, Etc)
09. Education  22. Other
10. Environmental Issues  23. No Problem Facing State
11 Family Issues  24 Don't Know
12. Gambling

13. Issues Relating to Indians

25. Refused Skip to Ques- 4

14. Moral Issues (Values)

03.) [For Those Who Gave a Response in Question 3]-

Which political party, if any, do you think can do a better job of handling the problem you have just mentioned-the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?


5. Neither  8. Don't Know  9. Refused

04.) Thank you. The next question I would like to ask concerns farm animal feedlots. Do you think the feedlot issue is a very important issue facing the state of Minnesota, a somewhat important issue, an issue of little importance or not an important issue facing our state today.


5.) Changing the subject to that of volunteer activities. How many hours have you personally volunteered to a recognized service organization, such as Boy Scouts, little league coaching, Catholic charities, etc., in the past month?

# of hours

998. Don't Know

999. Refused

6. How many hours in the past month have you volunteered in an informal manner, by that I mean not just belonging to a recognized service organization, but
actually working in some way to help others for no pay such as helping family members or friends in need?

998. Don't Know

999. Refused.

7.) How much money did you donate to charities last year? (1997)

99997. More than $10,000

99998. Don't Know

99999. Refused

8.) Thank you. The current illegal limit at which your drivers license will be automatically revoked in Minnesota is .10 Blood Alcohol Concentration level. Do you think the limit should be: raised, lowered or stay the same?


9.) Would you support a change in Minnesota's state law to provide for stricter criminal and civil penalties for adults who knowingly provide alcohol to those under 21?


10.) Would you support changes in state laws that would mandate compliance checks on all licensed alcohol beverage servers to ensure compliance with minimum age drinking and sales laws in Minnesota?


11.) Would you support tougher penalties for repeat drunken drivers which would prohibit repeat offenders from plea bargaining their sentence and forcing Minnesota courts to give the full legal punishment that is possible to repeat offenders?
1. Yes  
5. No  
8. Don't Know  
9. Refused  

12.) Thank you. When voting for your representative in Congress or the Minnesota state legislature, please tell me how important a candidate's stand on each of the following issues would be to you personally. First, will a candidate's stand on environmental issues be very important somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important when deciding whom to vote for?

Environmental issues

1. Very Important  
2. Somewhat Important  
3. Not Too Important  
4. Not at All Important  
8. Don't Know  
9. Refused

When voting for your representative in Congress or the Minnesota state legislature, please tell me how important a candidate's stand on each of the following issues would be to you personally. First, will a candidate's stand on abortion be very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important when deciding whom to vote for?

13) Abortion

1 Very Important  
2. Somewhat Important  
3. Not Too Important  
4. Not at All Important  
8. Don't Know  
9. Refused

When voting for your representative in Congress or the Minnesota state legislature, please tell me how important a candidate's stand on each of the following issues would be to you personally. First, will a candidate's stand on crime be very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important when deciding whom to vote for?

14.) Crime

When voting for your representative in Congress or the Minnesota state legislature, please tell me how important a candidate's stand on each of the following issues would be to you personally. First, will a candidate's stand on gun control be very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important when deciding whom to vote for?

15.) Gun control

Now I'm going to list several issues and I would like you to imagine that your views on an issue may be in a minority compared to those of people you associate with such as friends, neighbors and coworkers. Let us start with your views on CRIME LAWS. If you thought your views on CRIME LAWS were in a minority compared to those you associate with would you openly tell others of your views, keep your views but just be quiet about them or perhaps modify your views to fit those of people you associate with.


17) Your views on education. If you thought your views were in a minority compared to those you associate with would you openly tell others of your views, keep your views but just be quiet about them or perhaps modify your views to fit those of people you associate with.
18.) Your views on abortion. If you thought your views were in a minority compared to those you associate with would you openly tell others of your views, keep your views but just be quiet about them or perhaps modify your views to fit those of people you associate with.


19.) Your views on gun control. If you thought your views were in a minority compared to those you associate with would you openly tell others of your views, keep your views but just be quiet about them or perhaps modify your views to fit those of people you associate with.


20.) Your views on homosexuality. If you thought your views were in a minority compared to those you associate with would you openly tell others of your views, keep your views but just be quiet about them or perhaps modify your views to fit those of people you associate with.


21.) Next, we would like you to share your views on a different topic. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that there should be a law forbidding the possession of handguns except by police and other authorized persons?


22.) Would you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose a national seven day waiting period before a handgun can be purchased in order to give authorities
time to check to see if the prospective owner has a criminal record or been in a mental institution?

9. Refused

23.) Have you ever written a letter to a public official expressing your views on gun ownership, joined an organization, or given money to an organization concerned with this issue? [IF YES]-What have you done?

01. Joined an Organization  02. Joined Organization & Written Letter Ask Ext Question-
03. Joined Organization & Given Money  04. Joined Organization, Letter & Money
05. Written Letter  06. Given Money Skip to Question-26
07. Written Letter & Given Money  08. No-not Done Anything
09. Don't Know  10. Refused

24.) [FOR THOSE WHO JOINED A GUN RELATED ORGANIZATION] Could you please tell me the name of the group?

1. National Rifle Association
2. Other Anti Gun Control Group-list Name _____________
3. Handgun Control
4. Other Pro Control Gun--list Name of Group]-__________
8. Don't Know
9. Refused
25.) Within the past several months, have you received any information from that organization containing information about political issues or candidates?


26.) Next, let's turn to some questions concerning abortion. Would you please tell me if you think Minnesota law should:

(1) never allow a woman to have an abortion;

(2) or, the law should permit abortion only in cases of rape, incest or when the woman's life is in danger;

(3) or, the law should allow a women to have a legal abortion in circumstances other than rape, incest or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established;

(4) or, the law should allow a woman to have an abortion as a matter of personal choice?

1. Never  2. Some-rape, Etc.  3. Some+other If Clearly Established.

4. Personal Choice  5. Other -Volunteered  8. Don't Know

9. Refused

27) Have you ever written a letter to a public official expressing your views on abortion, joined an organization, or given money to an organization concerned with this issue? [IF YES]-What have you done?

01. Joined an Organization

02. Joined Organization & Written Letter Ask next Question-

03. Joined Organization & Given Money

04. Joined Organization, Letter & Money

05. Written Letter
06. Given Money Skip to Question

07. Written Letter & Given Money

08. No-not Done Anything

09. Don't Know

10. Refused

28.) [For Those Who Joined an Abortion Organization]

Could you please tell me the name of the group?


Pro-abortion Group-list       8. Don't Know       9. Refused

29.) Within the past several months, have you received any information from that organization containing information about political issues or candidates?


30.) Now lets switch to some questions about Congress and the Minnesota State Legislature. Again, I want to thank you for your participation in this survey. If the election for the U.S. Congress were being held today and you could choose between a Democrat, a Republican and a candidate who belonged to neither political party-do you think you would vote for the Democrat candidate for Congress in your district, the Republican candidate, or the candidate who belonged to neither party?


31.) Here's a different issue. Under Minnesota law, individuals are limited in the amount they can contribute to candidates for state office. For example, an individual can
contribute not more than $2,000 to candidates for governor in 1998. Contributions to political parties are not limited. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree that campaign contribution limits on individuals are important to preventing corruption of public officials?

8. Don't Know  9. Refused

32.) Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree that candidates and parties in Minnesota get around these contribution limits on individuals by soliciting contributions for the political party of the candidate?

8. Don't Know  9. Refused

33.) Most, if not all candidates for Minnesota public office agree to limit their campaign spending in exchange for a public subsidy for their campaign. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree that campaign spending limits are important to preventing corruption of Minnesota public officials?

8. Don't Know  9. Refused

34.) Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree that candidates in Minnesota get around spending limits by having political parties spend money on their behalf?

8. Don't Know  9. Refused
35.) Thank you. Looking ahead to next November's election in which all members of the Minnesota state house of representatives will be elected, which of the following would you like to see happen - the Republicans gain control of the Minnesota state legislature, the Democrats maintain control of the house; or haven't you thought much about this issue


36 ) Here is a different kind of question. Please think of a thermometer that has a range of 0 to 100 degrees. I'd like you to rate your feelings toward some of our political leaders and other people who are in the news. Ratings on the thermometer between 50 and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the person. Ratings between 0 and 50 mean that you do not feel too favorable toward the person. If we come to a person whose name you don't recognize, you don't need to rate that person. Just tell me and we will move on to the next one. If you do recognize the name, but do not feel particularly warm or cold toward the person, you would rate the person at the 50-degree mark.

36.) Bill Clinton
777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

37.) Rod Grams
777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

38) Paul Wellstone
777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

39. )Arnie Carlson

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777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

40.) Al Gore

777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

41.) Jesse Ventura

777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

42.) Newt Gingrich

777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

43.) Norm Coleman

777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

44.) Ken Starr

777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

45.) Hubert H. Humphrey III

777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

46.) Hillary Clinton

777. Can’t Judge.  888. Don’t Know  999. Refused

47) Do you usually consider yourself to be a Democrat, Republican or independent?—[If Democrat or Republican] Would you say that you always vote Democrat/Republican) or do you sometimes vote for a person of the other party? [If Independent]—Although you are an independent, do you usually consider yourself to be closer to the Democrats or the Republicans?

01. Always Votes Democratic  02. Democrat Who Sometimes Votes for Other Party
03. Independent Closer to Democrats  04. Independent

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48.) If the November, 1998 election for Governor of Minnesota were being held today would you vote for Hubert H. Humphrey III - the Democratic candidate; Norm Coleman-the Republican candidate; or Jesse Ventura, the Reform Party candidate? [If Not Sure]- Although you are not sure, would you say at this time you lean more toward Ventura, Coleman or Humphrey?

01. Definitely Ventura  02. Leaning Ventura  03. Definitely Coleman.
04. Leaning Coleman  05. Definitely Humphrey  06. Leaning Humphrey
07. Other  08. Won't Vote  09. Don't Know  10. Refused

Why are you going to vote for this person.

[Probe-do Not Read-select All That Apply]

12. Like His Character  22. Environment Pos.
15. Not a Typical Candidate  25. Other-list
16. Good Track Record  26. Don't Know
17. No Particular Reason  27. Refused
18. Abortion Position  28. No Other Response
50.) Are you presently registered to vote or do you plan to register to vote in the area in which you are now living?

51.) Did you get a chance to vote in the 1996 election for President between Bob Dole, Bill Clinton and Ross Perot?
1. Yes 2. No -[But Had Good Reason Such as Not 18 Years Old-ill-out of Country]
5. No 8. Don't Know 9. Refused

Next month there will be elections for Governor, members of the U.S. House of Representatives, and state representatives for the Minnesota legislature. What are the chances of your voting in the election-are you almost certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50-50, or don't you think you will vote?

53.) The following questions are primarily for statistical analysis and to help us determine if we are getting a random sample. You don't have to answer all the questions but it will help us if you do. What age group are you? Are you...
[Read Categories-as Necessary]
1. 18-24 3. 35-44 5. 55-65 8. Don't Know
2. 25-34 4. 45-54 6. 65+ 9. Refused

54.) Are you working now, temporarily laid off, unemployed, retired, a household manager, a student or what? [If More than One] What do you consider yourself primarily?
6. Household Manager       7. Student       9. Refused

55.) What...if any...is your religious preference? [If Don't Know/No Response]--

Well are you closer to being Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Presbyterian, or something else?

01. Catholic        02. Baptist          03. Lutheran           04. Presbyterian     05. Methodist
06. Episcopalian          07. Other Chris.(Mormon, Jeh. Wit. ,Etc.)     08. Jewish
09. None 10. Other Skip   11. Don't Know   12. Refused

If Ans=1-7  56.) Would you call yourself a born again Christian, that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?


57.) Would you please tell me the range which best represents the total income, before taxes, of all immediate family living in your household? [Read List until Stopped If Necessary]

01. under $10,000 05. $25-30 thousand
02. $10-15 thousand 06. $30-40 thousand
03. $15-20 thousand 07. $40-$50 thousand
04. $20-$25 thousand 08. $50-$100,000 thousand
09. $100,000+ 10. Don't Know 11. Refused

58.) Thinking about your own general approach to politics, do you consider yourself to be very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative

5. Very Conservative     8. Don't Know       9. Refused
I would like to thank you very much for your time and cooperation. You have been very helpful. If you would like to see the results of this survey you may contact Drs. Steve Frank or Steven Wagner at St. Cloud State University. Would you like their number?
In this Appendix, I present questions that should be asked in surveys during multicandidate elections in order to analyze strategic voting. In addition to the questions used in this dissertation, I suggest additional questions that were not available to me when analyzing the data from the Virginia and Minnesota surveys.

**Strategic Variables**

To properly capture the strategic nature of the decision, the researcher must know the respondents’ perceptions of the closeness of the race, their preference ratings and rankings of the candidates, and their perceptions of the last-place candidate’s chances of winning. To measure the closeness of the race, survey researchers should ask respondents what percent of the vote they believe each candidate will receive. To construct a closeness measure, one can follow the steps outlined in chapter 4. These questions would take care of the closeness variable and the last-place candidate’s percent of the vote.

Feeling thermometers should be used to measure the respondents’ ratings of the candidates. Feeling thermometers would be preferable to questions with smaller response scales because they come closest to being interval-level variables. The feeling
thermometers can be used to limit the analysis to those who prefer the last-place candidate. They can also be used to compute the measure of utility difference, by taking the absolute value of the difference of the feeling thermometer ratings of the two frontrunning candidates.

**Issues**

When designing questionnaires to use in an analysis of strategic voting, the researcher should be aware of potentially polarizing issues that may be related to the vote. For example, in chapter 6, I showed that the average Coleman’s supporter’s position on abortion was related to whether they voted sincerely for Coleman or strategically for Robb or North. The ability to control for positions on such issues will allow the researcher to make stronger claims about strategic voting if the strategic variables remain significant. Alternatively, if the strategic variables are no longer significant when important issues are included in the model, then perhaps the voters were not paying attention to strategy and were instead voting for or against the third-place candidate because of an important public policy issue.

**Partisanship and Ideology**

Partisanship, ideology, and strength of partisanship should be included in surveys when strategic voting in three-candidate races is being assessed. While partisanship and ideology were not related to strategic voting in the 1994 Virginia election, they may be related to votes for a third-place candidate in other elections. Partisanship should be significant when the last-place candidate is a nominee of a political party, especially if that party is one of the two major U.S. parties. Ideology may be significant in an election where the last-place candidate is an ideological extremist, instead of a centrist, as was the
case in Virginia. Strength of partisanship may also be important in strategic voting, as those voters who prefer the last-place candidate, but are also strong partisans, should be more likely to vote strategically than independents or weak partisans. A strength of partisanship measure was not available for the analysis presented in this dissertation, but might have been significant if it were available.

**Demographics**

Gender, race, and socio-economic variables should also be included in surveys that try to assess the degree of strategic voting in multicandidate elections. While demographic variables were not related to strategic voting in the 1994 Virginia election, there may be important relationships in other elections. For example, if the last-place candidate were a member of a racial minority, one might find the race of that candidate’s supporters to be related to their decisions to vote for their most preferred candidate or for a different candidate. Age has been shown to be related to strength of partisanship, since voters become more tied to their political party as they grow older. Younger voters are more likely to be independents, and therefore might be more likely to vote sincerely if the last-place candidate is also an independent or third-party candidate. Income, occupation, union membership, and education may also be related to voting for the last-place candidate, depending on the context of the election and the nature of the candidates.

**Political Awareness**

Survey researchers should include questions measuring political awareness, knowledge, attentiveness, or interest when studying strategic voting. In lower profile elections, the amount the respondent knows about the candidates and the campaign may well be related to his or her likelihood of voting strategically. For example, in a local
campaign, reports of public polls may be infrequent or even nonexistent. The more aware voters may be more sure of their estimates of the candidates’ shares of the vote than voters who have not paid much attention to the campaign. Predictions of strategic behavior may be more accurate for voters with high levels of knowledge than for voters who are not well aware of the candidates or their chances of winning.
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