**Appendix A: Survey Methodologies**

**The 1998 Congressional Campaign Study**

The 1998 Congressional Campaign Study consisted of a survey of all congressional campaigns competing in major-party contested House elections. A letter was sent two weeks before the election to the campaign headquarters of all major-party general election candidates describing the project and requesting an appointment for a telephone interview. The letter included a copy of the survey instrument and invited the respondents to submit their completed questionnaire by fax or mail, instead of answering questions by telephone. Twenty-three percent of the respondents exercised the fax/mail option. The remaining 77 percent participated in telephone interviews that were conducted November 4-13, 1998. The response rate for the entire survey was 44 percent and the sample represents the underlying population of candidates on important characteristics such as party, status, and electoral success (see Table A-1).

**Voter News Service Exit Poll Methodology**

The VNS methodology for 1998 is stated in its codebook: "The samples were selected in two stages. First, a probability sample of voting precincts within each state was selected that represents the different geographic areas across the state and the vote by party. Precincts were selected with a probability proportionate to the number of voters in each precinct. Each voter in a state had the same chance to have his or her precinct selected. There is one exception. In some states precincts that have large minority populations were sampled at a higher rate than other precincts…. Second, within each precinct, voters were sampled systematically throughout the voting day at a rate that gave

all voters in a precinct the same chance of being interviewed" (Voter News Service 1998, 8).

The VNS polled in 42 states (they did not poll in Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Mississippi, Montana, New Jersey, Virginia, and West Virginia). The sample represents the underlying population of voters on important characteristics such as party identification, gender, education, ideology, age, and race (see Table A-2). Except for education, where there is a substantively small difference, there is no statistical difference between respondents included in our sample, and those that are not included in sample.

## Appendix B: Variable Operationalization

**Republican incumbent**
1=Republican incumbent, 0=Democratic incumbent

**Campaign communications spending**
Candidates were asked, "Approximately what percentage of your campaign's total budget was spent on each of the following five categories," one of which was communications and voter contact. To calculate campaign communications spending, we multiplied the proportion of the total campaign budget spent on communications and voter contact with the Federal Election Committee's figure for candidate expenditures minus inter-candidate transfers. We then took the natural logarithm of that spending.

**Perceived Democratic media advantage:**
Our measure of media coverage advantage was created using three questions from the survey, which appear below (the numerical coding for response items are in parenthesis):

*Did your campaign receive a great deal, some, very little, or no media coverage at all?*
　　　*none at all* (1)　　　*very little* (2)　　　*some* (3)　　*a great deal* (4)

*Do you believe the news media covered the campaign fairly?*
　　　*Yes* (1)　　　*No* (2)

*If the media coverage was not fair, did the coverage favor your campaign or did it favor your opponent's campaign?*
　　　　*The media coverage favored your campaign* (1)
　　　　*The media coverage favored your opponent's campaign* (2)

We calculated the media coverage variable by subtracting the Republican candidate's media coverage from the Democrat's. If the coverage of the Democrat's campaign was not fair because it favored the Republican candidate, positive media advantage scores were changed to negative scores by multiplying by negative one. The hypothetical range for the variable is [−4, 4], but the observed range is [−2, 2].

**Conservative ideology**
*On most political matters, do you consider yourself:*
　　　*Liberal* (−1)　*Moderate* (0)　*Conservative* (1)

**Partisan affiliation**
Partisan affiliation is measure by two dummy variables coded for Democratic voters and Republican voters. The variables are recodes of the following question:
*No matter how you voted today, do you usually think of yourself as a:*
　　　*Democrat* (1)
　　　*Republican* (2)
　　　*Independent or something else* (3)

**Female voter**
*Are you:          Male (0)          Female (1)*

**Minority voter:**
Minority voter is a dummy variable recoded from the following question:

*Are you:          White (0)          Black (1)          Hispanic/Latino (1)     Asian (1)          Other (1)*

**50 or older**
50 or older is a dummy variable coded as one for the last two response categories of the following question:

*To which age group do you belong?*
          *18-24  (0)                    40-49  (0)*
          *25-29  (0)                    50-64  (1)*
          *30-39  (0)                    65 or over  (1)*

**College graduate**
College graduate is a dummy variable coded as one for the last two response categories of the following question:

*What was the last grade of school you completed?*
          *Did not complete high school  (0)*
          *High school graduate  (0)*
          *Some college, but no degree  (0)*
          *College graduate  (1)*
          *Post graduate study  (1)*

**Issue agreement and issue ownership**
The Congressional Campaign Survey asked candidates:

*Which one issue facing the country or your district was featured the most in your campaign advertising? Please circle only one from the following list:*
> *Education*
> *Taxes*
> *Clinton/Lewinsky matter*
> *Social security*
> *Health care*
> *Moral/Ethical standards*
> *Crime/Drugs*
> *Economy*

The Voter News Service asked voters:

*Which one issue mattered most in deciding how you voted for U.S. House?*
*(Check only one)*
> *Education*
> *Taxes*
> *The Clinton/Lewinsky matter*
> *Social Security*
> *Health care*
> *Moral and ethical standards*
> *Economy/jobs*

Voter agreement with Democrat on a Democrat-owned issue is coded one when the voter and the Democratic candidate name the same Democrat-owned issue (education, Social Security, or health care). Voter agreement with Republican on a Republican-owned issue is coded one when the voter and the Republican candidate named the same Republican-owned issue (taxes, the Clinton/Lewinsky matter, or moral/ethical standards). If the voter did not state an issue, then that voter is coded as agreeing with neither candidate.[1]

**Notes**


[1] Excluding voters who did not state a most important issue does not affect the results. Although some respondents did not state a most important issue, this option was not included in the VNS question wording, so some respondents may have stated an issue even though none of the listed issues were important to their vote decision. Since such voters could be included among those who matched a candidate's issue, but the issue would not affect the voter's vote, such miscategorization works against our hypotheses, and strengthens the test.

Table A-1. The Representativeness of the 1998 Congressional Survey

|  | Survey Respondents | All Candidates |
|---|---|---|
| **Candidate Status** | | |
| Incumbents | 46% | 52% |
| Challengers | 45 | 39 |
| Open seats | 9 | 9 |
| | | |
| **Electoral Success** | | |
| Winners | 47 | 44 |
| Losers | 52 | 56 |
| | | |
| **Party Affiliation** | | |
| Democrats | 45 | 49 |
| Republicans | 55 | 51 |
| | | |
| ( N ) | (336) | (771) |

Table A-2. The Representativeness of Exit Poll Respondents Included in the Analysis

|  | All Respondents | Analysis Subset |
|---|---|---|
| **Party** | | |
| Democrat | 38.7% | 38.4% |
| Republican | 33.3 | 34.4 |
| Independent | 28.0 | 27.2 |
| (N) | (10723) | (849) |
| **Ideology** | | |
| Liberal | 20.0% | 19.6% |
| Moderate | 49.9 | 48.2 |
| Conservative | 30.1 | 32.3 |
| (N) | (10572) | (849) |
| **Sex** | | |
| Male | 48.4% | 48.2% |
| Female | 51.6 | 51.8 |
| (N) | (11254) | (849) |
| **Race** | | |
| White | 81.0% | 83.9% |
| Black | 11.7 | 9.1 |
| Hispanic | 5.2 | 5.1 |
| Asian | 1.1 | 1.1 |
| Other | 1.1 | 0.9 |
| (N) | (11280) | (849) |
| **Age** | | |
| 18-24 | 5.6% | 4.0% |
| 25-29 | 6.7 | 5.7 |
| 30-39 | 19.0 | 21.0 |
| 40-49 | 25.4 | 24.5 |
| 50-64 | 26.8 | 29.3 |
| 65+ | 16.5 | 15.6 |
| (N) | (11312) | (849) |
| **Education** | | |
| Did not complete high school | 4.6% | 3.2% |
| High school graduate | 22.2 | 18.5 |
| Some college, no degree | 27.8 | 28.0 |
| College degree | 27.0 | 29.3 |
| Postgraduate study | 18.4 | 21.0 |
| (N) | (5394) | (849) |

Notes:  As some respondents did not answer each question (or were not asked a question), the N's for each category differ for "All Respondents."  There is no statistical difference (using a chi-squared independence test) between the respondents included in our analysis and those excluded, except in education, where those included are slightly more educated.