

PROPOSAL: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR BOTH CURRENT AND HISTORICAL

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Research assistants will be engaged in at least one of three possible projects. The first project will study how the introduction of the secret ballot in the United States impacted individual voting behavior. Early in this country's history, the candidate for whom a person voted was known, and the public nature of voting allowed political parties to try to gain influence with voters and then to verify how they voted. We are interested in learning whether and how privacy in voting affected a voter's choice.

The second project will examine how exposure to media in advance of the 2006 congressional election affected voting decisions. There has been a good deal of recent research about the characteristics of the audiences of various media outlets with political slants. We want to apply experimental methods to more rigorously assess the impact of exposure to the media on a specific political behavior: voting in the most recent elections.

Finally, a new project will look at a gubernatorial election this spring, specifically examining neighborhood voting patterns. We are interested in finding out if your neighborhood receiving a door-to-door canvassing appeal makes you more likely to go vote.

The responsibilities of these projects include data collection, organization, merging, and cleaning, along with some preliminary statistical analysis. Experience with Excel and STATA a plus, interest in policy and media issues encouraged.