Direct Democracy, Agendas, and Presidential Vote:
Gay Marriage and the 2004 Election

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Abstract

This study draws from agenda-setting and issue priming theories to develop hypotheses about how state-level ballot propositions may affect presidential elections. We propose that ballot measures prime voters to evaluate candidates in terms of policy questions placed on their state ballot. We test if concerns about gay marriage in 2004 had greater salience for voters in states where proposals to ban gay marriage were on the ballot, and test the impact of gay marriage on presidential vote choice. We find that gay marriage was more likely to be cited as an issue used to evaluate candidates by some residents of states with marriage ban propositions. We also find respondents who were concerned about gay marriage who resided in states with the issue on the ballot were more likely to vote for Bush. The research is among the first to show that state ballot propositions may have subtle but important effects in presidential elections.
Statewide ballot measures have the capacity to affect electoral politics in important, albeit indirect ways. The mechanisms of direct democracy (initiatives and referenda) are known to have effects on public policy (Gerber 1999; Matsusaka 2005), but also on the electoral environment. Ballot measure use has been found to be associated with increases in voters’ factual political knowledge (Smith 2002), with higher levels of political efficacy (Bowler and Donovan 2002; Mendelsohn and Cutler 2000; Smith and Tolbert 2004), with greater interest group diversity (Boehmke 2002), and with higher voter participation (Smith 2001; Tolbert and Smith 2005). Although the aggregate effects of initiative use on turnout are well established, research on the national agenda-setting effects of state-level ballot measures is only beginning to emerge. Public votes on highly salient policy questions such as California’s tax limitation Proposition 13 and various term limits initiatives have had consequences for policy diffusion to other states as well as consequences for the national political agenda. Are there spillover effects of ballot propositions on presidential races as well? At present, we know relatively little about how ballot measures may simultaneously shape the national agenda and prime candidate vote choice in a presidential election.

We approach these issues from the perspective of the 2004 presidential contest. A number of studies have largely dismissed the possibility that state-level ballot measures banning gay marriage had a decisive effect in 2004 (Abramowitz 2004; Burden 2004; Hillygus and Shields 2005). We move beyond the issue of whether these measures were decisive and examine the potential agenda-setting and priming effects of such ballot
measures in presidential contests. Under-appreciating the effect of ballot propositions on candidate races may be an outgrowth of the scholarly skepticism that campaigns themselves have only “minimal effects” on vote choice (e.g. Campbell 2004; Erickson 1989; Lewis-Beck 1988). Yet, there is considerable evidence to the contrary to suggest that campaigns do matter, and that policy issues influence voting (Bartels 1993; Finkel 1993; Gelman and King 1993; Holbrook 1996).

We build on Nicholson’s (2005) work to develop a theory of how state-level ballot measures can influence presidential elections, proposing agenda-setting and issue priming hypotheses about the effects of the same-sex marriage ballot measures of 2004. We contend that some statewide ballot measures may have effects that alter citizen’s evaluations of candidates. Although Nicholson found that ballot propositions have the potential to prime voters’ evaluations of gubernatorial and congressional candidates (particularly in low-information midterm elections), he does not consider the national effects of ballot measures in high-information presidential elections. We test our hypotheses by examining the impact that gay marriage ballot measures may have had on presidential vote choice. Given the electoral college, close presidential elections have historically turned on outcomes in key swing states. We demonstrate that the use of direct democracy in these states appears to have had subtle but potentially important effects on presidential vote choice in 2004.

Using opinion data from a unique national panel survey conducted just prior to and immediately after the 2004 contest, we test if ballot propositions altered the issue agenda in some states by increasing the salience of gay marriage as an issue concern, and test if the issue had a priming effect on evaluations of the presidential candidates. We
then use opinion data from the swing state of Ohio to illustrate how the ballot measure was associated with support for George W. Bush.

**Ballot Propositions and the Agenda**

Studies suggest that candidates and party officials view ballot issue campaigns as an indirect means to increase turnout for “their” candidates (Garrett 2004; Schrag 1998). Research also finds that voters make decisions on ballot measures by drawing on an array of elite and partisan cues (Lupia 1994) and that partisanship is the most powerful predictor of voting behavior in direct democracy (Branton 2003; Kahn and Matsusaka 1997; Snyder 1996). Since ballot measures may increase turnout (Smith 2001) and voters view these measures in partisan terms, ballot measures may have the capacity to affect the electorate by motivating partisan supporters or opponents of a particular issue. Candidates and parties have used state ballot measures as “wedge” issues in attempts to divide a rival party’s base of supporters (e.g. California’s Anti-illegal immigrant Proposition 187), and as vehicles to force political opponents to divert campaign resources away from other opportunities (Smith and Tolbert 2001). Observers have also noted many instances of the self-promotional uses of ballot propositions by candidates (Chavez 1998; Hasen 2000; Nicholson 2005; Schrag 1998). Although these campaigns are often limited to specific issues in individual states, there is evidence that some ballot issues have broad effects on national electoral politics.

Nicholson (2005) provides the most systematic demonstration that ballot measures have broad, national effects on electoral politics by shaping the issues voters use when evaluating state and congressional candidates. It is not unheard of, for
example, for a single ballot issue with a nominally coordinated national campaign to appear simultaneously on many statewide ballots. Ten states and several major cities had Nuclear Freeze measures on their ballots in conjunction with the November 1982 congressional elections (Nicholson 2005), and in November 1992 voters in 10 states were presented with term limits initiatives.

As Nicholson (2005) demonstrates with the Nuclear Freeze, ballot measures can have a powerful effect on priming the agenda in national elections even if candidates themselves avoid overt discussions of issues placed on states’ ballots. Although there is debate about the relative effect policy issues have on presidential vote choice (e.g. Holbrook 1996), a large body of work establishes that candidate choice is influenced by issues, particularly if information about the issues is available to voters (Bartels 1988; Gelman and King 1993; Popkin 1991; Repass 1971).

How then, does an issue rise to the point where it is on the agenda of items that voters might consider when evaluating presidential candidates? There are several potential vehicles, including overt statements made by candidates themselves. Iyengar and Kinder (1987) note how media attention to an issue can structure how (or if) voters use the issue when evaluating candidates. Exposure to information about a particular issue can prime voters to consider that issue when evaluating candidates (e.g. McCombs and Shaw 1972; Rogers and Deering 1988 for reviews). Voters may make links between issues and candidates even when no such explicit link is made in the information presented to them, and voters need not be conscious of an explicit link in order to make such connections (Higgins 1996; Mendelberg 2001; Valentino 1999). Nicholson (2005) demonstrates that initiatives and referenda also have the capacity to prime voters’
attention to an issue that is the subject of a public vote, to the point that voters may evaluate candidates in terms of the ballot question. Key ballot measures that receive sufficient attention can thus play a role in conditioning the voter's information environment and provide a tool to increase media attention devoted to a particular issue.

We expand on Nicholson’s work by hypothesizing that ballot propositions may have agenda setting and priming effects on evaluations of presidential candidates, potentially altering the bundle of issues that some voters associate with each candidate. Nicholson (2005) does not examine the agenda setting and priming effect of direct democracy in presidential elections. At present, we know relatively little about how ballot measures may shape the national agenda and prime evaluations of presidential candidates.

**Gay Marriage and the 2004 Presidential Election**

We suggest that gay marriage ballot measures may have played a priming role in the 2004 presidential race. Gay rights measures have been recurring, often polarizing issues on state ballots since the late 1970s (e.g. Haider-Markel and Meier 1996). In 2004, social conservative activists and state legislators placed anti-gay marriage questions on the ballot in 13 states, 11 that Bush won in 2000. Five states were considered competitive early in the campaign.¹ Every measure passed, receiving 70% support on average.²

Our focus here is on how these state-level policy questions may have affected national electoral politics. Although the presidential candidates dedicated little time to overt discussion of the topic, gay marriage emerged as a galvanizing issue early in the
2004 election cycle. Citing a Massachusetts court ruling and actions of the City and County of San Francisco, George W. Bush promoted the need for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage in February 2004. Over the summer, the US Senate rejected that amendment, but the issue was kept alive where state constitutional questions were placed on the November 2004 ballot.³

A national coalition of religious conservative groups, which included Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, and the Family Research Council, formed in early 2004 “to defend traditional marriage in the wake of a court decision requiring marriage or marriage-type rights for homosexual couples” (Michigan Family Forum 2004). In seven states, measures were referred to the ballot by the legislature. In six other states, citizen-group’s petition efforts placed the questions on ballots as initiatives. We suggest that media attention associated with legislative battles, state-level petition drives for initiatives, lawsuits attempting to block the measures, as well as campaigns associated with these issues, combined to generate more interest and information about gay marriage in these states than elsewhere, thus subtly altering the context of the presidential election in these states.

State-level campaigns over gay marriage were active, yet largely low-budget affairs; collecting signatures in and out of churches and making use of grass-roots volunteers and churches to distribute campaign literature. The Ohio Campaign to Protect Marriage began collecting signatures in May 2004, submitting 575,000 signatures by August. In Michigan, Citizens for the Protection of Marriage submitted 500,000 signatures to place a constitutional amendment on that state’s November ballot (Montemurri and Bello 2004). In Oregon, the Defense of Marriage Coalition and the
Oregon Family Council began collecting signatures in late May. The Coalition, founded by the chair of the Multnomah County Republican Party collected 244,000 signatures to qualify the Oregon amendment by July (Kaushik 2004).

Although many prominent Republicans in several states opposed the ban, partisan divisions behind the issue were made clear by gay marriage ban campaigns and associated media attention. Well-placed Bush surrogates in gay-marriage ban states also worked to link Kerry to supporting gay marriage. The Ohio campaign placed over 3.3 million phone calls (in a state where 5.6 million citizens cast votes) featuring Ohio’s Republican Secretary of State (who co-chaired Bush’s state election campaign) to promote Amendment 1 (Siegell 2004). In Arkansas, where roughly 1 million votes were cast, GOP Gov. Mike Huckabee (Bush’s campaign chair in the state) used same-sex marriage to define a “clear difference” between Bush and Kerry. The Republican National Committee sent direct mail to Arkansas voters linking gay marriage to “The Liberal Agenda,” and the Yes on Amendment 3 campaign distributed 500,000 cards to potential voters, primarily through churches (Barth and Parry 2005). The Detroit Free Press reported that African American voters in Michigan received thousands of “robo calls” urging them to vote for Kerry in order to promote the Democrat’s goal of defending gay marriage.4

Gay Marriage as an Agenda Issue

Given these campaigns and associated media attention where they occurred, gay marriage had the potential to be an issue that some voters used when evaluating the presidential candidates. Public opinion data collected by the Pew Foundation5 in mid
October 2004 demonstrate that voters across the nation were attentive to ballot measures: 42% of respondents in a national sample reported being aware of policy questions (initiatives or referendums) on their state’s November ballot.6 When asked an open-ended question about which issues were on their ballot, gambling and gay marriage were most frequently cited in the national sample, respectively. In the 13 states where gay marriage measures qualified 45% of respondents who answered the open-ended question mentioned that it was on their state’s ballot, indicating broad awareness of the policy. The Pew survey also measured voter concerns about a fixed-list of 16 policy issues, including gay marriage. Terrorism, the economy, Iraq, jobs, and education ranked highest nationally, but 32% of voters cited gay marriage as being “very important” to them in making their decision about which presidential candidate to vote for.7

Hypotheses

We propose specific hypotheses about how gay marriage affected voting in the 2004 presidential election. First, as for agenda setting, we expect that respondents in states with gay marriage bans on their ballot were more likely to consider gay marriage as an issue concern when assessing presidential candidates than people in states without such measures. We also test if the effect of agenda setting was conditional. Specifically, we expect that fundamentalist / evangelical Christians may have already been attentive to the gay marriage question, leaving other voters who may otherwise pay less attention to gay marriage to be those most receptive to agenda setting effects of the ballot propositions. To gauge the issue’s agenda-setting potential, we model national opinion data to test whether individuals residing in states with gay marriage propositions were
more likely to believe that gay marriage was “very important” in their choice of presidential candidates.

We also expect that state-level campaigns associated with the gay marriage bans primed voters to consider the issue when making their choice for president. We use pre and post election national opinion data to test if the effect of gay marriage concerns on presidential vote was conditioned by whether individuals resided in a state where the issue was on the ballot. Finally, we suggest the gay marriage ban issue might have benefited Bush in Ohio by priming people to associate Bush with support for the popular marriage ban (and Kerry with support for gay marriage). We examine this by estimating vote choice in Ohio with an interaction term that measures support for the ban multiplied by how much the respondent reported being motivated to turnout by the ballot proposition.

**Data, Methods and Results**

To assess these hypotheses, we analyze data from a 2004 Pew Research Center national panel survey. The pre-election survey was conducted between October 15-19 and included 1307 registered voters representing all fifty states. The post-election survey re-interviewed respondents from the October survey who reported they voted in November.\(^8\) We also analyze pooled data from three 2004 pre-election Ohio statewide surveys conducted in September, October and November.

**Testing for Agenda Setting and Issue Priming**

The Pew pre-election survey asked, “In making your decision about who to vote for in the presidential election, how important will the issue of gay marriage be?”
Respondents indicating “very important” were coded 1, with those indicating “somewhat important,” “not too important,” or “not at all important” coded 0. Given response bias in measuring attitudes about controversial issues, this question wording provides a meaningful benchmark of a person’s policy concerns. Similar question wording was used to measure respondent concerns about other issues.\(^9\)

In Table 1 (Column 1), we report a logistic regression model estimating if someone reported that gay marriage was a “very important” issue for them when considering the presidential candidates.\(^{10}\) The primary independent variable used to predict concern about gay marriage is a dummy representing residence in one of the 13 states where the gay marriage ban was placed on the ballot.\(^{11}\)

Given findings that Republicans and Protestants are less supportive of ballot measures extending rights to gays and lesbians (Loftus 2001), we account for religion with a dummy variable representing self-identified Protestants. As a more restrictive test, we also estimate models with religion measured by a question asking respondents if they described themselves as “born again, evangelical Christian or fundamentalist Christian.”\(^{12}\) Partisanship is represented with two dummies for Republicans and Democrats, respectively, with independents serving as the reference group. Past studies establish that education is associated with support for civil liberties for gays and lesbians (Loftus 2001; Sniderman et al 1991). Studies of opinions about homosexuality have also found that heterosexual men and women reason differently about gays and lesbians, respectively, with heterosexual men less likely than heterosexual women to support recognition of same-sex relationships (Herek 2002). Women are also less likely than men to condemn homosexuality on morality grounds, while blacks may be more likely
than whites to do so (Loftus 2001:772-3). Thus, our models also control for education (an ordinal scale), gender (1=female, 0=male), race/ethnicity (1=white, 0=other), as well as age (in years) and income (an ordinal scale).\textsuperscript{13}

Our estimates of vote choice also control for the importance of major issues that voters may have used when evaluating the 2004 presidential candidates, including concerns about terrorism, the economy, and the Iraq War.\textsuperscript{14} To address the possibility of endogeneity, or non-random placement of the gay marriage propositions on 2004 state ballots,\textsuperscript{15} we control the share of the vote for Bush in the 2000 presidential elections in the respondent’s state.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{Agenda-setting Results}

Table 1 (Column 1) illustrates that after accounting for these factors, respondents living in states where the gay marriage ban was on the ballot were more likely to mention that the issue was very important in their consideration of the presidential candidates. Partisanship, religion, education, race, and gender also affect the likelihood that a respondent said the issue was very important in their presidential vote. Republicans, Protestants, non-whites, those with less education, and women were significantly more likely, respectively, to say that gay marriage was a very important issue for them when considering the presidential candidates.

These data suggest that same-sex marriage ballot measures may have subtly affected the policy agenda for some voters residing in states where the issue was on the ballot. Our point is not that voters paid close attention to positions that Bush or Kerry took on this issue, nor that the candidate’s campaigns brought direct attention to the gay
marriage issue. Rather, the presence of a highly visible, controversial policy question on a state’s ballot may have altered the issues and the weights that some voters assigned to issues when judging the candidates. These results are consistent with Nicholson’s (2005:20) theory of the agenda-setting capacity of ballot measures.

Table 1 about here

Given that many fundamentalist / evangelical Christians nationally may have had higher levels of concern about gay marriage than other voters prior to the campaign, we test if the agenda setting effect of these ballot measures was conditional on whether a respondent was a fundamentalist / evangelical Christian or not. The second model in Table 1 (Column 2) is specified with a measure identifying born again / evangelical / fundamentalist Christian and an interaction term that identifies the conditional relationship between religion and residence in a state with a gay marriage ban proposition. In this model the coefficient for marriage ban state reflects the conditional effect of residing in one of these states for a person who is not a born again / evangelical / fundamentalist Christian. Conversely, the term for religion in Column 2 now represents the effect of being a fundamentalist Christian living a non-marriage ban state (Jaccard et al 1990:26-7).

The marriage ban state coefficient is positive and statistically significant in Column 2 of Table 1 meaning that nationally, people who were not fundamentalist Christians were more likely to believe gay marriage was an important issue in the presidential election if they lived in a state with a marriage ban measure. The coefficient for religion in this model demonstrates that born again / fundamentalist / evangelical Christians nationally were substantially more likely to say they would use gay marriage as an issue when voting for president. Probability simulations are useful for interpreting
the magnitude of the estimates reported in Table 1, Column 2. Clarify simulations where other variables are set to their mean/modal values illustrate that born again / fundamen talist Christians residing in states with a gay marriage proposition had a .43 probability of naming gay marriage as a “very important” issue. A similar born again / fundamentalist Christian respondent from a state without a ban measure is estimate to have a .46 probability of naming gay marriage as very important. Thus the negative coefficient for the interaction term translates into a nominal .03 difference. Nationally, born again Christians had relatively high levels of concern about gay marriage whether they resided in a state with a ban or not.

The story is considerably different for respondents who were not fundamentalist / evangelical Christians. Holding other variables constant at their modal or mean values, a person who was not a fundamentalist Christian in a state without a gay marriage ban is estimated to have had just a .23 probability of naming the issue as a very important issue in the election. This probability increases to a .32 for a similar respondent residing in a state with a gay marriage ban on the ballot; a .09 probability increase. These simulations reveal a modest but significant agenda setting effect of the gay marriage bans for people who were not fundamentalist / evangelical Christians. This is consistent with our assumption that fundamentalist / evangelical Christians may have had pre-existing concerns about the issue, leaving other voters to be subject to the agenda setting effect.17

The final model in Table 1 (Column 3) includes an additional control (state Bush vote in 2000) to account for the possibility that marriage ban measures may have been placed on ballots in states where voters already thought the issue was important. The results are largely consistent with those reported in Column 2 when this control and
others (see note 16) are used to account for factors that might have led to greater likelihood of a state being receptive to the gay marriage bans. Again, these models provide evidence of the agenda setting effect of the gay marriage ballot measures in the 2004 presidential election.

**Issue Priming Results**

But did concern about gay marriage associated with residing in a marriage ban state affect how people voted for President? Table 2 reports estimations of presidential vote choice modeled as a function of concerns about gay marriage. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the respondent reported an intention to vote Bush, 0 if Kerry or other. In Column 1 we find a significant effect of concern about the gay marriage issue on support for Bush. This effect holds when controlling for partisanship, age, gender, race, religion, income, education and concerns about terrorism, the economy and Iraq. Table 3 displays predicted probabilities estimated by the model displayed in Table 2, Column 1. Setting the control variables at their means or modal values, the model predicts that a white Protestant, female independent with mean levels of education, age and income who believed Iraq, terrorism and the economy were also very important in evaluating the presidential candidates (modal responses) had a .48 probability of supporting Bush if she believed that gay marriage was a not “very important issue” for evaluating the candidates; this increases to a predicted .57 probability if she did believe that gay marriage was a very important issue; a .09 difference. As we discuss below, this difference is much more pronounced when we account for residence in a state with a gay marriage ban on the ballot.
The remaining models in Table 2 are specified to test if there was an accentuated effect of gay marriage on Bush support in states with gay marriage bans on the ballot. We represent this with an interaction term (resides in ban state * gay marriage a very important issue), and find that voters living in states with marriage ban measures who also considered gay marriage a very important issue were significantly more likely to vote for Bush. We suggest this interaction reflects the priming effect of these anti-gay marriage ballot measures. The effect on voting of thinking that the issue was very important depended on whether a respondent lived where there was a statewide campaign against gay marriage. If one lived in a state with the issue on the ballot and believed that the gay marriage issue was very important, this interacted to increase the probability of voting for Bush.

The model in Column 3 (Table 2) demonstrates that this priming effect holds when we use a more restrictive measure of religion and when we control for the potential that state gay marriage bans appeared in states where there might have been heightened concerns about gay marriage. This model includes a variable measuring the share of the vote for Bush in the 2000 presidential elections, and a variable identifying born again/evangelical or fundamentalist Christians. Not surprisingly, individuals residing in "redder" states were more likely to vote for Bush in 2004, as were born again Christians. Estimations not shown due to space constraints indicate that the significant priming effect of the gay marriage bans also remains when we replace the Bush 2000 vote control with measures of state public opinion on homosexuality, or the probability a state would have a gay marriage measure. The primary finding is robust across alternate specifications: individuals who lived in states with...
gay marriage bans on the ballot and who thought gay marriage was a very important issue were more likely to vote for Bush.

The magnitude of this interaction is substantial, as can be seen in Table 3. A respondent living in a state without a marriage ban on the ballot who believed the issue not was very important when evaluating the candidates is predicted to have a .49 probability of supporting Bush. In contrast, the probability of supporting Bush was .57 for a demographically identical respondent in a non-ban state who said gay marriage was very important. The probability of supporting for Bush increases to .69 for a similar respondent in a state with a marriage measure who said gay marriage was very important.

Probability simulations reported in Table 3 indicate that voter concerns about gay marriage were less important nationally than other issues, but were substantively significant when compared to issue concerns that dominated the 2004 election. The Pew survey found 78% citing the economy as a very important issue for evaluating the candidates, 77% citing terrorism, 74% Iraq, compared to citing 32% gay marriage. Although voters concerned about the economy and the Iraq war were much less likely to vote for Bush, and those worried about terrorism and were much more likely to vote for Bush, a comparison of the substantive magnitude of these issue concerns is telling. Concerns about gay marriage, while held among a relatively small proportion of voters, is associated with a .20 increased probability of voting Bush for respondents in states with anti gay marriage campaigns, all else equal. Our simulations illustrate that this effect of concerns about gay marriage in marriage ban states rivaled that of more widely held concerns about the Iraq war (a .17 drop in probability of Bush support), but were smaller than the effect of the widely held concerns about the economy (which corresponded with a .28 decline in probability of supporting Bush). The
effect on individual vote choice of concerns about gay marriage in ban states was about half that of the effect of broadly held concerns about terrorism (a .39 increase in probability of Bush support). In sum, the effect of the gay marriage concerns was localized, but the issue seems to have played a larger role where it was on a state's ballot.

As a further test of the effect of gay marriage measures on the 2004 presidential vote we replicated this analysis with the addition of data from the post election wave of the Pew panel study. These estimates are reported in Table 2 (Column 4). In this specification we continue to measure issue concerns used to evaluate presidential candidates (and controls) at mid-October, with reported vote measured immediately after the election. This allows us to estimate reported presidential vote with the issue concerns a respondent cited during the campaign. These estimates of reported vote confirm that respondents who said gay marriage was very important during the campaign who resided in a state where the issue was on the ballot were significantly more likely to report voting for Bush after the election, all else equal.

Finally, probability simulations based on the model in Column 3 Table 2 suggest the potential priming effect of the gay marriage ban campaigns on voting may have been slightly larger for people who did not identify themselves as born again / fundamentalist / evangelical Christians. Simulations show a median/modal respondent in a state without a marriage ban, who did not identify as a fundamentalist but believed gay marriage was very important had a .42 (s.e.=.07) probability of supporting Bush. A similar respondent in a state with a marriage ban is predicted to have a .57 probability (s.e.=.09) , a .15 increase. Conversely, a fundamentalist in a non-ban state who thought gay marriage was very important is estimated to have a .65 probability of supporting Bush (s.e.=.07),
compared to a .77 (s.e. = .08) probability for a similar respondent in a ban state; a .12 increase.

**Gay Marriage and Presidential Vote Choice in a Battleground State**

The national data demonstrate that gay marriage was more important in affecting vote choice for president in states with marriage ban measures than in states without. State-level surveys that asked respondents how they would vote on the gay marriage ban help illustrate how specific gay marriage ban measures may have been associated with candidate choice in a critical state.\(^1\) We pooled data from three Ohio opinion surveys into one sample to examine how the gay marriage measure may have affected voting in Ohio in 2004.\(^2\)

We use the Ohio data to estimate if a respondent intended to vote for Bush, with a Bush vote coded as 1 and for Kerry or a third party candidate as 0. Rather than asking if gay marriage was an important issue concern, the Ohio surveys asked respondents if they were "motivated" to turnout and vote because of the ballot measure, and if they supported or opposed it. We represent the priming potential of the marriage ban measure in Ohio with a term representing whether a respondent reported being very motivated to turnout by the ballot measure, interacted with a variable representing whether the respondent supported the gay marriage ban. Motivation is measured by responses to the question, "How much does your support or opposition to ballot measures in this election motivate you to vote" ranging from 4, "very motivating," to 1 for "not at all motivating." The marriage ban question was the only measure on the Ohio ballot in 2004. We expect that
respondents who supported the ban and who reported being motivated by the issue were more likely to support Bush.

We include control variables similar to those in our other models, including: education, gender, race (a dummy for white non-Hispanic), age (in years), and controls for party (dummy variables assuming the value of 1 if individuals were Democrats or Republicans, respectively). No questions about the religion were included in the Ohio surveys, so we include a county-level contextual measure of the percent of individuals who were Protestants based on the 2000 census, and merged this with the individual level survey responses.

Table 4 about here

Table 4 demonstrates that, not surprisingly, supporters of the gay marriage ban were significantly more likely to indicate they would vote for Bush (Column 1). The model in Column 2 adds the interaction term representing respondents who said they supported the ban who also reported that they were motivated to turnout because of the ballot measure. The coefficient for this interaction term is positive and statistically significant. Individuals who supported Ohio's marriage ban amendment who also reported being motivated by it were significantly more likely to support Bush. Clarify simulations estimated from the second model in Table 4 show that a median/modal Ohio respondent who supported the gay marriage ban who reported she was not motivated to turnout by the measure had a .46 (s.e.=.07) probability of supporting Bush, whereas a similar respondent who supported the ban and who was motivated by the measure had a .61 (s.e.=.06) probability of supporting Bush, a .15 increase. Given the lack of an individual level control for religion, these results should be interpreted with caution.
As one would expect, when we replicate the models in Table 4 to estimate Kerry vote (estimates available from the authors) we find opposition to the marriage ban had a strong association with support for Kerry. When an interaction between opposition to the marriage ban and being motivated by the ban is included in a model estimating Kerry support, we find that marriage ban opponents who were motivated by the issue were even more likely to support Kerry. However, Clarify simulations from the estimates of Kerry vote suggest that Kerry had less to gain from opponents of the gay marriage ban than Bush had to gain from supporters. Respondents who reported being opposed to the ban who said they were not motivated by the issue had an estimated .55 (s.e.=.08) probability of supporting Kerry, whereas those opposed to the ban who were motivated by it had a .64 (s.e.= 06) probability of supporting Kerry; a .09 difference.

Although our data are not well suited for sorting out the causal processes affecting voting in Ohio, these results suggest that voters who supported the gay marriage ban but were not motivated by it had a roughly even probability of supporting Bush (their probability of voting Bush = .46 +/- s.e. = .39 to .53). Marriage ban supporters who were (or became) very motivated by the marriage ban issue appear to have been much more likely Bush supporters. Kerry, in contrast, may have received support from opponents of the marriage ban even if they were not motivated by the issue (their probability of voting Kerry = .55 +/- 1 s.e = .47 to .63). This suggests that any mobilization of concerns about gay marriage may have had more potential to move some people toward Bush than toward Kerry. These Ohio results compliment what we find in the national data demonstrating that concern about gay marriage interacted with the marriage ban campaigns to increase the likelihood a respondent supported Bush.
Conclusion

Our analysis demonstrates that state ballot propositions may have agenda setting effects and priming effects in presidential elections. State-level institutions of direct democracy provide a mechanism that may be used to shape the issues voters consider in presidential elections and prime voter choice. Our study moves beyond existing literature by demonstrating that ballot propositions may not only affect state level voter turnout, and prime evaluations of candidates at the state level, but that they may also affect presidential elections. This builds on Nicholson’s (2005) agenda-setting theory of how ballot measures shape candidate races.

The analysis provides support for the theory that ballot propositions can have subtle but important effects on the issue agenda in presidential elections by priming voters to consider a particular issue when they evaluate candidates. With respect to agenda-setting at the national level, our results demonstrate that gay marriage was more likely to be among the set of issues that some voters considered to be important when evaluating Kerry and Bush if they lived in states where it was on the ballot. Residence in a state with a marriage ban campaign encouraged some voters, particularly those who may not have previously been attentive to the issue (people who were not born again / fundamentalist / evangelical Christians), to be concerned about gay marriage as an issue in the election. The national data demonstrate that the issue created a positive effect on support for Bush across the states where marriage bans were on the ballot, even after controlling for possible endogeneity or selection bias in placement of the bans. Although gay marriage was not high on the list of frequently cited issue concerns in 2004, residence in a state where gay marriage was on the ballot corresponded with a doubling
of the effects that concerns about gay marriage had on support for Bush. We also find evidence suggesting that the ballot measures may have had effects that worked to benefit Bush in Ohio.

There at least two major questions that flow from our research that we cannot answer definitively here: how much of an effect might direct democracy have on outcomes in presidential contests, and are there potential ballot issues other than gay marriage that may have a similar capacity to affect how voters evaluate future presidential candidates? As far as the first question, the effects of emerging issues promoted via direct democracy on presidential voting may be marginal relative to other enduring issues that affect presidential vote choice (such as war or the economy), but we show here that an issue like gay marriage can be substantively important in some states. As Hillygus and Shields (2005) have demonstrated, attitudes about gay marriage did affect support for Bush in 2004 independent of other issue concerns, yet on a national scale they find other issues mattered much more. In competitive states, however, any marginal effect may be important.

The second question presented by our findings relates to generalizability. We provide evidence that gay marriage had subtle but potentially important consequences in a single presidential election. This begs a question, then, about the sort of issues that are capable of having such effects. Theory building about the range of issues capable of having such effects is required, but the recent history of presidential races provides examples of emotional issues, images and themes that were promoted separately from a candidate's campaign: Willie Horton and Reagan-era tax limitation measures are some of the most famous examples. State-level candidates have also tied themselves explicitly to
ballot measures in order to highlight policy positions of their opponents that may deviate from the median voter: immigration, welfare, affirmative action, taxation and crime serve as examples. Our findings suggest that state-level initiatives offer a potential vehicle for translating such controversial issues into specific policy proposals that may affect how some voters evaluate presidential candidates in key states.
Table 1: Agenda Setting Effect of Gay Marriage Issue in the Presidential Election (National Survey Data).

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<td>.25 (.14)</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.40 (.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born Again/ Evangelical/ or Fundamentalist Christian Ban State * Born Again Christian</td>
<td>1.03 (.17)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.55 (.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>.42 (.15)</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.29 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-.24 (.17)</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>-.26 (.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.002 (.004)</td>
<td>.628</td>
<td>.004 (.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-.31 (.13)</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>-.33 (.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-.46 (.17)</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>-.51 (.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.07 (.04)</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>-.04 (.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-.05 (.03)</td>
<td>.147</td>
<td>-.04 (.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>.46 (.13)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.12 (1.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Vote for Bush in 2000 in Respondent’s State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.77 (.40)</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>-.45 (.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R²</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi²</td>
<td>53.32</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>73.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>1068</td>
<td>1068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The dependent variable is measured with the following question: In making your decision about who to vote for in the presidential election, how important will the issue of gay marriage be?” Respondents indicating “very important” were coded 1, with those indicating “somewhat important,” “not too important,” or “not at all important” coded 0. Unstandardized logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses to correct for heteroskedasticity. Reported probabilities based on two-tailed tests.
Table 2: Priming Effects of Gay Marriage Issue and State Propositions in the Presidential Election (National Survey Data).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covariates</th>
<th>Intend to Vote Bush (pre-election)</th>
<th>Intend to Vote Bush (pre-election)</th>
<th>Intend to Vote Bush (pre-election)</th>
<th>Voted for Bush (post-election)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (S.E.)</td>
<td>Coef. (S.E.)</td>
<td>Coef. (S.E.)</td>
<td>Coef. (S.E.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resides in Gay Marriage Ban State</td>
<td>-.21 (.28)</td>
<td>.459 (.29)</td>
<td>-.48 (.29)</td>
<td>.101 (.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay Marriage Issue Very Important in Pres. Choice</td>
<td>.38 (.22)</td>
<td>.076 (.25)</td>
<td>-.15 (.26)</td>
<td>.274 (.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban State * Gay Marriage Issue Very Important</td>
<td>.91 (.47)</td>
<td>.052 (.49)</td>
<td>1.08 (.49)</td>
<td>.028 (.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism Issue Very Important in Pres. Choice</td>
<td>2.14 (.31)</td>
<td>.000 (.31)</td>
<td>2.17 (.31)</td>
<td>.000 (.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq Issue Very Important in Pres. Choice</td>
<td>-.68 (.27)</td>
<td>.012 (.27)</td>
<td>-.70 (.28)</td>
<td>.010 (.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy Very Important in Pres. Choice</td>
<td>-1.34 (.27)</td>
<td>.000 (.27)</td>
<td>-1.33 (.27)</td>
<td>.000 (.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>2.62 (.27)</td>
<td>.000 (.27)</td>
<td>2.60 (.27)</td>
<td>.000 (.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-2.51 (.27)</td>
<td>.000 (.27)</td>
<td>-2.55 (.27)</td>
<td>.000 (.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.001 (.007)</td>
<td>.840 (.006)</td>
<td>-.002 (.007)</td>
<td>.791 (.009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.25 (.21)</td>
<td>.242 (.21)</td>
<td>.25 (.22)</td>
<td>.233 (.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>.74 (.30)</td>
<td>.013 (.30)</td>
<td>.76 (.30)</td>
<td>.012 (.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.10 (.08)</td>
<td>.184 (.08)</td>
<td>-.10 (.08)</td>
<td>.190 (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.12 (.05)</td>
<td>.023 (.05)</td>
<td>.12 (.05)</td>
<td>.026 (.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>.31 (.21)</td>
<td>.138 (.21)</td>
<td>.31 (.21)</td>
<td>.147 (.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born Again/ Evangelical/ or Fundamentalist Christian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.97 (.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Vote for Bush in 2000 in Respondent’s State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.38 (.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.33 (.60)</td>
<td>.026 (.60)</td>
<td>-1.28 (.60)</td>
<td>.035 (.104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R²</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi²</td>
<td>265.02 (.155)</td>
<td>.000 (.155)</td>
<td>267.03 (.20)</td>
<td>.000 (.138)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note: The dependent variable is presidential vote choice in 2004. Unstandardized logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses to correct for heteroskedasticity. Reported probabilities based on two-tailed tests.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Effect</th>
<th>Priming Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R said gay marriage issue not very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.48 (.05) Resides in state <strong>without</strong> gay marriage on the ballot and said gay marriage <strong>not</strong> very important issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R said gay marriage issue is very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.57 (.06) Resides in state <strong>with</strong> gay marriage on the ballot and said gay marriage <strong>is</strong> very important issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change (No to Yes)</strong></td>
<td><strong>.09</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R said terrorism not very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.10 (.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R said terrorism is very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.49 (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change (No to Yes)</strong></td>
<td><strong>.39</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R said Iraq issue not very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.66 (.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R said Iraq issue is very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.49 (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change (No to Yes)</strong></td>
<td><strong>-.17</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R said economy not very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.77 (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R said economy is very important when considering presidential candidates</td>
<td>.49 (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change (No to Yes)</strong></td>
<td><strong>-.28</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Predicted probabilities estimated with Clarify. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors. We hold age, income and education at their means. Gender is set at female, race/ethnicity at white (non-Hispanic) and religion at Protestant. All simulations estimated for Independents. Believing terrorism, Iraq and economy “very important” in presidential vote set at modal categories (yes), while variables measuring residence in a gay marriage ban state and believing gay marriage issue “very important” in presidential vote set at model category (no), except where noted.*
**Table 4: Gay Marriage and Support for President Bush in Ohio, 2004**

*Covariates*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bush Vote</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Bush Vote</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (S.E.)</td>
<td>P&gt;</td>
<td>z</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (S.E.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated*Supports Gay Marriage Ban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.29 (.15)</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports Gay Marriage Ban</td>
<td>1.09 (.16)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.24 (.45)</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated to Vote by Measures on the Ballot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.08 (.12)</td>
<td>.487</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>2.61 (.22)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.59 (.23)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-1.90 (.22)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-1.94 (.22)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.003 (.04)</td>
<td>.938</td>
<td>-.006 (.04)</td>
<td>.898</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-.14 (.16)</td>
<td>.379</td>
<td>-.13 (.16)</td>
<td>.406</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2.74 (.50)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.73 (.51)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.09 (.08)</td>
<td>.284</td>
<td>.10 (.08)</td>
<td>.212</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant*</td>
<td>.36 (1.26)</td>
<td>.776</td>
<td>-.41 (1.25)</td>
<td>.741</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>.30 (.18)</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.34 (.19)</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>.18 (.21)</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>.25 (.21)</td>
<td>.241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>-.39 (.20)</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>-.43 (.20)</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>-.19 (.18)</td>
<td>.290</td>
<td>-.18 (.19)</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-3.70 (.68)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-3.33 (.80)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R(^2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi(^2)</td>
<td>798.61</td>
<td>785.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>2189</td>
<td>2155</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* The dependent variable is presidential vote choice in 2004. Unstandardized logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses to correct for heteroskedasticity. Reported probabilities based on two-tailed tests. \*Religion measured by percent Protestant in respondent’s county.
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Review. 100: 731-52.


The marriage measure states were Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah. Arkansas, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio and Oregon were considered competitive states early in the campaign.

Technically, the measures would define marriage as being between a man and woman only.

Louisiana and Missouri placed their measures as referendums on late-season primary ballots.

“When you vote this Tuesday, remember to legalize gay marriage by supporting John Kerry,” the call said. “It’s what we all want. It’s a basic Democratic principle” Gray (2004).


Respondents were asked, “From what you have heard or read, will voters in your state this November be voting on any ballot initiatives, referendums, or state constitutional amendments, or not?”

The survey asked, “In making your decision about who to vote for in the presidential election, how important will __________ be?” with the 16 issues rotated randomly.

The Pew Post Election Callback Survey used telephone re-interviews conducted November 5-8, 2004 among 1,209 voters who had been contacted in one of two October Pew surveys. About half of the 1,209 post election re-interviews were people interviewed initially in our Mid October Political Survey, and half were initially interviewed for another survey that did
not include our questions about gay marriage. The Post Election Callback survey had a 72% contact rate and a 90% cooperation rate. The overlap between our Mid October survey the Post Election Callback survey, and the elimination of non-voters yields 687 respondents in our panel. Available: [http://www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org).

As examples, many may consider it socially undesirable to offer responses that may be interpreted as being against gays, or against the war in Iraq, or opposed to fighting terrorism.

Estimates of concerns about gay marriage are robust when the variable is coded as an ordered scale (with the effect of residence in a ban state significant at p. < .06). The LR Chi$^2$ is much larger in the model using the binary dependent variable, and the binary dependent variable allows for easier comparison of independent variable effects across the models reported in Table 1.

We include states where the ban was on the September and November ballots under the assumption that attention to this issue would have similar priming effects across all 13 states.

Protestant was measured by the question, “What is your religious preference -- Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Mormon, or an orthodox church such as the Greek or Russian Orthodox Church?” “Protestant” were coded 1 and all other valid replies as 0. Born again / evangelical / fundamentalist Christians were identified with a follow-up to the general religion question asked of all who identified a Christian denomination (Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox), those who replied "other religion," and those who initially refused to respond to the general religion question. Thirteen people who did not respond initially gave responses to the follow up religion question identifying Born again / evangelical / fundamentalist Christians.
For income, the question wording was “Last year, that is in 2003, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes?” Responses ranged from 1=“less than $10,000” to 9= “$150,000 or more.” For education: “What is the last grade or class that you completed in school?” Responses ranged from 1 =“none, or grade 1-8” to 7=“ Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college.”

Question wording in note 7, with "the issue of the economy," "the issue of Iraq,” “the issue of terrorism” rotated randomly. Respondents indicating “very important” coded 1, with those indicating “somewhat important,” “not too important,” or “not at all important” coded 0.

These marriage ban measures might not have occurred randomly across states. Bush received more support in 2000 in the 13 ban states than he did nationally (54.7 vs. 47.9%). Using the Brace et al (2002) measure of state public opinion on homosexuality (higher scores indicate increased tolerance), the correlation between whether a state had a gay marriage ban in 2004 and state opinion on homosexuality is -.35 (p<.01).

We estimated our models with other controls for state-level factors associated with the occurrence of gay marriage measures, including state-level measures of attitudes about homosexuality (from Brace et al 2002), and an instrument that predicted the probability of a state having a gay marriage proposition estimated by a logistic regression equation accounting for the presence of a state initiative process and the state's support for Bush in 2000. Apart from a loss of cases associated with the Brace et al measure, the substantive results reported here are similar when these controls are used in place of a state’s vote for Bush in 2000.
This unique conditional effect is not found when estimating identical models with interactions created by residing in a state with a gay marriage ban * Protestant, or residing in a state with a gay marriage ban * frequency of church attendance.

Model estimates available online at [www.X.X](http://www.X.X)

Respondents were asked: “A proposed amendment to the Ohio Constitution may appear on the Ohio ballot this November. The proposed amendment…states that: ‘Only a union between one man and one woman may be a marriage valid…Some people will vote for this constitutional amendment, while others will vote against it. What about you?”

The Ohio Polls were conducted by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. The September Poll (12-18, 2004) included a random sample of 808 likely and unlikely voters. The October survey (11-17, 2004) included a random sample of 757 likely voters. The final poll of 877 likely voters were interviewed between October 27 and November 1, 2004.

In the Ohio Polls, education is measured on a four-point scale with 1=less than high school and 4 = college graduate. We have no reason to expect that the omission of an income control creates an omitted variable bias. Column 2 in Table 1 demonstrates that our main substantive results are still obtained when income is included as a control in the national sample.

We created this variable from a three-point measure of partisanship. A follow-up question on strong partisanship was not included in the survey.

This variable measures the percent of individuals in county who are Protestant.

The respondent is assumed to be a white, independent, female, residing in an urban area with average Protestant population, of average age, income and education. To predict support for Bush among low motivated voters who support the ban we set opinion on the marriage ban at 1 (yes), motivation at 1 (low), with the interaction term (support for ban * motivation to vote), set at 1 ((support ban=1) * (low motivation to vote=1) =1). To simulation high motivation to turnout support is set at 1, motivation at 4, and the interaction at (4*1).