

## Chapter 2

# Voters for Obama

*State Sen. Barack Obama, a Chicago Democrat, says Daley profited from the economy and “this aversion to ideology and an emphasis on management that plays well to an executive.” The end of the machine has immensely strengthened the power of the mayor. The decline of patronage and political organizations that delivered voters to the polls has reduced the power of local ward leaders to challenge mayoral authority. “It’s harder for folks to build their own independent organizations.” Money and advertising rule now. That leads to a new urban politics, built on what Obama calls “pinstripe patronage.” It includes not only city contracts but also work that has parceled out to law firms and the fees that go to the brokerage houses that float city bond issues. “They do well, and you get a \$5 million to \$10 million war chest.”*

—E.J. Dionne, Jr. (1999)

*Unlike Ronald Reagan, who could keep demonizing government as he attempted to minimize the political costs of the sharp recession heading into the 1982 midterm elections, Obama found it difficult to voice any full-throated attack on the bankers and corporate chieftains he and his advisors depended upon to spark the economy as soon as possible.*

—Theda Skocpol and Lawrence Jacobs (2011, 32)

### 2.1 Introduction

During the period of the 2008 election campaign, the United States was involved in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the financial structure of the economy was collapsing, many thought the country was in decline, economic and social inequality were

severe, and about 46 million citizens lacked health insurance. Barack Obama emphasized in his campaign that he would ameliorate these problems. To circulate his messages, his campaign raised more than \$778 million and spent \$760 million. These funds were about twice that of his opponent, John McCain, whose campaign raised \$384 and spent \$358 million to try to win.<sup>1</sup> Obama decisively defeated McCain, capturing 365 electoral votes to McCain's 173, a ratio of about 2.1 to 1. In the subsequent 2012 election, Obama received 332 electoral votes to Romney's 206, for a ratio of 1.61 to 1. Indiana (11 electoral votes) and North Carolina (22 electoral votes) shifted from Democrat in 2008 to Republican in 2012; the other states did not change.

The apparent decline of the U.S., which Obama promised to lessen, can be gauged by the human development (HD) index of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which ranks countries based on measures of health, education, and financial well-being.<sup>2</sup> Among top-ranked countries for the period 1980–2010, the relative position of the United States dropped from first in 1980 and 1990; to second, in 1995; to third, in 2000; to fourth in 2009 and 2010.<sup>3</sup> The difference in underlying scores between the U.S. and the other top-ranked countries is small, but the trend does document a decline in social and economic well-being, which income inequality exacerbates.<sup>4</sup>

Among countries with very high HD in 2010, the UNDP reported that income inequality in the U.S. stood at 40.8 (as measured by the Gini coefficient across the period 2000–2010). Only two of the 32 countries being compared had higher income inequality scores: Qatar, 41.1 and Singapore, 42.5.<sup>5</sup> All of the long-standing democracies exhibit less income inequality.<sup>6</sup> Among 16 of these advanced democracies for which there are data, the U.S. has the worst percentages of children in poverty before and after government transfers and the smallest percent reduction in poverty due to these government transfers; it also has the highest percentage of the elderly (i.e., people over 60 years old) in poverty.<sup>7</sup> Although the U.S. was ranked fourth in human development in 2010, its relative position drops to twelfth on the inequality-adjusted human development index; the poor health of some of its citizens contributes to this decline.<sup>8</sup> The increased costs of treatments for the uninsured—many of whom are drawn from ethnic minorities, the poor, younger adults, part-time workers, and the unemployed—drives up the total healthcare costs per capita for the U.S., the highest among the advanced democracies.<sup>9</sup> However, the health outcomes for the U.S. are not necessarily better: its citizens have higher rates of infant mortality, asthma mortality, obesity, and Hepatitis B.<sup>10</sup>

In November 2008, perhaps summarizing the subjective impacts of these societal problems, the vast majority of the voters (78%) thought the country was on the wrong track and a similar percentage (65%) disapproved the job performance of the incumbent president, George W. Bush.<sup>11</sup> This book's survey analyses shall clarify how sentiments such as these, along with other facilitating factors, key political variables, political and moral ideologies, social attributes, and state contexts all

contributed to Obama's electoral victories over John McCain in 2008 and by implication over Mitt Romney in 2012.

### ***2.1.1 New Contributions***

This chapter asks: What kinds of practical voters facilitated Obama's victory over John McCain? To answer this question, this chapter develops a procedure for the analysis of contingency tables of voting that is rooted in decision theory. It applies this procedure to study the voters' discontent with the policies of the incumbent president, variables of the voting process, and the stability of the vote. The voters' moral sentiments are not studied here. People who voted for Obama compared with those voting for McCain did not approve of Bush's presidency, made up their minds early, and voted early through absentee or mail ballots. Moreover Obama's margin of victory was boosted by voters who are less politically active: African Americans, young people, previous nonvoters, the "all others" category (i.e., missing responses, refused, other), and people not sorted by partisanship. The party of the incumbent congressperson, a context variable, had less effect. Democratic voters in 2008 were more diverse than Republican voters: Obama captured the vote of people across the political spectrum; voters for McCain were more homogeneous.

### ***2.1.2 Approach***

Interpretive mistakes may arise if pundits and electioneers do not take into account the distinction between percentage-point differences and the sizes of contributions to a candidate's margin of victory.<sup>12</sup> For example, a large percentage-point difference of +85.6 percentage points across the categories of a response variable (the decision weight), such as voting for McCain over Obama, for an infrequently occurring category of a social attribute (e.g., probability = 0.17), such as approval of incumbent President Bush's presidency, makes a limited contribution to a candidate's share of the vote ( $+85.6 \times 0.17 = +14.6$ ). This chapter quantifies the effects of the categories of an independent variable on the categories of a response variable first as percentage-point differences and then, after multiplication by the frequency probabilities of occurrence of the categories of the independent variable, their contributions to a candidate's share of the vote.<sup>13</sup> These contributions quantify the overall decision values of the categories of an attribute on the vote better than do the unadjusted difference in percentage points, the decision weights. Because the percentages for Obama or for McCain dichotomize the vote, this chapter reports the odds ratios from logistic regression models that have been weighted by the survey sample; various endnotes present the linear probability estimates.<sup>14</sup>

2.1.3    *The Survey Data*

This chapter and subsequent chapters focusing on voting primarily use survey data from telephone interviews of voters conducted by the advocacy organization Democracy Corps and the polling agency Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research (GQR). GQR drew a random-digit telephone survey sample of landline telephone numbers, conducted the interviews over the phone, formed survey weights, and conducted their analyses.<sup>15</sup> Two-thousand voters completed the interviews on November 4–5, 2008, 1075 voters on election day (54.9% weighted), and 925 the day after (45.1% weighted). A random sample this size allows one to say with 95% confidence that the error due to sampling and other random effects is  $\pm 2$  percentage points.

I chose to analyze these survey data rather than those from exit polls, the American National Election Studies (ANES), the Annenberg Election Survey, the General Social Survey, and so forth because this survey focuses in detail on voting, the sample represents the population of voters in 2008, the data became available a few days after this election, and the analysis of this fresh dataset reduces the potential redundancy of reanalyses of popular datasets, leaving open their use for replications of results.<sup>16</sup> As the famous old-time baseball player Willie Keeler once said: “Keep your eye clear and hit ’em where they ain’t.”

The gender and age distributions between the sample and the exit polls are very close; see Figs. 2.1 and 2.2, as are the distributions of vote.<sup>17</sup> The exit polls and this

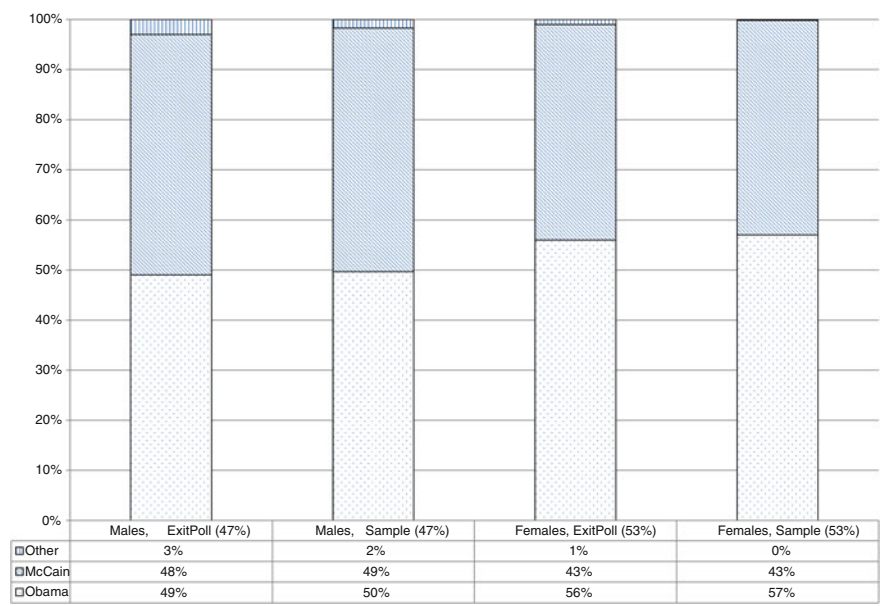
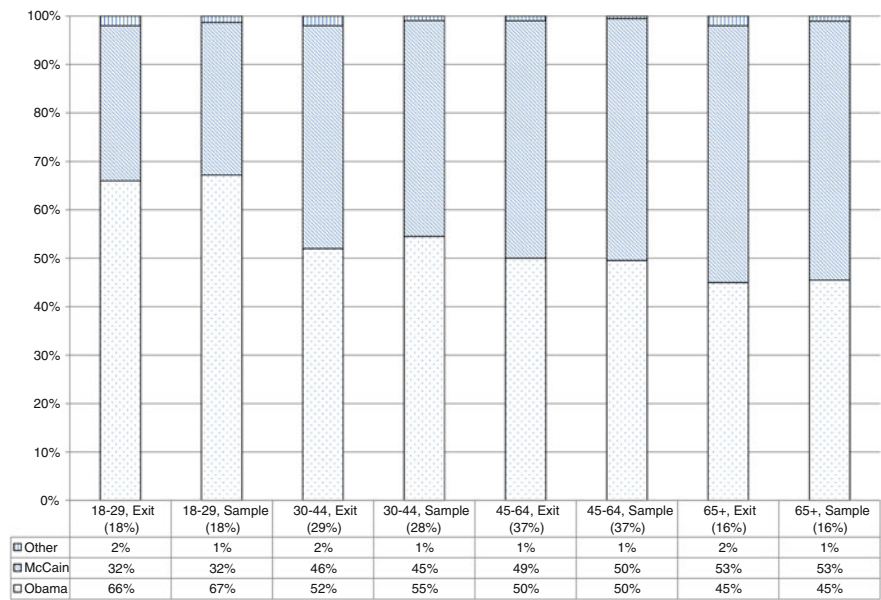


Fig. 2.1    Gender and voting by polling agency



**Fig. 2.2** Age and voting by polling agency

survey indicate a gender gap with females preferring the democrats by a difference of 6 percentage points. In both surveys, about 67% of young people (18–29 years) voted for Barack Obama whereas only 45% of senior citizens (65 and older) voted for him. Moreover, when the 92 respondents who refused to say their choice are deleted from the GQR sample, 53.6% voted for Obama, 45.5% for John McCain, and 0.9% for other candidates, for a victory margin of 8.1 percentage points.<sup>18</sup> Election statistics are very similar, respectively, 53.9%, 45.6%, and 1.5%, for a victory margin of 8.3 percentage points. Apparently, this weighted sample of voters represents the 2008 population of voters satisfactorily.<sup>19</sup>

**2.2 Discontent**

Discontent implies a sense of grievance. Many people voted for Obama because they thought the country was moving in the wrong direction (1, 0) and they disliked the job performance of then incumbent President George W. Bush (1, 0); both binary indicators tap discontent with Bush’s policies. A pragmatic index tapping discontent results by summing their values; Box 2.1 specifies aspects of this index.<sup>20</sup> It classifies 60.1% of the survey respondents as exhibiting discontent (a score of 2), 22.9% as having some discontent (a score of 1), and 17.1% as

approving of Bush’s policies (a score of 0). The negative relationship between scores on this index and the voters’ warm feelings for Bush indicate the emotional aspect of discontent, as measured by a warmth-of-feeling thermometer scale (0° = cold feelings to 100° = warm feelings). When respondents approve of Bush’s policies their warmth is 75°; some discontent, 59.5°; and discontent, only 17°. <sup>21</sup> As expected, voters exhibiting discontent for President Bush are more likely to vote for Obama (77.7%) rather than for McCain (19.1%). These relationships validate this measure of discontent.

**Box 2.1 Two Indicators and Their Index of Discontent with President Bush’s Policies**

Wrong Track versus Right Track, sample weighted percentages:  
Generally speaking, before this election, did you think that things in this country were going in the right direction, or did you feel things had gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

Right Direction	(Coded 0)	16.43%
Wrong Track	(Coded 1)	78.17%
Missing, DK, Refused	(Coded 0)	5.40%

  
Approval of President’s Job Performance, sample weighted percentages:  
Do you approve of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?

Strongly approve	(coded 0)	13.22%
Somewhat approve	(coded 0)	18.06%
Somewhat disapprove	(coded 1)	13.83%
Strongly disapprove	(coded 1)	51.04%
Missing, DK, Refused	(coded 0)	3.85%

  
Index of Discontent, the sum of Wrong Track (1, 0) and Poor Job Performance (1, 0), sample weighted percentages:

Approval, score 0 (361)	17.05%
Some Discontent, score 1 (447)	22.87%
Discontent, score 2 (1192)	60.08%

  
Argument for the validity of index: The items adequately translate the sentiments of the public, thus *fit validity* is appropriate. The questions are easily understood with clear response categories, thus their *face validity* is appropriate. The correlation of the two indicators is 0.50 ( $p < 0.0003$ ), their reliability coefficient alpha is 0.67, and both items have similar correlations with a range of other variables; thus internal validity is appropriate. External validity is appropriate: the Spearman rank correlation ( $r_s$ ) of the index with the feeling thermometer for Bush is  $-0.71$  ( $p < 0.0001$ ) and with voting for Obama is  $+0.67$  ( $p < 0.0001$ ). Moreover, warm feelings for Bush are strongly negatively correlated with voting for Obama,  $-0.74$  ( $p < 0.0001$ ).

2.3 Analysis of Contributions

Table 2.1 relates discontent with President Bush to votes for McCain or Obama. In this table and in subsequent tables, a plus sign indicates support for Obama; a minus sign indicates support for McCain. The notes to this table explicate the meanings of the table’s categories. Here it suffices that the contributions to Obama’s victory margin for each category of discontent with President Bush’s policies is the product of the Obama minus McCain percentage-point difference for a category of discontent (the decision weight) multiplied by the frequency probability of that category: Contribution = Decision Weight  $\times$  Probability. The sum of these vote contributions equals Obama’s margin of victory of +7.75 adjusted percentage points. If these percentages for Obama or McCain are recalculated deleting the 4.45% who are missing, then the margin is 8.1 adjusted percentage points as reported earlier.<sup>22</sup> Table 2.1 applies this formula.

**Table 2.1** Choice of Obama or McCain by discontent with President Bush’s policies, probability adjusted

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Probabilities	Percentages			Decision weights	Contributions
	Frequency probabilities	Obama (O)	McCain (Mc)	Missing (·)	(O – Mc) difference	(O – Mc) $\times$ freq. prob.
Discontent with Bush’s policies	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
“Approval” (361)	0.17046	4.037	89.591	6.373	–85.554	–14.584
“Some discontent” (447)	0.22871	18.809	75.066	6.125	–56.257	–12.867
“Discontent” (1192)	0.60083	77.664	19.068	3.268	+58.596	+35.206

*Note* The raw frequencies (which are not survey-sample weighted) for the three categories of discontent are the numbers in parentheses in column 1. Column 2 presents the weighted by survey sample frequency probabilities, these sum to unity. Columns 3–5 present the percentages voting for Obama (O), McCain (Mc), and Missing (·). Column 6 presents the overall percentage-point differences between Obama and McCain for each category of discontent and for the total sample; these differences are the decision weights. In column 7 the Contributions = Decision Weights  $\times$  Probabilities. These contributions sum to the overall margin of victory for Obama of 7.750 percentage points. Discontent with Bush’s policies contributed strongly to Obama’s victory whereas the other categories of the discontent index contributed to McCain’s vote share. Voters’ approving of Bush exhibited a very large percentage-point difference of 85.554, but when multiplied by the small probability of approving of Bush’s policies the contribution to McCain’s share of the vote is about same as those showing some discontent

## 2.4 Variables of the Voting Process

Variables bearing on the process of voting suggest some differences between the percentages voting for Obama versus percentages voting for McCain, see Table 2.2. Eager voters, in-person voters, complete-ballot voters, and nonvoters in the 2006 congressional election made salient contributions to Obama's victory margin. For the time period of decision (see panel a), 0.11252 of the total voters are classified as late deciders if they said they chose their presidential candidate on election day, a few days before, or a week before. Contrariwise, 0.85507 of the total voters are classified as early deciders if they said a month before the election, sometime in September, during the summer, or before the summer. About 0.03241 of the total voters are missing their voting choice. When the percentage-point differences are adjusted by these probabilities, late deciders voted for Obama over McCain by a contribution of  $-0.209$  percentage points; early deciders, by  $+8.106$  percentage points; and the missing category by  $-0.142$  percentage points—of these categories early deciders contributed the most to Obama's margin of victory.

The Obama campaign targeted potential early voters and tried with some success to insulate them from Republican messages and to lock-in their vote.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, the day a person votes produces noticeable differences in the contributions to Obama's margin of victory, see panel b of Table 2.2. About 0.70653 of the total voted on election day and about 0.29347 voted earlier, before November 4. Among the election day voters, the contribution for Obama is  $+3.017$  percentage points, whereas among those voting before election day the contribution is  $+4.745$  percentage points. Although Obama received positive contributions from both categories, people who voted before election day contributed a bit more to Obama's margin of victory.

A pragmatic index of a voter's eagerness to vote combines the replies to the two questions above as follows: eager voters (0.2656) decide early (+) and vote early (+); typical voters (0.60771) either decide early (+) and vote on election day (−), or decide late (−) and vote prior to election day (+); and last-minute voters (0.09427) decide late (−) and vote on election day (−). This measure classifies 0.03241 as missing. Panel c of Table 2.2 shows that eager voters contributed  $+4.579$  percentage points to Obama's margin (the largest contribution); typical voters,  $+3.798$  percentage points; last-minute voters,  $-0.482$ ; and missing,  $-0.142$ .

Eagerness to vote implies methods of voting other than the ballot box. Consequently, a relationship can be expected between the choice of a candidate and the manner of voting; see panel d of Table 2.2. Among the vast majority of voters (0.859) who voted in-person on election day, the contribution in vote for Obama versus McCain is  $+5.669$  percentage points, which is the largest contribution to Obama's margin of victory in this panel. However, all the other categories make positive contributions to his margin: Among the 0.07620 of the total casting absentee ballots, the contribution to Obama's margin is  $+0.864$  percentage points; among the 0.06347 voting by mail, the contribution is  $+1.187$  percentage points; and among the 0.00133 of the total who would not say (3 respondents), the contribution is  $+0.034$  percentage points. The sum of the latter three contributions is



**Table 2.2** Choice of Obama or McCain by variables of the voting process, probability adjusted

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Probabilities	Percentages (%)			Decision weights	Contributions
	Weighted freq. prob.	Obama (O)	McCain (Mc)	Missing (.)	(O – Mc) difference	(O – Mc) × freq. prob.
(a) Time period of decision	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
(–) Late deciders (238)	0.11252	42.71	44.57	12.72	–1.86	–0.209
(+) Early deciders (1686)	0.85507	53.54	44.06	2.40	+9.48	+8.106
Missing (76)	0.03241	32.83	37.20	29.97	–4.37	–0.142
(b) Day of voting	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
(–) On election day (1366)	0.70653	49.85	45.58	4.57	+4.27	+3.017
(+) Before election day (634)	0.29347	56.00	39.83	4.17	+16.17	+4.745
(c) Eagerness to vote	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
(– –) Last-minute voters (194)	0.09427	41.00	46.11	12.89	–5.11	–0.482
(– + or + –) Typical voters (1165)	0.60771	51.89	45.64	2.47	+6.25	+3.798
(+ +) Eager voters (565)	0.26560	57.18	39.94	2.88	+17.24	+4.579
Missing (76)	0.03241	32.83	37.20	29.97	–4.37	–0.142
(d) Manner of voting	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
In-person (1660)	0.85900	51.25	44.65	4.10	+6.60	+5.669
Absentee (178)	0.07620	52.31	40.97	6.73	+11.34	+0.864
Mail (159)	0.06347	56.09	37.41	6.50	+18.70	+1.187
Missing (3)	0.00133	62.82	37.18	–	+25.64	+0.034
(e) Extent of voting	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
President-only (39)	0.02414	70.83	23.18	5.99	+47.65	+1.150
President, governor and senate (48)	0.03619	59.27	37.26	3.47	+22.01	+0.797
President, governor, senator, and congress (79)	0.04252	53.84	43.20	2.96	+10.64	+0.452
All-on-ballot (1802)	0.88350	50.55	44.99	4.47	+5.56	+4.912
Missing (32)	0.01365	62.46	29.70	7.84	+32.76	+0.447

(continued)

**Table 2.2** (continued)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Probabilities	Percentages (%)			Decision weights	Contributions
	Weighted freq. prob.	Obama (O)	McCain (Mc)	Missing (·)	(O – Mc) difference	(O – Mc) × freq. prob.
(f) 2006 congressional election	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
Voted (1589)	0.73675	48.59	47.17	4.23	+1.42	+1.046
Did not vote (323)	0.22699	61.23	34.17	4.60	+27.06	+6.142
Missing or refused (88)	0.03627	53.88	38.20	7.92	+15.68	+0.569

*Note* The unweighted raw frequencies for the categories of the panel are the numbers in parentheses in column 1. The first row of each panel presents the weighted marginal percentages voting for Obama, McCain, or Missing. Column 7 adjusts the Obama minus McCain percentage-point difference for a category of a panel (the decision weight) by multiplying it by the frequency probability for that category of the panel. The adjusted percentage-point difference quantifies that category’s contribution to Obama’s victory margin. The adjusted percentage-point differences sum to Obama’s victory margin

+2.085 percentage points. Thus, voters who cast their votes by mail or by absentee ballots or who would not say boosted Obama’s margin of victory. Obama’s victory margin included positive contributions from both in-person and other kinds of voters.

People who voted for all positions on the ballot contributed more to Obama’s victory margin than the other categories of the extent of voting, but people who limited the extent of their voting also made positive contributions, see panel e of Table 2.2. At first glance the sharpest difference in vote between Obama and McCain stems from the 0.02414 who voted only for president. Their unadjusted percentage-point difference is +47.6, compared with the unadjusted percentage-point difference of +5.56 for the vast majority (0.88350) who voted for all positions on the ballot. However, when these differences are probability adjusted, the contribution to Obama’s margin due to president-only voters shrinks to +1.150 compared with the contribution of all-on-ballot voters which shrinks much less to +4.912. The contributions of the other categories of extent of voting are as follows: for those who voted for the president, governor, and senator the contribution is +0.797, for those who voted for those offices plus congressional candidates it is +0.452, and for those who would not say it is +0.447.

Logistic regression models indicate that those people who only voted for the position of president tended to be African Americans; endnotes below present the linear probability estimates. Box 2.2 explicates aspects of these logistic regression models.<sup>24</sup> When the choice of Obama versus McCain is regressed on the extent of voting, the only difference that attains statistical significance is that between only voting for the president and voting for all positions on the ballot; the odds ratio is +2.72 (+1.14, +6.48).<sup>25</sup> (The quantities in parentheses after +2.72 are the lower and upper confidence bounds for the odds ratios. When one bound is less than 1 and the other greater than 1, then the odds ratio is not statistically significant.) The differences

between the other categories of extent of voting and voting for all positions on the ballot are not statistically significant. However, when the distinction between African Americans versus all other people is introduced into the model as a test factor, the statistically controlled difference between voting only for the president versus voting for all other positions on the ballot becomes smaller and is not statistically significant: the odds ratio becomes +1.75 (0.78, 3.91).<sup>26</sup> When other test factors (e.g., Hispanic, women, and discontent for Bush) are introduced one at a time into the basic model, the odds ratios for voting only for the president versus voting for all other positions on the ballot remain statistically significant as follows: when Hispanic is the control, +2.59 (1.05, 6.40); when gender is the control, +2.88 (1.17, 7.13); and when discontent is the control, +3.15 (1.12, 8.89). Thus, in this election African Americans were more likely than these other groups to vote only for the position of president. Voting for all of the positions on a ballot would increase their political voice.

### Box 2.2 Explication of Logistic Regression Parameters

Here is the SAS code for a survey logistic regression model with GLM coding:

```
Title 'Model 1 logistic does allvot affect Obama vote?
Panel e';
proc surveylogistic total = 200000006 missing;
class allvot/param= glm ref=last;
model obama (desc)= allvot /clparm;
lsmeans allvot /ilink pdiff or; /* note glm paramateri-
zation*/
weight weight_3; run;
```

The estimates of the parameters on the logistic scale are: Intercept = 0.1165, Allvot (·) = 0.6270 (missing), Allvot 1 = 1.0006 (only voting for president), Allvot 2 = 0.3477, Allvot 3 = 0.1036, Allvot 4 = 0 (the reference category). The odds ratio +2.72 is the exponentiated value of +1.0006, that is  $\exp(1.0006) = +2.72$ . This coefficient can be interpreted as follows: The odds of voting for Obama when the effect of only voting for a presidential candidate is operating is  $\exp([0.1165 + 0.6270 + 0.3477 + 0.1036] + 1.0006) = \exp([+1.1948] + 1.0006) = \exp(+2.1954) = +8.98359$ . When this effect of only voting for a presidential candidate is not operating the odds equal  $\exp[1.1948] = +3.30289$ . Therefore, the ratio of these odds, or the odds ratio, equals +2.72 ( $=+8.98359/+3.30289$ ). Consequently, the exponentiated logistic parameter can be interpreted here as the increased odds of voting for Obama when the voter only votes for a presidential candidate (relative to voting for all offices), holding constant the other factors. The proportion differences can be calculated from the parameters via the least-squares means (LSM). A LSM equals the sum of the value of a parameter on the logistic scale plus the intercept value. For voting only for the president the mean is.  $1.0006 + 0.1165 = 1.1170$ .

	Means logistic scale (LSM)	Odds exp (LSM)	Odds/(1 + odds) = proportions
.	0.7434	2.103	0.678
1	1.1170	3.056	0.753
2	0.4642	1.591	0.614
3	0.2200	1.246	0.555
4	0.1165	1.123	0.529

Then, the proportion difference between voting only for the president (coded 1) versus voting for all positions (coded 4) is  $\delta = +0.753 - +0.529 = +0.224$ , which the linear probability model found directly.

Panel f of Table 2.2 shows that the 0.22699 of the total sample who said they did not vote in the 2006 congressional election disproportionately contributed to Obama’s victory margin over McCain by +6.142 percentage points; whereas the 0.73675 of the sample who said they voted in the 2006 election only slightly favored Obama, by +1.046 percentage points. The contribution of the missing or refused is +0.569. Disregarding the missing responses, a logistic regression model indicates that the effect of not voting in the 2006 congressional election on voting for Obama is statistically significant initially: the odds ratio is +1.739 (1.276, 2.371).<sup>27</sup> However, when a voter’s age category (which maybe 18–29, 30–44, 45–64, or 65+) is controlled, then the effect on Obama vote of not voting in the 2006 congressional election becomes statistically insignificant: the odds ratio becomes +1.363 (0.989, 1.880).<sup>28</sup> Inspection of the four categories of the age typology suggests that the people in the two younger age categories tended not to vote in the 2006 congressional elections, but these people voted for Obama in 2008. Singular controls for ethnicity, gender, and discontent do not eliminate the effect of not voting in that congressional election on voting for Obama in 2008. The odds ratios when ethnicity is controlled are +2.76 (1.46, 5.22); when female is controlled, +1.75 (1.28, 2.39); and when discontent is controlled, +1.66 (1.04, 2.65). Here, only the younger age categories explain the initial association between not voting in 2006 and voting for Obama in 2008.

In summary, early deciders, early voters, eager voters, in-person voters, complete-ballot voters, and younger voters all contributed decisively to Obama’s victory margin.

2.5 Stability of the Party Choice

By relating the present vote for Obama or McCain to partisan choices in previous elections, and also in the contemporaneous 2008 congressional election, the subsequent table focuses on the stability of the vote and how prior indicators of

partisanship “sort” the person’s presidential vote.<sup>29</sup> When the party of the person’s voting choice is the same as the party of the prior partisanship indicator, then the voter is sorted by the partisanship indicator—partisanship and vote are consonant (synonyms are aligned, in agreement, consistent, or congruent). When the party of person’s voting choice is not the same as the party of the prior partisanship indicator (or the party of the partisanship indicator is not known), then the vote is not sorted by partisanship; the person is an unsorted voter. Table 2.3 sorts the voters in 2008 by their votes in the 2006 and 2008 congressional elections; whether their congressional incumbent is a Democrat or Republican; whether they voted or not in the 2004 election, and their choice of candidate in that election.

Panel a of Table 2.3 shows that a person’s choice of a Democratic or Republican candidate in a previous congressional election predicts voting in a future presidential election—that is, presidential vote is sorted by prior congressional party vote. The 0.33843 of the total who voted Republican in the 2006 congressional election supported McCain over Obama in 2008 by a contribution of  $-22.604$  percentage points. Similarly, the 0.33122 of the total who voted Democrat in that congressional election supported Obama over McCain by a contribution of  $+22.443$ . For these sorted voters the two candidates were about even, with McCain having a slight edge,  $-0.161$  percentage points. The eventual gain in Obama’s victory margin came from three categories of unsorted voters: from the 0.01998 of the total who voted for “other,” contributing  $+0.590$ ; from the 0.04712 of the total who would not say how they voted in 2006, contributing  $+0.616$ ; and from the 0.26325 of the total who said they did not vote in that election, contributing  $+6.710$ —here the largest contribution is made by the people who did not vote in the 2006 congressional election. When the latter three categories are grouped together as “all others,” the contribution of these unsorted voters to Obama’s victory margin is a decisive  $+7.916$  percentage points, which is only slightly offset by McCain’s edge of  $-0.161$  percentage points among sorted voters; their sum produces Obama’s victory margin of  $+7.755$  percentage points.

Logistic models that regress voting choices in 2008 on the voting choices in the 2006 congressional election are confirmative. Using the Republican congressional voters in 2006 as the reference category, then: (1) voting Democratic in the 2006 congressional election produces a pro-Obama odds ratio of 30.5 (21.8, 42.7); and (2) “all others” produces a pro-Obama odds ratio of 9.4 (6.8, 12.9).<sup>30</sup> Thus, the latter unsorted voters, who had ambiguous partisan commitment in the 2006 congressional election, helped Obama in 2008. This effect holds with simultaneous controls for discontent, age category, minority status, and gender; the pro-Obama odds ratio for “all others” under these statistical controls is 5.45 (3.65, 8.16).

Although the true direction of effect is problematical, panel b of Table 2.3 shows that in 2008 contemporaneous congressional party voting is strongly associated with contemporaneous presidential voting. When for consistency the weighted percentages are taken in the same direction as in panel a (i.e., with congressional vote leading presidential vote), the 0.43410 of the total who voted Republican in the 2008 congressional election tended to vote for McCain in the 2008 presidential election, by a contribution of  $-30.886$ . Contrarily, the 0.51247 of the total who

**Table 2.3** Choice of Obama or McCain by votes in other elections, probability adjusted

	Probabilities	Percentages			Decision weights	Contributions
	Weighted freq. prob.	Obama (O)	McCain (Mc)	Missing (·)	(O – Mc) differences	(O – Mc) × freq. prob.
(a) 2006 congressional election	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
Voted for house Republican (726)	0.33843	14.81	81.60	3.59	–66.79	–22.604
Voted for house democrat (697)	0.33122	82.70	14.94	2.36	+67.76	+22.443
Voted for “other” (51)	0.01998	60.88	31.32	7.80	+29.56	+0.590
Don’t know, refused (115)	0.04712	46.27	33.19	20.53	+13.08	+0.616
Did not vote (411)	0.26325	60.22	34.73	5.06	+ 25.49	+6.710
(b) 2008 congressional house election	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
Voted for Republican (859)	0.43410	12.97	84.12	2.92	–71.15	–30.886
Voted for Democrat (961)	0.51247	85.11	12.51	2.38	+72.60	+37.205
Voted for “other”(106)	0.01797	51.08	38.13	10.79	+12.95	+0.233
Missing (74)	0.03546	41.99	8.06	49.95	+33.93	+1.203
(c) If democratic incumbent (928)	0.48290	60.62	35.23	4.14	+25.39	+12.261
Voted for Republican (255)	0.13158	9.34	88.18	2.49	–78.84	–10.373
Voted for Democrat (589)	0.32410	81.98	14.97	3.05	+67.01	+21.718
Voted for “other” (53)	0.01013	55.62	38.03	6.36	+17.59	+0.178
Missing (31)	0.01709	53.38	10.11	36.51	+43.27	+0.739
(d) If Republican incumbent (1072)	0.51709	43.28	51.99	4.73	–8.71	–4.504
Voted for Republican (604)	0.30251	14.55	82.35	3.10	–67.80	–20.510
Voted for Democrat (372)	0.18837	90.50	8.27	1.23	+82.23	15.490
Voted for “other” (53)	0.00784	45.21	38.26	16.53	+6.95	0.054
Missing (43)	0.01838	31.41	6.14	62.45	+25.27	0.464

(continued)

**Table 2.3** (continued)

	Probabilities	Percentages			Decision weights	Contributions
	Weighted freq. prob.	Obama (O)	McCain (Mc)	Missing (·)	(O – Mc) differences	(O – Mc) × freq. prob.
(e) 2004 presidential election	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
Voted (1812)	0.85368	48.41	47.32	4.27	+ 1.09	+0.930
Did not vote (105)	0.06221	70.00	24.95	5.05	+45.05	+2.803
Not registered, ineligible, youths (51)	0.07508	73.00	21.48	5.52	+51.52	+3.868
Refused, don't know (32)	0.00902	54.47	37.36	8.17	+17.11	+0.154
(f) 2004 presidential election, votes	1.00000	51.65	43.90	4.45	+7.75	+7.750
Not clearly voters in 2004 (188)	0.14632	70.58	23.93	5.49	+46.65	+6.826
Democrat John Kerry (797)	0.38517	90.69	7.96	1.35	+82.73	+31.865
Republican George Bush (937)	0.44157	11.96	84.15	3.89	–72.19	–31.877
Ralph Nader (8)	0.00296	83.99	5.77	10.25	+78.22	+0.232
Other candidates (21)	0.00627	40.49	8.59	50.92	+31.90	+0.200
Don't know, refused (49)	0.01771	34.29	5.74	59.97	+28.55	+0.506

*Note* The unweighted raw frequencies for the categories of a panel are the numbers in parentheses in the first column. The first row of each panel presents the percentages voting for Obama, McCain, or Missing. The last column adjusts the Obama over McCain percentage-point difference for a category of a panel by multiplying it by the probability for that category

voted Democratic in the 2008 congressional election tended to vote for Obama in the 2008 presidential election, by a contribution of 37.205. The sum of these differences contributes +6.319 percentage points to Obama's victory margin. The unsorted voters who are less committed to party again boosted Obama's vote share: the 0.01797 of the total classified as voting for "other," by a contribution of +0.233; and the 0.03546 of the total whose congressional vote is classified as "missing," by a contribution of +1.203. When the latter two categories of unsorted voters are grouped together as "all others," then for this 0.05343 of the total, their total contribution to Obama's victory margin is +1.436 percentage points.

Logistic regressions confirm the positive relationship of Democratic congressional voters with Obama's vote and the smaller relationship of "all others." Using the Republican congressional voters in 2008 as the reference category, voting Democratic in the 2008 congressional election produces a pro-Obama odds ratio of 44.1 (31.4, 62); "all others" produces a pro-Obama odds ratio of 16.1 (8.7, 29.7).<sup>31</sup> Simultaneous controls for minority ethnicity, age category, gender, and discontent do not change the significance ( $p < 0.0001$ ) of these relationships.

In sum, younger voters not sorted by their congressional vote in the 2006 election contributed more to Obama's victory margin than did the sorted voters. But when voters are sorted by their 2008 congressional vote, the consistent voters contributed more. How the party of the incumbent congressperson may affect this latter finding is probed next.

Panel c and panel d of Table 2.3 examine the effects of the voters' congressional choice in 2008 on their presidential choice in 2008, in different incumbency contexts (i.e., whether the voters' incumbent congressperson is a Democrat or Republican). This refinement by incumbency opens the possibility of studying how the incumbency context in conjunction with congressional vote can sort the presidential vote. Comparison of the top rows of the two panels shows that a Democratic congressional incumbent boosts Obama's margin more than Republican incumbency boosts McCain's margin. If the congressional incumbent is a Democrat (0.48290 of the total), then Obama's total contribution is +12.261 ( $0.48290 \times 25.39$ ). If the congressional incumbent is a Republican (0.51709 of the total), then McCain's total contribution is -4.504 ( $0.51709 \times -8.71$ ). The sum of these contributions (+12.261 - 4.504) produces the Obama victory margin over McCain of 7.757 percentage points.<sup>32</sup> A logistic regression model confirms that a Democratic congressional incumbent enhances the vote for Obama, the odds ratio is 2.07 (1.65, 2.59).<sup>33</sup>

The internal cells of panels c and d can clarify how in the different incumbency contexts the various categories of voting for a congressperson in 2008 are associated with Obama's victory margin. In panel c of Table 2.3 (total = 0.48290) when there is a Democrat incumbent, then: (1) among the 0.13158 who voted for a Republican congressperson in 2008 their contribution ( $0.13158 \times -78.84$ ) to Obama's margin is -10.373 (these people voted for McCain), and (2) among the 0.32410 who voted for a Democratic congressperson their contribution ( $0.32410 \times 67.01$ ) to Obama's margin is +21.718. Thus, when the incumbency context, congressional vote, and presidential vote are consistently all Democratic, then the contribution to Obama's margin of victory of these fully sorted Democrats is larger than the contribution to McCain when the Democratic incumbency context is inconsistent with the sorted Republicans whose congressional vote in 2008 and vote for McCain are aligned. These adjusted differences ( $21.718 - 10.73$ ) sum to 10.988 percentage points, which is most of Obama's victory margin when there is a Democratic congressional incumbent. The remainder of this margin comes from the unsorted people who voted for "other" for congress, which equals +0.178, and from those whose congressional vote is missing, which equals +0.739. Thus, in panel c where there is a Democratic congressional incumbent, the total positive contribution to Obama is +22.636 percentage points, which is offset by the sorted people who voted both for a Republican congressperson and for McCain, the contribution of these Republican voters ( $0.13158 \times -78.84$ ) is -10.373; the sum of these two contributions ( $22.636 - 10.373$ ) equals +12.263, which is Obama's margin of victory when there is a Democratic incumbent. A Democratic congressional incumbent enhanced voting for Obama.

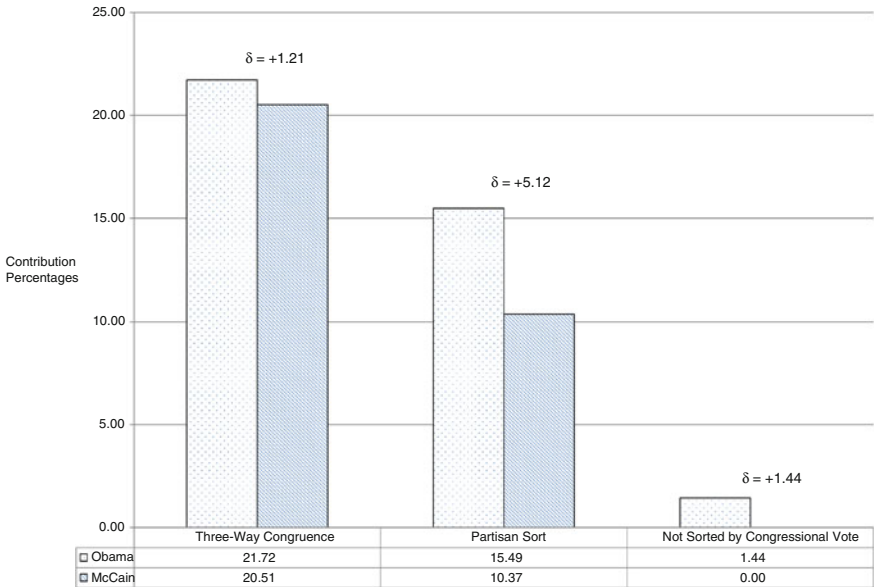


When there is Republican incumbent (panel d of Table 2.3), then: (1) among the 0.18837 who are Democratic congressional voters in 2008 the contribution ( $0.18837 \times 82.23$ ) of these sorted Democrats to Obama's margin of victory is 15.490, and (2) among the 0.30251 who are Republican congressional voters the contribution ( $0.30251 \times -67.80$ ) of these sorted Republicans to McCain is  $-20.510$ . The sum of these differences ( $-20.510 + 15.490$ ) is  $-5.02$  in favor of McCain. Once again, those who voted for "other" =  $+0.054$  and those whose congressional vote is missing =  $+0.464$  added to Obama's margin thereby reducing McCain's margin to  $-4.502$ . The sum of McCain's margin when there is a Republican congressional incumbent and Obama's margin when there is a Democrat incumbent ( $-4.502 + 12.263$ ) equals Obama's overall margin of victory ( $+7.761$ ). The incumbency context helped Obama more than it did McCain.

The estimates of the contributions in panels c and d of Table 2.3 can facilitate this study of sorting. If the party of the congressional incumbent is the same as the party of the person's congressional and presidential votes then there is a three-way congruence or a "two-way sort"—the person's presidential vote is sorted by the congressional vote and by the incumbent's party; there is no cross-pressure due to the difference between incumbency context and congressional vote. If the party of the congressional incumbent differs from the party of the person's congressional and presidential vote, then there is a one-way or "partisan sort," the person's presidential vote is sorted by his congressional vote but not by the party of the congressional incumbent; there is some cross-pressure. Finally, if the party of person's congressional vote is unknown or missing, then the person is "not sorted by congressional vote"—unsorted.

Figure 2.3 combines the contributions of Table 2.3 by grouping them as indicating (1) a three-way congruence (i.e., a two-way sort) among incumbent's party, congressional vote, and presidential vote; (2) a one-way partisan sort with incumbent's party not aligned with an aligned congressional and presidential vote; and (3) not sorted by congressional vote. Figure 2.3 clearly shows that voters with fewer cross-pressures make larger contributions to their candidate of choice. It also shows that all three groups of voters contribute to Obama's victory margin but by different amounts: three-way congruence =  $+1.21$ ; partisan sort =  $+5.12$ ; unsorted by congressional vote =  $+1.44$ . Their sum is Obama's victory margin of  $+7.77$ , which is largely due to the Democratic partisan-sorted voters. Although the three-way congruent voters and the unsorted voters leaned slightly toward Obama their contributions when compared with the similar contributions for McCain voters were not decisive.<sup>34</sup>

In sum: (1) Democratic congressional incumbency helped Obama more than Republican incumbency helped McCain; (2) the effect of the 2008 congressional vote on aligned presidential vote was larger when the incumbency context was also aligned—Obama benefited more than McCain from this congruence; (3) the difference between the vote of Democratic and Republican partisan-sorted voters benefited Obama much more than McCain, and (4) the unsorted voters supported Obama more than McCain.



**Fig. 2.3** Contributions for Obama and McCain for different sorts of congruence between congressional vote and presidential vote in different incumbency contexts

The remaining two panels (e and f) of Table 2.3 assess the lingering effects of the 2004 presidential election between the Republican George Bush and the Democrat John Kerry. Panel e primarily looks at the effects of voting in that election versus other categories. Among the 0.85368 of the total who voted in 2004, the contribution to Obama’s victory margin is only +0.930 percentage points. Once again, the less politically active voters in 2004 boosted Obama in 2008: the 0.06221 of the total who did not vote in 2004 supported Obama by a contribution +2.803; the 0.07508 of the total who were ineligible or too young, by +3.868; and the 0.00902 of the total who said don’t know or refused, by +0.154. The sum of these contributions enhanced Obama’s victory margin by +6.825, providing most of Obama’s victory margin.

When the data are dichotomized as having voted in 2004 versus “all others,” then the regression models are confirmative: the “all others” category produces a pro-Obama odds ratio of 2.88 (1.85, 4.48). Simultaneous controls for discontent, political party affiliation, ideology, younger people, and African Americans reduce this effect but it retains its statistical significance; the odds ratio is 2.61 (1.02, 6.67).<sup>35</sup> The less politicized people at the time of the 2004 election boosted Obama’s vote in 2008, even when the younger age category is controlled.

Panel f of Table 2.3 clearly shows that voting for a Republican or Democratic candidate in the 2004 presidential election strongly sorts the person’s reported vote in the 2008 presidential election; partisanship persists across elections. The unsorted in 2004—nonvoters and voters for other candidates—boosted Obama’s

vote share in 2008. Among the 0.38517 of the total who voted for John Kerry in 2004, their adjusted contribution to Obama's margin of victory is +31.865 percentage points. However, this contribution is totally offset by the 0.44157 of the total who voted for George Bush in 2004, their adjusted contribution is -31.877 percentage points, for a difference of -0.012. Here Obama's victory margin was largely due to the 0.14632 of the total who were not clearly voters in 2004; their contribution is +6.826. In addition, the previously less committed (voters for Ralph Nader, voters for other candidates, and those who could not say) contributed another +0.938, which is the remaining contribution composing Obama's margin.<sup>36</sup>

The logistic regression models underscore the importance to the Obama vote of previous patterns of presidential voting and nonvoting in 2004. When the voting choice in 2004 is characterized as for Kerry, "all others" (including nonvoting), or for Bush, and with the latter as the reference category, the odds ratios are as follows: (1) the "all others" category for 2004 relative to the Bush Republican voters in 2004 boosts the Obama vote in 2008 by an odds ratio of 21.9 (13.6, 35.2); (2) the Kerry voters in 2004 relative to the Bush Republican voters in 2004 boosts the Obama vote in 2008 by an odds ratio of 80.2 (54.3, 118.35). These effects are reduced but remain statistically significant when discontent, party affiliation, political ideology, younger age, and African American are simultaneously controlled. Now the statistically controlled effects for: (1) the "all others" category for 2004 relative to the Bush Republican voters in 2004 boosts the Obama vote by an odds ratio of 3.67 (1.63, 8.25) versus the earlier 21.9 (13.6, 35.2); and (2) the Kerry voters in 2004 are still Obama voters in 2008, but by a much smaller odds ratio than earlier, 3.88 (2.11, 7.14) versus 80.2 (54.3, 118.35).<sup>37</sup>

Separate tabulations suggest that this reduction in effect and the shrinkage of the difference between Kerry voters and the "all others" category is due largely to the control for party affiliation. Moreover, the effects of the different categories of party affiliation suggest that the categories of Democratic voters have effects that are bit more diverse than the categories of the Republican voters: the Republican-leaners, weak Republicans, and strong Republicans have rather similar effects on the 2008 vote, whereas the effects of Democrat-leaners, weak Democrats, and strong Democrats are more diverse; in addition, the pure Independents supported Obama.

If the Republicans are more politically homogeneous than the Democrats, then they would be less likely to consider the opposition candidate (Obama) as a possible choice, whereas the Democrats, given their diversity, would be more likely to consider the opposition candidate (McCain) as a possible choice. This interpretation can be tested by these questions: the Obama voters were asked if they had considered voting for McCain, and the McCain voters were asked if they considered voting for Obama. Of the Obama voters about 32.6% considered voting for McCain; of the McCain voters about 29% considered voting for Obama. This difference of 3.6 percentage points suggests that the Obama voters were slightly more deliberative; they were willing to consider the other candidates and were less driven by party affiliation.

## 2.6 Discussion

A person's past party voting choices shape his or her future party voting choices but not deterministically, there is some play. Specific facilitating factors may vary from one election to another. In the 2008 election people who voted for Obama, compared with those who voted for McCain, disapproved of Bush's presidency; made up their minds early; and voted early via absentee or mail ballots. Moreover, the less politically active voters—previous nonvoters, young people, African Americans, the “all others” category (i.e., missing responses, refused, other), and voters not sorted by partisanship—boosted Obama's vote share. The party of the incumbent congressperson, a context variable, affected both Obama voters and McCain voters. Partisan-sorted Democratic voters persisted to vote for Obama regardless of the incumbency context, whereas a Democratic incumbency context limited the vote of sorted Republican voters—the political environment of McCain voters was more homogeneous. Democratic voters in 2008 were more diverse than Republican voters; Obama captured the vote of people across the political spectrum: Democrats and liberals, Independents and moderates, and even some Republicans and conservatives.

In 2012 the Obama and the Mitt Romney campaigns made use of findings similar to those of this chapter to increase their vote and reduce that of their opposition. Early on, the Obama campaign went negative, aiming to generate discontent for Romney by attacking his business activities at Bain Capital, which presumably led to the closing of companies and the unemployment of numerous former employees; requesting that Romney disclose his income taxes; and stressing that Romney tax-shelters his fortune via off-shore bank accounts.<sup>38</sup>

The Republicans were aware that African Americans and other minorities, absentee and early voters, and young people generally supported Obama. Consequently, the Republicans at best did nothing to encourage the vote of such people; rather they introduced procedures that might limit their vote.<sup>39</sup> Circa the 2010 midterm elections Republicans instituted redistricting to guarantee safe seats; voter identification and proof-of-citizen requirements in 19 states; provisional ballots, which could be rejected easily if there was a mistake; and complicated ballots, which might delay voters by stretching the time needed to vote, thereby creating long lines that might discourage potential voters. By allowing voting only on election day, which some voters cannot do, this curtails the effects of absentee and early voting, and also increases the exposure of potential voters to political advertisements. By requiring that college students vote in their home town makes it more difficult for younger people to vote. The Democrats vigorously opposed these measures and tried to increase turnout by canvassing potential voters, registering the unregistered, and facilitating the vote of the elderly, infirm, and others in need of transportation to the polling places.

The next chapter continues this analysis of factors bearing on practical voting. It defines individual-level political variables and assigns them to time-ordered blocks. The measures of the political variables form this core mechanism: political

ideology → party affiliation → voting choice. It also defines the macrolevel red-purple-blue (RPB) and human developmental contextual variables, and such microlevel variables as cold economic feelings and the voters' social attributes, which Chap. 4 will use to test this basic mechanism of practical voting.<sup>40</sup>

## Notes

1. These figures were accessed 26 December 2011 from the web site of the Federal Election Commission, <http://www.fec.gov/finance/disclosure/srssea.shtml>, Summary Reports, 2007–2008 Election Cycle, as of December 31, 2008:

Campaign	Total net receipts	Net disbursed	Cash	Debt
Obama	\$778,642,962	\$760,370,195	\$18,272,367	\$434,954
McCain	\$383,913,834	\$358,008,447	\$26,377,840	\$1,603,974

2. The landmark legislation of the first two years of the Obama administration focused on the reform of healthcare insurance, making educational loans available, and regulating powerful economic interests (Skocpol and Jacobs 2011, 44). These changes are consistent with Obama's campaign promises and with the dimensions of the human development index. Hopefully, their implementations will improve the standing of the U.S. on this index.
3. These data are from Table 2, Human Development Index Trends, 1980–2011, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2010*, 148–150, and are based on the 2010 revision of this index.
4. The *American Human Development Report 2008–2009* reports a more severe drop, from second in 1980, 1985, and 1990; to sixth in 1995; to ninth in 2000; and to twelfth in 2005 (Fig. 1.2, 13). This trend is based on the earlier measure of human development. The authors of this American report (Burd-Sharps et al. 2008, 13) did not report that in 1975 the U.S. was tied for sixth, the actual trend is thus more jagged. For the original data see Table 2, UNDP, Human Development Index Trends, *Human Development Report 2007/2008*, 234.
5. These data are from Table 3, Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index, *Human Development Report 2010*, 152–155.
6. Stepan and Linz (2011, Table 3, 844, 847) compare inequality in the U.S. with 21 other countries that compose their “comparison set” of other long-standing democracies in advanced economies. By only studying these similar countries, the variation across all of the countries is missed. By the judicious use of indicator variables, the differences between the U.S. and other long-standing democracies can be quantified readily.
7. See Stepan and Linz (2011, Table 3, 847) for the data.
8. Table 3, Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index, *Human Development Report 2010*, 152–155.

9. Stepan and Linz (2011, Fig. 3, 847); Smith (2011, Table 13.1, 385).
10. Smith (2011, 386–387) discusses the poor showing of the United States on these indicators of the quality of healthcare.
11. Circa May 2012 after his first term in office Obama's job performance ratings, 48% approve and 47.8% disapprove, were considerably better than the 65% disapproval for Bush in November 2008 after his second term in office. About 58.5% in May 2012 thought the country is headed in the wrong direction versus 78% in November 2008. Accessed circa 25 May 2012 from the Real Clear Politics web site.
12. Stuart Stevens, a lead strategist and media consultant for the Mitt Romney campaign in 2012, opined that not taking into account the difference between the percentage-point difference and the contribution to a candidate's margin impaired their campaign (Jamieson 2013, 40–41): "Our goal was always to get up to converting at least 75% of wrong track voters and to get you [the Democrats] at least down to 85% of right track voters. We slowly crept up. On election day we were close to 75% of wrong track voters. The problem was there were fewer of them."
13. Kahneman's (2011, 322–323) analysis of fear of bus bombings in Israel guides this procedure.
14. Helevik (2009) discusses the advantages and limitations of the linear probability model. Murnane (2013, 395–398) applies this model to predict high-school graduation rates.
15. For the initial reports see Greenberg et al. (2008) and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research (2008).
16. In-depth analyses of standard surveys are provided by Kenski et al. (2010) for the 2008 Annenberg Election Survey; Lewis-Beck et al. (2008) for the 2000 and 2004 American National Election Surveys; and Ellis and Stimson (2012) for the General Social Survey. Reanalyses of these datasets most likely would lead to redundant findings.
17. The exit poll data were presented by CNN.com, Election Center 2008, updated, November 17, 2008; accessed for use here on 1 September 2011.
18. This distribution is derived from the variable coded `presev3` in the computer code syntax.
19. To take into account the survey weights the analyses apply the following SAS survey modules: `Proc SurveyFreq`, `Proc SurveyMeans`, `Proc SurveyRegression`, and `Proc SurveyLogistic`. The analyses also apply `Proc Factor`, `Proc Mixed`, `Proc Glimmix` and `Proc Calis`, which do not explicitly provide for survey weights.
20. Separate analyses suggest that evaluating the direction of the country as wrong ( $x$ ) is prior to evaluating Bush's job performance as poor ( $t$ ). The latter mediates the effects of the former on political response variables ( $y$ ).
21. The next chapter disaggregates the items in the discontent index. The item about Bush's job performance shows about the same correlations as the discontent index: Unfavorable job performance is negatively correlated with warm

- feelings for Bush (Spearman  $r_s = -0.723$ ) and positively correlated with voting for Obama ( $r_s = +0.697$ ),  $p < 0.0001$  for both correlations.
22. The recalculated percentages are  $(51.65/95.55) - (43.90/95.55) = 54.06 - 45.94 = 8.12$ .
23. Kenski et al. (2010, 251–264, 304–305) studied absentee and early voting in the 2008 campaign. Their Table 11.4, p. 260 clearly shows that the earlier the vote the larger the Obama edge over McCain. However, the contributions to Obama’s margin of victory of the different categories of time of voting were not reported. The table below does this; showing that the percentage-point differences ( $\delta$ ) strongly favor early voting but the probability adjusted contributions to Obama’s vote are about even across the three categories of time of voting:

Contributions to Obama’s victory margin from Kenski et al. (2010, Table 11.4)

Time of vote	<i>N</i>	Freq. prob.	Obama (%)	McCain (%)	Difference = $\delta$ (%)	Freq. prob. $\times \delta$ (%)
Election day	2074	0.651996	52.6	47.4	5.2	3.4
1 Week	660	0.207482	57.9	42.1	15.8	3.3
prior						
2 Weeks	447	0.140522	62.4	37.6	24.8	3.5
prior						
Marginal prob.	3181	1	55.1	44.9	10.2	10.2

24. SAS’s Proc SurveyLogistic produces the odds ratios and their lower and upper confidence bounds; Proc SurveyReg produces the linear probability effects and the significance of the  $b$  coefficients.
25. With voting for all positions on the ballot as the base, the linear probability effect of only voting for president on voting for Obama is  $b = +0.224$  ( $t = 2.71$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ).
26. When African Americans are the test factor, the linear probability model produces an effect of only voting for the president relative to voting for all positions on the ballot of  $b = +0.093$  ( $t = 1.40$ ,  $p = 0.161$ ), which is not statistically significant.
27. From the linear probability model the effect of not voting in the 2006 congressional election on voting for Obama is  $b = +0.135$  ( $t = 3.65$ ,  $p = 0.0003$ ).
28. When the respondent’s age category is controlled, the linear probability effect of not voting in the 2006 congressional election becomes  $b = +0.074$  ( $t = 1.91$ ,  $p = 0.057$ ), not significant.
29. Political scientists define the relationship between political partisanship (assumed to be a prior variable) and political ideology (assumed to be a consequence) by saying that ideology is sorted by partisanship—Democrats tend to be liberals and Republicans tend to conservatives, but some Democrats and Republicans are moderates. At the extreme, there is polarization: the moderates have moved either to the Democrats or to the Republicans taking on their ideologies, which may have become more radical; the political middle has disappeared. For a very clear explication of the differences between sorting and

mass polarization see Levendusky (2009, 4–8). This chapter generalizes slightly the notion of sorting by studying how the indicators of partisanship (prior variables) sort the vote (a consequence); the indicators of partisanship may be previous presidential voting choices, previous congressional voting choices, and so forth. See Fiorina and Abrams on sorting (2009, 49–74) and the contrasting view of Abramowitz (2013, 1–17) on polarization. Rather than using “polarization” which has different interpretations, the subsequent chapters will refer to differences between extreme categories as “polarities.”

30. In linear probability models, voting Democratic in the 2006 congressional election produces a pro-Obama effect of  $b = 0.693$  ( $t = 31$ ) and “all others” produces a pro-Obama effect of  $b = 0.476$  ( $t = 15.5$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). The latter effect holds with simultaneous controls for discontent, age category, minority status, and gender, the  $b = 0.228$  ( $p < 0.0001$ ).
31. Using the Republican congressional voters in 2008 as the reference category in a linear probability model, the effect of voting Democratic in the 2008 congressional election on Obama vote is  $b = 0.738$  ( $t = 37.4$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ); the smaller effect of “all other” on voting for Obama is  $b = 0.579$  ( $t = 9.7$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). Simultaneous controls for minority ethnicity, age category, gender and discontent do not change the significance of these relationships.
32. Here, the summation is the equivalent of a difference-in-differences (DID) effect: When there is a Democratic incumbent then Obama’s advantage is +12.261 percentage points. When there is a Republican incumbent then McCain’s advantage is +4.504 percentage points. The DID = +12.261 – +4.504 = 7.757 percentage points; Obama’s margin of victory.
33. A linear probability model also confirms the effect of a Democratic congressional incumbent on vote for Obama: the  $b = 0.178$  ( $t = 6.48$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ).
34. A latent class model of the issues of the 1992 election classified the voters along a Left-Center-Right continuum and found that those on the Right were more ideologically consistent than those on the Left. About 69.5% of those on the Right were conservative ideologically, whereas 43.7% of those on the Left were liberals and another 32.6% on the Left were centrists. For details see Smith (2008, 178–182) and Smith ([2003] 2004).
35. In the linear probability model the effect on voting for Obama in 2008 of the “all others” category for the 2004 presidential election is  $b = +0.24$  ( $t = 5.5$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). Simultaneous controls for discontent, political party affiliation, ideology, younger people, and African Americans reduce this effect to  $b = 0.065$ , but it retains its statistical significance ( $t = 2.09$ ,  $p = 0.037$ ).
36. The less ideological political center boosted Bill Clinton’s margin of victory over George H.W. Bush in 1992. Smith (2008, 178–182) and Smith ([2003] 2004) show that among the Left 55.8% identified as Democratic and among the Right 56.3% identified as Republican, about the same percentages. Among the Center, 37.5% identified as Democratic, 29.7% identified as Independent, and 30.5% as Republican.



37. In a linear probability model, the “all others” category for 2004 relative to the Bush Republican voters in 2004 boosts the Obama vote in 2008 by  $b = 0.63$  ( $t = 15.61$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). The Kerry voters relative to the Republican voters in 2004 boosts the Obama vote in 2008 by  $b = 0.795$  ( $t = 44.6$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). These effects remain statistically significant when discontent, party affiliation, ideology, younger age, and African American are simultaneously controlled. But the difference in Obama vote between the Kerry voters and the “all others” voters becomes minimal and the effects shrink: Now the statistically controlled effects for the “all others” category for 2004 relative to the Bush Republican vote in 2004 boosts the Obama vote by  $b = 0.176$  ( $t = 3.83$ ,  $p = 0.0001$ ); and the Kerry voters in 2004 are still Obama voters in 2008, but by a much smaller amount than earlier, the  $b = 0.181$  ( $t = 4.45$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ) versus  $b = 0.795$  ( $t = 44.6$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ).
38. This very brief synopsis of aspects of the 2012 election is consistent with Alexander and Jaworsky’s (2014) cultural account. Implicitly, their theoretical model is one of stimulus and response with the stimuli being the perceptions of candidates made available to the audience of ordinary voters by television, speeches, advertisements, and interpersonal influence.
39. This discussion draws upon Drew (2012), Toobin (2013), and Schlozman et al. (2012). The latter state (2012, 537): “Of the 2018 legislators across nine states that considered voter ID bills between 2005 and 2007, 95.3% of Republicans and 2.2% of the Democrats voted in favor.” They also suggest (2012, 563–564) that voter ID laws do not prevent fraudulent voting, which is very rare in any case, but may depress voter turnout. The recent Supreme Court (June 25, 2013) decision weakens the Voting Rights Act by no longer requiring preclearance with federal agencies for changes in voting laws by nine states mostly in the South.
40. I thank Ruth Leeds Love and anonymous reviewers for their comments that focused my revisions of this present chapter.

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