



Institute for Policy Research
Northwestern University
Working Paper Series

WP-07-11

**Going Negative in a New Media Age:
Congressional Campaign Websites, 2002-2006**

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Version: May 3, 2007

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Abstract

Few topics have received more attention in recent years than negative campaigning. The bulk of this work focuses on the effects of negative campaigns and/or the normative consequences. We address a more basic question: when do Congressional candidates go negative in the first place? Our approach differs from the few works that systematically explore the determinants of negative campaigning in three notable ways. First, we offer a new theory that specifies conditions under which we expect candidates to go negative against their opponents. Second, we test our predictions using a novel data set based on more than 730 candidate websites, over three election cycles. This means we use non-mediated communication (e.g., compared to news reports) and we have an unbiased sample of campaigns (i.e., we are not limited to competitive races that happen to produce television advertisements). We also offer insight into campaigning on this new medium. Third, we extend prior work by distinguishing issue negativity from personal attacks, and by exploring alternative types of negativity such as negativity toward the parties and the president. We find that campaign specific variables, particularly competition, drive negativity towards opponents, but other more partisan forces lead to alternative types of negativity. We discuss the implications for an understanding of campaign strategy, methodologies of studying campaigns, and studying public opinion formation.

The foundation of virtually all conceptions of democratic government is the occurrence of free and fair elections, and citizens' participation in the electoral process. Elections serve as the mechanism through which the populace chooses their representatives. As such, they serve as the key linkage between the governed and their governors. How elections actually occur depends in fundamental ways on candidates' campaigns. Understanding the conduct of electoral campaigns is, thus, essential for those interested in how democracies function.

An enduring feature of American campaigns is the tendency for candidates to "go negative" by criticizing their opponent's issue positions or personal characteristics. As Mark (2006: 19) explains, "The nation's earliest political campaigns provided a roadmap for the tough rhetoric [that followed]." Scholars, pundits, and citizens regularly debate the effects of negative campaigns on voters as well as their normative consequences. Indeed, over the last decade, few topics have received more attention from political communication researchers (e.g., Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995, Lau, Sigelman, Heldman, and Babbitt 1999, Broder 2002, Kahn and Kenney 2004, Lau and Pomper 2004, Geer 2006). Yet, a notable gap in our understanding of negative campaigning remains.

Specifically, with a few exceptions (e.g., Kahn and Kenney 2004, Lau and Pomper 2004), this work ignores the questions of why and when candidates go negative in the first place.¹ In this paper, we explore the determinants of negative campaigning in congressional elections. By so doing, we offer insight into the electoral conditions that promote or inhibit negativity. We also contribute to analysts' efforts to predict and explain candidate behavior, and we move scholarship closer to developing a more

¹ As intimated, it instead focuses on the impact of negative campaigning on voters (e.g., Lau et al. 1999), variations in the content of negative and positive campaigning (e.g., Geer 2006), and/or normative implications.

comprehensive understanding of campaign behavior – a research area that continues to be relatively under-developed (e.g., Riker 1996, Druckman, Jacobs and Ostermeier 2004).

We begin in the next section by offering a new theory of negativity from which we derive expectations. We then describe our approach to testing our hypotheses, including the many advantages of our reliance on a novel data set drawn from more than 730 candidate websites. We also discuss some unique features of candidate websites that may affect their behaviors. Next, we turn to the details of our data collection and measurement, and we present our analyses. We conclude with a discussion of our findings and suggestions for next steps. Our study offers one of the most comprehensive investigations into negative campaigning, and also provides new insights into how candidates use the World Wide Web.

Why Candidates Go Negative

We develop a new theory of going negative. We initially present a general theory without reference to media (i.e., the web) but later will consider web-specific incentives. Our theory begins, as campaigns presumably do, with a consideration of voters' behavior.² First, voters, particularly in congressional elections, tend to display a status quo bias – that is, all else constant (e.g., controlling for partisanship), voters opt for the incumbent candidate. This bias reflects a general preference for the status quo evident in many decisions (Samuelson and Zeckhauser 1988, Cobb and Kuklinski 1997: 90-91), and/or the well-documented incumbent advantages that come from familiarity (e.g., name

² By developing our hypotheses about campaign strategies based on voters' information processing, we hope to take a step towards overcoming McGraw's (2003: 395) lament that "the two topics – how citizens think about politicians and the strategic attempts by politicians to influence those perceptions – occupy separate shelves in our offices and separate chapters in scholarly treatments. Cross-fertilization between the two literatures is rare. As a consequence, the manifest empirical links between the two processes are few and far between." She (2003: 420) continues that "Political impressions are cognitive structures consisting of beliefs and inferences that also include overall affective evaluations that are differentially responsive to positive and negative information... The impression management strategies adopted by politicians are rooted in strategic calculations... the politician's cognitive perceptions of his or her constituents, and their preferences, certainly must play a role in how impression management strategies are selected and presented."

recognition, more media coverage) and the provision of perks while in office (e.g., via casework) (Jacobson 1992).

Second, depending on electoral conditions, voters employ alternative strategies when arriving at their decisions. Of particular note, voters can compare candidates against one another across various dimensions, for example, assessing which candidate possesses preferable foreign policy positions, leadership qualities, partisanship, positions on abortion, and so on. This approach, known as compensatory decision-making, requires a non-trivial amount of processing and thus more likely occurs when voters are motivated to choose the “best” alternative, regardless of cognitive demands. Motivation, in turn, increases with the perceived importance of decisions, anxiety about the decision, and the novelty of the choice (e.g., Svenson 1979, Payne, Bettman, and Johnson 1993, Lau 1995, 2003, Lau and Redlawsk 2006: 45). In other situations, less motivated voters rely on less cognitively demanding (and often less accurate) non-compensatory strategies where there is no comparison between candidates (Lau 2003: 36, Lau and Redlawsk 2006: 272). Instead, voters turn to simple cues such as opting for the most familiar option (e.g., the status quo incumbent) or the most popular or viable choice (e.g., the front-runner) (see Lau and Redlawsk 2006: 28; also see Bartels 1988).³

Voters will vary, based on individual differences, in the type of decision-making strategy they pursue. However, a third premise from which we will build is that the electoral context can influence one’s decision-making approach. As a race becomes more competitive, more voters will put forth the effort to employ compensatory strategies. In close races, voters will view their decision as more important (e.g., consistent with evidence of increased turnout in competitive elections), more novel (e.g., as the typical congressional election is not particularly competitive), and they are more

³ A common strategy here is for voters to satisfice such that they choose the first alternative (e.g., candidate) that is “acceptable.” Of course, partisanship sometimes serves as a cue as well.

likely to be anxious about the outcome (e.g., due to uncertainty). As mentioned, each of these factors promotes compensatory decision-making. Moreover, a competitive campaign, almost by definition, will produce an increasing amount of conflicting information about candidates, and such competitive environments have been shown to stimulate more deliberate processing (e.g., Kuklinski, Quirk, Jerit, and Rich 2001, Druckman 2004, Chong and Druckman 2007). There will be more non-compensatory decision-making in non-competitive races (all else constant).⁴

Finally, voters process negative information differently from positive information. Voters pay more attention to negative information (e.g., Lau 1982, 1985, Ito, Larsen, Smith, and Cacioppo 1998), and engage in riskier behavior when presented with negative information (e.g., Tversky and Kahneman 1987). Also, negative information in the guise of criticisms could cause voters to get anxious or fearful (of potentially bad outcomes), which in turn, stimulates voters to seek out more information (e.g., Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000, Brader 2006).

From these four premises, we derive predictions about which congressional candidates are more likely to go negative. (We do not mean to suggest that candidates think of voters and information in these specific terms, such as employing compensatory or non-compensatory strategies. Rather, the important point is that candidates recognize an incumbency bias, that voters will sometimes explicitly compare candidates and other times will not, and that negative information has distinct effects.)

Challengers will be significantly more likely than incumbents to go negative against their opponents, all else constant.

The rationale for this prediction comes from the likelihood that many, if not most, voters will put forth little effort to engage in compensatory decision-making (absent a competitive campaign, as we will shortly discuss). Indeed, a voter is unlikely to believe

⁴ As mentioned, voters also will vary based on individual differences. For example, it may be that stronger partisans are less likely to engage in compensatory decision-making.

his or her vote is particularly important since it will not affect the outcome. As a result, voters will rely on cues that give the incumbent, as the familiar status quo choice, a distinct advantage. Incumbents therefore have little incentive to go negative. They also want to maximize the likelihood voters use these cues rather than stimulating more compensatory decision-making that may come from a more conflictual, competitive information environment. (As we will discuss, when such an environment is unavoidable, their incentives change.)

In contrast, challengers must somehow overcome the status quo bias, and one way to do this is to criticize their opponents. As explained, voters will be more likely to attend to such negative information, will be more likely to engage in risk-seeking behavior (e.g., choose the less familiar challenger), and become anxious and seek out further information. Moreover, by drawing explicit contrasts with the incumbent, which is a typical form of negativity, a challenger can hope to induce voters to compare the candidates more thoroughly, taking a negative view of the incumbent, rather than relying on cues that favor the incumbent. The challenger also must provide voters with a rationale to not go with the status quo.⁵

This is consistent with Kernell's (1977) point that a voter's preference for a challenger arises from opposition to the incumbent more than from support for the challenger. As Lau and Pomper (2004: 32) explain, challengers have no office to lose and often "[b]eating an incumbent is a longshot anyway, and many challengers believe that their only chance is to give the electorate some reason to vote against a sitting incumbent."⁶ Prior analyses largely confirm this expectation, at least for Senatorial

⁵ Moreover, challengers will often have more information on which they can go negative given incumbents have records in office.

⁶ Similarly, Kahn and Kenney (2004: 36) argue that "Citizens are unlikely to abandon a Senator who has represented them for the last six years, at least, not without cause. Challengers need to make a case for why voters should change course and support someone new. They tend to rely on criticisms that blame incumbents for failed policies. They also try to explain to citizens that the incumbents have been corrupted by their ties to the 'Washington Establishment'."

elections (e.g., Kahn and Kenney 2004, Lau and Pomper 2001, 2004). We will explore whether this relationship holds in the presence of a broader distribution of campaigns, over time, once controlling for a full set of explanatory factors.

Front-runners will be significantly less likely than non-front-runners to go negative against their opponents, all else constant.

The logic here is the same as for the incumbent. As mentioned, voters who employ non-compensatory decision-making strategies rely on cues, and another prominent cue is to opt for the most viable candidate (Bartels 1988, Lau and Redlawsk 2006: 28). Front-runners thus have less incentive to encourage voters to engage in more comparative candidate assessments that may occur with explicit contrasts common in negative messages. This predication also comes from Skaperdas and Grofman's (1995) formal theory of negative campaigning (although it has not generally been included in prior empirical analyses).⁷

Members of the minority party in Congress will be significantly more likely than members of the majority party to go negative against their opponents, all else constant.

Members of the minority party also hope to change the overall status quo, and thus, have added incentives to go negative (e.g., Mark 2006: 4). It also is easier to critically link members of the majority party to existing problems in government, particularly in midterm elections when the Congress receives more attributions of responsibility (for extant policy) than the president. Historically, many political parties developed for the express purpose of critiquing and challenging extant governing practices (e.g., Duverger 1954).⁸ Most prior work excludes party variables (e.g., Kahn

⁷ Some prior work suggests that open-seat candidates also may exhibit relatively more negative behavior (e.g., Weaver-Lariscy and Tinkham 1996, Damore 2002, Lau and Pomper 2004). While this is consistent with our theory insofar as there is no incumbency cue in this situation, we expect that once we control for the front-runner and competitiveness (see below), there is no reason to expect open-seat candidates to engage in more negative campaigning.

⁸ Of course, many other parties including those in the United States first developed within the legislature.

and Kenney 2004), with the main exception being Lau and Pomper (2001, 2004) who suggest Republicans in general will go negative more often.⁹

Candidates in competitive races will be significantly more likely than candidates in less competitive races to go negative against their opponents, all else constant.

Competitive races, by their very nature, will promote compensatory decision-making (as explained). This means that the incumbent's cue advantages dissipate and all candidates have an incentive to go negative, since negative information draws attention. Moreover, most negative campaigning involves contrasts between candidates (Goldstein and Freedman 2002: 11), and these contrasts explicitly provide voters' with advice on how to compare the candidates. This prediction is consistent with prior work that explores competition effects (e.g., Hale et al. 1996, Lau and Pomper 2004: 32). A secondary hypothesis, following from our theory, is that *since competition increases the likelihood that all candidates, including incumbents, will go negative, the aforementioned differences between challengers and incumbents may subside* (Kahn and Kenney 1999, 2004).¹⁰

Studying Negative Campaigns on the Web

Nearly all prior negative campaigning studies use data from candidates' television advertisements, interviews with campaign managers, or media campaign coverage. We take a different approach by using a new data set that includes information from a representative sample of over 700 Senate and House candidate websites from 2002, 2004, and 2006.¹¹ While candidate websites may have limited direct influence on voters, given

⁹ Lau and Pomper (2004: 32) predict this dynamic, noting that "This prediction is based on the preferred strategies of Republican consultants, who more often report they would attack their opponents in certain campaign situations (Perloff and Kinsey 1992), and the greater acceptance among Republican voters, compared with Democrats, of attacking the opponent as a campaign strategy."

¹⁰ Kahn and Kenney (2004: 36) argue that "if incumbents appear to have a safe lead in the polls, they tend to avoid using negative messages altogether. . . . They have no incentive to mention the challengers by name when they are well ahead in the pools. However, when incumbents feel challenged, they readily engage in negative campaigning and devote a significant amount of resources to attacking challengers. . . ."

¹¹ A few others have studied online negativity with much smaller samples of candidate websites from particular years (and without looking at a range of explanatory variables) (e.g., Klotz 1998).

that relatively few voters access them, the sites can impact elections by affecting media coverage (e.g., journalists regularly visit the sites), attracting donations, and mobilizing activists.¹² The impact of websites also increases with each election, and thus, our study offers the beginnings of a long term examination of campaigning on this new medium.¹³

Advantages of Using Campaign Websites

Our data possess numerous appealing features. First, the data include a substantial degree of variation in electoral conditions, such as campaigns that widely differ in terms of competitiveness, funds raised, candidates' backgrounds, and constituencies. This differs from limited heterogeneity found in data exclusively from presidential or Senate elections (e.g., Kahn and Kenney 2004, Geer 2006). Moreover, our reliance on websites means we have a more representative sample than used in prior work. For example, only the most competitive campaigns produce television advertisements (Goldstein and Rivlin 2005: 16), and as a result, studies that use only ads cannot generalize beyond highly competitive races (i.e., it is a biased sample; see Simon 2002: 94, Lapinski 2004: 10). This is why there have been few analyses of House campaigns (since House candidates are less likely to produce advertisements). In contrast, virtually all candidates have websites, allowing us to offer a more complete picture of how campaigns work under different conditions.¹⁴

Additionally, candidate websites offer unmediated composites of candidates' campaigns. Candidates can post copious information, in contrast to brief sound bites

¹² As Semiatin (2005: 166-167) explains, "Campaigns use the Internet to attract volunteers, raise money, and advertise. According to Republican Internet consultant Becky Donatelli: 'Today, they [campaigns] are using the Internet as an integral component of all aspects of the campaign – from distributing press releases to coordinating volunteers' efforts, fundraising and online GOTV efforts'."

¹³ Each year, more and more voters turn to candidate websites. Williams (2003: 4) calculates that individual Senate candidate websites, for example, received between 1,000 and 800,000 visits in 2000 while just two years later the number of hits ranged from 6,854 to 1,615,819. Multiplying these visitation statistics with the number of candidate websites that now exist, and noting that website visitors tend to be quite politically active (e.g., Norris 2004), one gets the sense that online campaigns may have notable political influence that is sure to grow.

¹⁴ Williams, Aylesworth, and Chapman (2002: 5) explain that "The question is no longer whether candidates for major office will have a web site, but what the web site will look like and how it will be used."

available in television advertisements.¹⁵ This means that in addition to studying negativity towards opponents, we can investigate alternative attack strategies including negative discussion of the president and parties and negative discussion of policy outcomes.

We complemented our web data with extensive information about the candidates, their districts, and the campaigns. This allows us to move beyond prior work that often focuses on selected independent variables (e.g., Goldstein and Freedman 2002, Kahn and Kenney 2004) to explain the determinants of negative campaigning. Finally, focusing on websites means that we offer one of the few systematic over-time (including midterm and presidential election years) studies into web campaigning.¹⁶

Strategy on the Web

The web is a unique medium that might affect candidate strategy. The most relevant feature for us to consider, given our focus on content (i.e., negativity), is the audience.¹⁷ Candidate websites tend to attract two groups: journalists and politically active supporters (e.g., Ireland and Nash 2001: 14-15; Foot and Schneider 2006, Bimber and Davis 2003: 68-72, 106-107, Cornfield 2004). Candidates therefore use websites to provide information for wider distribution by the media, and to solicit funds and volunteers. Semiatin (2005: 166-167) explains, “Campaigns use the Internet to attract volunteers, raise money, and advertise [to the press]...”

Journalists, for their part, focus on certain types of information; in political campaign settings, confrontation and conflict draw particular attention (e.g., Cappella and

¹⁵ Studies that rely on news reports (e.g., Sigelman and Buell 2003, Lau and Pomper 2004) present a different view since journalists presumably mediate the presentation of the information.

¹⁶ We see ourselves as building on some notable prior scholarship on candidate websites (e.g., Klotz 1998, Davis 1999, Bimber and Davis 2003, Foot and Schneider 2006); however, we are not aware of other studies that offer over-time website data, examine negativity, and incorporate a host of political variables. In this paper, we do not compare website strategies with strategies used in other media (e.g., television ads, direct mail). This is an obvious direction for future research.

¹⁷ There is no reason to expect technological features of the web *per se* to influence strategies of negativity (for discussion, see Druckman et al. 2007).

Jamieson 1997, Price and Tewksbury 1997). This means there is a high likelihood that negative information on a candidate's website, relative to positive information, will make its way into the general news. Since we implicitly assumed a mix of voters in our theoretical discussion, this part of the web audience (i.e., journalists who pass on information from the site) does nothing to change our predictions.

For the audience consisting of engaged supporters, the site serves as a method for soliciting funds and volunteers (Norris 2004, Foot and Schneider 2006: 86, 129-155, Gordon 2006). On-line visitors are substantially more likely to be politically active (e.g., volunteer) and to donate to a campaign (e.g., in 2004, 46% of campaign website visitors had recently donated versus 10% of the general public) (Institute for Politics, Democracy and the Internet 2004). Candidates thus will want to use tactics aimed at motivating giving and volunteering. One of the more noted methods of doing so is to present threatening messages: negativity stimulates activism (for a general review, see Miller et al. 2007). All candidates then have some incentive to go negative, although this *incentive will be particularly acute for campaigns short on resources that may rely to a greater extent on the relatively grassroots approach of the web*. Campaigns with greater resources, in general, presumably will have less need to rely on mobilization via the web.¹⁸

Thus, our one unique web-based expectation concerns a negative relationship between resources and going negative. Counteracting this incentive, however, is the fact that the cost of going negative for many campaigns (particularly incumbents, majority party members, and front-runners) – in terms of potentially causing voters to engage in more compensatory decision-making – may outweigh the mobilizational gains from

¹⁸ Lau and Pomper (2004: 32, 36) suggest that candidates with larger amounts of funds raised ran less negative Senate campaigns.

going negative. This is particularly the case given that the web continues to be a secondary supplementary source of resources (Jones 2006).

Data Collection

We collected our data for each year – 2002, 2004, and 2006 – by first identifying the universe of major party (Democrat and Republican) House and Senate candidates using the *National Journal*, *Congressional Quarterly*, and various state party homepages.¹⁹ We included the universe of Senate candidates and then selected a systematic random sample of approximately 20% of House races, stratified by state and district to ensure regional diversity in the sample. We searched for all of the websites in our sample by following links from the *National Journal*'s website (www.nationaljournal.com) and using search engines such as Google (www.google.com). We were careful to identify only candidates' personal *campaign* websites, excluding official congressional websites and websites sponsored by other groups or individuals. We were able to identify nearly all Senate candidate websites and nearly 95% of House sites in our sample.²⁰ This suggests that while not all candidates had websites, clearly the overwhelming majority did, substantially more than produced advertisements or engaged in public debates (see Foot and Schneider 2006: 7-11). Ultimately, our sample consisted of a total 736 websites with 26% coming from the Senate and 74% coming from the House.

In each year, we assembled a team of content analyzers. All coders participated in a detailed training session that included practice coding before being randomly assigned a set of candidate websites. All coding was conducted in the ten days preceding Election Day, thereby minimizing the extent to which websites might differ from one

¹⁹ We also included independent Bernard Sanders of Vermont who was a 2002 House incumbent and 2006 open seat Senate candidate. We also included incumbent Democrat turned Independent Democrat Joe Lieberman in 2006.

²⁰ In approximately half of the cases where we could not locate a site, the candidate had no opponent and thus presumably engaged in little campaigning. The list of all sites coded is available from the authors.

another due to changes that occur as the election approaches.²¹ To assess the reliability of the coding, we randomly sampled approximately 30% of the websites and had one of two reliability coders code these sites. Specific reliability statistics are available from the authors; in general, we found high levels of reliability, nearly always exceeding the .80 threshold (see Riffe, Lacy, and Fico 1998: 131, Neuendorf 2002: 143).

Negativity Measures

Coders examined the front-page (or homepage), the page(s) devoted to fundraising, the page(s) devoted to issues, the page(s) devoted to biographical information, and any other “major” page (e.g., with a clear link from the front-page).²² We coded various political and technical features of the websites. Most relevant here is our coding of negativity toward the opponent (i.e., going negative); we utilize a dichotomous variable indicating whether a candidate includes material, on any page, about his or her opponent that is negative or critical (in tone or explicitly) (coded as 1) or not (coded as 0).²³ Our approach follows Geer’s (2006: 23) depiction: “negativity is any criticism leveled by one candidate against another during a campaign.” While there is always a subjective element in identifying such negativity, we are confident that we are using a reliable measure – indeed, the reliability of our negativity coding, for each year, exceeded .90 (adjusting for chance agreement).²⁴

²¹ While we observed some changes in websites over those ten days (when we checked), nearly all changes would not have affected our coding (i.e., the changes generally concerned specific details in content, such as specifics of the candidate’s schedule).

²² Ninety-eight percent of the sites coded included multiple pages, and in nearly all cases, the pages consisted of no more than an issues, biography, and fundraising page. We did not have coders follow links to other sites. Our approach made coding a large number of sites feasible; the typical site took approximately one and one-half to two hours to code.

²³ We did not code for the precise location of the negative information (i.e., on which page it appeared).

²⁴ We believe this is the most direct way to evaluate unmediated negativity on the part of the campaign, which is preferable to other approaches that code negativity based on second-hand media or expert accounts (e.g., Kahn 1993, Sigelman and Buell 2003, Kahn and Kenney 2004, Lau and Pomper 2004). We did not code the proportion of negative communication (e.g., Klotz 1998) as it would have provided little variance in most sites which either offered a few (but not an overwhelming number of) negative statements or none.

Coders also characterized the type of negativity that the candidate employed. Specifically, if the site contained any negative information, coders recorded whether the negative information – anywhere on the site – focused exclusively on issues (e.g., “my opponent has a bad record on taxes”), exclusively on the person (e.g., “my opponent is not trustworthy”), focused on both issues and the person (this could be in different locations on the site), or focused on other types of negativity (such as the opponents strategy). (We found very few “other” types.) Others distinguish issue and trait foci in advertisements (e.g. Weaver-Lariscy and Tinkham 1996, Lau and Pomper 2004, Geer 2006, Brooks and Geer 2007: 4); however, we are not aware of any analyses of the determinants of each type of negativity in House and Senate races.

While our theory does not offer direct hypotheses about issue versus personal negativity, we can speculate: insofar as candidates go negative with the hope of affecting voters’ comparative candidate evaluations, they have an incentive to focus (to some extent) on personal traits. McGraw (2003: 398) states, “traits are the central components of ordinary and political impressions... Trait inferences dominate impressions” (also see, e.g., Funk 1999, Druckman and Parkin 2005). Working against this possibility, however, is that candidates may want to avoid being directly linked to personal attacks on their own websites. Also, in his analysis of presidential ads, Geer (2006: 68) reports that very few negative ads include personal content.

We examine one other set of dependent variables. As mentioned, websites offer composites of overall campaign approaches. This means we can explore alternative types of negative communication, that often would not be possible in brief advertisements. We coded for the presence of negativity toward either political party (in the 2006 data), toward President Bush (in 2004 and 2006), toward Vice President Cheney (in 2006), and toward presidential candidate Kerry (in 2004). This contrasts from other work that looks

at linkage strategies (e.g., between a congressional and presidential candidate) (e.g., Goldstein and Rivlin 2005), as we strictly examine going negative against these individuals or groups. We also coded (in all years) sites that included a “warning,” meaning discussion of potentially dire consequences regarding an issue (e.g., “if we do not address global warming, the planet is in grave danger”). We include warnings since it reveals a negative tone on issues, even though it differs from the other items in its lack of a clear target.

We developed our hypotheses with an explicit focus on the opponent; for example, we predicted the candidate’s standing relative to his or her opponent (e.g., as challenger or incumbent, competitiveness) will shape strategy aimed at that opponent. We do not necessarily expect analogous dynamics when it comes to other types of negativity. Prior work all but ignores these different types of negativity, and we see our analyses on this as exploratory.

Measuring the Determinants of Negative Campaigning

Our unit of analysis is the candidate; therefore, we measure explanatory variables that describe the candidate, the campaign, and the district. Unless otherwise noted, our data come from *The Almanac of American Politics* (complemented by the *National Journal’s* website).

We used dichotomous variables to identify challengers, open-seat candidates, and the candidate’s political party (i.e., if the candidate is a Democrat). Recall that we expect more negativity from members of the minority party. For the 2004 and 2006 elections, the Democrats constituted the minority party, with the Republicans controlling both chambers of Congress and the presidency. For the 2002 election, the status of the Senate was murky, with the Democrats becoming the majority party during the term, after Senator Jeffords resigned from the Republican Party. This makes the minority party

ambiguous; since the Republicans continued to control the House and the presidency (and had initially controlled the Senate), we view the Democrats as closer to an opposition party. We include a dichotomous variable, then, that identifies Democrats.

To measure competitiveness, we used the ratings posted on the website of non-partisan political analyst Charlie Cook (www.cookpolitical.com). For both Senate and House races, we coded based on the degree of certainty that the seat would be held by one party over the other, with higher scores indicating increased competitiveness; thus 0 = solid Democratic or Republican; 1 = likely Democratic or Republican; 2 = Leaning Democratic or Republican; 3 = toss up. The Cook scores are a common measure of competitiveness (e.g., Sulkin 2001, Goldstein and Freedman 2002, Xenos and Foot 2005: 16, Foot and Schneider 2006: 173), and have the virtue of being largely exogenous to the race itself (e.g., Gronke 2001: 100-101). We did, however, run all of our analyses using an alternative competitiveness measure – the absolute difference in the vote totals from the winner and loser, with higher scores indicating closer and therefore more competitive races (Jacobson 1992: 33, Sulkin 2005: 91)²⁵ – and the results are virtually the same as those reported below.²⁶

We measure front-runner status by taking the difference between a candidate's support (measured in the proportion of the vote he or she received in the election) and the support for his or her opponent. This variable correlates with our challenger measure and

²⁵ Based on this measure, we rated races as “highly competitive”, “mildly competitive”, or “non-competitive.” A drawback of this measure is the potential endogeneity between the election outcome and campaign practices such as going negative (e.g., negative campaigning by one side may make the election difference smaller). Pre-election polls would be another option (e.g., Kahn and Kenney 1995, Lau and Pomper 2001); however, we could not find a centralized source of polls for congressional races, and in fact, we suspect that polls are not available for many if not most House races.

²⁶ One problem with the Cook measure, however, is that he rates an extraordinary number of seats as “safe” (e.g., nearly 70%). While the bulk of the races he rates as safe are, indeed, uncompetitive, there are some that end up being quite competitive according to the electoral difference measure. Thus, to be as accurate as possible, we coded any race where the margin of victory was smaller than 10% as a 2 (leaning), any race where the margin of victory was between 10% and 19% as a 1 (likely), and all other non-coded races as a 0 (see Jacobson 1992: 33). We compared with alternative coding schemes including simply using Cook's rating of all these races as safe (i.e., 0) and the results are virtually unchanged. (The electoral data came from *The Almanac of American Politics*.)

our competitiveness measure, but it explicitly identifies front-runners. We create three categories of “clear front-runner,” “no clear front-runner,” and “clear trailer” (since our prediction focuses on qualitative distinctions) (also see Skaperdas and Grofman 1995).²⁷

We measure a campaign’s resources by the amount of money each candidate raised (in millions of dollars) as reported by the Federal Election Commission. Recall that we predict that campaigns with fewer resources may be more likely to go negative on the web due to an increased need to raise funds.²⁸

We also include several variables that have been shown to affect campaign behavior in general (even though we do not have specific predictions). We include “District Partisanship” which is the percentage of votes in the district (or state) cast for George W. Bush in 2004 (Lau and Pomper 2004).²⁹ This variable may complement our party variable, with candidates from more partisan Republican (majority party) districts less likely to go negative. We include a variable distinguishing Senate races from House races. This is a novel variable insofar as other work largely ignores House races. We have no clear expectation, although, if anything, Senate races may involve more negativity since they tend to be more competitive and involve better known challengers (perhaps weakening the incumbency cue).

We use a dummy variable to identify women candidates. Kahn and Kenney (2004: 36) predict that “men make use of negative messages more often than women do. Irrespective of the status of the candidate or the closeness of the race, men are more likely to criticize their opponents than are women.” Lau and Pomper (2004: 32-33),

²⁷ Our front-runners won by at least 10% while our trailers lost by at least 10%. Others were in the middle category. As mentioned, pre-election polls would be an alternative approach but they are not generally available.

²⁸ Because the bulk of funds raised, for any campaign, do not come from internet donations, the possibility of endogeneity (e.g., going negative increases the amount of funds raised) is slight. (This was a web specific prediction.) Indeed, the internet serves more as an alternative way for campaigns to raise smaller amounts of funds (thus, variation in funds raised will not be substantially explained by internet strategies).

²⁹ We find the same results (as those reported below) if we instead use presidential vote in 2000 for all years, or just for 2002.

however, note that “It is difficult to make a firm prediction on the effect of candidate gender... [For example,] women may want to show they are ‘tough enough’ to make it in a traditionally male occupation...”

We include two dummy variables to distinguish the 2004 and 2006 campaigns. These can capture time trends; early assessments of internet campaigning suggested candidates would avoid going negative since their sites are directly connected to them so they may opt for what Goldstein and Freedman (2002: 12) call the “high road” (Klotz 1998, Bimber and Davis 2003: 98-99, Kaid 2006: 76; however, see Bystrom 2006: 183).³⁰ The year variables also might reveal distinct dynamics, particularly in 2004 which was the only presidential election year.

Finally, we created a dummy variable to identify candidates whose opponents were negative on their websites.³¹ This tests Ansolabehere and Iyengar’s (1995: 120) “tit-for-tat” prediction that a “negative advertisement triggers a negative response and, in turn, a negative reply” (also see Kahn and Kennedy 1999, Lau and Pomper 2004: 33).³²

Results

We find that 54.5% (400) of the sites mention the opponent by name while 45.5% (334) do not name the opponent.³³ Senate candidates mentioned their opponent (67% or 126/189) more often than House candidates (50% or 274/545), presumably reflecting better known opponents in higher profile Senate races. Of candidates who mention their opponent, 88% (349/399) state something negative about them. Thus, it is rare for a

³⁰ In their analysis of Senate elections from 1992 to 2002, Lau and Pomper (2004) report no time trend.

³¹ If a candidate’s opponent did not have a website, we coded this variable as the opponent not going negative. The results reported below are identical if we instead treated this as a missing value.

³² We collected other district level (in the case of the House) and state level (in the case of the Senate) data such as average household income and education (e.g., Hale et al. 1996). Inclusion of these and/or other demographic variables does not change the results and none are significant.

³³ This includes a few races where there was no opponent.

candidate to mention the opponent without criticizing him or her.³⁴ Overall, then, we find 48% (251/732) of the candidates went negative on their sites.³⁵

[Table 1 About Here]

To explore causal dynamics, we re-scale all variables on 0 to 1 scales and run a logit regression of “going negative” on the independent variables. The most basic model (Model 1), displayed in column 1 of Table 1, offers strong support for our main hypotheses. First, challengers include negative statements about their opponents significantly more often than incumbents. To see the substantive impact, consider a candidate with average scores on all other variables. If the candidate were not a challenger, the probability of going negative is .31 (standard error = .04). If this same candidate were a challenger, the probability jumps all the way to .67 (.06).³⁶ We find a similarly large and significant effect for front-runners – as predicted, they are substantially less likely to go negative. Moreover, we find that the members of the minority Democratic Party also were more likely to go negative, as predicted. An average candidate who belongs to the Republican Party has a .40 (.03) probability of going negative; if this candidate were to switch to the Democratic Party, the probability rises to .52 (.04).³⁷

We also have clear evidence that competition drives negativity, and the effect is substantial. As the average candidate moves up the four-point competitiveness scale, the probabilities of going negative increase from .31 (.03) to .49 (.03) to .67 (.04) to .80 (.04). While others have reported competitiveness effects (e.g., Goldstein and Freedman 2002, Kahn and Kenney 1999; however; see Geer 2006: 109), we are the first to do so with the

³⁴ There also are two cases where the candidate did not mention the opponent (explicitly) but still implicitly went negative against the opponent.

³⁵ We failed to obtain negativity coding for four sites.

³⁶ We compute these and other probabilities using *Clarify* (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 1999).

³⁷ Although not presented in the table, when we run the regression just for 2002, we find no significant party effect, perhaps reflecting the aforementioned ambiguous partisan status of the Senate (in which the Democrats technically were the majority party).

full complement of controls across Senate and House races. Theoretically, this is perhaps our most important prediction insofar as we expect fundamental changes due to the shift in contextual conditions.

We find no evidence for our internet hypothesis that increased funds would make it less likely that candidates would go negative. As mentioned, this may be due to the potential downsides of going negative (i.e., causing voters to engage in comparative assessments of the candidates).

We neither predicted nor found significant open-seat, gender (female), office (Senate), or district partisanship effects.³⁸ This is comforting insofar as these alternative factors do not determine negativity, once we include the variables predicted by our theory. We also find no evidence supporting the tit-for-tat theory – a candidate does not appear to condition his or her behavior on that of the opponent's. Candidates make the decision to go negative without regard for what their opponent is doing, and they also have no apparent need to retaliate when their opponents attack them (controlling for other variables).

We do find a notable time trend toward negativity over the course of the three elections. The magnitude of this trend can be seen by considering the increase in the raw percentages of candidates going negative each year: 38% in 2002, 45% in 2004, and 57% in 2006. As far as we know, this is the first documented time trend toward negativity (c.f., Lau and Pomper 2001). On the one hand, it may be a medium specific trend reflecting candidates' growing comfort campaigning on the web (as mentioned, initial assessments suggested candidates were hesitant to go negative on the web). On the

³⁸ We suspect that prior work that finds significant open-seat effects (e.g., Weaver-Larischy and Tinkham 1996, Lau and Pomper 2004) may do so because of the lack of control for front-runners.

other hand, it could reflect a general trend toward increased negativity – further study over time and with other media is needed.³⁹

Our theory suggests that in highly competitive races, both incumbents and challengers will have an incentive to go negative. In other words, the challenger effect that we report in Model 1 should shrink or disappear as a race becomes increasingly competitive. To test this, we add an interaction, in Model 2, between competition and challenger. The negative significant impact of the interaction suggests that once a race is competitive, the distinction between the challenger and incumbent becomes substantially smaller. For example, in the least competitive campaign situations, an average challenger is 41% more likely to go negative than an average non-challenger. This difference shrinks to 13% in the most competitive campaign.⁴⁰

A final dynamic we explore is whether the determinants of going negative changed over time or differed in the 2004 presidential election year. We find one systematic presidential year effect which we present in Model 3. Specifically, we add two more interactions: one between the year 2004 and Democratic Party and another between 2004 and presidential vote (for Bush) in the district. The results show that in the 2004 Presidential election year, being a member of the minority Democratic Party did not significantly lead to more negativity (i.e., the significant negative interaction cancels out the significant positive Democratic main effect). The significant interaction between

³⁹ While we had no theoretical reason to predict a time trend, its presence does not suggest any causal dynamics distinct from our theory *per se*.

⁴⁰ Our theory also might suggest that front-runners will be less likely to differ from non-front-runners in competitive races (for similar races). If we include an interaction between competitiveness and front-runner, it is indeed significant; the result is virtually the same as the just discussed incumbency result. That is, in competitive races, front-runners and non-front runners are barely distinguishable. However, when we add this interaction with the other interaction, both become insignificant due to an unacceptably high level of multi-collinearity (of including multiple interactions between variables such as competition, front-runner status, and incumbency that are already significantly correlated). Indeed, when we regress the front-runner and competitiveness interaction on the other independent variables, the adjusted R-squared is .93. We also tested an interaction between competitiveness and the Democratic (minority) Party. It is not significant, which is not surprising since the tendency for minority parties to go negative is not necessarily related to their distinct race; rather, it just provides them with ammunition against the party in power (i.e., there is more to criticize).

2004 and Bush vote in the district suggests that, just for 2004, the district's partisanship significantly drove negativity such that districts with more Bush voters had candidates who were less likely to go negative. This has two important implications. First, minority party status might only matter in midterm election years since during presidential election years, the partisan status of Congress is often a secondary consideration in a voter's mind, relative to the presidential vote. Instead, minority party status is replaced by the extent to which the district opposes the more recognizable incumbent president. Second, the results show that distinct dynamics may drive negativity in different election years which accentuates the importance of future research attending to year specific effects.⁴¹

Getting Personal

We next turn to an examination of the specific ways in which candidates go negative. In 2004 and 2006, we coded whether – when the candidate went negative against his or her opponent – he or she focused on issues, the person/image, or both. While this distinction has been drawn by others (e.g., Klotz 1998, Geer 2006, Jordan and Geer 2007); we are unaware of other multi-variate analyses of these strategies in congressional campaigns.

Our data show that candidates virtually never went negative *exclusively* against the person – that is, when they went negative against a person, they also would go negative on issues (either in the same place or at another place on the site). Specifically, we find fewer than 4% of sites went negative only against the person. The main distinction, then, concerns whether the candidate went negative on issues *only* or went negative on issues *and* the person. (Of those who went negative, 39% did not include personal negativity; that over 60% did include personal content is interesting given Geer's (2006: 68) finding that presidential candidates avoid personal negativity).

⁴¹ Recall in an earlier note, we mentioned that partisanship did not matter in 2002 (when Congress was technically split). That, combined with these results, makes clear that the overall partisan effect is driven by 2006.

We run a multinomial probit model comparing not going negative, negativity on issues only, and negativity that includes personal attacks. The excluded group is no negativity, and thus, the results reported in Table 2, show the relative likelihood of each type of negativity (issues only, or inclusive of personal attacks), relative to not going negative.

[Table 2 About Here]

The table shows that several of our key theoretical variables impact both types of negativity in the expected directions, including competition, challenger status, and front-runner status. On the other hand, out-party status only promotes personal negativity. We also see that funds increase the likelihood of going personal only on issues. We thus continue to have no support for our internet hypothesis; in this case, in fact, the evidence flatly contradicts it. It may simply be that potential fundraising on the internet does not outweigh the possible costs of attacking one's opponent.

Three other results are particularly interesting. First, the aforementioned over-time increase in negativity stems entirely from negativity that includes personal attacks. The probability of personal negativity jumps from .18 (.03) in 2004 to .34 (.04) in 2006. This trend has potential consequences for how campaigns affect voters (e.g. in terms of priming), and also contrasts with early evidence from web campaigning (e.g., Klotz 1998: 356). Second, we see that a candidate whose opponent goes negative personally is significantly more likely to respond. That is, the tit-for-tat dynamic appears to take place when it comes to personal attacks. (The probability of going personally negative increases from .21 (.04) to .31 (.04) due to the opponent's negative strategy.) Third, women are more likely to go negative on issues only (with probability increases from .20 (.02) to .31 (.06)). This contradicts what others have hypothesized (i.e., they suggest

women are more likely to attack opponent's personal character; e.g., Bystrom 2006: 176), and suggests an interesting campaign difference based on gender.

Alternative Types of Negativity

Candidates can go negative towards any of a variety of political actors (i.e., not just their opponents); yet, nearly all prior studies exclusively focus on negativity towards the opponent. This stems in part from the reliance on television advertisements, where candidates have little time to engage in multiple types of negativity. On websites, in contrast, candidates can post numerous types of negative statements. We explored this by coding for negative statements about: the Democratic Party (2006), the Republican Party (2006), President Bush (2004 and 2006), Vice President Cheney (2006), and presidential candidate Kerry (2004). Our coding strategy was the same as described for negativity toward the opponent. We also coded (in all years) sites that included a “warning” of some potentially dire consequence regarding an issue such as global warming or Social Security insolvency.

In Table 3, we display the percentages of candidates who used each type of negative strategy. None of the additional strategies approaches the 48% of the candidates who used negativity toward their opponents. On the low end, few candidates went negative against Cheney or Kerry; the few who did were almost all partisan challengers from the opposing party (i.e., Democratic challengers going negative against Cheney and Republican challengers going negative against Kerry).

[Table 3 About Here]

The table shows, however, notable levels of negativity with the other strategies with 19% going negative against the Democrats, 30% against the Republicans, and 26% against Bush. We also see that 30% of the candidates took a negative tone on some issue by issuing a warning about policy consequences. We explore the causal dynamics of

these strategies by running regressions with the same independent variables used in prior analyses. (We do so even though our theory is expressly about negativity towards one's opponent, given the focus on race-specific variables such as competitiveness and standing.)

[Table 4 About Here]

We present the results in Table 4, for each dependent variable. Recall that the year dummies we include depend on the years the particular data were collected. The central message is that these alternative approaches to negativity involve distinct strategies from those that determined negativity toward one's opponent.⁴² Specifically, race specific variables that drive negativity against the opponent – including competitiveness, incumbency status, and minority party status – play no role in determining negativity against the parties, Bush, or the inclusion of policy warnings. In the case of the parties and Bush, negativity stems from partisanship such that Democrats and individuals from Democratic districts are likely to go negative against the Republicans and Bush, while Republicans and candidates from Republican districts go negative against the Democrats. We see increasing negativity towards Bush over time (with 16% going negative in 2004 and 35% in 2006), which is not surprising given his drop in popularity, and a gender effect with females more likely to go negative against the Democrats. This also is sensible since female Republicans often need to distinguish themselves from common stereotypes of women being more liberal (Schneider 2006).

The final column of Table 4 shows that Senate candidates, candidates with fewer funds, and trailing candidates issue significantly more warnings. The finding regarding funds is interesting insofar as it is the first analysis that supports our expectation of

⁴² We also ran regressions that included a variable identifying whether candidates went negative against their opponent. Inclusion of this variable neither changes the results nor is it ever significant. This further highlights the distinction in going negative strategies. (Also there is no relationship between a candidate's strategy and that of his or her opponent's strategy with regard to the same object of negativity.)

candidates lacking resources engaging in more negative behavior on the internet. The probability of issuing a policy warning on the internet drops from .31 (.03) for the lowest funded campaign to .07 (.09) for the highest funded campaign. This result is sensible – as explained, it may be that the negative consequences of going negative against one’s opponent outweigh the benefits. However, issuing warnings presumably does not have the same negative consequences of prompting voters to engage in compensatory decision-making across candidates. And, importantly, a policy warning is exactly the kind of rhetoric that Miller et al. (2007) identify as a powerful mobilizer (in stimulating donations).

Overall, the message of these results is that future work – including the vast literature on the effects of negativity – needs to explicitly account for various types of negativity. Not only do we have little understanding of strategic differences, but we also have virtually no knowledge of the effects of various types of negativity.

Conclusion

We conclude by noting three implications. First, campaigns constitute a critical part of the democratic process. Thus, identifying the factors that shape alternative types of campaign behavior enhances our understanding of how democracies work. Many scholars and pundits believe that negative campaigns affect citizens’ behaviors and election outcomes, but they differ on the nature of the effects and the normative implications. Whether one wants to minimize or promote negative campaigning, it is essential to know why and when candidates engage in it. Our findings suggest that increased competition and other race specific factors lead to negative campaigning against one’s opponent. Other factors such as gender and office level have little effect. We also show that distinct factors drive candidates to go negative against the parties or

the president. As mentioned, how these other forms of negativity affect campaigns has gone virtually unexplored.

Second, not only does the increasing prominence of the web raise questions about how candidates and voters use it, but it also provides new methodological opportunities. It enables research to include broader samples of campaigns (e.g., House campaigns) that are not possible with other types of behavior such as television ads and debates.

Candidate websites also have the virtue of presenting unmediated and nearly unlimited space with which candidates can present their message. An obvious direction for future work is to compare candidate behavior across media including websites, direct mail, and television advertisements.

Finally, other work shows that increased competition between campaigns can alter the way voters process information and make decisions (e.g., Kuklinski et al. 2001, Chong and Druckman 2007). Apparently, increased competition between candidates, in turn, shapes the types of messages candidates send. Thus, future work on opinion formation needs to attend to not only how competition affects citizens but also how it shapes candidates' messages in the first place.

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Table 1: Determinants of Negative Campaigning Against Opponent

Dependent Variable: Negative Campaigning; 0 = No Negativity and 1 = Negativity.

Independent Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Challenger	1.49*** (.37)	1.95*** (.47)	1.90*** (.47)
Front-Runner	-1.68*** (.38)	-1.41*** (.41)	-1.48*** (.41)
Open-Seat	.16 (.33)	.17 (.33)	.19 (.34)
Democrat	.51** (.20)	.55*** (.20)	.82*** (.26)
Competition	2.20*** (.34)	2.59*** (.42)	2.62*** (.42)
Funds	1.58 (1.37)	1.60 (1.37)	1.65 (1.36)
Female	.43* (.26)	.41 (.26)	.42 (.27)
Senate	.42 (.27)	.41 (.27)	.41 (.27)
District Partisanship (Rep.)	-.38 (.89)	-.38 (.91)	1.68 (1.14)
Opponent Negative	.09 (.25)	.12 (.25)	.06 (.25)
2004	.68** (.27)	.69*** (.27)	4.38*** (1.08)
2006	1.14*** (.27)	1.14*** (.27)	1.21*** (.27)
Competition X Challenger	--	-1.11* (.68)	-1.04 (.69)
2004 X Democrat	--	--	-.71* (.42)
2004 X District Partisanship	--	--	-6.31*** (1.96)
Constant	-1.62*** (.63)	-2.02*** (.67)	-3.20*** (.77)
χ^2	328.91***	331.52***	346.83***
Number of Observations	714	714	714

Note: Entries are logit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *** $p \leq .01$; ** $p \leq .05$; * $p \leq .10$ for two-tailed tests.

Table 2: Determinants of Issue Negativity and Issue/Personal Negativity

Dependent Variable: No Negativity, Issue Negativity, Issue and Personal Negativity.

<u>Independent Variable</u>	<u>No Negativity vs. Issue Negativity</u>	<u>No Negativity vs. Issue & Personal Negativity</u>
Challenger	1.68*** (.39)	1.42*** (.37)
Front-Runner	-.85** (.39)	-1.51*** (.38)
Open-Seat	.13 (.39)	.48 (.35)
Democrat	.14 (.20)	.52*** (.21)
Competition	1.10*** (.33)	1.91*** (.32)
Funds	2.48** (1.23)	1.69 (1.25)
Female	.47* (.26)	.21 (.26)
Senate	.29 (.27)	.25 (.27)
District Partisanship (Rep.)	-.59 (.91)	-1.34 (.91)
Opponent Negative	.25 (.26)	.43* (.25)
2006	.02 (.20)	.69*** (.20)
Constant	-1.47** (.63)	-1.26** (.61)
χ^2		210.12
Number of Observations		546

Note: Entries are multinomial probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.
 *** $p \leq .01$; ** $p \leq .05$; * $p \leq .10$ for two-tailed tests.

Table 3: Negativity Strategies

<i>Negativity Towards:</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Opponent (n = 732)	48%
Democratic Party (n = 292)	19%
Republican Party (n = 292)	30%
Bush (n = 561)	26%
Cheney (n = 292)	8%
Kerry (n = 267)	4%
Warnings (n = 732)	30%

Table 4: Determinants of Alternative Types of Negative Campaigning

Dependent Variable: Negative Campaigning; 0 = No Negativity and 1 = Negativity.

Independent Variable	<i>Against Democrats</i>	<i>Against Republicans</i>	<i>Against Bush</i>	<i>Warnings</i>
Challenger	.83 (.70)	1.01 (.69)	.23 (.50)	.27 (.33)
Front-Runner	-.53 (.73)	-.36 (.75)	-.45 (.53)	-.95*** (.34)
Open-Seat	.17 (.62)	1.13 (.70)	.49 (.51)	.13 (.32)
Democrat	-3.89*** (.69)	3.80*** (.56)	3.84*** (.41)	-.08 (.18)
Competition	.39 (.57)	-.30 (.57)	-.27 (.44)	.18 (.29)
Funds	1.38 (2.37)	2.90 (2.33)	3.07 (2.12)	-2.52* (1.41)
Female	.85* (.48)	-.17 (.39)	.15 (.31)	.22 (.23)
Senate	-.40 (.55)	-.67 (.54)	-.14 (.40)	.75*** (.25)
District Partisanship (Rep.)	4.01** (1.89)	-3.31** (1.60)	-4.45*** (1.25)	-.61 (.79)
Opponent Negative	-.12 (.49)	-.27 (.40)	-.004 (.30)	.23 (.21)
2004	--	--	-1.37*** (.26)	.03 (.25)
2006	--	--	--	.82*** (.24)
Constant	-2.94*** (1.15)	-2.11** (1.07)	-.89 (.84)	-.82 (.56)
χ^2	76.41***	122.89***	231.80***	71.85***
Number of Observations	292	292	549	714

Note: Entries are logit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *** $p \leq .01$; ** $p \leq .05$; * $p \leq .10$ for two-tailed tests.