

**ELECTION LEGITIMACY IN THE UNITED STATES:  
EFFECTS ON POLITICAL EFFICACY, TRUST AND PARTICIPATION**

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University of Pittsburgh, 2006

The 2000 presidential election was a disaster for the legitimacy of the electoral process in America, leaving lasting impressions on citizens' attitudes and behaviors regarding campaigns and elections. This dissertation has two main goals. The first is to discover the determinants of attitudes about election fairness in the United States. In broad terms, this is an exploration of the variables that influence attitudes about controversial moments in American politics. More specifically, the emphasis is on the comparative importance of procedural concerns, partisan interest, and ideological differences in determining attitudes about the fairness of American elections. Second, I investigate the effect of different kinds of procedural problems in elections on political attitudes and behaviors. Variables of interest include trust in government, political efficacy, interest and participation in campaign activity.

This study focuses on attitudes and behaviors related to the 2000 presidential election, and to a lesser extent, subsequent elections in 2002 and 2004. It also provides original experimental data that involves hypothetical election scenarios, with variation in procedural problems and election outcomes.

The decline in trust in government and political participation widely noted by scholars in recent years suggests that perceptions of procedural problems and self-interested political actors may play a part in public disillusionment with government and democratic processes. Overall, then, this dissertation is a study of the consequences of watershed events in American politics on faith and engagement in the political process.

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## **1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

The 2000 presidential debacle brought to light many fundamental flaws in the American electoral process that had gone relatively unnoticed for decades. Not since the rancorous accusations of vote-tampering leveled at Mayor Daley of Chicago in 1960, had the legitimacy of an American presidential election been so bitterly contested. Nonetheless, the 2000 election result was eventually certified, and despite mutterings from the left throughout the first term of President George W. Bush, the 2004 presidential election “exceeded the margin of litigation,” thereby placing the stamp of electoral approval on the Bush administration. Neither rioting nor mass non-compliance with presidential policies resulted from the 2000 election debacle. Even with overwhelming nationwide evidence of racial bias, inconsistency and confusion at every level of the electoral process, Americans, by and large, accepted the decision of the Supreme Court and carried on as usual. In 2004, many of the problems that had gone unresolved since 2000 caused great anxiety in the lead-up to Election Day; however, the reelection margin for the President was ample enough to largely moot any accusations of election tampering. All indications suggest that Americans are sufficiently satisfied with what has proven to be a badly flawed, poorly administered, often inaccurate vote process. But are they really?

This dissertation examines the effects of problems in electoral processes on political attitudes and behavior. Democratic elections have long been held to be the fundamental cornerstone of a functional democracy. Today, we judge nations around the world on the basis

of their ability to provide free and fair elections as a minimal indication of a democratic polity (Huntington 1991). Evidence has emerged, however, that the administration of American elections may have fallen short of this standard in recent years. The aim of this dissertation is to discover, first, what determines citizens' perceptions of the fairness of elections: simple partisan bias based on election outcomes, for example, or a genuine concern with the justice of election procedures. Second, it seeks to assess whether perceptions of unfair elections affect important political attitudes such as trust in government and political efficacy, or behaviors, such as participation in campaign activity.

In this chapter, I begin by describing two contrasting views of elections that have informed the debate over the significance of the 2000 presidential election problems, and the appropriate reforms. I discuss the roots of these two views in American democratic theory, and their partisan and ideological expression in contemporary political thought as regards elections. By one argument, the failure of the electoral process to satisfy the conditions for a democratic process is a blow to the very soul of American democracy, and as such deserves serious attention. By the other, it is little more than administrative error. These differences are fundamental to the understanding of the election reform debate in America, given their apparent influence in driving partisan attitudes about appropriate reforms, and differences in judgment of the fairness of elections.

I next examine each of the major problem areas within the American electoral process, including those uncovered in Florida in 2000, and those that have surfaced since that election. I assess the state of election administration today and the challenges that remain in order to ensure a smooth, consistent, genuinely democratic process for the peaceful transition of power. Throughout, I note the partisan and ideological differences in emphasis for each problem area.

Finally, I outline this dissertation and the methodology with which I approach the questions identified.

## **1.1 ELECTIONS AND IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES: ACCESS VERSUS INTEGRITY**

“It is un-American and wrong to have an election system where certain classes of voters – racial minorities, language minorities, the blind and disabled – are disenfranchised at significantly higher rates than voters not [in] those classes. And until we can say as one nation that the differences in their disenfranchisement are insignificant, then our work as a Congress and a country is unfinished.” – Senator Chris Dodd, D-Connecticut (Election Reform Information Project 2001, p.4).

“We must make it easier to vote while making it harder to cheat.” – Senator Christopher Bond, R-Missouri (Election Reform Information Project 2001, p.4).

Although it is clear that administration problems can significantly alter the outcome of an election, we cannot take interpretations of the seriousness of these problems for granted. Some partisan and ideological differences that reside at the philosophical foundations of American democracy can lead some citizens to see electoral problems in a very different light from others. What one voter sees as an egregious trespass of democratic rights might be viewed as a simple administrative error to another. In examining citizen judgments of election fairness, therefore, it is necessary to first outline the ways in which ideological and partisan differences inform the various facets of the debate over electoral reform. In this section, I discuss the basic political theory underlying democratic elections, and the philosophical differences that we expect to find between liberals and conservatives in their views on electoral problems and the appropriate reforms. These differences can lead to very different interpretations of the current state of

elections administration in America. As such, it is vital to understand these two perspectives in any discussion of the seriousness of electoral problems and the necessity for electoral reform, and of the potential attitudinal and behavioral reactions to these issues.

Partisan and ideological differences have long characterized attitudes toward the identification of election problems, and appropriate election reforms. The above quotes clearly illustrate the traditional philosophical divide between the parties on matters of election reform. Particularly in recent years, the highest priority for the Democratic Party and for liberals more generally has been *voting access*, with a great emphasis on removing barriers that discourage poor and minority voters. Meanwhile, the *voting integrity* movement, which focuses on fraud in the electoral process from registration to ballot-counting, has typically been the province of Republicans and conservatives (Toobin 2004).

A useful way of conceptualizing this ideological division has been suggested by John Fund (2004) in his discussion of election fraud. Fund draws on economist Thomas Sowell's (1988) work on the ideological origins of political conflicts in comparing the liberal and conservative attitudes toward voting rights. According to Sowell, citizens hold either a "constrained" or an "unconstrained" view of human nature. For the "constrained" view, which corresponds with conservatism, the goal of human reason is to identify rules and processes, and to establish procedures which all citizens must follow without exception. The objective, for this view, is a well-ordered and secure society, in which obedience to norms is the way to success. In terms of election reform, Fund suggests, this leads to an emphasis on the individual's responsibility to take the initiative in following rules and procedures in order to vote legally and effectively. By contrast, the "unconstrained" or liberal view is more likely to see human behavior as structured by the institutions within which it takes place. Therefore, according to

this view, if our ultimate goal is a prosperous, enlightened, and equal society, then we must develop programs and work to implement them in order to secure such an outcome. When it comes to election reform, Fund argues, this view emphasizes the expansion of voting opportunities by removing all obstacles and creating incentives to participate.

A survey question designed by Rasmussen Research in 2004 captures the essential difference between the “unconstrained” and “constrained” views of electoral problems: “If there are disputes in elections, which is more likely to be a problem – that people who are not eligible to vote will be allowed to vote, or that people who should be allowed to vote will be denied the right to vote?” (Quoted in Fund 2004, 16.) A survey of 1,500 likely voters conducted in June 2004 found that 41% were more concerned about eligible citizens being prevented from voting, while 36% thought ineligible citizens would hijack the democratic process. Kerry voters were much more likely to be in the first group, while Bush voters were overwhelmingly in the second (Fund 2004).

A very similar contrast is outlined in the work of Crigler, et. al. (2004), who draw a distinction between two visions of the normative justification for democratic elections. A contrast between the “minimalist” approach to democratic theory and that of the “participatory democrats” makes this ideological and partisan divide easier to understand. Democratic elections are, of course, the keystone of the political system on which we rely to protect our rights. But the theoretical grounds for democratic government generally do not determine the institutional and social specifics that must exist in a democracy, partly because philosophical approaches differ widely across democratic theory. Democratic theorists generally agree on this core principle, that democracy is a “system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and



cooperation of their elected representatives.” (Schmitter and Karl 1991, 76.) Even the most minimalist definitions of the democratic state stipulate some electoral accountability of representatives. However, the “minimalist,” more conservative approach tends to view the electoral mechanism as “no more than a crude but efficacious check on more despotic alternatives.” (Crigler et. al. 2004, 9.)

This belief stems in large part from a pessimistic view of human nature as inherently greedy, apathetic, and intolerant. Schumpeter’s (1940) advocacy of elite competition, for example, is founded on a contemptuous view of the citizen as too ignorant and stupid to make good political decisions.<sup>1</sup> Democracy, Schumpeter argues, is no more than a somewhat useful political method for arriving at decisions by vesting power in educated elites, wherein the role of the people is simply to approve representatives who compete only with each other. Once a representative has been chosen, the citizen must refrain from any attempts to influence the decision-making process (Schumpeter 1940). Such theorists hold that elections are the mainstay of democracy, but only in terms of legitimating the power rightfully held by intelligent elites. Ultimately, by this view, elections are not really meaningful. Power will simply remain in the hands of a few elites who are qualified to make decisions. As such, the typical selfish and lazy citizen can, via a minimalist democratic state, theoretically protect her rights, and thereby ensure continued wealth and freedom in a capitalist economy.

According to Crigler et. al. (2004), minimalists therefore have little interest in substantively improving opportunities for political participation, or in fostering public interest in

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, “[T]he typical citizen drops down to a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field. He argues and analyzes in a way which he would readily recognize as infantile within the sphere of his real interests ... even if there were no political groups trying to influence him, the typical citizen would in political matters tend to yield to extra-rational or irrational prejudice and impulse ... if for once he does emerge from his usual vagueness and does display the definite will postulated by the classical doctrine of democracy, he is as likely as not to become still more unintelligent and irresponsible than he usually is. At certain junctures, this may prove fatal to his nation.” (Schumpeter 1940, 262.)

the political process. Instead, their concern is limited to ensuring a stable, orderly process, where the actual outcome is less important than establishing a widespread perception that the transition of power was accomplished successfully and legally. This attitude theoretically corresponds closely with Fund's "constrained" voters. Minimalists are much more interested in enforcing the rules in an orderly fashion, and preventing the ill-informed, selfish public from sabotaging the election process by participating illegitimately. Any efforts to increase turnout, therefore, are viewed with suspicion or, at best, indifference.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are the participatory democrats. For these theorists, participation in democratic processes is itself the ultimate "end" of democracy. Barber (1984) argues that the very existence of politics itself establishes "conditions that impose a *necessity for public action*, and thus for reasonable public choice, in the presence of conflict and in the absence of private or independent grounds for judgment." (Barber 1984, 120, emphasis added.) Participation thus becomes the *source* of liberty, equality and justice, products that naturally emerge from the democratic process he prescribes. "Deliberative democrats," for whom our current institutions prove woefully inadequate, argue that true democratic debate, where all members of the polity present their views on an equal footing, is the only path to true democracy (Dryzek 1990, Fishkin 1991, Benhabib 1996, Habermas 1996). For these democrats, we can only achieve meaningful democracy by engaging the public in a genuinely substantive dialogue about the needs and experiences of each individual. Although such democratic dialogue is probably impossible to implement,<sup>2</sup> these theorists highlight the fundamental point that participation in democracy is essential if the individual wants the opportunity to articulate and

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<sup>2</sup> The costs alone, both monetary and to the citizens' time, would be prohibitive, even if such a scheme could garner public support.

defend her political preferences – even if the choice is only between the Republican and Democratic candidates.

For these theorists, democratic participation, free of any restraint or coercion, is integral to a consistent democratic cycle. This participatory emphasis leads to a proactive reformist approach to democratic processes. Participatory democrats frequently critique current institutions for failing to provide sufficient encouragement and opportunity for citizens to exercise democratic rights. These theorists, who fit in Fund's (2004) "unconstrained" category, barriers to participation include socioeconomic and informational conditions that affect some voters unequally, as well as the administration problems detailed previously. Crigler et. al. (2004) point out that participatory democrats seek to persuade all citizens to take the opportunity to "speak," while concurrently identifying and removing all obstacles to full participation. Failing to promote and facilitate voting is undemocratic, in this vision.

In terms of partisanship, this philosophical divide is clearly visible in the focus of attention devoted by Republicans and Democrats to different electoral problems after the 2000 presidential election. One instructive example is the emphasis placed on different parts of the *Help America Vote Act* (passed by Congress in response to the 2000 election problems) by different parties. The HAVA provisions were designed as a compromise between voting access and voting integrity concerns, supplying funds for better elections technology to protect the right to vote, as well as instituting tighter restrictions on voter identification to reduce fraud. However, under the supervision of the Bush administration and the Ashcroft Justice Department, the implementation of HAVA has tended to favor Republicans. Funding for improved machines has been subject to delays and shortfalls in many cases, but immediate implementation of the

antifraud regulations in time for the 2002 Congressional elections ensured that no citizens without adequate identification would be permitted to vote (Toobin 2004).

Furthermore, the Justice Department, headed by then-Attorney General John Ashcroft through the first term of the Bush presidency, clearly favored the voting integrity perspective in reforming the electoral system. A proposal put forth by Ashcroft's office to "clean up" American elections, the Voting Access and Integrity Initiative, was, despite the title, heavy on the integrity side. A cornerstone of the initiative was the suggestion that a federal prosecutor be assigned to monitor each judicial district for election crimes (Toobin 2004). According to Ashcroft, these prosecutors would "deter and detect discrimination, prevent electoral corruption, and bring violators to justice." (Former Attorney General John Ashcroft, quoted in Toobin 2004).

In examining these philosophical differences between parties, it is important to remember that we still have no way of knowing the extent to which these views are conflated with political expediency. That is, what looks like an ideologically driven conception of the right to vote, and the institutions that facilitate that right, may actually be entirely based on the predicted vote share of a given demographic. For example, if the Republican Party had reason to believe that large numbers of African Americans wanted to vote for conservative candidates, expanding the right to vote at the risk of permitting some fraud may top the party's priority list for the next election. But even if elites use inclusion and exclusion tactics for purely partisan reasons, these two views represent contrasting visions of democracy that can be traced back for centuries. These views are highly relevant for the attitudinal and behavioral effects of electoral problems among the American public. Citizens who subscribe to a minimalist view of elections may be altogether

unconcerned about the problems that have so troubled those with a participatory election philosophy.

Although both minimalist (“constrained”) and participatory (“unconstrained”) democrats approach election reform from very different philosophical foundations, both schools of thought have found much to criticize in the contemporary American electoral system. Fraud is apparently widespread, as are illegitimate obstacles to voting, and serious electoral reform must account for both perspectives if all citizens are to be satisfied that the process is fair and democratic. The current state of affairs allows neither side to achieve its democratic objectives. We have much to learn from both in determining the potential impact of electoral problems on public opinion and political participation.

In the following section, I outline the major problems that plague the administration of American elections. Some were thrust into the national spotlight by the debacle of the 2000 presidential election. Others have surfaced since then. To date, inconsistent efforts at the state, local, and federal level have succeeded in resolving some of these problems. Reform policies have occasionally created new problems, however. A detailed examination of each area of concern helps lay out the practical land for this project, and emphasizes the widespread and serious nature of electoral problems in the United States today.

## **1.2 ELECTION PROBLEMS 2000–2004**

Probably the main reason that American elections are so complicated, and prone to such a wide variety of flaws, is the decentralized nature of the election system in the U.S. Constitutionally, American elections are the province of the states, the majority of which have further fragmented

the process by handing authority over election administration to local governments. Consequently, we currently have “over three thousand election administrators maintaining voter registration systems, choosing equipment, formatting ballots, setting up polling places, handling absentee ballots, and conducting counts, audits, and recounts (Voting Technology Project 2001, p.13).” In 2000, estimates show that, in total, between four and six million votes were lost from the presidential election (Voting Technology Project 2001). Voting technology was blamed as a major culprit of lost votes, but voter registration rules, provisional voting problems, absentee ballot procedures, and a series of other issues were also pinpointed as problematic in Florida and many other states.

After months of post-election debate, Congress passed the *Help America Vote Act* (HAVA), a comprehensive piece of legislation representing the first federal involvement in elections administration since the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Millions of federal dollars were budgeted to assist states in meeting election reform mandates, with deadlines set for 2004 and 2006. However, in the approach to the 2004 presidential election, the regulatory and administrative frameworks were still behind schedule, and funding shortfalls had held up the adoption and implementation of the HAVA requirements in a number of states (Election Reform Information Project 2004b, Keller 2004). The dramatic post-election circumstances of 2000 were, of course, narrowly avoided in 2004. However, according to a report released by Electionline.org immediately following the last presidential election, the most positive thing that could be said about the state of election administration in 2004 was that by sheer good luck, the Bush campaign “*exceeded the margin of litigation* (Election Reform Information Project 2004c, emphasis added).” In other words, had the election been as close as in 2000, the many serious problems that continued to riddle the system would have provided ample grounds for legal

challenge. Chief among these were grim questions about the provisional voting standards that states were instructed to implement after 2000, and doubts about the electronic voting machines many counties had introduced to replace the old, worn-out technology.

Although most Americans seemed fairly confident that their own votes would be counted accurately in 2004 (Morin 2004), trust in the electoral system plummeted when individuals were asked about the likelihood of electoral problems elsewhere. A Washington Post tracking poll found that only one in four likely voters believed that the votes for president would be correctly tallied nationwide, although almost half thought the overall result would prove to be accurate.<sup>3</sup> Three out of ten expressed “little or no confidence in the accuracy of the national count (Morin 2004). Nearly eighty percent of African Americans believed that some states would deliberately seek to prevent them from voting on Election Day (Nagourney and Elder 2004). Online alerts flooded the internet immediately following the election, proclaiming the hesitancy of the American public to believe the accuracy of the result: “Another Stolen Election”, “Presidential Election was Hacked”, “Ohio Fraud” (Roig-Franzia and Keating 2004).

Today, although the public is apparently not overly concerned with the fairness of the 2004 election administration, and although few question the legitimacy of the 2004 results, the electoral system itself is still widely perceived as flawed and in need of serious overhaul. Issues raised by the problems publicized in 2000 and 2004 involve some of the oldest features of the American electoral system. In April 2005, former President Jimmy Carter and ex-Secretary of State James Baker heard testimony in the Commission for Federal Election Reform relating to the way electoral districts are drawn, the potential abolition of the Electoral College, and whether

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that although a slim majority believed the ultimate count would be accurate, the possibility of an *inaccurate* count would have been almost inconceivable just four years previously, prior to the 2000 election. This is clear even from the apparent absence of such questions on pre-election polls before 2000.

the District of Columbia should be allowed to vote in Congress, in addition to questions about the technological and administrative side of elections (Faler 2005).<sup>4</sup> A closer examination of each major problem area from 2000 and 2004 reveals the extent of the bungling of American elections.

### 1.2.1 Election Technology

Although the most public recounts took place in Florida in 2000, that state's 3% unmarked/uncounted/spoiled ballot rate was not actually the worst. Illinois, South Carolina, and Georgia all had higher rates of spoiled and uncounted ballots in that year than did Florida; one study indicated that the city of Chicago lost almost *one in ten* ballots in the 2000 presidential election (Voting Technology Project 2001). Broken lever machines, incorrectly printed ballots, and a high number of unrecorded votes from touch screen voting machines all contributed to the high rates of uncounted votes that year. Ballot layout was also confusing in some places; nobody could forget the infamous "butterfly ballot" of Florida, which confused thousands of voters into inadvertently casting a vote for right-wing presidential candidate Pat Buchanan (Wand, et. al. 2001).<sup>5</sup>

As of 2005, Americans still use five different kinds of voting equipment: hand-counted paper ballots, punch cards, optically scanned paper ballots, mechanical lever machines and electronic voting machines. Of all the equipment types, the punch card machines have the

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<sup>4</sup> However, this dissertation steers clear of questions about such institutional features, and deals solely with the technological and administrative errors that prevented the elections being administered according to the rules that are already laid out.

<sup>5</sup> One study used multiple methods and several kinds of data to rule out alternative explanations for the "anomalous excess" of Buchanan votes in Palm Beach County. It seems clear that the butterfly ballot caused approximately 2,000 voters in Florida to mistakenly vote for Buchanan, many more than constituted George W. Bush's margin of victory in that state (Wand et. al. 2001).



greatest rate of lost votes, with 2.5% of all votes cast going uncounted (Voting Technology Project 2001). This is largely due to the high likelihood of under-voting (failing to completely dislodge the paper chad with the stylus) and over-voting (accidentally dislodging more than one chad for a given race). The inaccuracy of the original ballots is only enhanced by the potential for changing the vote on recounts by inadvertently knocking out more chads; reports revealed that each time the punch cards were run through the machines for another recount in 2000, the tally changed noticeably. Among the many iconic moments during the 2000 recount crisis, the “chads,” or the small paper circles left behind when the punch card voting machines have marked a ballot, featured heavily.

Florida’s embarrassment in 2000 was a loud wake-up call for many states to immediately upgrade their voting equipment. Optical scanning machines were a particularly popular choice. Voters using these scanning machines mark a ballot by filling in a circle or connecting a line with a pencil, and ballots are scanned and recorded in the machines. According to the report by the Voting Technology Project at the California Institute of Technology and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, these machines have the lowest rate of ballot spoilage of all the voting equipment types (Voting Technology Project 2001).

However, many states also chose to purchase Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) equipment, such as touch-screen computer machines. In the 2004 election, almost a third of registered voters were expected to cast votes on one of these (Zeller 2004b). By early 2004, electronic voting machines had become a major concern for those interested in a secure and fair election, for a number of reasons. First, the security of the software on which the machines ran was dubious. The DREs, according to many commentators, are very easy to hack. At particular risk was the “central vote tabulator,” which collects the vote totals for many polling places in a

county. Thousands of elections employees, many of whom were temporary employees hired without background checks, had access to the central vote tabulators on Election Day (Cohen 2004). One report pointed to the ease with which a manufacturer of DREs could include modem connections between the central vote tabulator and the company headquarters, allowing them to change vote totals from afar (Cohen 2004). In the suspicious climate of partisan accusations leading up to the 2004 presidential election, no shenanigans seemed too outrageous to rule out.

Furthermore, the superior reliability of the electronic machines was unproven. In fact, the rate of ballot spoilage in the DREs was higher in 2004 than all voting equipment except punch card machines. Problems identified prior to the presidential election included machines that failed to register any votes, or that recorded voters arriving at the polling place but not casting a vote. Further, when machines froze, or realigned themselves, they sometimes lost or transposed data. Such occurrences surfaced in a number of local and primary elections in which new DREs were tested, as well as in early voting in some counties, causing great anxiety about the potential for fraud or simple error in the presidential election (Gumbel 2003). One proposed solution was a voter-verifiable paper trail--that is, machines should be reprogrammed to produce a paper receipt which voters could check to ensure the accuracy of their recorded vote. DRE machines could print a *tally* of all votes cast, but a recount would be impossible without a paper trail of some kind. California took the lead in legislating that such paper trails be mandatory, but only Nevada managed to have these in place by the 2004 presidential election (*The New York Times* 2003).

Just two weeks before the 2004 presidential election, testament to the cloud of suspicion hanging over the DREs, a coalition of private citizens and local election officials in New Jersey filed a lawsuit to prevent the use of the new machines, citing the lack of a paper trail and other

security issues (Zeller 2004a). As stated in the University of Richmond's Election Reform Information Project, "Reports of sharply reduced under-votes in Florida were countered by troubling instances of lost votes from overloaded data storage in North Carolina. Positive reviews of electronic voting in Georgia and Maryland were met with phantom added votes in one Ohio county (Election Reform Information Project 2004c)." Matters were not improved by the overtly partisan remarks of Walden O'Dell, chief executive of Diebold Election Systems Inc. (one of the top three manufacturers of DREs) and an ardent Republican fundraiser, who promised to help deliver Ohio to the Republican Party in 2004 (*The New York Times* 2003). Widespread publicity and speculation about these security issues with the electronic machines contributed to low public confidence in the likelihood of a secure and reliable election in the lead-up to November 2004 (Election Reform Information Project 2004b, Gumbel 2003). Clearly, despite the good intentions behind employing state-of-the-art DRE technology to reduce electoral confusion and error, the potential for fraud and disruption was still high.

Thanks to the questionable performance of DREs in 2004, some counties have actually considered disposing of the controversial machines altogether, rather than modifying them to increase software security and include paper trails. In April 2005, election officials in Florida's Miami-Dade County began investigating the potential costs of replacing their expensive DREs with optical scanning machines, after finding that hundreds of votes cast electronically in recent elections had not been counted due to a staffer's coding error (Schwartz 2005). Furthermore, a series of reports found that three traditionally Democratic counties in Florida may have recorded up to 130,000 extra electronic votes for President Bush in the 2004 election. Although the state was decided by a 381,000 vote advantage for Bush and thus exceeded the margin for litigation, this was nonetheless a troubling finding, confirmed by studies at both the University of

California at Berkeley and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Powell and Slevin 2004). Meanwhile, in Youngstown, Ohio, twenty-five machines were found to have experienced so-called “calibration problems” whereby votes for Kerry cast on electronic machines were automatically switched to the Bush column (Powell and Slevin 2004).

A final problem caused by voting equipment is the wide variation in recount standards, across states and often across counties. It was Florida’s failure to institute a statewide uniform recount standard in 2000 that allowed the Supreme Court to rule in favor of George W. Bush (*Bush v Gore 2000*, 531 U.S. 98).<sup>6</sup> At that time, very few states had county parity in terms of voting equipment, making it almost impossible to create standards whereby all citizens could be genuinely guaranteed that their ballot would be treated the same as one from a neighboring county. To avoid being caught in the same legal trap in 2004, many states did manage to create and implement counting standards to ensure uniform, statewide recount strategies in the event of a problem in that year’s presidential election (Election Reform Information Project 2004b). However, cross-county disparities in rules about provisional votes undermined, at least to some extent, the hope that all votes would bear equal weight (Election Reform Information Project 2005).

### **1.2.2 Provisional, Absentee and Early Voting**

Provisional voting allows citizens who cannot be found on the voter rolls to receive and cast a ballot, which is then sealed in an envelope along with an affidavit signed by the voter affirming her or his eligibility to vote. The registration status of the voter is checked after Election Day,

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<sup>6</sup> The decision was taken up on the basis of equal protection claims. The state’s failure to institute uniform standards meant, according to the Court, that no recount performed in the extant patchwork of standards could treat all votes with the same weight. Instead, the Court decided much more simply to disregard all Democratic votes in a uniform manner.

and the vote is subsequently counted or discarded. The nationwide lack of provisional ballots was a grave problem in 2000. Only a third of states had some form of provisional voting for that election, and in states where provisional ballots were permitted, many did not aggressively inform voters of the option, thereby preventing many registered voters from casting a ballot due to administrative errors (Voting Technology Project 2001). Provisional voting has probably been more effective than any other issue at highlighting the need for national uniformity of election standards. It has also accentuated the difficulty of achieving this. Presently, provisional ballots can be received, cast and counted for different reasons and under different circumstances across states and counties, calling the meaning of the equal protection clause into serious question.<sup>7</sup>

The impact of provisional voting problems first received national publicity in Florida in 2000, when large numbers of voters who had been erroneously stricken from registration rolls as felons were turned away from the polls with no recourse. Congress subsequently acted to make provisional voting part of the HAVA requirements, thereby ensuring that all citizens have the right to cast a vote regardless of the circumstances, with the legitimacy of the provisional ballot to be verified later. Prior to 2000, no such national requirement existed; many of the 1.6 million voters who cast provisional ballots in 2004 would simply have been unable to vote. Even so, HAVA did not establish clear national standards for the distribution and counting of these ballots, and hundreds of thousands still went uncounted (Election Reform Information Project 2005). Although the improvement in provisional voting standards between 2000 and 2004 was certainly marked, states' lack of uniform rules for casting and counting provisional ballots led to a great deal of confusion. Nationwide, the percentage of provisional votes counted in the 2004

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<sup>7</sup> That is, there is no constitutionally sound reason for a voter in one state to be given a provisional ballot on the basis of convenience, while in another state the voter must prove extenuating circumstances.

presidential election ranged from a high of 97% in Alaska to a low of 6% in Delaware (Election Reform Information Project 2005). According to one study, in states where votes could be considered provided they were cast in the correct *jurisdiction*, only 70% of ballots were counted – this percentage dropped to 62% in states where ballots had to be cast in the correct *precinct* (Election Reform Information Project 2005). Should future elections run as close as in 2000, these inconsistent standards would provide a rationale for an equal protection litigation battle identical to that of Florida in 2000, with all the attendant damage to the legitimacy of democratic elections.

Problems with the national uniformity of absentee and early balloting procedures also abounded during both the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections. Generally, absentee ballots are collected before Election Day and sent to election authorities by mail. Justification for absenteeism used to be almost universally required. Acceptable reasons could include illness, military service, or traveling outside the precinct on Election Day. However, many states have instituted absentee balloting on demand in the past twenty-five years, including early voting and mail voting, simply to enhance voter convenience. In 2000, sixteen states allowed early voting by mail in at least some elections (Voting Technology Project 2001). Unfortunately, administrative errors remain on quite a large scale: in 2004 as well as 2000, some voters reported never having received their requested absentee ballots, and in Broward County in Florida, 60,000 absentee ballots went missing (Election Reform Information Project 2004). One survey showed that of fifteen swing states, at least eight failed to distribute absentee ballots by 19 September 2004, a cutoff date meant to ensure that the votes could be returned in time to be counted (Moss 2004).

Another serious matter for absentee early voting is ballot security. Coercion of absentee voters is of course prohibited by law, but in 2004 widespread unease surrounded the votes of vulnerable citizens like residents of nursing homes, who may not be mentally or physically able to resist coercive efforts by those meant to assist them with early voting (Fund 2004). Furthermore, ballot security is dependent on mail security, and on the ability to verify the signature on the ballots. In the absence of the individual voter, the affidavit returned with the vote must be matched to the signature on the voter rolls. Election workers may not be qualified to identify mismatches.

The security and integrity of military absentee ballots were also key concerns both in 2000 and 2004, given the typically heavy Republican vote totals in this group. In 2000, to the great chagrin of Democrats, a decision was made – after the recount crisis began – to include hundreds of military absentee ballots submitted to Florida, despite their lacking requisite stamps, signatures and zip codes. Military voters tend to be disproportionately Republican, and the inclusion of these ballots helped tip the final count in favor of the Bush campaign. Then, in 2004, arrangements made for the military to obtain absentee ballots were significantly more efficient than for civilian citizens living abroad. An internet system set up to provide ballots online was immediately criticized for making the armed forces votes more effective than those of “citizens with passports,” whom a Zogby poll found favored John Kerry to President Bush by 58% to 35% (Moss 2004). Missouri, North Dakota and Utah also offered soldiers the convenient option of returning military ballots electronically by scanning them, a suggestion criticized for having the same partisan intent as the internet ballot program (Election Reform Information Project 2004b). However, the security of military ballots, particularly under these new programs, has also come under suspicion. In the fundamentally hierarchical structure of the

armed forces, the possibility of coercing votes is quite serious, particularly in light of the insecurity of electronic vote transmissions. The Defense Department initially supported a proposal for troops to fax or email their ballots to a central line operated by a private contractor called Omega Technologies, whose chief executive donated money and worked for the Republican Congressional Committee in 2004 (*The New York Times*, 2004a). However, the internet and fax systems for military ballots were ultimately scrapped in February 2004, when such security concerns were widely publicized. Meanwhile, civilians living abroad must still contend with dauntingly convoluted rules and procedures that make simply obtaining an absentee ballot a difficult matter.<sup>8</sup>

Voting equipment issues are also manifest in absentee balloting, but here, no poll workers are available to help with confusing ballots and accidental over-voting on punch cards. Delays in counting ballots are even more prolonged where absentee and early voting is widespread. In Washington State in 2000, recounts in two elections could not be ordered until three weeks had passed, due to the extensive use of mail-in ballots. In 2004, Washington's situation was even worse. The gubernatorial race in that year hinged on a tiny margin of 129 votes for Governor Christine Gregoire, who took office despite bitter allegations of having tampered with absentee ballot totals (Egan 2005). Despite the added convenience of early voting and absentee ballots, therefore, these procedures can add to the public perception that elections are insufficiently secure in the current climate of partisan suspicion about election results. Nonetheless, it is also clear that the insufferably long lines at polling places nationwide on Election Day – particularly in battleground states like Ohio and Florida – will lead to further implementation of early voting in future elections (Election Reform Information Project 2004c).

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<sup>8</sup> The author knows this from personal experience. The intimidating pile of forms and prohibitively complicated information prevented me from obtaining a Floridian absentee ballot in 2000.



### **1.2.3 Statewide Voter Registration Databases, Photo ID, and Other Registration Issues**

What precipitated many of the problems with provisional voting and absentee ballots was the lack, until recently, of reliable and comprehensive voter registration databases in many states. In 2000, the inability to find voters on registration lists when they appeared at polling places was identified as a “major problem” by thirty percent of precincts nationwide (Election Reform Information Project 2001). This not only increased the urgency of adopting provisional voting procedures, it also highlighted states’ failure to create reliable registration databases. Comprehensive, accurate lists would have allowed poll workers to rapidly identify voters and direct them to the correct polling places, or to distribute the correct provisional ballots. Databases can also help reduce electoral fraud by preventing double and wrongful registrations, ensuring voters are not wrongfully stricken from the rolls, and stripping bloated, outdated voter lists by accurately tracking voters as they move through and between states. One of HAVA’s most extensive and expensive mandates was the 2006 deadline for the creation of these databases. After 2006, according to HAVA, local wards, cities and towns will no longer maintain their own lists. Instead, HAVA requires that each state implement “a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list defined, maintained and administered at the State level.” (Help America Vote Act, P.L. 107-252, section 303, quoted in Election Reform Information Project 2004c) Unfortunately, by the 2004 presidential election, only fifteen states had managed to create and implement a database. Widespread problems with voter identification, provisional voting, and electoral fraud were the predictable results in that election (Election Reform Information Project 2004b).

Voter identification is another way in which electoral fraud may be prevented, but controversy surrounded this policy also. HAVA declared that first-time voters who failed to

include photo identification with their registrations when registering by mail must display it when arriving at the polls. In 2004, thirty-two states had adopted at least that minimal requirement, with two states requiring photo identification from all first-time voters (Election Reform Information Project 2004b), and four states (Florida, Louisiana, South Carolina and South Dakota) demanding photo identification from all voters at the polls. In South Dakota, voters were permitted by law to sign an affidavit affirming their identities if they did not possess photo identification, but during the primary elections, many voters were turned away without being informed of this option. Fortunately, this problem was remedied in time for the presidential election in November (Election Reform Information Project 2004b).

However, photo identification requirements remained a bitter partisan issue in many places. Lawmakers in Georgia and Indiana actually walked off the job to protest suggested photo identification requirements, and Mississippi Democrats resisted heavy pressure from Republicans in that state to require photo identification from all citizens (Haygood 2005, Wang 2004). Most recently, Georgia enacted a state law requiring voters to show photo ID when arriving at the polls for municipal elections in November 2005. However, the ID cards offered as alternatives to traditional forms of identification such as driver licenses and passports were not available within Atlanta, a major urban area with many African American Democratic voters. Predictions of a dismal voter turnout among these citizens led to a legal battle, with some claiming that the ID requirement constitutes a poll tax, and “unduly burdens the right to vote.” (Rankin 2005). The ultimate fate of this and similar bills is currently unclear, but the controversy surrounding this legislation is indicative of the partisan acrimony over this issue.

Typically, Republicans have advocated voter identification requirements to prevent voter fraud, while Democrats have complained about the potential deterrent of such requirements to

minorities and the poor (Crigler, Just and McCaffery 2004). That is, any demand for photo identification, whether for registration or for the vote itself, could discourage citizen participation simply by adding one more obstacle to overcome in order to vote. Democrats see these demands as a deliberate attempt to make registering and voting more difficult for citizens who do not habitually carry photo identification, usually those citizens at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale, who tend to vote Democratic. On the other hand, Republicans view the failure to demand identification as a clear invitation to fraud (Fund 2004). Certainly, there have been efforts to disenfranchise legitimate voters by unnecessarily insisting on photo identification. In Florida in 2000, for example, election monitors observed a poll worker shouting over a bullhorn that nobody would be allowed to vote without photo ID, even though Florida law does not make such a requirement (*The New York Times* 2004b). However, there are also recorded incidents of voter fraud which likely could have been prevented with the requirement of photo identification (Fund 2004). It certainly appears that some compromise solution is called for, given the conflict over this issue in 2000 and 2004. In the meantime, citizens remain suspicious about the nature and motive of arguments over these requirements.

The clash over photo identification led naturally in 2004 to disagreement about poll workers' rights to challenge the legitimacy of first-time voters. In the lead-up to Election Day, many members of both parties grew increasingly worried about the possibility of election fraud by individuals posing as legitimate voters, or by those who had faked identities to register. Just as much concern surrounded the possibility of over-enthusiastic poll workers intimidating or turning away legitimate first-time voters by groundlessly challenging their registrations, and thereby causing trouble by holding up the lines. One election official in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, suggested that challenges would "create impromptu courts at polling places as workers

huddled to resolve a dispute and cause delays in voting (Moss 2004).” In Ohio alone, GOP officials placed thousands of recruits in polling places on Election Day specifically to challenge those individuals they suspected of not being qualified to vote. Consequently, Democratic officials complained about the intimidating and discouraging effects of these challenges on voters waiting in line (Moss 2004).

#### **1.2.4 Racial Issues**

It has been alleged that a strong current of racial antipathy drove many of the conflicts that tainted the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections. Following the 2000 Florida debacle, the United States Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) held hearings in Miami and Tallahassee with over one hundred witnesses, including Florida Governor Jeb Bush, Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris, and a number of election workers and voters who had first-hand knowledge of Election Day problems. Having uncovered extensive evidence of voter fraud and intimidation, the Commission issued a report on a range of racially related issues relevant to the 2000 election. The report concluded that the Voting Rights Act (VRA), enacted in 1965 to enforce the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, had been violated in the administration of the 2000 election. The VRA does not merely apply to *intent* to discriminate – rather, violations can be “established by evidence that the action or inaction of responsible officials and other evidence constitute a ‘totality of the circumstances’ that denied citizens their right to vote (United States Commission on Civil Rights 2001 p.2).” In other words, differences in voting technology and procedures that advantage whites and disadvantage minority voters can still be condemned as discriminatory violations of the VRA, absent clear intent or conspiracy to discriminate.

In particular, the dramatic undercount of votes that resulted from erroneous registration challenges that year produced widespread disenfranchisement that fell most heavily on the shoulders of minority voters. Several pieces of information were particularly telling – for example, statewide, black voters were nearly ten times more likely than non-black voters to have their ballots rejected, and approximately 14.4% of Florida’s black voters had their ballots rejected, compared to 1.6% of nonblack Florida voters (USCCR 2001). Nine of the ten counties with the highest percentage of African American voters had ballot spoilage rates higher than the state average; meanwhile, only two of the ten counties with the highest percentage of white voters had spoilage rates above the state average (USCCR 2001).

Ballot spoilage rates were not the greatest problem, however. That title falls to the infamous felon purge list commissioned and distributed by the Florida Secretary of State, Katherine Harris. Florida is the largest of the seven states that permanently disenfranchise convicted felons. In 1998, the state hired a private company to assist in purging the voter rolls of deceased persons, duplicate registrants, declared mental incompetents, and convicted felons. In the months prior to the election, some 66,000 voters were ordered stricken from the Florida voter list in a process called “list maintenance.” Once removed from the rolls, the burden of proof resides with the individual voter to prove their legitimate registration status.<sup>9</sup> However, the list was created and maintained using alarmingly low standards of accuracy; the spelling of names and the accuracy of social security numbers of citizens included on the list often varied significantly from the originals (Palast 2003). According to several studies, the vast majority of “felons” purged from the list were either innocent, or had had their voting rights legally restored

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<sup>9</sup> That is, the individual must somehow provide evidence that she or he has not actually been convicted of a felony, or, that her or his voting rights were restored following felony disenfranchisement elsewhere. For many citizens, this process is somewhat daunting; given that voting is not a terribly high priority for many Americans anyway, an inaccurate felon purge could conceivably prevent many legitimate voters from ever bothering to show up at the polls again.

prior to registering in Florida (Palast 2003, Wayne 2003).<sup>10</sup> African Americans, moreover, were placed on the purge list in far higher proportions than any other racial group. As the USCCR report described it, “Florida’s overzealous efforts to purge voters from the rolls, conducted under the guise of an anti-fraud campaign, resulted in the inexcusable and patently unjust removal of disproportionate numbers of African American voters from Florida’s voter registration rolls for the November 2000 election.” (USCCR 2001, 3.) It is indubitably important to prevent voter fraud via appropriate legal and administrative efforts. However, the list employed by Florida in 2000 was so inaccurate that it actually disenfranchised thousands of legitimate voters, in a distinctly racially discriminatory manner.

Initial poll results certainly suggested a high level of dissatisfaction among minority voters in Florida, both with the outcome and the process (Smith and Nealy 2001, Nickens and Smith 2001). But the furor over the felon purge list did not end after 2000. In the months prior to the 2004 presidential election, thousands of voters were still trying to have their voting rights restored after being erroneously kicked off the rolls (Goodnough 2004). As late as July 2004, Florida election authorities fully intended to again purge the voter rolls using a list of felons and other disqualified voters almost identical to the 2000 list, despite acknowledging its broad inaccuracy. In fact, of 48,000 Florida residents on the 2004 list, only 61 were Hispanic, while over 22,000 were African American. When the racial disparity of the list became public, state officials admitted that the method used for identifying felons automatically exempted all individuals who self-identified as Hispanic. Hispanic Republicans outnumber Hispanic Democrats by about 100,000 voters in Florida, while more than ninety percent of registered

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<sup>10</sup> Linda Howell, Madison County’s own elections supervisor, was informed by mail that because she had committed a felony, she could no longer legally vote in Florida’s elections. Although the mistake was corrected, it served to highlight the inaccuracy of the list for that area (Palast 2003).

African Americans in that state are Democrats. Consequently, the 2004 felon purge list contained more than 28,000 Democratic names and only 9,521 Republicans, with the rest unaffiliated (Fessenden 2004). Although Florida officials claimed the racial and partisan imbalance on the list was unintentional, their efforts to keep the list confidential<sup>11</sup> strongly suggest some awareness of its implications (Herbert 2004).

In 2004, racially motivated voter intimidation tactics were reported all over the country, but particularly in the battleground states of Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. In predominantly black Jacksonville, Florida, for example, BBC News reported seeing a private detective conspicuously filming early voters going in and out of the polls (Palast 2004). Reporters also obtained a mysterious list of names and addresses of Jacksonville voters that was prepared for the Bush campaign in Florida, apparently intended for challenging registrations on Election Day (Palast 2004). The NAACP also documented a wide variety of other intimidation and suppression tactics throughout the nation, apparently aimed directly at minority voters, and often limited to predominantly black geographic locations. Challenges and threats were made against individual voters at the polls by armed private guards, off-duty law enforcement officers, local creditors, fake poll monitors, and poll workers and managers. Signs were found posted at polling places warning of penalties for “voter fraud” or “non-citizen” voting, or illegally urging support for a particular candidate. Poll workers were seen illegally “helping” voters fill out their ballots, and instructing them on how to vote. Criminal tampering with voter registration rolls and records was discovered in some places. Fliers and radio advertisements containing false information about where, when and how to vote; voter eligibility; and bogus threats of penalties blanketed some African American communities. Finally, internal memos from party officials

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<sup>11</sup> The list was only revealed to the press after lawsuits filed under Florida’s “Sunshine Law” forced the Secretary of State’s office to release it.

were discovered in which the explicit goal of suppressing black voter turnout was outlined (NAACP 2004).<sup>12</sup>

The reports of widespread racial discrimination during the 2000 election disaster apparently had the effect of galvanizing some black voters in 2004. Many who felt betrayed by failures in the electoral process were determined to participate as poll watchers and volunteers at the voting booths, to assist in monitoring the process and preventing fraud or administrative error (Dwyer 2004). In battleground states, a great surge of new voter registrations accompanied this increased involvement with the elections process. In Ohio, for example, new registrations in Democratic strongholds, many of which were heavily African-American, increased 250% above those of 2000 (Dwyer 2004). However, in many predominantly minority areas, elections officials failed to supply adequate voting equipment to satisfy the needs of the new registrants. Instead, voters in many black communities found themselves in discouragingly long lines, waiting up to ten hours to vote, due to insufficient machines (Dwyer 2004). It is important to note that election policies may not be created with discriminatory intentions, but the effect of these problems may well have been to dampen minority turnout via intimidation, inconvenience, and sometimes outright fraud.

### **1.2.5 Polling Places, Including Accessibility for Disabled Voters**

Problems with the polling places themselves also made a significant contribution to electoral mismanagement in 2000 and 2004. Particularly troublesome was the insufficient number of poll workers, many of whom were inadequately trained. A General Accounting Office (GAO) report

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<sup>12</sup> In one instance, Michigan state Representative John Pappageorge (R-Troy) was quoted as having said “If we do not suppress the Detroit vote, we’re going to have a tough time in this election.” Detroit’s population is 83% African American (NAACP 2004).



found that problems with elections equipment would have been virtually eradicated, had the equipment been operated and maintained according to the requirements. Every type of voting mechanism can “produce complete and accurate counts as long as the technology used is properly maintained and effectively integrated with the associated people (voters and election workers) and processes.” (GAO 2001.) Even before Election Day, anecdotal evidence began to accumulate on voters kept waiting for insufferably long times at polling places. In Ohio, the anticipated epicenter of election drama for 2004, hundreds of voters reported waiting in line for hours in the rain. According to Powell and Slevin (2004, A01), “In Toledo, Dayton, Columbus and Akron, and on the campuses at Ohio State and Kenyon, long lines formed on Election Day, and hundreds of voters stood in the rain for hours. In Columbus, Sarah Locke, 54, drove to vote with her daughter and her parents at a church in the predominantly black southeast. It was jammed. Old women leaned heavily on walkers, and some people walked out, complaining that bosses would not excuse their lateness.”

Long lines at polling places were not only due to inadequate staffing, but also to the mass failure of many election officials to accurately predict voting equipment requirements. Despite record surges in registration for the 2004 election, and the subsequent widespread expectations of a record number of voters, many election officials apparently believed they could make do with the same number of machines they always had.<sup>13</sup> Some locales benefited from generous budgets that allowed for extra machines, but these areas were disproportionately wealthy and Republican dominated. In an analysis of vote distribution following the 2004 presidential election in Ohio, local political activists found that 27 of the 30 wards with the most machines per registered voter

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<sup>13</sup> Michael R. Hackett, deputy director of the Board of Elections in Franklin County, Ohio, was quoted in The Washington Post as saying “Does it make any sense to purchase more machines just for one election? I’ll give you the answer: no (Powell and Slevin 2004).”

showed majorities for Bush. Meanwhile, six of the seven wards with the fewest machines delivered large margins for Senator John Kerry (Powell and Slevin 2004). It appears that the likelihood of purchasing adequate election equipment and hiring well-trained staff to operate it is much greater when the local budget is larger. In light of the partisan outcome of discrepancies in elections budgets, this problem again highlights the need for statewide uniform standards in election administration, and the potential for decreased electoral legitimacy when just one party reaps the benefits of adequate voting equipment.

### **1.2.6 Legal Preparations for 2004**

From the early days of the campaign, legal preparations for the 2004 presidential election were among the parties' highest priorities. The extent of the legal networks created and maintained by both parties clearly illustrates how sincerely both sides feared a post-election battle similar to that of 2000. In battleground states all over America, Democrats and Republicans rented office space and organized groups of high-powered lawyers, in teams both local and national, ready for immediate deployment to trouble spots. The Democratic National Committee established the Voting Rights Institute (VRI), headed by Vice President Al Gore's former campaign chair Donna Brazile, to ensure that all legitimate ballots cast would be counted. To this end, the VRI announced on its website its intention to deploy ten thousand lawyers across the nation in aid of election workers and voters needing legal assistance. The Democrats also provided "voter rights" cards to citizens in many key states, such as Pennsylvania, on which phone numbers of legal hotlines were printed for easy access to lawyers. Republicans also set up legal networks ready to challenge illegitimate registrations, or any other efforts to fraudulently influence the election in favor of Senator John Kerry (Election Reform Information Project 2004b). In Ohio

alone, Republicans challenged 35,000 new voter registrations and sent 3,600 poll watchers to monitor the election, mostly in neighborhoods that contained heavily Democratic minority communities (*The New York Times*, 2004). Election monitors were recruited from the local citizenry by both parties, trained, and sent to watch the polls in record numbers.

In retrospect, it appears that the remarkable events of the 2000 presidential election served most importantly to highlight significant flaws in the American electoral process, and point to the many ways in which citizens can be disenfranchised, or vote fraudulently. It also provided incontrovertible evidence of racial discrimination riddling the contemporary electoral system; as long as racial groups can be easily identified with a particular party, the opposition will no doubt hope to prevent that group from voting in large numbers.

But what effect, if any, does this have on public opinion? Is it only such extraordinary circumstances that make issues of democratic and electoral legitimacy important to the American public? If so, how fast will the effect, dissipate? The 2004 presidential election, it turned out, was outside the margin of litigation. That is, despite great anxiety about the potential for a repeat of 2000, the three million popular vote margin by which President Bush won reelection was sufficient to quell most doubts (with a few notable exceptions<sup>14</sup>). However, national partisanship is still effectively neck and neck. Furthermore, similar electoral problems can also occur in lower-order elections. The scuffle over the gubernatorial election in Washington State in 2004 – litigation over which concluded a full five months later – clearly illustrates that electoral problems can be supremely disruptive outside a presidential race as well.

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<sup>14</sup> For example, a recent article by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., in *Rolling Stone Magazine* (Kennedy 2004), listed a series of reasons to believe that sufficient vote tampering occurred in 2004 to illegitimately throw the election to George W. Bush. At the very least, some statistical evidence exists to cast doubt on the purity of that election process (Freeman and Bleifuss 2006, Simon and Baiman 2004).

### 1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Chapter two of this dissertation is a detailed discussion of the theoretical framework from which my hypotheses are drawn, divided into two sections. I first discuss the recent decline in trust in government that has been well-documented throughout the Western world. I argue that the theory of procedural justice is the most useful for explaining this decline, particularly in the context of government processes such as elections that fail to meet democratic standards. Hypotheses are generated about the likely attitudinal effect of election problems, according to various tenets of the theory of procedural justice. I outline the reasons to expect individual variation in attitudinal responses to election problems, and predict the ways in which different ideological and partisan filters will affect this.

To date, much of the extant research on trust in government has focused on describing and explaining the recent decline. Few have done more than speculate on the possible *outcomes* of this decline. In the second part of this chapter, therefore, I discuss the effects of a potential cause of declining trust (electoral problems) on trust in government, political efficacy, and political participation. An examination of the research into diffuse and specific support for government assists in the production of hypotheses predicting the effects on efficacy and participation of serious problems in the election process.

In chapter three, for the first quantitative phase of this study, I use American National Election Studies (ANES) data to examine public attitudes toward elections in 1996, 2000, 2002 and 2004.<sup>15</sup> Using 1996 data as a baseline, I employ the one indicator in these surveys of attitudes about electoral fairness to determine what variables influence citizens' views of election

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<sup>15</sup> Data in this dissertation include all years for which the election fairness questions were included in the ANES surveys. The question was first asked of respondents in 1996, but it was not included in the 1998 survey.

fairness (see Appendix A for question details). Demographic variables, as well as political attitudes like trust in government and political efficacy, are employed to find what drives perceptions of the fairness of the election process in four separate election years, including one Congressional election: 1996, 2000, 2002 and 2004. This tests whether negative perceptions of elections are driven by favorable outcomes alone, or whether other important individual variables are also relevant.

Next, I employ the panel component of the ANES 2000, 2002 and 2004 data, in a quasi-experimental design using election fairness attitudes as an independent variable, to test its effect on subsequent political efficacy and political participation. Specifically, I examine whether survey respondents who saw the 2000 presidential election as unfair experienced any subsequent shift in their levels of trust in government and political efficacy, and their interest and participation in the political process.

In chapter four, I introduce experimental survey data from a study of undergraduate psychology students at the University of Pittsburgh in the fall of 2005. Subjects were asked to read one of several randomly assigned vignettes in which a hypothetical electoral problem was presented. The vignettes varied according to the type of administration problem (such as electoral fraud or disenfranchisement), the seriousness of its impact on citizens, and the partisan outcome and locus of responsibility. Subjects were also asked a series of questions about their political attitudes and habitual political participation, as well as partisan identification. I use these data to investigate what variations in the election scenario determine fairness judgments, with a particular focus on the ideological and partisan differences in the types of election flaws that are seen as most problematic.

The second part of the experimental analysis examines the effects of these hypothetical election problems on political efficacy, and on future expected political participation. A question order experiment embedded in the survey, whereby subjects were randomly assigned to receive a battery of efficacy questions before or after reading the hypothetical scenario, allows for an examination of the effects of different kinds of election problems on efficacy attitudes. Finally, in the fifth chapter, I revisit the major findings from each chapter and draw conclusions for the study.

#### **1.4 CONCLUSION**

The presidential election of 2000 has been extensively discussed and analyzed in many fora, and yet, efforts to correct the grave failings discovered in that election have been frequently stymied. Serious flaws in the administration of American elections persist to this day, striking a blow at the keystone of the democratic polity. The effect on the political attitudes and behaviors of the American public, in an era of unparalleled political cynicism, can thus far only be imagined. Furthermore, while such relatively minor matters continue to plague American democracy, it is almost inconceivable for the nation to begin to tackle the much more controversial questions of democratic redistricting, the necessity of the Electoral College, and racial, religious and economic disparities in political representation. This dissertation seeks to illustrate the seriousness of the electoral problems in this country on public beliefs about democracy, and the willingness to engage in democratic processes.

## 2.0 CHAPTER TWO: TRUST, EFFICACY AND PARTICIPATION: THE MEANING OF ELECTORAL PROBLEMS

The electoral system in the United States is currently rife with administrative problems that jeopardize citizens' voting rights.<sup>16</sup> Attitudes about this issue, and about the proper reform action that is required, are informed by two very different normative perspectives. However, the realization that the electoral system is badly flawed could arguably have universal negative effects on public opinion, unrelated to individual partisanship or ideology. Citizens, whether Democrats or Republicans, who discover that their democratic elections are flawed may well experience a sense of outrage and lowered political efficacy, with important implications for political participation. This dissertation aims to discover, first, what sort of public *attitudinal* reactions follow revelations about the insufficient fairness of American elections. Second, it seeks to determine what the *behavioral* response to such information might be – that is, the extent to which political participation and voting behavior are influenced by the perception that elections are unfair.

In the previous chapter, we focused on the background, outlining the significant challenges facing the American electoral process, and the normative and theoretical reasons to treat this as a serious democratic problem. In this chapter, we look at *why* we might expect particular effects on political attitudes and behavior from this situation. I begin by discussing the

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<sup>16</sup> See Chapter 1 of this dissertation for a full description of these administration problems.

dramatic decline in trust in government throughout the modern Western world, which has been extensively documented since survey data became widely available in the post-World War II period. A variety of theories have been advanced to explain this trust deficit. I argue that the theory of procedural justice is most useful for explaining why electoral flaws might present a particularly troubling issue to citizens, in the context of the overall decline in trust. I discuss this theory in depth, drawing links between generalized distrust in government, electoral flaws, and the likely attitudinal responses to these.

Extant research, however, has concentrated primarily on describing the trust deficit in public opinion, providing evidence that it exists, and suggesting potential sources. Very little has been said about what, if any, consequences stem from low trust in government. Instead, much work is limited simply to suggesting theoretical democratic problems that might arise from distrusting elected representatives and democratic institutions, and often somewhat as an afterthought. This dissertation, by contrast, seeks evidence for both a lack of trust in the electoral system, and for changes, if any, in political attitudes and behavior that can be attributed to a lack of trust. In this chapter, I next discuss extant research on political efficacy and political participation, and the effects that we might expect on these from a perceived lack of democratic accountability in the electoral process. Research relating to diffuse and specific support for government is also closely related to this topic, and can shed some theoretical light on these questions. Again, however, this work has primarily concerned itself with documenting levels of support for institutions, and has rarely ventured into the realm of consequences. I review the literature on political efficacy and its relationship with participation, and present hypotheses of



the relationships to be tested in this dissertation, including attitudinal responses to electoral flaws as well as behavioral expectations.<sup>17</sup>

## 2.1 DECLINING TRUST IN GOVERNMENT: UNJUST PROCEDURES

During the 1950s, trust in the United States government was at what now appears to have been an all-time high. Public trust in specific elected representatives, as well as in the institutions of government including Congress, the executive branch, and the Supreme Court, was almost universal (Nye, Zelikow and King 1997). Since that era, however, trust in the American government began a steep decline that has yet to be reversed, despite several brief moments of resurgence. Data from the American National Election Studies show the following:

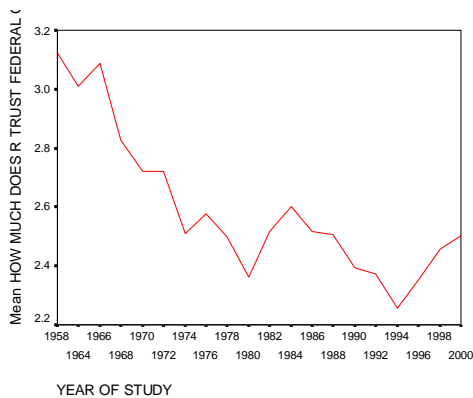


Figure 2.1: Trust in Federal Government by Year

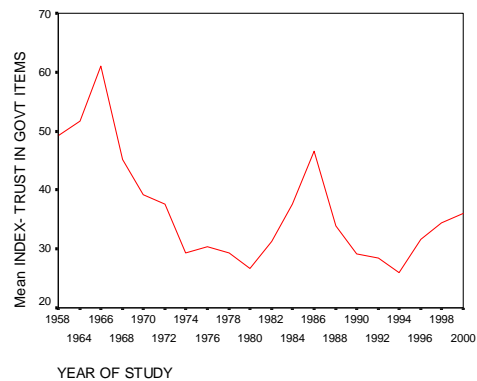


Figure 2.2: Trust in Government Scale by Year

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<sup>17</sup> Hypotheses proposed in this chapter are not included word for word in the analytical chapters. Instead, wording of the hypotheses is modified to be appropriate for the data analyzed in each chapter. However, all hypotheses outlined in this chapter are ultimately tested.

Although the scale of items relating to trust in government in Table 2.2 does not reveal quite the same marked pattern as Table 2.1, which taps only trust in the federal government, it is nonetheless quite clear that something has changed dramatically since the 1950s in terms of the way Americans perceive their government.<sup>18</sup> During the past few decades, since the monumental sociopolitical upheavals of the Vietnam and Watergate eras of the 1960s and 1970s, many researchers have struggled to describe and analyze the great drop in trust across institutions as well as across countries (Zelikow and King 1997, Nye, Zelikow and King 2000, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001). An important point to note is that, thus far, the rising level of distrust does not seem to be directed toward the constitutional structure of government; although the American people clearly distrust the government, it appears they do not want to make any significant changes to its structure (Nye, Zelikow and King 1997). Nonetheless, given the remarkable shift in public opinion, and the plethora of theories as to its cause, it is important to review what we know about what has happened, why, and the potential consequences. In so doing, we can better predict the kind of public opinion changes that might occur in response to electoral problems.

### **2.1.1 What Is Political Trust?**

Before discussing the nature and scope of the decline in trust, it is necessary to establish what it means to have political trust, and in whom that trust is placed – whether it encompasses institutions as a whole, particular administrations or individuals, specific behaviors, or policy outputs. A number of definitions of political trust have been offered over the years. Barber

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<sup>18</sup> In any case, there is reason to believe that the scale of trust items does not tap the same generalized construct of diffuse support for the federal government as does the data in Table 1. Instead, some have argued that the items in the trust scale are better conceptualized as antecedents to the generalized trust question – that is, they tap attitudes to government performance more than actual trust (Owen and Dennis 2001).

(1983), who investigated the nature of trust across a variety of institutions, defines trust most broadly as having confidence in one's expectations about the world. Trust, according to Barber, is a basic fact of social relationships that allows us to have "expectations of persistence, regularity, order, and stability in the everyday and routine moral world." (Barber 1983, 11.) More specifically, he identifies *competence* and *fiduciary responsibility* as components of trust. That is, trust involves the expectation that people who do jobs for us will be competent in their area of expertise, and that they will have some kind of moral commitment to protecting our interests above and beyond simply doing a competent job. In the realm of government, we must therefore be able to rely on elected representatives to make laws and policy in the public interest, and not according to personal or partisan gain. If elected to act in a position of public trust, we expect them to obey the moral obligation that it confers. For Hardin (2000), trust similarly contains both a component of ability, and one of motivation. One might distrust government because (a) it is incompetent to do the assigned job, or (b) it is able, but not motivated to protect the interests of the public (Hardin 2000). Levi (1998) adds "fairness" to the components of trust: for us to trust that a process is fair and legitimate, we must have "the perception that all relevant interests have been considered, that the game is not rigged." (Levi 1998, 90.) Levi and Braithwaite (1998) further add that trust cannot exist without accountability, that unless officials can be held genuinely accountable for their actions, the public will not be able to trust them.

It is equally important to specify what or who is the *object* of distrust. The Miller-Citrin debate is still relevant here, in that we must distinguish between trusting the *regime*, or system support ("diffuse support" in Easton's terms), and trusting the *incumbents* ("specific support"), the actual individuals serving at the time (see Citrin 1974, Miller 1974a, 1974b). Mistrusting individual politicians is quite different from mistrusting the actual institutions of government.

The outputs of government – the specific policies and the economic and international context in which citizens judge the trustworthiness of government – may also have a significant role in the decline in trust.

### **2.1.2 What Decline?**

Since 1964, as reported by Nye, Zelikow and King (1997), the percentage of Americans who trust the government to “do the right thing most of the time” has declined from around 75% to 25%. Trust in other major institutions in America, as well as trust in governments abroad, has also declined dramatically (Pharr and Putnam 2000). Although researchers are divided on the exact nature and scope of this decline in trust, most tend to converge on the period 1965–1975. The majority of the decline apparently occurred during these years (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001). Early survey data from the 1950s suggested that the American government and its attendant institutions enjoyed high levels of trust among the public, particularly prior to 1965. Bennett’s (2001) close examination of all available survey data from that period strongly suggests that the “shining moment” in American public opinion toward the government was the late 1950s and early 1960s (Bennett 2001).

The subsequent decline was universal, apparently sparing no demographic, partisan or ideological group (Citrin and Luks 2001). Alford’s (2001) investigation of the group dynamics of rising distrust found very little evidence of cross-demographic variation in attitudes. Race, long a predictor of sharp differences in public attitudes, was relatively insignificant. Trust was found to have declined almost equally for whites and blacks (although African Americans evinced a slightly higher level of distrust). Grouping survey respondents according to education, age, income, gender, region, urbanity, and even party identification and ideology also produced

only slight variation (Alford 2001). This strongly suggests that the current trend of disillusionment with government is not the result of stereotypically “rational” reactions to any specific policy outputs, as some have argued. That is, if we assume that citizens judge policies in a Downsian manner, on the basis of direct benefits or punishments they receive from policies, we would expect to see group divides of some kind within the decline in trust (Downs 1957).

Across different institutions, we again find only slight variation in distrust. Given the complexity and breadth of American government, it is easy to imagine that trust might have dipped for specific institutions and not for others. After all, it is long established that in the public mind, relationships between institutions affect each other, but do not entirely overlap (Davidson, Kovenock and O’Leary 1966). For now, it appears, attitudes toward the Supreme Court remain somewhat more positive than those toward Congress and the executive branch. Confidence in the judiciary seems to be only weakly related to the performance concerns that feed into approval of the other two branches (Richardson, Houston and Hadjiharalambous 2001). Attitudes toward Congress, however, have declined comparatively steeply in recent decades. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1995, 2002) clearly illustrate this pattern in their seminal works on public opinion about Congress and the nature of American democracy. Approval of Congress is typically the lowest of the three institutions, likely due to frequent press attention to Congressional wrangling and partisan conflict (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995). However, trust in the presidency has also dropped in the last few decades, independent of attitudes toward particular administrations. Even levels of government vary only slightly in the trust they inspire: a slight majority generally trust their state government to do a better job in running things, but Nye, et al. (1997) find that trust in state governments is only barely above that of the federal level.

### 2.1.3 Why the Decline?

The causes of Americans' loss of trust in government have been hotly debated during the past thirty years, as researchers watched it continuing to sink to almost record lows. A wide variety of explanations have been put forth in the effort to determine the cause of the modern mistrust of government. One category blames the recent apparent incompetence of the government in dealing with the increasing complexity of modern policy puzzles (Bok 1997, May 1997, Hardin 2000). By this line of argument, efforts to tackle very large-scale and complicated jobs that have failed conspicuously and very publicly have damaged the government's credibility. Vietnam, the War on Poverty, the War on Drugs, and the failed attempts to institute national health care are all examples of such embarrassing failures. Hardin (2000) argues that public pressure has encouraged government to take on these increasingly difficult tasks, but its capacity to perform has not concurrently increased. According to this view, the devastating incompetence repeatedly displayed across policy areas and administrations has led Americans to lose trust in government, quite independent of benefits or punishments that accrue from any individual policy.

May (1997) also points to such modern issues as globalization and the problems associated with controlling the national economy in a world where international transactions are effectively uncontrollable. As the nation-state shrinks in importance, citizens lose trust in government as it fails to meet its competency requirements, or even to fulfill the traditional functions of a state, such as border control (May 1997). Despite the intuitive sense of these explanations, however, researchers have consistently failed to establish clear relationships between policy outputs and institutional confidence. Efforts to empirically link policy failures with attitude trends have faltered (Alford 2001).

Newton and Norris (2000) test behavioral explanations for the decline in trust. One is drawn from social psychological theory, where trust is considered to be an affective orientation that develops as a result of childhood socialization, and is properly studied at the individual level. Here, “trusting people” expect politicians and the political system to work reliably for them without much oversight, where “cynics” expect the opposite. Neither group makes much reference to political specifics in determining whether to trust or not (see Gabriel 1995 for a discussion).

By contrast, there is the social cultural explanation. This draws from the wide literature on social capital, where trust and confidence are the natural consequences of belonging to a social network of groups like voluntary associations and civic organizations. According to the social cultural theory, civil society provides for positive social relations characterized by social trust, cooperation, and reciprocity. It prepares citizens for a democratic way of life in which the public participates, but also has confidence in leaders to act as they should (Almond and Verba 1963, Inglehart 1990, Putnam 1995, Mischler and Rose 1997, della Porta 2001). Political groups and governmental institutions that evolve from a strong civic culture reinforce this trust, and help build confidence in other institutions (Newton and Norris 2000). Again, while these explanations are intuitively appealing, Newton and Norris (2000) find scant evidence for the social psychological or social cultural theories. Variables from these models are statistically unrelated to institutional confidence.

Other explanations have included the deliberate actions of politicians themselves. Fried and Harris (2001) argue that politicians have increasingly learned to stir up distrust among public opinion for their own political gain. By enthusiastically pointing out the ethical and practical shortcomings of fellow politicians, and invoking the incompetence of the federal government as

a campaign tool, some politicians have deliberately created an atmosphere of distrust among the public (Fried and Harris 2001). An alternative view holds that media framing has played a role. Increasing media attention to scandal, corruption and general mismanagement in the past several decades, coupled with the ever more strident tones of ideological debate in the media, have conspired to undermine trust in government (Jamieson 1992, Patterson 1994, but see Norris 2000 for a rebuttal). One line of argument has even suggested that the post-World War II highs in trust were the aberrant result of the national crisis of the war, and the looming Soviet threat. That is, at times when the public perceives the existence of a serious external threat, a “rally around the flag” effect occurs, causing trust in government to spike upward (Alford 2001). Meanwhile, between these moments, a loss of defensive cohesion causes trust to decline (Nye, Zelikow and King 1997).

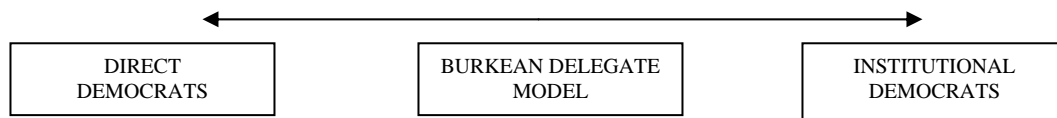
Conclusive evidence for any of these explanations has yet to be found. However, one particularly promising line of research deals with public attitudes to government procedures. Here, it is important to note that although trust in all branches of government, political parties, and the “political class” has declined in recent years, it does not appear that a significant decline in support for the *constitutional arrangements of government* has taken place. Rather, the weight of evidence appears to lean toward the process, the individuals involved, and perhaps even politicians in general as the objects of distrust (Funk 2001, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001, 2002, Tyler 2001). A seminal study by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) of the reason for Americans’ great dislike of government attempts to dispel the myths created by the competing explanations outlined above. The authors focus instead on perceptions of the democratic processes to which citizens are regularly exposed. Instead of conceptualizing attitudes toward



government as a two-dimensional *policy space*, as is frequently done, they redraw it as *process space*, as follows<sup>19</sup>:



**Figure 2.3: Policy Space**



**Figure 2.4: Process Space**

The authors use survey and focus group data to establish that, unlike policy space, where most people converge almost perfectly with their perceptions of the parties, when it comes to *process space* most citizens see both parties as very institutional, with actual government processes located far to the right. The public, by contrast, would prefer arrangements somewhere in the center of this space. That is, they want legislators who can be counted on to act on the people's wishes, but without the participatory burdens of direct democracy. The public perceives today's lawmakers as out of touch with them, and they strongly believe that politicians have no incentive to remedy this situation, being the direct beneficiaries of

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<sup>19</sup> Direct democracy includes such examples as town meetings, people's courts, and random sample deliberation. The institutional democracy definition, by contrast, includes representative trustees in a legislative body, where public input is limited to occasional electoral opportunities. The center, the Burkean delegate model, where legislators are required to act on the public's wishes (instead of their own opinions about what is best for the public interest), is where most citizens come down (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002).

government as currently constituted. Although they don't want ordinary people in charge of government, neither do they want selfish elites making the decisions (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002). In fact, the public is apparently much less concerned with the policy outputs of government than with the ways at which they are arrived. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse present evidence to illustrate that the people are ill-informed about policy specifics on the whole. According to their analysis, citizens firmly believe that a simple answer exists for any significant problem in the American polity. As a result, they see squabbles over policy details as a betrayal, brought about by politicians' obligations to "special interests." If only politicians could be prevented from selling out to these special interests, they would rapidly come to agreeable solutions that would work for everyone. Instead, government processes have become the objects of cynical distrust by a public that perceives them as at best unnecessarily inefficient, and at worst, corrupt, benefiting politicians and "special interests" at the expense of ordinary people (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002, 10).

This is highlighted by the variation in attitudes toward different government institutions. The Supreme Court, whose argumentation processes are by far the least transparent, is consistently the most popular of the three branches of government; the president comes in second; Congress, whose bickering and frequent failure to resolve major issues that affect Americans' daily lives makes headlines daily, is consistently the least popular (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995, 2001, 2002; Nye, Zelikow and King 1997).

This question of government process is particularly relevant to the issue of electoral problems in the United States. We already know that trust in government has sunk very low in recent years. We also have a deal of evidence that suggests it is dissatisfaction with the justice of procedures that precipitated this decline in trust (Tyler 2001). It is intuitively likely that citizens

would judge their electoral system by the same standards as other government institutions. That is, having long been an apparent bulwark of democratic justice, the flaws in the electoral processes may now be subject to the very same cynicism and distrust as political parties, the three branches of government, and individual politicians. We now address the linkage between perceptions of procedural justice, and the ways in which citizens assess the fairness of political processes.

#### **2.1.4 Procedural Justice and the Electoral System**

How do citizens judge whether an election was conducted in a fair manner? One theoretical approach that is particularly useful in evaluating perceptions of the legitimacy of elections is that of *procedural justice*. Generally, this term refers to the way in which we judge political *processes* as fair, independent of the *outcome* (Tyler 1990b). In terms of elections, therefore, we would expect perceptions of procedural justice to be based on the extent to which election administration is viewed as consistent, predictable, egalitarian and unbiased, controlled by rules that were predetermined to be fair.

This is something of a theoretical shift from our usual focus in political science. The rational choice models of citizens' attitudes and behavior that have come to dominate much political science research in the last few decades center almost exclusively on outcomes. That is, citizens are expected to base attitudes and behavior on subjective expected utility, or the degree to which the *outcome*, not the *process*, satisfies their material, short-term desires (Shepsle and Bonchek 1997). By contrast, the theory of procedural justice suggests that citizens place a great degree of emphasis on the perceived fairness of a process, which can determine satisfaction with politics independent of the material benefits a citizen receives (Lind and Tyler 1988, Tyler

1990). Tyler (1990b) writes that although some economists have suggested that evaluations of fairness are epiphenomenal – that is, that we determine whether a procedure was fair depending on whether the outcome was our preferred one – significant evidence illustrates that the procedures by which decisions are made determine perceptions of fairness (Tyler 1990b).<sup>20</sup>

Extant research on areas other than the electoral process has revealed that perceptions of the fairness of political processes and institutions have much to do with support for the outcomes of these processes and institutions, regardless of the nature of outcomes (Easton 1965, Lind and Tyler 1988, Tyler 1990a, Brockner et al. 1992, Caldeira and Gibson 1995, Brockner et al. 1997, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001a, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001b). We have already examined some of this evidence in the previous section on trust in government. I argue that the electoral process will prove to be no exception, i.e., the greater the perceived fairness of elections, the more likely it is that citizens will accept the legitimacy of electoral outcomes, independent of their individual political preferences. Evaluations of the electoral process itself will be most relevant. As Hibbing and Theiss-Morse have repeatedly pointed out in their work on perceptions of governmental processes, policy preferences are not exclusively determinative of the public's support for government. Equally important are perceptions of “combative political parties, self-serving politicians, and demonic special interests ... People tend to speak more directly and with more confidence about the flawed processes of government than they do about intractable policy dilemmas.” (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001a, 148.)

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<sup>20</sup> This may be due to our universal cognitive need for predictability. Cognitive psychologists have extensively documented the psychological drive to predict and thus control the environment. When we can all count on the rules of the game, reliability is increased and unpredictability is reduced (Eagly and Chaiken 1993). By contrast, in places where the rule of law is not predictable and procedural injustice characterizes the political and legal systems, citizens are anxious and must constantly spend cognitive resources on trying to determine what will happen in any given situation.

This effect is apparently non-partisan. Individuals who believe that the opposition party is beholden to special interests and unrepresentative of the public are just as likely to believe the same thing about their own party. Thus far, we know that this effect holds for the legitimacy of government in general, and most notably for Congress (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995, 2001b, 2002).

In a closely related vein, researchers have also found evidence that confidence in procedures is largely responsible for the acceptance of adverse outcomes (Tyler, et al. 1989, Brockner, et al. 1997, Hetherington 1998). In the private sector, trust in the fairness of the procedures governing such sensitive issues as lay-offs was highly predictive of the level of acceptance of such decisions (Brockner, et al. 1997). Similarly, experience with the criminal justice system that informed an individual's expectation of fair treatment was strongly determinative of future attitudes toward outcomes of the system's decisions: those who had found the system to be fair were much more likely to accept outcomes of government decisions as valid (Tyler, et al. 1989). Generalized political trust has also been found to affect attitudes toward political leaders and outcomes, independent of specific policy preferences (Hetherington 1998).

In their discussion of the psychology of procedural justice, Lind and Tyler (1988) posit four variables that should be particularly influential in perceptions of the fairness of processes. The first is "the favorability of the procedure to the perceiver (Lind and Tyler 1988, 226)." The assumption here is that citizens will view processes more favorably when they lead to a positive outcome for them: in terms of elections, whether one's preferred candidate was successful. Although the theory of procedural justice suggests that fairness evaluations are independent from the outcome, it may be that the outcome *amplifies* the extent to which the procedure is seen as

fair or unfair. The second variable is “the amount of control over outcomes afforded the perceiver (Lind and Tyler 1988, 226).” The control citizens have over elections depends on the extent of the individual’s political participation, most minimally the choice to vote, but also including donations to parties, displays of political buttons or stickers, attendance at rallies, and so on. I would also interpret this to relate to the individual’s sense of political efficacy, both internal and external. That is, the extent to which the individual believes that she is qualified to be involved in politics, whether by voting or by serving in office (internal), as well as the belief that government works the way it ought to, absent corruption, with caring public officials, and so on (external).<sup>21</sup> Third is “the fairness of the outcomes provided by the procedure (Lind and Tyler 1988, 226).” Because it is difficult to consider elections in terms of distributive justice, I interpret this variable simply as whether the electoral outcome reflected what we consider to be unequivocally the democratic will of the people, in the form of a popular and an Electoral College vote majority for the winning candidate. Finally, they discuss “the consistency with which the procedure is applied across people (Lind and Tyler 1988, 226).” It is this variable that is most relevant in the electoral context of the past four years. In terms of elections, I would interpret this to mean the ability of all eligible citizens to vote unimpeded, and the application of all of the rules in a consistent manner equally across individuals. In light of this discussion, I pose the following hypotheses to be tested in this dissertation:

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<sup>21</sup> Of course, it is impossible to know whether political efficacy and the tendency toward political participation actually drive perceptions of the fairness of elections. The causal path may be entirely reciprocal, where efficacy and participation drive perceptions of the fairness of elections, which in turn affects political efficacy and participation rates. However, I hope to deal with this by including a question order experiment in the study design. One random half of the sample will be presented with political efficacy and participation questions prior to receiving the experimental treatment (information about electoral problems) and the other half will answer the same questions after receiving the experimental treatment. In this way, I hope to discover whether the information has any impact on efficacy and participation levels, or vice versa.

*H1: Elections will be perceived as more fair when:*

- a) They yield a preferred outcome.
- b) The citizen has high political efficacy.
- c) The citizen has high habitual political participation.
- d) The winning candidate has a popular and an Electoral College vote majority.
- e) There are no significant barriers to voting for any citizens.
- f) The rules governing elections are applied consistently to all citizens.

*H2: Elections will be perceived as less fair when:*

- a) They yield a non-preferred outcome.
- b) The citizen has low political efficacy.
- c) The citizen has low habitual political participation.
- d) The winning candidate has only an Electoral College, and not a popular, vote majority.
- e) There are some random barriers to voting for some citizens.
- f) There are some systematic barriers to voting for some citizens.
- g) The rules governing elections are not applied consistently to all citizens.

It may also be that a preferred outcome can ameliorate dissatisfaction with the process somewhat, while an undesirable outcome will simply make an unfair process seem even more outrageous. That is, we might expect an interaction effect of the outcome with the other elements of procedural justice, whereby citizen satisfaction with elections is determined both by the procedural justice of the election, as well as the actual outcome. Although the extant procedural justice research has reported no such effect, this may be due to its exclusive focus on situations that directly link the citizen with the process in question, for instance, experiences with the police and the criminal justice system, in which the individual is asked to rate the fairness of their own treatment, and extrapolate from that to the fairness of the system on the whole (Lind and Tyler 1988, Tyler 1990b, Tyler and Huo 2002). By contrast, in a highly charged partisan atmosphere such as characterized the post-2000 election, many sources of contrasting information about the course of events compete for citizens' attention, accompanied by a wide variety of interpretations circulating in the media. It seems plausible that in such an environment, citizens might focus more on information that puts their own party in a good light. Facts may be interpreted at least to some extent in the light of partisan filters (Rahn 1993, Green,

et al. 2001, Bartels 2002), allowing for some attitudinal drift in the effect of procedural justice concerns. That is, citizens might be more likely to excuse, rationalize, or simply ignore procedural problems that resulted in a preferred outcome. On the other hand, they might be more likely to notice and harshly judge procedural problems that lead to a non-preferred outcome. I therefore hypothesize that:

H3: Elections will be perceived as very unfair when there are procedural problems and the outcome is non-preferred.

H4: Elections will be perceived as somewhat unfair when there are procedural problems and the outcome is preferred.

H5: Elections will be perceived as somewhat fair when there are no procedural problems and the outcome is non-preferred.

H6: Elections will be perceived as very fair when there are no procedural problems and the outcome is preferred.

When considering the fourth procedural justice variable (“consistency with which the procedure is applied”), it is important to remember that perceptions of fairness are dependent on what the individual considers to be just. Some research has found a distinction between an emphasis on rules and procedures, and on the fair distribution of outcomes (Tyler 1990b). This distinction tends to break on ideological lines, as discussed in the previous chapter. Conservatives and those who are more advantaged in society lean in favor of rules being followed at all times, while liberals and the less advantaged are more likely to base perceptions of justice on the fairness of distributive outcomes, as well as on just procedures.<sup>22</sup> In terms of electoral flaws, we can make a similar distinction, one suggested by John Fund (2004) and outlined from a more theoretical perspective in the previous chapter. Briefly, according to Fund,

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<sup>22</sup> According to Tyler (1990), this may be due to the fact that the “advantaged” are somewhat more embedded in society as it is currently constituted; they may therefore have a stronger attachment to and belief in the laws as fair and productive of fair outcomes. By contrast, the “disadvantaged” may be less convinced that the laws are in fact quite so fair, and consequently are a little more concerned with seeing that the outcomes reflect justice.



conservatives tend to be more concerned with following the rules exactly as set out; their primary interest is in preventing ineligible citizens from breaking any rules to vote illegally (the “constrained” view of elections, in Fund’s terms). By contrast, liberals are more concerned with ensuring that the rules conform to an egalitarian kind of justice, in which all citizens have the right to participate in the political process. For liberals, therefore, it is a worse mistake to disenfranchise an eligible voter, than to risk allowing an ineligible voter to cast a vote (the “unconstrained” view). In studying how procedural justice informs attitudes about the legitimacy of elections, we must therefore distinguish between electoral flaws that *disenfranchise eligible* voters (a problem for those with the “unconstrained” view) from those that *enfranchise ineligible* voters (a problem for those with the “constrained” view). Citizens may react very differently to each type of problem, depending on their ideological leanings. In terms of the “consistency of application” principle, I would therefore refine the fourth hypothesis as follows:

H7: Self-identified Democrats/liberals will be more likely than Republicans/conservatives to see procedural injustice in electoral problems that prevent individuals from voting who may have been eligible (e.g. widespread use of an inaccurate felon purge list).

H8: Self-identified Republicans/conservatives will be more likely than Democrats/liberals to see procedural injustice in electoral problems that allow individuals to vote who may have been ineligible (e.g. acceptance of late or improperly completed registrations).

Of course, it is possible that extant evidence supporting such hypotheses has simply been the result of those particular issues tending historically to favor one party or the other.<sup>23</sup> For example, at least until the 2004 presidential election, high turnout has typically favored the Democratic Party, and preventative efforts have favored the Republicans by blocking predominantly minority and poor citizens from voting illegally (Fund 2004). Thus, it could be

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<sup>23</sup> However, given the close tracking of these perspectives with particular normative theoretical perspectives, it seems this is an intuitively appealing description of the typical differences in ideological views of the electoral process.

that a last-minute surge in questionable voter registrations by Christian conservatives would be supported by the Republican Party and opposed by the Democrats, in contradiction to the above hypotheses. The design of this study will cater to both possibilities.

## **2.2 CONSEQUENCES: SUPPORT FOR THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, POLITICAL EFFICACY, AND PARTICIPATION**

### **2.2.1 Diffuse and Specific Support for the Electoral Process**

What difference does it make if citizens do perceive elections as unfair? Easton's seminal distinction between "diffuse" and "specific" support for institutions is instructive in answering this question.<sup>24</sup> *Diffuse* support can be thought of as a matter of institutional legitimacy. It is not issue, outcome, or actor specific, but rather refers to the nature and the scope of the institution's role in politics. It is generally defined as a deep "reservoir of favorable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or tolerate outputs to which they are opposed or the effects of which they see as damaging to their wants." (Easton 1965, 273). The institution can draw on this diffuse support when it produces an outcome that is controversial or unpopular. So, diffuse support among the citizenry protects the institution from an erosion of legitimacy, maintaining the public's acceptance of its mandate and, by implication, mass compliance with its dictates (Nicholson and Howard 2003). We would expect widespread diffuse support to have characterized attitudes toward electoral processes prior to the scandals of the 2000 presidential election.

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<sup>24</sup> Sets of rules, such as those governing democratic elections, can be conceived of as an institution for this purpose (Peters 1999).

Specific support, on the other hand, refers to attitudes toward particular decisions, policies, or other outcomes of the institution. Specific support may also be drawn from attitudes toward the motives and attributes of particular political actors (individual campaigns, for example), and the extent to which they are seen as delivering preferred outcomes (Dolbeare and Hamond 1968, Durr, Martin and Wolbrecht 2000). In the case of elections, specific support should rise and fall with the individual's response to the partisan outcome of elections. However, given widespread diffuse support, fluctuations in specific support should have little impact on the extent to which citizens view the elections process as legitimate and fair. For example, partisan citizens may think that a particular campaign played dirty advertising tricks and manipulated the public into supporting an opposition candidate, but this should not detract from these citizens' overall diffuse support of the electoral system itself.

Where does diffuse support originate? Although little evidence has been produced as to the sources of diffuse support, extant research suggests a connection with two sources. One of these is a long period of accumulated specific support. Although the concepts of diffuse and specific support are theoretically distinct, it may be that there is a causal relationship from specific to diffuse support. For example, in one study of African Americans' attitudes toward the Supreme Court, Gibson and Caldeira (1992) discovered a *generational* difference among black Americans in diffuse support. Although African Americans experienced a long period of judicial sympathy during the Warren Court era (1953-1969), current levels of support for the Court among blacks are somewhat lower than for whites.<sup>25</sup> This suggests a powerful effect for a prolonged decline in specific support on attitudes toward the Court's institutional legitimacy.

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<sup>25</sup> Splitting their sample into three cohorts, the authors find that those respondents who were socialized during the period of judicial focus on racial rights were most likely to have retained a level of diffuse support for the Court. By contrast, those respondents who were born before 1933 and after 1953 have no such reservoir of good will (Gibson and Caldeira 1992).

We might expect a similar effect for elections administration. For citizens who experience a prolonged period in which a regular partisan turnover in elections permits an accumulation of specific support, diffuse support will concurrently accumulate. By contrast, if the electoral system appears to have favored one party consistently for many years, citizens may come to distrust it, even absent evidence of corruption.

In 1996, it appears that virtually universal diffuse support characterized American attitudes toward elections (see Figure B1, Appendix B). Although one's preferred candidate may have lost (reducing specific support for individual elections or campaigns), the electoral institutions were still perceived as legitimate and fair. Consequently, an undesirable outcome was not blamed on the election processes. This is clearly visible in Figure B1 (Appendix B), a histogram of data from the American National Election Study (NES) of 1996 that illustrates the high levels of support for the fairness of that presidential election. However, the extensive publication of electoral flaws during and after 2000 may have thoroughly undermined this diffuse support. Data from the 2000 NES show that far fewer citizens thought the presidential election was conducted fairly in 2000 than in 1996. In 2002 and 2004, it appears that opinion has become even more polarized on this question than in 2000, suggesting that citizens' attitudes about the 2000 election have become more crystallized over time (see Figures B2, B3 and B6, Appendix B). But it may be that disappointment with the problems in 2000 is limited to that individual election. Data on attitudes toward the 2002 Congressional elections reveal that perceptions of the fairness of electoral processes in general were probably unaffected by 2000, at least at the time of the 2002 elections, and the shape of the fairness distribution in 2004 is also closer to that of 1996 than of 2000 (see Figure B4 and B5, Appendix B). At issue, then, is the extent to which widespread awareness of the many flaws in the electoral process could affect

citizens' diffuse support for American elections. That is, perhaps citizens were not terribly troubled by the implications of 2000 for the electoral system as a whole, but instead believed these problems were so localized (to Florida, to President Bush, etc.) that no other election would be affected by similar flaws. It could be that Florida initially caused a drop in *specific* support only, because disappointed citizens were able to blame the debacle on that state's elections officials, and on President Bush. However, revelations during the past four years about the state of elections administration across America may preclude such localization of blame in the future. Historically, we have tended to assume that political institutions such as the rules governing elections are set in stone, as though institutions emerged magically at some point in the distant past, and the intra- and inter-institutional arrangements are now more or less non-negotiable (Gamm and Huber 2002). But in the case of electoral administration, this is clearly inaccurate. As we learned in the previous chapter, electoral processes are not under federal control; each state (and often each county) is free to create its own regulations governing a great many aspects of elections. Thus we see massive county and state level variation, with unpredictable effects on election outcomes. We can therefore conceive of electoral processes as both a *policy-neutral institution*, and as the embodiment of the *policy preferences of partisan election officials*.

In terms of electoral legitimacy, then, we might expect specific support to characterize not only attitudes toward the election outcome, but also toward the locus of responsibility for any bungling. Diffuse support, by contrast, might characterize attitudes toward American elections in general. A prolonged period of declining specific support for either election outcomes or for the people responsible for electoral administration, therefore, might eventually affect the pool of diffuse support for American elections. At this point, we know that specific support for individual outcomes will have fluctuated with each election in past decades, but that the

consistent partisan turnover (at least at the presidential level) should have long contributed to high levels of diffuse support for the electoral system. However, specific support for those responsible for elections policy in each state may have taken a significant dive in the past four years, beginning with Florida, and continually reinforced by emerging stories about the flaws in elections administration across the nation.

### **2.2.2 Consequences: Political Efficacy and Political Participation**

But even if diffuse support has been reduced by the publicity surrounding the problems in 2000 and 2004, what does this mean for American democracy? The concept of diffuse support has generally been applied to research on the judicial branch, given the Court's historical lack of coercive power. This idea is eloquently embodied in Justice Frankfurter's often-quoted 1962 observation: "The Court's authority – possessed of neither the purse nor the sword – ultimately rests on sustained public confidence in its moral sanction (*Baker v. Carr*, quoted in Caldeira 1986, 1209)." In the United States, it is difficult to imagine a somewhat questionable election leading to widespread rejection of the elected official, much less any kind of coup or revolutionary activity.<sup>26</sup> However, there are lesser but still fundamental implications for the political efficacy – both internal and external – and participation levels of the mass public. For example, Bernstein (2001) suggests that "feelings of political discontent that lead someone to view politics cynically might lead them to seek out less information. It is not a stretch to suggest this person might become less efficacious as a result, which may then lead to further discontent

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<sup>26</sup> Research has shown that declining diffuse support related to widespread perceptions of procedural injustice is extremely important in determining whether citizens will attack an institution for an undesirable outcome: one study of violent anti-system behavior among 2663 German workers found that negative process-based judgments about the political system drove actions destructive of the political order (Muller and Jukam 1977). However, it seems unlikely that we will reach such an impasse in the United States in the near future.

and another round through this vicious cycle.” (Bernstein 2001, 98.) He argues further that citizens may be less likely to comply with laws when they believe that policies were made by Congress members who are beholden to special interests, and not the interests of the American public (Bernstein 2001). To make a more informed assessment about the possibilities, however, it is important to first review what we know about political efficacy and its relationship with political behavior.

What exactly is political efficacy? Self-efficacy, more generally, can be thought of as a key link between knowledge and action. Self-efficacy determines coping efforts in any given domain of behavior. That is, individuals who perceive themselves as efficacious are much more likely to act when confronted with a challenge within their environment; they are also less likely to be discouraged by obstacles than those who are not efficacious (Bandura 1977 and 1982, Madsen 1987). Renshon’s (1974) study of psychological needs and political behavior defines political efficacy as “the belief that one has sufficient personal control over political processes to satisfy the need for personal control.” (Renshon 1974, 7.) Political efficacy, by Renshon’s argument, is a simple extension of the individual’s basic psychological drive to achieve and maintain some semblance of control over the forces and experiences that shape our lives. When the political sphere becomes salient to the individual’s daily life, political participation and a resulting sense of political efficacy is the natural response. This salience stems from several sources: reward, where the political system is seen as the only source of certain goods or services; punishment, where the political system interferes with the individual’s pursuits; and political obligation, where the individual experiences a sense of civic obligation to fulfill participatory responsibilities. Under any of these circumstances, according to Renshon, the citizen develops the need for a degree of control over the political environment. Renshon argues

further that citizens who are able to exercise this control are happier, more stable, and more content citizens. A political system that allows for this kind of control will, it follows, enjoy a happier and less alienated citizenry (Renshon 1974). If the need for political control is continually thwarted, however, the citizen becomes first frustrated, and then deeply alienated. It is at this point that she turns to more extremist political action (Renshon 1974).

Since the 1970s, researchers have made a distinction between “internal” and “external” political efficacy that is relevant for this study (Converse 1972, Balch 1974, Coleman and Davis 1976, Niemi, Craig and Mattei 1991). “Internal” efficacy relates to the degree to which the individual believes that reward follows from, or is contingent on, one’s own behavioral attributes (Renshon 1974). In political terms, internal efficacy is determined by the individual’s belief that participating in politics – for example, by voting, financially supporting a candidate, or talking to friends about politics – could have some desirable outcome, such as the successful election of a preferred candidate. It refers to the individual’s belief in her own competence to understand and to participate effectively in politics (Niemi, Craig and Mattei 1991).<sup>27</sup> Of course, one might believe oneself to be personally efficacious, while concurrently believing that the environmental obstacles to effective action are overwhelming. “External” efficacy refers to the degree to which the individual perceives government officials and institutions to be responsive to citizen demands, i.e., the extent to which government actually fulfills its side of the democratic bargain (Renshon 1974, Niemi, Craig and Mattei 1991). In terms of the electoral process, we might reasonably expect that citizens who concluded that their ability to influence the political sphere was undermined by the events of 2000 might experience a drop in political efficacy. Internal

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<sup>27</sup> The so-called Campbell conceptualization of the “sense” of political efficacy calls it “the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process ... the feeling that social and political change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change.” (Campbell, Gurin and Miller 1954, 187.)



efficacy may be damaged when voters realize that the impact of their actions – voting, or other campaign activity – was subverted by a badly flawed process that invalidated their democratic participation. Meanwhile, external efficacy would take a blow when citizens see the responsiveness of the electoral process, the cornerstone of American democracy, as effectively destroyed. Thus, Americans who believe the electoral system to be riddled with faults could well assume that not only are they *individually* unable to influence the political sphere (internal efficacy), but that the governmental system is unresponsive to them in the most basic of democratic processes (external efficacy).

But again, we must ask ourselves whether a reduction in political efficacy has any concrete results on political behavior, in addition to attitudes. That is, do citizens who have found that the electoral process thwarts their political efforts, while failing to respond to the demands of the public, *behave* differently as a result? Extant research suggests that a sense of external efficacy promotes political participation in individuals; those who believe that the government is responsive to the citizenry are more likely to involve themselves in the political process (Schaffer 1981, Abramson and Aldrich 1982). One important study suggests that political participation actually has a reciprocal relationship with political efficacy (Finkel 1985). Finkel's panel analysis of NES data from 1972-1974-1976 provides evidence that political participation – voting and campaign activity more generally – does have a positive effect on external political efficacy, which in turn encourages yet more participation. Citizens who participate come to see government as responsive to their needs, and are therefore more motivated to participate further. The effect is particularly strong for less-educated individuals (Finkel 1985). Finkel (1985) argues that by developing these positive attitudes toward the

system, such legitimate political participation can defuse more violent political behaviors or challenges to the existing political order.

Although Finkel (1985) finds no relationship between participation and internal efficacy, a study of Indian survey data from the 1960s illustrates that success and failure in “petitioning government” directly affects internal efficacy (Madsen 1987). Madsen (1987) examined the attitudes of a national sample of Indian male citizens, all of whom had been to see a government official for assistance of some kind in the past. The results illustrated that a successful outcome from such a visit led to higher levels of internal efficacy among citizens, while an unsuccessful outcome reduced internal efficacy (Madsen 1987).<sup>28</sup> The study also produced further evidence that a successful outcome does little to enhance external efficacy; belief in government responsiveness did not increase for these citizens. However, for those who experienced a negative outcome, external efficacy decreased along with internal efficacy (Madsen 1987). A key point of Madsen’s study is this argument:

“[I]n the absence of positive self-efficacy, individuals are found not to undertake action, whatever their views on the environment. Instead, they are apathetic (if they see a negative environment) or despondent (if they see a positive environment). In political life, then, one can conclude that both eventualities would mean the absence of participation ... *Motivation to pursue self-interest in political or governmental arenas may not be wholly absent for such individuals, but it cannot produce action, conventional or otherwise.*” (Madsen 1987, 580, emphasis added.)

Madsen goes on to argue that extant evidence suggests a strong link between low external and internal efficacy, and a “sense of grievance,” protest actions, and other less acceptable political acts.

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<sup>28</sup> Some democratic theorists actually find such a relationship between political participation and internal efficacy to be problematic. This is because participation – especially electoral – might simply serve to convince the citizenry that they ultimately control government forces, which are thereby easily legitimized. Regime stability is enhanced, but so is governmental authority, which could more easily be abused under circumstances which these theorists might characterize as false democracy (Weissberg 1975, Wright 1976, Ginsberg 1982).

So far, then, there is no consistent evidence for the effects of lowered political efficacy on citizens' political behavior. However, we can make a relatively informed guess about what might occur in terms of the problematic electoral system. Until the 2000 presidential election, it seems likely that citizens believed quite strongly in the responsiveness of American elections. In other words, they believed that through voting, they were able to exert some democratic control over the political system. In light of Finkel's (1987) study, we can assume that voters, and those who participated in campaigns in other ways, were, until 2000, continually reinforcing their external political efficacy. On discovering that the most basic democratic right had been subverted, and the responsiveness of a basic government institution – the electoral process – could no longer be guaranteed, external efficacy may well have plummeted. In Madsen's terms, internal efficacy would also have taken a serious hit, particularly for those whose preferred candidate did not ultimately take the presidency. The individual's belief in her ability to influence the political sphere might have dropped dramatically.

It is important, however, to be careful in attributing any change in participation rates to efficacy judgments. A study by Gurin and Brim (1984) suggests that the kinds of events necessary to really *disrupt* efficacy are rare, idiosyncratic, and particularly compelling. Thus, only quite serious events can cause damage to an individual's sense of personal efficacy. I argue that the 2000 election debacle, with the subsequent continuing revelations about major flaws in the electoral process, constitutes such an event. Studies also show, as mentioned above, that citizens who have negative experiences with government are much more likely to give it low ratings than those who have positive experiences. However, citizens who have had positive experiences are no more likely to rate the government more highly than those who have had no experience with it (Katz et. al. 1975, Madsen 1987). So, such a negative political experience as

the 2000 presidential election might well have a significant impact on efficacy, both internal and external.

I suggest, therefore, that citizens whose trust in government and sense of political efficacy (internal and external) is already low – for example, vulnerable members of society like poor African Americans – are most likely to react with increased disillusionment and reduced motivation to participate politically in a legitimate way (Gibson and Caldeira 1992, Cohen and Dawson 1993, Verba et al. 1993). Participation by these individuals might take the form of civil disobedience or simply more protest activity, but I expect apathy to be a more common response. These citizens will also demonstrate a quick judgment of the 2000 election as unfair, being already primed with their low levels of external efficacy, and they will be more likely to judge future elections as unfair also.

Alternatively, we could see rising mobilization as the opposition to the illegitimately elected administration organized to protest its policies and defeat its future electoral hopes. I would argue that those citizens who have long been accustomed to political participation and have higher levels of internal and external efficacy might be expected to react in this second way, mobilizing to protect the governmental system they long trusted from further abuse. One key factor in influencing perceptions of procedural justice in politics, “voice,” might be particularly relevant in this context. That is, citizens who feel that they have been denied an opportunity to express themselves and participate in the process – for example, Democrats after the 2000 presidential election – may be significantly more likely to mobilize politically (Tyler 1990b). Meanwhile, for citizens whose internal and external political efficacy was not so damaged by the electoral problems – Republicans, for instance, who attained their preferred outcome – I expect little effect on participation levels, and efficacy may even rise. In sum, I

argue that one's levels of internal and external political efficacy, as well as one's habitual political participation, will determine one's reaction to the maladministration of American elections. In this context, I pose the following hypotheses:

H9: Politically vulnerable citizens (e.g. the poor, African Americans) will react to perceptions of procedural injustice by blaming the system *as well* as those responsible for administering it (decrease in diffuse as well as specific support for elections).

H10: Citizens who are not politically vulnerable will be more likely to react to perceptions of procedural injustice by blaming those who administer elections than by blaming the system itself (decrease in specific support will be more widespread than decrease in diffuse support).

H11: Citizens with low political efficacy and trust in government will react to decreased specific and diffuse support with increased disillusionment and reduced motivation to participate in future elections.

H12: Citizens with high political efficacy and trust in government will react to decreased specific and diffuse support with increased motivation to participate in future, both by fighting to reform the electoral system, by voting, and by mobilizing in other ways to protest the illegitimate administration and defeat it in future elections.

## 2.3 CONCLUSION

During the past five decades, trust in the American government, its leaders and institutions, has dramatically declined. American citizens no longer believe that the individuals in charge of the most important national decisions have the integrity and competence to work for the best interests of the people. This holds for all branches of government, the parties, and many individual leaders and administrations. As yet, the consequences of this decline in trust for the political process have yet to become clear. However, we have some important clues. The turnout rates of American voters have also declined in recent years (Ambramson and Aldrich 1982, Powell 1986, Jackman 1987, Cassel and Luskin 1988, Timpone 1998), suggesting new levels of political apathy. Studies suggest that this may be due to a concurrent decrease in political efficacy, involving both beliefs about one's own ability to influence politics, and beliefs

about the responsiveness of government to one's needs. An apathetic reaction, where citizens simply stop participating in the process, is probably the least troubling outcome we can expect from such a situation. Now, our most fundamental democratic institution, the most basic way in which American citizens can express their political wishes and hold leaders accountable for their actions, has come under fire for being badly flawed. Citizens cannot trust in the procedural fairness of the electoral system, and as a result, they cannot continue to believe in the efficacy of their political actions. This dissertation seeks to test the hypotheses outlined above, and determine the extent to which the American people have become disillusioned with the electoral system, and what effect this may have on their political efficacy and behavior.

### **3.0 CHAPTER THREE: ELECTION ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR: SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS**

The 2000 presidential election revealed serious, widespread flaws in the U.S. electoral system. These included a wide variety of technological problems such as faulty equipment, and a series of administrative errors, like the erroneous felon purge of the Florida voter rolls. In the aftermath of the election, public opinion was sharply divided on the legitimacy of George W. Bush's administration. Many Democrats protested bold legislative initiatives on the grounds that Bush was not rightfully elected, and Republicans responded with indignant affirmation of his electoral mandate (for example, see Moore 2004, Coulter 2003). But as yet, public opinion about the electoral process itself has not been studied. How aware were Americans of the problems that surfaced during that election? Certainly, many heard of at least a few. But perhaps only Democrats, the losers in this particular election process, were troubled by the myriad flaws it exposed. It could be that the procedural problems are considered to be minor by citizens for whom the election outcome was preferred.

In this chapter, I use American National Election Studies data to answer a number of questions. First, were citizens truly concerned about the fairness of the electoral process in 2000? If so, did the effect last beyond 2000? Do perceptions of unfairness form independently of the election outcome, or is it entirely driven by partisanship? Do demographic influences play a part in attitudes about election fairness? I examine these questions as they relate to the 2000

presidential election, as well as to subsequent elections in 2002 and 2004. Demographic, partisan, and ideological data, as well as data on political attitudes such as efficacy and trust in government, and on habitual political participation, are employed to find what drives attitudes toward the 2000 election, both in that year, and again in 2002 and 2004. I find that attitudes toward the 2000 election are significantly driven by partisanship.

Second, I examine the effects of unfair elections on attitudinal and behavioral change in the longer term, using panel data collected in 2000, 2002 and 2004. I examine the effects of negative perceptions of the election process on attitudinal orientations and behavior, including political efficacy, trust in government, interest in campaigns, and political participation. I find that those citizens who believe the election of 2000 was unfair are likely to have experienced a decline in external efficacy, and in trust in government between that year and 2004. Trust in government and political participation in 2004 is also found to be a function, in part, of the perception of unfair elections both in 2000 and 2004.

### **3.1 DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE 2000 ELECTION**

What determines political attitudes toward the kind of watershed, negative event represented by the 2000 election debacle? The first part of this chapter consists of an analysis of the determinants of attitudes toward the fairness of the 2000 presidential election. In the previous chapter, I discussed at length the potential influence of such attitudinal traits as political efficacy and trust in government. However, demographic influences are also likely to be important here. Political scientists have known for years that some demographic characteristics play a role in policy preferences and political attitudes, although the nature and magnitude of this role is not



always entirely clear. Some variables tend to be more important, more consistently, than others in predicting political orientations. Among these are education, economic status, social class, race, gender and region of residence (Sears et al. 1978, Kluegel and Smith 1983, Ponza et al. 1988, Krosnick and Kinder 1990, Sears and Funk 1990, Popkin 1991, Price and Zaller 1993, Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995, Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996).

Research analyzing these variables has frequently approached them through the lens of rational self interest. Self interest has been thought to play an important role in citizens' political calculations since Down's (1957) "economic theory of democracy," which posited a rational calculation by voters of the "utility" of any given voting preference. Self-interest can be defined variously, but an obvious way to think of it is in terms of the citizen's economic or group interest. Many studies have investigated the influence of economic issues on self-interested political decisions (Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981; Ponza, Corcoran and Groskind 1988; Erikson, 1989; Sears and Funk, 1990; MacKuen, Erickson and Stimson, 1992; Wlezien, Franklin and Twiggs 1997). Although little evidence exists for any clear patterns of "pocket-book voting," researchers have found support for the idea that Americans often vote in what they perceive to be the national economic interest – a phenomenon known as *sociotropic* voting. (Kinder and Kiewiet 1981, Holbrook 1994).

Despite the evidence for "sociotropic voting", it is has been fairly well established that economic status is highly correlated with partisanship. Wealthier Americans tend to be more likely to vote Republican, and poor Americans still vote Democratic in higher numbers than they vote Republican (Page and Shapiro 1992). Socioeconomic status in general, encompassing several variables such as financial position (income), education levels, and the social class the individual most identifies with, is often a powerful predictor of policy attitudes and political

behavior. This is probably attributable to some combination of the roles of economic group interest, class traditions, and also to the importance of political awareness, which tends to increase with higher socioeconomic status and the educational opportunities it affords (Zaller 1992).

In terms of attitudes toward the electoral system, and the 2000 presidential election in particular, it is possible to suggest some hypotheses about the potential influence of these variables. The 2000 election had what could be considered a favorable outcome for wealthy, upper-class Republican voters, not only in strictly partisan terms, but subsequently via tax cuts and the loosening of market regulations. Citizens of higher socioeconomic status may therefore be less inclined to worry about the fairness of the 2000 election. Such a finding, of course, would contradict the expectations drawn from the procedural justice literature. In the previous chapter, I discussed research findings that policy preferences do not affect perceptions of the political process. Instead, researchers have argued that citizens have lost trust and respect for government regardless of individual policy preferences (Tyler 2001, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002). Evidence from this analysis that self-interest, defined as socioeconomic status, is highly determinative of perceptions of the fairness of elections, would undermine the conclusions of that research. On the other hand, if income and class do not drive these attitudes, we can assume that the process itself is the problem. I therefore propose the following hypothesis:<sup>29</sup>

H1: Elections that result in a Republican victory are perceived as more fair by citizens with higher income and those who self identify with higher social class, regardless of procedural problems that occurred in the election.

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<sup>29</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, attitudes about election fairness are presumed to be stable and almost universally positive up until the controversial 2000 presidential election. In this chapter, I use data from 1996 to compare “normal” election attitudes with those influenced by 2000. Hypotheses about attitude change, therefore, assume that awareness of election problems only really began in 2000.

Education differs from economic interest in its influence on political attitudes. Education levels are often thought to affect political attitudes and behavior through awareness and interest in political matters. Higher education generally corresponds with a better understanding of political issues, institutions, and processes (Zaller 1992, Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). The work of Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) suggests that this more complex understanding of the “messiness” of democracy and the characteristic hyperbole surrounding controversial political events may actually attenuate perceptions of unfairness, and lead better educated citizens to be more tolerant of hiccups in the democratic process. The disillusionment and assumptions of governmental corruption and unfairness that are so widespread in contemporary Western democracies often stem, according to Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002), from a lack of appreciation of the complexity and argumentation that are a fundamental part of democratic politics. I therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Elections are perceived as more fair by citizens with more education, regardless of procedural problems that occurred in the elections.

Group identity, particularly racial identity, has also repeatedly been found to be a strong predictor of political attitudes and behavior. Much research has examined the effect of racial attitudes on political judgments such as vote choice and issue positions (Carmines and Stimson 1989, Sears et al. 1997, Kinder and Sanders 1996, Sears, Sidanius and Bobo 2000, Mendelberg 2001, Sniderman and Carmines 1997). One fairly widely accepted conclusion is that of the overarching importance of racial issues and racial group identity in American political attitudes. A wide racial gap is often found in attitudes toward many important policy areas, particularly those that include some race-related element, such as welfare, affirmative action, and crime

(Carmines and Stimson 1989, Kinder and Winter 2001, Kinder and Sanders 1996, Kellstedt 2000, Sears, Sidanius and Bobo 2000). Although citizens may not consciously vote in an overtly racist way, evidence suggests they are heavily influenced by their racial identity in forming opinions on various matters. Individuals frequently seem to protect the interests of their own racial group in vote choice and other political acts (Bobo and Kluegel 1993, Gilens 1999, Kinder and Sears 1981, Kinder and Sanders 1996, Sears, Sidanius and Bobo 2000). In the months after the 2000 presidential election, the racial implication of some of the problems, most notably the felon purge of the voter rolls, was widely publicized. Furthermore, the centuries-old tradition of racism in American elections provided a worrying historical context for some of the problems uncovered in 2000. Given this history, coupled with the gap between African Americans and white Americans in interpretations of many policy questions, we might expect African Americans to be much more likely to see the 2000 election as unfair. African Americans may also have been primed to look more carefully for electoral problems in subsequent elections in 2002 and in 2004, and to give more credence to reports of such procedural flaws. I therefore posit the following hypothesis:

H3: African Americans see elections as less fair than other racial groups when there is a Republican victory, and widely publicized procedural problems.

In addition to demographic groups, partisan identity has long been known to play a fundamental role in the formation of political attitudes and in interpreting political information. In the previous chapter, I discussed the major assumption to be drawn from the procedural justice research: that citizens would judge the electoral system according to the fairness of its procedures, and not the partisan outcome. However, partisanship is arguably the most

indispensable variable in any study of American political opinion (Campbell et al. 1960, Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002). Since the birth of American public opinion research, partisan affiliation has been treated as perhaps the primary determinant of vote choice and policy preferences (Campbell et al. 1960). Despite some evidence for a modern decline in partisanship and more recently, a “dealignment” (see Niemi and Weisberg 1976, Nardulli 1995, Abramowitz and Saunders 1998), it seems clear that partisanship remains a key force in driving virtually all political behavior and attitudes (Stanga and Sheffield 1987, Rahn 1993, Dalton, Beck and Huckfeldt 1998, Bartels 2000, Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002). Particularly important is evidence that partisan filters can affect the way information is interpreted, as well as the emphasis placed on different pieces of information (Rahn 1993). Information about what happened in the 2000 presidential election may have been so distorted by the partisan lenses of both the sources and the recipients that only Democrats, the losers that year, really believe any of the problems were very serious. Republicans may have been able to dismiss, or at least minimize, the flaws uncovered in the electoral process. This partisan filtering may even have increased over time, as stories about 2000 are told and retold, and Republicans become impatient with the suggestion that that election was illegitimate. In other words, the partisan nature of the post-election debate in 2000 may have made the procedural flaws in the 2000 election impossible to separate from partisanship. I propose the following hypothesis:

H4: Democrats perceive elections as less fair than do Republicans when they result in a Republican victory, and when procedural problems are found.

Ideological orientation is also a key determinant of political preferences, and perhaps of partisanship itself. As discussed in the previous chapters, there are important reasons to think

that ideology structures attitudes toward the electoral process (Crigler, Just and McCaffery 2004, Fund 2004). Conservatives might have been less concerned about procedural flaws in 2000 for two reasons. First is that the conservative candidate eventually triumphed, which may have attenuated a lot of potential unease about the process. Second is that some of the procedures that disenfranchised legitimate voters were put in place to prevent voter fraud, especially fraud by citizens who were expected to support the Democratic candidate.<sup>30</sup> Liberals, on the other hand, are thought to be more willing to risk an element of voter fraud than to inadvertently disenfranchise a legitimate voter. The abundance of administrative flaws that prevented citizens from legally participating in the 2000 election was arguably much more problematic for liberals than conservatives. The ANES data available preclude the possibility of separating out the impact of ideological congruence with the outcome from that of attitudes about specific procedural problems, but I can propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Conservatives perceive elections as more fair than do liberals when there is a conservative victory, and when procedural problems arise in the service of preventing voter fraud.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the effect of political efficacy and trust in government on attitudes about electoral fairness. To recap, political efficacy is thought to determine coping efforts in the political domain. That is, individuals who have high political efficacy are more likely to act when confronted with a political challenge, and less likely to be discouraged by obstacles (Bandura 1977 and 1982, Renshon 1974, Madsen 1987). The scholarly distinction commonly made between internal and external efficacy refers to the difference between

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<sup>30</sup> For instance, the felon purge of Florida's voter rolls, ostensibly intended to prevent illegitimate voters from getting to the polls, may have strongly appealed to conservatives who believe that the law must be upheld at all costs.

believing *oneself* to be capable of influencing politics – internal efficacy – and believing that the institutions and leaders are actually responsive – external efficacy (Niemi, Craig and Mattei 1991). As a result of the 2000 presidential election, I expect to find that citizens experienced a drop in both internal and external political efficacy. On the other hand, individuals whose political efficacy was already high when the 2000 election took place may have reacted with more optimism, on the assumption that they were capable of exerting influence in political matters despite such bumps in the road. I therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H6: Citizens with low political efficacy see elections as less fair than citizens with high political efficacy when there are widely publicized procedural problems.<sup>31</sup>

In the previous chapter, I also discussed the role of trust in government. According to a vast store of survey data, trust in government has steeply declined since the 1950s. One explanation is that Americans have become disillusioned with government processes due to an expanding perception of self-interested politicians who are uninterested in working for citizens, and focused only on advancing their own careers and selling legislation (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995 and 2002, Tyler 2001). Reactions to the 2000 presidential election, therefore, are likely to be more negative for those who already had low trust in government. I propose the following hypothesis:

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<sup>31</sup> The limitations of the data employed in this analysis prevent any clear inferences about the causal direction of this relationship. That is, because efficacy is measured after the election at the same time as the respondent's attitudes about the fairness of the election, it is impossible to statistically determine whether efficacy drives fairness attitudes, or vice versa. In fact, the relationship may be somewhat reciprocal. This question is taken up in greater detail in the second half of this chapter, as well as in the following chapter in which experimental data allows for the establishment of temporal causality. However, for this section of the analysis, it is necessary to note that conclusions about causality are entirely dependent on theory.

H7: Citizens with low trust in government see elections as less fair than those with high trust when there are widely publicized procedural problems.<sup>32</sup>

Finally, political participation and interest in the campaigns themselves can affect attitudes about the election. Political participation, in the form of voting, donating money to candidates or groups, attending rallies and meetings, or even simply talking persuasively to others about political issues, has been associated with higher levels of political efficacy, which in turn promotes further participation (Finkel 1985). It seems reasonable to assume that participating in the political system, particularly during presidential campaigns, might increase positive regard for the electoral system, and thereby provide a kind of psychological buffer against the reports of flaws in the system. Citizens who were interested and actively participated in the campaign during 2000 may have been slower to respond negatively to reports of electoral flaws, and more tolerant of such problems than those who did not participate. I therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H8: Citizens who report greater interest and participation in the campaigns are more likely to see elections as fair than citizens with less interest, and who do not participate, regardless of procedural problems in the election.

### **3.1.1 Data and Methods**

The analysis in this part of the dissertation makes use of the high level of external validity afforded by large N surveys. The American National Election Studies (ANES) surveys are

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<sup>32</sup> The caveats relating to causality for the efficacy hypothesis must also be introduced for the trust hypothesis. Trust in government is also measured at the same time as fairness attitudes; it is possible that any relationship between the two is reciprocal, or runs in the opposite direction to what I theoretically expect. Again, this is taken up in the second half of this chapter, as well as in the next chapter using experimental data.



conducted by the University of Michigan in presidential election years, with shorter surveys (often designed to test new questions) conducted in the off years during Congressional elections. The ANES uses large national random samples, and in some years, multi-methods<sup>33</sup>, to cover a vast range of topics and demographic data. In the 2000, 2002 and 2004 surveys, which I employ in this chapter, a particular advantage is the large panel component. Of the 1807 respondents surveyed in 2000, 1187 were included in the 2002 survey, and 840 in the 2004 survey. It is possible, therefore, to utilize the data from these three waves in a quasi-experimental design, by comparing the responses across years and using 2000 data to predict change through 2004. In this first section of the analysis, I also use ANES data from 1996 (not part of the panel) as a baseline against which to compare findings from subsequent election surveys about election fairness.<sup>34</sup> ANES data from 2004 are employed to investigate longer term effects on attitudes and behavior.

The dependent variable for each of the models analyzed in this section is a question included in the 1996, 2000, 2002 and 2004 ANES surveys. This question asks respondents to judge the fairness of the election carried out in that year, and ranks answers on a five-point (2000) or four-point (2002 and 2004) scale ranging from “very fair” to “very unfair.” In 2000, the question read: “In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the presidential election we’ve just had, do you believe it was very fair, somewhat fair, neither fair nor unfair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair?” A similar question was also asked in 2002 and

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<sup>33</sup> For example, in 2000, approximately half of the surveys were conducted in person door to door, and the other half by telephone.

<sup>34</sup> As mentioned above, this is based on the assumption that the 1996 election was a “normal” election. No significant reports of election misadministration emerged, and President Bill Clinton was clearly reelected with 49% of the popular vote, compared to Senator Bob Dole’s 41%. Consequently, although some citizens no doubt were disappointed by the outcome, the fairness of the election procedures was not in question.

2004 in reference to the 2000 presidential election.<sup>35</sup> I use those later responses in a comparison with the responses in 2000. The 1996 data are compared with the later years as a baseline for attitudes about the fairness of elections prior to the revelation of the many procedural problems in 2000.<sup>36</sup>

Independent variables include race (whether the respondent was African American, or not), the respondent's education level, the respondent's household income and subjective social class combined into a scale of socioeconomic status (SES), the region in which they live (South or non-South), partisan identification (on a standard seven point scale), ideological orientation (also on a seven point scale), and gender. These test the demographic hypotheses discussed above. Coding for all variables is included in Appendix C.

Political efficacy and trust in government are measured using scales composed of several survey items. The items included on these scales differ somewhat from year to year, with some surveys including more questions than others. The questions included in each of the scales are listed in Appendix C, along with the coding and reliabilities for each scale. The political participation scale, however, is identical in each year, consisting of seven items that measure respondents' level of participation by asking about a variety of types of participation. I also include a measure of interest in the campaigns of that year, a three point scale ranging from "very interested" to "not much interested." Interaction terms for race and political efficacy, and

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<sup>35</sup> In 2002, respondents were first asked the open-ended question, "Whether or not you voted, you might remember that the 2000 election ended in a big controversy. What do you remember most about that?" They were then asked, "All things considered, would you say that the 2000 presidential election was decided in a way that was fair or unfair?" A branching question followed, "Do you feel strongly or not strongly that it was fair/unfair?" This resulted in four response categories, "approve strongly," "approve not strongly," "disapprove not strongly", and "disapprove strongly." The question wording in the 2004 survey was identical to this. However, for questions about the fairness of the 2002 Congressional elections and the 2004 presidential election, the wording was identical to the presidential election fairness question included on the 2000 survey.

<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately for the purposes of this study, the question about election fairness was first included on the ANES only in 1996, and was not asked in 1998. Therefore, no earlier survey data exists to compare with 2000 and post-2000 responses, and this analysis must rest on the assumption that 1996 represented a "normal" election year.

race and trust, are also included, to investigate whether these variables act differently for different racial groups.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.1.2 Results

**Table 3.1.1: Attitudes Toward Current Year Elections: Ordinal Logistic Regression Coefficients**

<b>Independent Vs</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Race (Black)</b>	1.646* (.884) 80.7%	-.5809 (1.513) -44.1%	1.054 (2.029) 187.0%	-.582 (2.691) -44.1%
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>	-.010 (.009) -0.1%	-.038* (.015) -3.8%	-.072** (.021) -6.9%	-.023 (.021) -2.3%
<b>Education Level</b>	-.081* (.040) -7.8%	-.137** (.046) -12.8%	-.033 (.057) -3.2%	.020 (.066) 2.0%
<b>Gender</b>	-.064 (.115) -6.2%	.411** (.125) 50.8%	.010 (.157) 10.5%	.172 (.190) 18.7%
<b>Party Identification</b>	.105** (.030) 11.1%	-.160*** (.033) -14.8%	-.073* (.043) -7.1%	-.224*** (.054) -20.1%
<b>Ideology</b>	-.040 (.066) 3.9%	-.022 (.040) -2.1%	-.041 (.054) -4.0%	-.089 (.065) -8.5%
<b>Region (South)</b>	-.133 (.112) -12.5%	-.458*** (.127) -36.8%	-.198 (.165) -17.9%	-.116 (.210) -11.0%

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<sup>37</sup> In the previous chapter, I discussed the possible effects of the interaction of race with these attitudinal variables, political efficacy and trust in government. African Americans have traditionally been politically vulnerable, and tend to have different levels of support for government institutions compared to other racial groups (especially white Americans). I therefore hypothesized that African Americans with lower trust in government and political efficacy would be more likely to see elections as unfair than others, having less faith in the system to begin with. The interaction terms included in this analysis are intended to test for this possibility.

<b>Internal Efficacy Scale<sup>38</sup></b>		.027 (.042) 2.7%	-.045 (.060) -4.4%	-.004 (.076) 0.36%
<b>External Efficacy Scale</b>	-.130*** (.024) -12.2%	.144** (.041) 15.5%	.124* (.060) 13.15%	.205** (.065) 22.8%
<b>Trust in Government Scale</b>	-.231*** (.043) -20.6%	.229*** (.044) 25.7%	.333*** (.057) 39.6%	.365*** (.067) 44.1%
<b>Political Participation Scale</b>	.016 (.050) 1.7%	-.106 (.055) -10%	-.027 (.072) -2.7%	.095 (.067) 9.9%
<b>Interest in Politics</b>	-.068 (.060) 6.6%	-.015 (.111) -1.5%	.325* (.139) 38.4%	.101 (.144) 10.6%
<b>Race x Trust (Interaction Term)</b>	.080 (.131) 8.3%	-.136 (.121) 14.5%	-.191 (.209) -17.4%	.026 (.269) 2.6%
<b>Race x Efficacy (Interaction Term)</b>	.152* (.072) 16.5%	.028 (.112) 2.8%	.222 (.157) 24.9%	.187 (.205) -20.6%
<b>Wald Chi2 Prob&gt;chi2 N</b>	135.57 p<.000 1332	228.35 p<.000 980	127.17 p<.000 719	165.98 p<.000 567

Figures are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors and odds ratios reported beneath.

\* = p<.05

\*\* = p<.01

\*\*\* = p<.000

This table contains results of ordinal logistic regression equations in which the dependent variable is the perceived fairness of the election in that year. The results show some continuity across years as well as some interesting differences. Of the demographic variables, race is particularly interesting. In 1996, African Americans were significantly more likely to think the election was fair than non-black respondents (when trust and efficacy are held at “0”), whereas the statistical significance of this relationship has vanished by 2000, when trust in government

<sup>38</sup> No internal efficacy measures were included in the 1996 ANES. This model employs only external efficacy measures, therefore.

has become determinative of African American attitudes about the fairness of elections.<sup>39</sup> The socioeconomic variables, meanwhile, have a consistent influence on the dependent variables. Higher socioeconomic status predicts a perception of greater fairness in both the 2000 and 2002 elections. Higher education, however, caused respondents in 1996 to think the election that year was less fair.

Partisanship is statistically significant in all years. Those who identify with the party of victory judge the election as significantly more fair in each year. In other words, Democrats saw elections in 1996 as significantly more fair than did Republicans, and vice versa for the following three election years. Ideology, however, does not influence these attitudes in any year – partisanship is clearly a more substantial influence on the dependent variable than ideology in 2004.

Internal efficacy was not a significant force in election fairness attitudes in any of the models in which it was included. External efficacy, by contrast, had a statistically significant effect on election fairness attitudes in each of 1996, 2000, 2002 and 2004. In 1996, higher efficacy prompted a greater propensity to see the election as *unfair*, but in 2000, 2002 and 2004, higher efficacy corresponded with the likelihood of seeing the elections as fair. Political trust is similarly statistically significant in every year, with an equally interesting relationship with the dependent variable. In each model after 1996, higher levels of trust cause respondents to see elections as more fair. Political participation and interest in the campaigns are not important for election fairness attitudes in any year, however.

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<sup>39</sup> The effect of race when trust is set to “0” is not statistically significant, nor is the effect of race when external efficacy is set to “0”. However, as trust increases, the lincom calculations tell us that non-black respondents are more likely to think the election is fair than are black respondents; that is, the slope is steeper for non-black respondents, indicating that trust in government has more of an insulating effect on fairness attitudes for these citizens than for African Americans.

Of the interaction terms, the main effect of only one is significant. In 1996, the interaction between race and efficacy reveals that black respondents with low efficacy were significantly more likely to believe elections were fair than non-black respondents with low efficacy. However, increased efficacy led non-black respondents to think elections were *more* fair, whereas black respondents actually thought elections were *less* fair, the more efficacy they acquired (see Appendix D for statistically significant lincom results for each of the interaction terms in the models). The lincom calculations for the other interaction terms, however, reveal some interesting results. For black respondents in 2000, lower trust in government led to a significantly greater likelihood of thinking the election was unfair than for white respondents. The effect of race when trust is set to “0” is not statistically significant, nor is the effect of race when external efficacy is set to “0”. However, as trust increases, the lincom calculations tell us that non-black respondents are more likely to think the election is fair than are black respondents; that is, the slope is steeper for non-black respondents, indicating that trust in government has more of an insulating effect on fairness attitudes for these citizens than for African Americans. Similarly, in 2002, trust has a significantly stronger positive effect on fairness attitudes for non-black respondents than for black respondents, as does external efficacy. That is, for African American respondents, higher levels of trust and external efficacy apparently do not insulate them from believing that an election is unfair, compared to non-black respondents. Lincom calculations for 2004 reveal the identical relationships for these variables. Although African American respondents start out around the same intercept point as do non-black respondents when external efficacy and trust in government are set to “0”, non-black respondents are significantly more likely to see elections as fair the more trust and efficacy they have.

The following analysis compares attitudes about the 2000 presidential election collected in 2000, 2002 and 2004.<sup>40</sup>

**Table 3.1.2: Attitudes Toward 2000 Presidential Election: Ordinal Logistic Regression Coefficients**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>2000 in 2000</b>	<b>2000 in 2002</b>	<b>2000 in 2004</b>
<b>Race</b>	-.5809 (1.513) -44.1%	1.343 (.2.343) 283.2%	6.164 (4.389) 37551.57%
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>	-.038* (.015) -3.8%	-.031 (.019) -3.1%	.025 (.021) 2.6%
<b>Education Level</b>	-.137** (.046) -12.8%	.131* (.062) 14.0%	.203* (.081) 22.6%
<b>Gender</b>	.411** (.125) 50.8%	-.212 (.166) -19.1%	-.220 (.210) -19.7%
<b>Party Identification</b>	-.160*** (.033) -14.8%	-.495*** (.045) -39.1%	-.539*** (.061) -41.7%
<b>Ideology</b>	-.022 (.040) -2.1%	-.178** (.057) -16.3%	-.190** (.069) -17.3%
<b>Region (South)</b>	-.458*** (.127) -36.8%	-.498** (.177) -16.3%	-.445 (.238) -35.9%
<b>Internal Efficacy</b>	.027 (.042) 2.7%	-.133* (.065) -12.5%	-.112 (.084) -10.6%
<b>External Efficacy</b>	.144** (.041) 15.5%	.038 (.066) 3.9%	.178* (.074) 19.5%
<b>Trust in Government</b>	.229*** (.044) 25.7%	.172** (.055) 18.8%	.306*** (.075) 35.8%

<sup>40</sup> In Table 3.1.1, attitudes about the election *that year* were analysed. That is, attitudes about the 1996 election that were collected in 1996, the 2000 election collected in 2000, the 2002 election collected in 2002, and the 2004 election collected in 2004. In this table, by contrast, the dependent variable is respondents' attitudes about the fairness of the 2000 election, collected in 2000, then again in 2002 and 2004 as retrospective judgments. The first column in Table 3.1.2, therefore is identical to the second column in Table 3.1.1, but I include it here for easy comparison to the other two columns.

<b>Political Participation</b>	-106 (.055) -10%	-.042 (.077) -4.1%	.081 (.072) 8.4%
<b>Interest in Politics</b>	-.015 (.111) -1.5%	.193* (.070) .097	-.045 (.157) -4.4
<b>Race x Trust</b>	-.136 (.121) 14.5%	-.081 (.084) -.158	-.971** (.355) -62.1%
<b>Race x Efficacy</b>	.028 (.112) 2.8%	.051 (.054) .148	.568* (.228) 76.5%
<b>Fairness of Current Election</b>		.170*** (.043) .129	.545*** (.124) 72.5%
<b>Wald Chi2</b>	228.35	275.01	193.89
<b>Prob&gt;chi2</b>	p<.000	p<.000	p<.000
<b>N</b>	980	709	552

Figures are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors and odds ratios reported beneath.

\* = p<.05

\*\* = p<.01

\*\*\* = p<.000

In this analysis, it is clear that demographic variables play only a limited role in determining attitudes about the 2000 election. Race by itself has no statistically significant effect in any of the models on attitudes about the 2000 election. Socioeconomic status affected attitudes in 2000, with higher levels causing a decrease in the odds of seeing the election as unfair, but had no effect in subsequent years. Education had contrasting effects in 2000 compared to 2002 and 2004 – in 2000, higher education decreased the odds of seeing the election as unfair, but this relationship has reversed and strengthened across the ensuing four years. By contrast, partisanship and ideology are statistically and substantively significant for almost all years. The size of the coefficients increases in 2002 and again in 2004 for both variables (although coding differences make it impossible to directly compare these models). Democrats and liberals were significantly more likely to judge the 2000 election as unfair, in 2000 as well as



in 2002 and 2004. As in the previous analysis, party identification is a substantially larger influence than ideology, judging by the standardized coefficients.

Trust in government was again significant in all years. For those with low trust, judgments of the fairness of the 2000 election were significantly more negative than for those with high trust. That is, lower trust in government increases the odds of seeing the 2000 election as unfair. The lincom calculations show that this is particularly true for non-black respondents. As with Table 3.1.1, the effect of trust in all years is identical when trust is at “0”, but for non-black respondents, higher trust corresponds with a steeper increase in the odds of seeing the election as fair (see Appendix D). No such racial differences exist for political efficacy in these models, however. Nonetheless, external efficacy has a significant relationship with fairness attitudes in 2000 and 2004; higher efficacy decreases the odds of seeing the election as unfair. Professing greater interest in the 2002 campaign also increases the odds of judging the 2000 election as unfair. Finally, judgments of the current year election are also significant in both 2002 and 2004. Believing the current year’s election was conducted unfairly corresponds with the belief that the 2000 election was also unfair, perhaps suggesting that attitudes toward the electoral process in general have become closely linked to attitudes toward – and retrospective interpretations of – the 2000 election.

### **3.1.3 Discussion**

It is now possible to return to the hypotheses stated above. To begin, some evidence supports the hypothesis that income and social class affect election fairness attitudes according to the outcome. In 2000 and 2002, higher socioeconomic status did lead citizens to express perceptions of fairness in the elections. That is, those who were more likely to benefit financially from

Republican control of government also expressed more positive attitudes about the fairness of the 2000 and 2002 elections. The effect is not substantively large, however, and by 2002, these economic variables had ceased to affect retrospective attitudes about the 2000 election. Education also affected attitudes about the 1996, when higher education did cause citizens to think the election was unfair, contrary to what was hypothesized. However, retrospective evaluations of the 2000 election are also *less* fair for those who are more educated. It may be that higher education predisposes citizens to have noticed news stories about the problems inherent in some elections, whereas in 2000, citizens with more education may have been more insulated against the initial reports of problems.

Prior to 2002, race especially had an important impact on election fairness attitudes. In 1996, black Americans overwhelmingly believed that the election that reinstated President Bill Clinton was conducted fairly. In 2000, however, they reacted immediately to problems that had only just begun to be revealed in the month after Election Day. It seems reasonable to assume that the long history of racial discrimination in American elections primed black citizens to notice errors in electoral administration that might have disenfranchised them, particularly given the non-preferred outcome in that year, as hypothesized. Despite this, in the 2002 and 2004, race, gender, and socioeconomic status were entirely supplanted by partisanship, ideology, and attitudinal orientations toward the political process in determining the fairness of the 2000 presidential election. For the demographic variables, then, there is some evidence to contradict the procedural justice literature. Economic self interest, as well as racial group identity, had a small influence on attitudes about the fairness of elections. However, the evidence to support this set of hypotheses is limited at best.

Partisanship has a consistent substantive and significant influence on attitudes about the fairness of elections, as hypothesized. For those respondents whose preferred candidate triumphed, elections seemed significantly more fair in all years, including retrospective judgments of the 2000 election in 2002 and 2004. At first glance, this seems to seriously undermine the theory that election outcomes are less important than the objective fairness of the procedures. However, the expanding ideological divide in news sources has made it possible to carefully screen for information that accords with one's own partisan and ideological views (Barker 2002). It may be that stories and beliefs about what happened during the 2000 presidential election have consolidated over the past few years into a clear script for each side of the partisan divide. Partisan and ideological differences about what constitutes "fair" and "unfair" may also drive this difference of opinion. Citizens have apparently developed a concrete set of beliefs about what happened in that election, and that they judge its fairness according to these heuristics. Although these data do not permit comparative tests of these explanations, there is clear support for the fourth and fifth hypotheses, with liberal Democrats seeing elections as less fair beginning with the Bush victory in 2000, and conservative Republicans seeing them as more fair.

Political efficacy, the belief that one's actions can influence a responsive political system, shored up faith in election fairness in 1996, 2000 and 2004, in line with the sixth hypothesis. Political efficacy may provide a kind of buffer against procedural problems in elections. But the relationships, although statistically significant, are not substantively large. Furthermore, the fact that this relationship exists in 1996, prior to the discovery of widespread election flaws, suggests that this is a general orientation toward the electoral system that may not have been touched off by the 2000 election. The interaction with race indicates that efficacy may be more important for

some groups than others, however. In 2000, 2002 and 2004, external political efficacy actually increase the odds of seeing the election as *fair* significantly more for non-black Americans than for blacks. That is, African Americans with higher efficacy are still less likely to have positive fairness judgments than other Americans with high efficacy. This supports the idea introduced in the previous chapter: that historically vulnerable citizens, even with high efficacy, will react to electoral problems with greater disillusionment than citizens who do not belong to vulnerable groups.

Evidence for the seventh hypothesis, that low trust in government drives judgments of unfair elections, is perhaps the strongest and most consistent in this analysis. Respondents who reported having low trust in government were significantly more inclined to believe that elections were unfair, even in 1996, although the substantive size of the relationship may have increased after 1996. The recent decline in trust in American government probably reduced citizens' faith in the electoral system, and the 2000 election only compounded the effect. Another way to state it is that high trust in government leads citizens to be more tolerant of problems in the system. The same relationship exists here with race as for external efficacy. That is, for non-black citizens, higher trust in government sharply decreases the odds of judging the election as fair. By contrast, African Americans with higher trust in government are still significantly more likely to see the election as unfair than others.

The eighth hypothesis, that participation in elections and interest in the campaigns would lead to a greater perception of fairness in elections, is not supported by this analysis. Instead, virtually no effect is found for these variables in relationship to fairness attitudes about any of the four elections in these models. Perhaps by 2004, partisan scripts about what went wrong in 2000 had really become reified in American political discourse. Those who were interested and

participated in the 2004 campaigns may have been mobilized to help prevent what they saw as another election loss to fraud or to disenfranchisement. That is, the mobilization effect may have been spread across the partisan and ideological spectrum, canceling out the effect.

So, few consistent or significant effects for demographic variables have emerged, suggesting that judgments of the fairness of elections are only weakly related to self-interest. Instead, the sizeable role of partisanship and ideology uncovered here suggests that election information is probably interpreted primarily according to political leanings. The effect of trust in government and political efficacy in this analysis illustrates that these variables are also very important in determining election fairness attitudes, quite independent of the outcomes. Finally, the minimal effect of participation and interest in campaigns is also interesting for what it suggests about mobilization effects and the impact of paying attention to campaign information. A clearer picture will emerge from the second section of this chapter, in which I turn the analysis around to focus on the *effects*, rather than the *determinants*, of attitudes about the fairness of elections.

### **3.2 ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR CHANGES CAUSED BY THE 2000 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

In this section, I examine changes in attitudes and behaviors that occurred after 2000, as the result of attitudes about that year's presidential election. The 2000-2002-2004 panel component of the ANES is employed in a quasi-experimental design to investigate shifts in political efficacy, trust in government, interest in campaigns, and political participation between 2000 and 2004. Although it is impossible to control for all influences on these attitudinal constructs in the

four year period covered in the panel, some evidence exists to support the idea that attitudes about the fairness of the 2000 election were indeed influential in changing political attitudes and behavior.

Internal and external political efficacy are treated separately in this part of the analysis, to determine whether attitudes about the 2000 election affected respondents' beliefs about their ability to participate in the political system, or by contrast, their faith in a responsive political system. I expect both kinds of efficacy to have been negatively affected by the perception that the election was unfair (see chapter 2 for a detailed theoretical explanation). I also examine trust in government in 2004 as a dependent variable. If moments of perceived incompetence in the political system actually do depress citizens' trust, as discussed in the previous chapter, we can expect trust in government to have declined since 2000 as a result of perceptions of electoral unfairness.

Interest in the political campaigns is also included as a dependent variable in this part of the analysis. For citizens who saw the 2000 election as unfair, apathy may have resulted, as these individuals disengaged from the political process out of disillusionment. Alternatively, citizens who saw the election as unfair in 2000 may actually have been mobilized by the controversy, and therefore have paid more attention to subsequent campaigns in 2002 and 2004. On a similar theoretical basis, change in political participation is treated as a dependent variable in this section. Political participation is the only *behavioral* variable contained in the ANES. It may be that individuals who felt the election of 2000 was unfair stepped up their participation, to increase their level of "control" over subsequent elections. On the other hand, these respondents may have simply thrown up their hands in despair, refusing to get involved in subsequent years out of a sense of futility. Given the implications of extant literature on this subject discussed at

length in chapter two, it seems reasonable to come down on the “apathy” side in developing hypotheses about interest and participation in campaigns (again, see chapter two for a detailed theoretical explanation). However, it is important to note the strong possibility of the mobilizing effect of electoral problems.

I propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Political efficacy, both internal and external, will decrease between 2000 and 2004 for citizens who thought the 2000 election was unfair.

H2: Trust in government will decrease between 2000 and 2004 for citizens who thought the 2000 election was unfair.

H3: Political participation in the campaigns in 2004 will have decreased from 2000 for citizens who thought the 2000 election was unfair.

H4: Interest in the campaigns in 2004 will have decreased from 2000 for citizens who thought the 2000 election was unfair.

The demographic variables from the previous section are also included in this analysis to control for their potentially important influence. Although few effects were found for these variables in determining attitudes about the election, the wealth of research on the many potential demographic causes of declining political efficacy, trust in government, and political interest and participation (see chapter two) suggests that these are important control variables.

### **3.2.1 Data and Methods**

In this section of the analysis, the panel data from the ANES studies conducted in 2000, 2002 and 2004 is employed to investigate the difference between attitudes in 2000 and 2004. The dependent variables are a series of attitudinal and behavioral measures, including internal and external political efficacy, trust in government, political participation, and interest in the

campaigns, all measured in 2004. For internal and external efficacy, I included only questions that were asked in both 2000 and 2004, collapsing categories from the five-point Likert scales used in 2000 to the three-point scales in the 2004 survey. Trust in government is also measured with a scale of four items, all of which were included in 2000 as well as 2004. Political participation is measured in both 2000 and 2004 with a scale of seven items, in which respondents were asked to report on their political activities during the campaign, as well as to state whether or not they voted in the campaign that year. Responses for these variables in each year were summed to create additive scales. Finally, campaign interest was measured using the same three-point scale described in the previous section.<sup>41</sup> All of these questions were asked in the post-election survey for the relevant year.

This part of the analysis attempts to determine whether the dependent variables reflect change over the four year period following the controversial presidential election of 2000. Included in the independent variables, therefore, are the 2000 measures of the dependent variables, coded for compatibility with the 2004 data. By including these lagged measures, any variance not explained by the 2000 data must reflect change over time in the dependent variable that was caused by some other influence.

The independent variable of interest is the respondents' perceptions of the fairness of the 2000 election, measured in 2002. Of course, respondents were asked how fair they thought the election was in the 2000 survey, but that survey was conducted so soon after the election that attitudes arguably had very little time to crystallize. Much information about the extent and nature of the problems surrounding that election did not emerge until months later. I therefore

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<sup>41</sup> The range of the dependent variables (and the lagged variables) is as follows. Internal efficacy: 3 – 9, external efficacy: 2 – 6, trust in government: 4 – 12, political participation: 0 – 8, campaign interest: 1 – 3.



include the 2002 measure of the 2000 fairness attitudes, in order to allow time for attitudes to truly take shape.

All other independent variables included in the models are coded as for the analysis in the first section. Demographic information, as well as partisanship and ideology, are drawn from the section of the panel dataset collected in 2000, to ensure consistency of the temporal order of the analysis. Further coding details can be found in Appendix C. The results are as follows:

**Table 3.2.1: Ordinal Logistic Regression Coefficients: The Influence of Attitudes About the 2000 Presidential Election, Measured in 2002, on Attitudes and Behavior in 2004**

<b>IVs – '02 Predicting '04</b>	<b>Internal Efficacy</b>	<b>External Efficacy</b>	<b>Trust in Govt.</b>	<b>Political Participation</b>	<b>Interest</b>
<b>DV Measured in '00</b>	.715*** (.060) -104.5%	.541*** (.059) 71.7%	.768*** (.066) 115.6%	.688*** (.069) 99.1%	1.407*** (.156) 308.1%
<b>Fairness of '00 in '02</b>	-.075 (.060) -7.2%	.232*** (.058) 26.1%	.272*** (.058) 31.3%	.168** (.060) 18.3%	-.090 (.068) 8.6%
<b>Race</b>	.691 (.865) 99.5%	-.953 (1.268) 61.5%	.022 (1.032) 2.3%	1.181 (1.401) 225.8%	.786 (.768) 119.4%
<b>SES</b>	.020 (.020) 2.0%	-.011 (.021) -1.1%	-.000 (.019) 0.0%	-.002 (.021) 0.2%	-.026 (.023) 2.6%
<b>Education</b>	-.220** (.064) -19.8%	-.133* (.061) -12.4%	-.038 (.063) 3.8%	.179** (.058) 19.6%	-.050 (.069) 4.9%
<b>Gender</b>	.229 (.173) 25.8%	-.108 (.162) -10.2%	-.077 (.164) 7.4%	-.253 (.162) 22.3%	.684*** (.181) 98.3%
<b>Party Identification</b>	-.075 (.056) -7.2%	-.080 (.051) -7.7%	-.142** (.054) 13.2%	.033 (.047) 3.4%	.065 (.060) 6.7%
<b>Ideology</b>	-.055 (.065) -5.4%	.031 (.061) 3.2%	-.029 (.062) 2.8%	-.045 (.056) 4.4%	-.129* (.064) 12.1%
<b>Race x Fairness '00 in '02</b>	-.258 (.230) -22.7%	.137 (.306) 14.7%	.067 (.230) 7.0%	-.264 (.311) 23.2%	-.266 (.212) 23.4%

<b>Wald Chi2</b>	189.42	143.61	216.87	157.03	118.41
<b>Prob&gt;chi2</b>	p<.000	p<.000	p<.000	p<.000	p<.000
<b>N</b>	503	557	521	558	567

Figures are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors and odds ratios reported beneath.

\* = p<.05

\*\* = p<.01

\*\*\* = p<.000

The lagged variables, the measures of attitudes and behavior in 2000, are all statistically significant in these models, as expected. The independent variable of interest, the perceived fairness of the 2000 election, is statistically significant in three of the models. External efficacy and trust in government significantly declined between 2000 and 2004, as a result of perceiving the 2000 election as unfair. That is, some of the variance in the 2004 measures of external efficacy and trust in government *not* captured by the 2000 lagged variable can be attributed to negative perceptions of the 2000 election over that period. The odds of experiencing lower external efficacy and trust in government between 2000 and 2004 were significantly higher for those that saw the election as unfair. Political participation, by contrast, actually increased for respondents who saw the 2000 election as unfair, with a 18.3% increase in the odds of participating more in 2004 for every one unit shift toward “unfair.” Internal efficacy and campaign interest, by contrast, were not affected by attitudes about the 2000 election.

Of the control variables, education is statistically significant in the same direction for both internal and external efficacy. Higher levels of education correspond to increased political efficacy between 2000 and 2004 in this analysis. Higher education also predicts an increase in political participation over the four year period. For trust in government, partisanship is important, with a one unit shift toward the Republican end of the scale predicting a 13.2% increase in the odds of gaining a greater trust in government over that period. Stated differently, Democrats apparently lost trust in government over the 2000–2004 period. Similarly, liberals

appear to have lost some interest in campaigns over this period, with a one unit shift toward “conservative” predicting a statistically significant 12.1% increase in the odds of being more interested in the campaign in 2004. Finally, the only other important variable for campaign interest in 2004, other than the 2000 measure, is gender. Women lost a significant amount of interest in campaigns after 2000, with a 98.3% decrease in the odds of being more interested in the campaigns as the result of being female.

For the interaction of race and the fairness of the election, there is a similar effect as was noted in the models in the previous section. According to the lincom calculations (see Appendix D for statistically significant calculations), the effect of fairness attitudes when the race variable is set at “0” (non-black) is significantly more important than for black respondents. That is, for non-black respondents, trust in government and external efficacy declined, and participation increased, at a significantly steeper rate than for African Americans. Although no statistically significant effect appears for race in these models, therefore, it appears that non-black respondents may have been more affected by negative fairness perceptions from 2000 than black respondents.

### **3.2.2 Discussion**

This analysis used panel data to carry out a quasi-experimental design testing the effects of attitudes about the fairness of the 2000 election over a long period of time, providing insight into the extended effects of the electoral problems in 2000. By November 2002, extensive publicity had delivered the question of elections administrations into the foreground of the campaigns. For many, attitudes about 2000 had been reignited and fleshed out with information missed in the post-2000 debate. Citizens were primed with the problems of the previous presidential election,

and alert for a repeat in the 2002 Congressional elections. As the analysis shows, attitudes about election fairness clearly had a substantive and significant effect on attitudes and behavior in 2004.

To return to the hypotheses stated previously, it was suggested that both internal and external political efficacy would decrease between 2000 and 2004 for those citizens who believed the 2000 election was unfair. The data do not support this hypothesis for internal efficacy. Instead, it appears that respondents who saw the 2000 election as unfair did not lose faith in their own capacity to get involved in politics, and to act competently in the political sphere. However, a significant decline in external efficacy occurred between 2000 and 2004 for those respondents who believed that the 2000 election was unfair. External efficacy refers to the individual's perception of a responsive political system. This evidence suggests that Americans who were disillusioned by the election problems in 2000 subsequently lost confidence in the political system, and the likelihood of its responding to their political activities, as hypothesized. It is important to note, however, that education seems to ameliorate the effects of such controversy on efficacy attitudes. In the previous section, it was suggested that education provides a greater understanding of, and tolerance for, the messiness of democracy. The data do illustrate that respondents with more education actually increased in both internal and external efficacy over the period studied. Of course, another way of stating this relationship is that respondents with lower education lost efficacy between 2000 and 2004. Still, it seems clear that education might help shore up faith in the democratic process, protecting efficacy from crisis moments.

Trust in government, already at a historical low, had also declined significantly by 2004 for respondents who thought the 2000 election was conducted unfairly. As hypothesized, the

controversy over the results of the 2000 election was a serious problem for some citizens. It appears that such moments of great incompetence and controversy in American politics may have a significant role in destroying trust in government. The failure of most other variables to affect the change in trust between 2000 and 2004 is evidence of this. Partisanship also drove some of this decline, with Democrats experiencing a drop in trust after 2000. However, the effect of fairness attitudes is independent of party and ideology, lending support to extant research that trust in government is not driven entirely by political outcomes. Instead, the 2000 election debacle, a heavily publicized event in which the government failed to do a good job while engaging in bitter partisan fighting to protect the interests of politicians, led some members of the public to lose trust in the system, to the exclusion of most other influences.

The effect of negative election fairness judgments on political participation, however, seems to point to a reason for optimism. It was hypothesized that election fairness attitudes would have a negative influence on political participation, but in fact, the perception that the election was unfair predicted a significant increase in participation between 2000 and 2004. In other words, for those citizens who thought the 2000 election was conducted unfairly, that perception had a mobilizing effect over the four year period studied. Rather than the apathetic withdrawal from politics that might be expected as the result of a disillusioning experience, this controversial moment in American politics actually produced a surge in participation, an encouraging finding for the proponents of democratic engagement. Education also had an influence on participation, with higher education predicting a significantly higher level of political activity from 2000 to 2004. This is consistent with the findings for the efficacy models, demonstrating that education might help reinforce democratic values and behaviors in the wake of political crisis.

Finally, I examined interest in campaigns as a function of fairness attitudes. According to the results, attitudes about the fairness of the 2000 election had no impact on any change in interest between 2000 and 2004, contradicting the fourth hypothesis. Instead, only gender and ideology made a significant difference for this variable. Men appear to have experienced a significant increase in interest between 2000 and 2004, while women's campaign interest decreased in that period. It could be that men were unusually disinterested in the campaign in 2000, given the widely reported complacency of the electorate in that year (Frankovic and McDermott 2001), and the change actually represents a return to a normal level of campaign interest. Meanwhile, conservatives seem to have grown in campaign interest over this period, suggesting that they were mobilized perhaps even more than liberals – at least in comparison to their interest in the 2000 campaign. Again, this may actually represent a return to a normal level of campaign interest.

Interestingly, however, these results are differentiated according to race. That is, for non-black respondents, the effects of negative fairness judgments on trust, external efficacy and political participation are apparently more significant. This suggests that African Americans may actually have such low levels of trust, external efficacy and political participation habitually that such an event does not cause a significant spike or dip in their orientations toward the political process.

### **3.2.3 Conclusion**

The analysis performed in this chapter has provided answers to a number of questions about the effects, both attitudinal and behavioral, of the problems in the 2000 presidential election. I began with an examination of the variables that determine attitudes about the fairness of elections, in

2000 as well as in other years. Procedural justice theory suggests that the fairness of the processes, not the actual outcomes, determines attitudes about the fairness of elections. One way to determine whether this is the case is to look at the role of self interest, via demographic variables that might lead citizens to prefer one outcome over another. Little evidence for demographic influences was found in this analysis. However, partisan and ideological leanings were found to be highly determinative of attitudes about election fairness. It may be that citizens care overwhelmingly about the fortunes of their party, regardless of procedural issues. Alternatively, information about such controversial political moments as the 2000 presidential election could be so biased by partisanship that few consider the relevant information in an “objective” way. Finally, underlying ideological differences may drive this gap, with conservative Republicans much less concerned about possible disenfranchisement in the service of preventing voter fraud than liberal Democrats. The limitations of the data employed in this chapter do not allow any of these explanations to be ruled out. At this stage, we know only that party affiliation is very important in determining attitudes about election fairness.

So, however, are other political orientations, especially external political efficacy, and trust in government. Low levels of trust in government, an extensively documented trend in the United States, apparently encourage citizens to judge elections as unfair. Of course, the fact that cross-sectional data are employed in this analysis prevents unambiguous causal conclusions. In other words, it is possible that unfair elections cause citizens to lose trust in government. Either way, there is a clear relationship between low trust in government and the perception of unfair elections. This has serious implications for the decline in trust in government in recent years, in that for those with low trust – a rapidly expanding proportion of the population – moments of perceived governmental incompetence or corruption may be much less tolerable than in years

past. The lower levels of trust sink, the less likely the populace may be to give the government the benefit of the doubt over a controversy such as the 2000 presidential election. Alternatively, trust might decline each time the government creates such a crisis.

The same holds for external political efficacy, which also has a clear relationship with fairness attitudes. Again, cross-sectional data precludes strong conclusions about causality, but certainly it is clear that unfair elections and a perception of the government and politicians as unresponsive go hand in hand. And both trust in government and external efficacy have apparently diminished over time because of what happened in 2000. The panel analysis of effects of attitudes about the 2000 election illustrate a pattern of decreasing trust, and the cross-sectional analysis seems to add evidence of a greater likelihood of perceiving subsequent elections as unfair. This suggests that watershed moments in American politics, whereby the government displays a theatrical inability to conduct important procedures with competence and objectivity, may cause a significant dip in attitudes about the trustworthiness, fairness, and responsiveness of democratic government in America.

As mentioned above, however, there is reason for optimism. Despite the decrease in trust, the election problems were not met with apathy, at least, not by all citizens. Many responded over time with increased participation in the political system, and greater interest in the campaigns. Internal political efficacy – citizens' beliefs that they can act usefully in a responsive political system – did not suffer from the electoral problems of 2000. It appears that as far as their own ability to engage with and influence politics is concerned, Americans continue to think positively. Negative views of government with respect to electoral problems seem to be more or less limited to trust and to external efficacy.



Conclusions drawn in this chapter must be treated very carefully in terms of causality, given that the data are cross-sectional, and even the panel analysis cannot possibly rule out external influences. Despite the limitations of these data, however, it is clear that some relationships have been established between real world electoral flaws and political attitudes and behavior. To get a clearer picture of the cause and effects of attitudes about election problems, the next step is an analysis of experimental data, specifically designed to provide the internal validity lacking in a large N survey such as the NES.

#### **4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: EXPERIMENTAL DATA ANALYSIS**

Electoral problems in the United States since the 2000 presidential election are a serious problem for democracy in America. The previous chapters have outlined theoretical reasons to expect significant effects of electoral administration problems on political attitudes and behavior. The analysis of the American National Election Studies (ANES) data in Chapter 3 provided evidence that some variables are particularly important in determining attitudes about election fairness. Demographic variables, including race and economic status, play a limited role, but partisanship and general attitudes about the political process are particularly important. Trust in government and political efficacy, as well, play a major role in determining whether elections are judged as fair. Perhaps more importantly, the ANES data illustrate that perceiving elections as unfair causes a significant decrease in trust in government and in political efficacy. However, such attitudes also seem to have a mobilizing effect on some individuals, provoking them to participate in these campaigns in a variety of ways.

Thus far, this study has been limited by data collected in the aftermath of particular elections, with questions relating to real world electoral events. The internal validity of the analysis, and the ability to draw causal inferences, has been restricted by this. It is impossible to assume causality in studying cross-sectional data, and the partisan, ideological, and demographic related issues of the 1996, 2000, 2002 and 2004 elections almost certainly influenced attitudes toward the electoral process a great deal. We cannot know whether the circumstances of those

elections, including the outcomes, were entirely responsible for fairness attitudes. To gain a clearer, more nuanced picture of attitudes about election problems, therefore, I conducted an experimental study with undergraduates at the University of Pittsburgh in Fall, 2005. The experiment provided subjects with a series of vignettes describing hypothetical election scenarios, which varied according to: a) the extent of election administration problems; b) the citizens affected by them; c) the responsible party; d) the effect on the election outcome; and e) the type of problem itself.

This experimental design allows for comparisons of the effects of different variables on attitudes about election fairness. It also facilitates examination of the effects of election problems on political efficacy, diffuse and specific support for the electoral system, and political behavior. Although such data are of course limited in terms of external validity, they nonetheless provide some important insights into the importance of specific electoral problems that is impossible to detect with large scale studies such as the ANES. Rather than focusing on general efforts to discover the determinants of election fairness attitudes, therefore, this chapter involves a more detailed and closer examination of variations in procedural problems. I begin by briefly describing the experimental design, to set the stage for the types of questions to be answered in this chapter. In the first analysis section, I look at the determinants of fairness attitudes, according to the variations in the experimental treatment. The second section involves an examination of the consequences of different election scenarios for political efficacy and participation.

## 4.1 THE EXPERIMENT

Large N studies, such as the ANES examined in the previous chapter, are advantageous chiefly for their external validity, the generalizeability afforded by a sample that can represent populations of millions. However, a significant drawback is the lack of internal validity in such surveys. To be internally valid, it must be possible to conclude that change in the independent variables actually caused change in the dependent variables. When independent and dependent variables are measured simultaneously, as they often are in cross sectional survey research, we can observe correlations, but not causality (Smith and Mackie 2000). By contrast, the internal validity afforded by experimental designs allows us to concentrate on one causal variable at a time, by randomly dividing subjects into control and treatment groups. Rather than wait for complex electoral phenomena to take place in the real world, therefore, it is possible to isolate the effects of each variable of interest by utilizing an experimental design such as this. Random assignment, also a standard element of experimental research, should ensure that no group will have a concentration of any “subtype” (such as demographic or personality characteristics).<sup>42</sup>

This study relies on data provided by undergraduates at the University of Pittsburgh, collected between October 4<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Four hundred and eighty subjects from an introductory psychology class completed the pencil and paper survey to fulfill class requirements. Subjects ranged from freshman to senior year, with several mature students also included in the pool. The internal validity provided by the experimental design allows for the testing of more detailed hypotheses about the way election fairness attitudes are formed, as well

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<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately for the discipline, the degree to which random assignment is effective has been somewhat compromised by the overwhelming reliance on college undergraduates as a subject pool (Sears, 1988). Characteristics of this group include, according to Sears’ (1988) analysis, “less-crystallized attitudes, less-formulated senses of self, stronger cognitive skills, stronger tendencies to comply with authority, and more unstable peer group relationships (Sears, 1988, p.313).” Nonetheless, it is generally considered to be a worthwhile tradeoff for the internal validity and convenience provided by the undergraduate subject pool.

as the attitudinal and behavioral effects of different types of electoral problems. The design of the experiment is as follows (see Appendix F for wording of experimental vignettes):

**Table 4.1.1: Experimental Design**

<b>Problem<sup>43</sup></b>	<b>Type and Severity of Problem<sup>44</sup></b>	<b>Blame and Outcome (Partisan vs Neutral)</b>	<b>Effect</b>
<b>Control Group (C):</b> No problems at all	No significant barriers to voting for any citizens (fair)	Neutral (Outcome randomly varied between parties)	No problems at all
<b>Treatment 1 (T1):</b> Faulty Machines	Some random barriers to voting for all citizens (somewhat unfair)	Neutral (Outcome randomly varied between parties)	Random disenfranchisement of random voters of both parties and all races
<b>Treatment 2A (T2A):</b> Felon Purge	Some systematic barriers to voting for one group (very unfair, especially for “unconstrained” and Democrats)	Republican Officials (Republican victory)	Systematic, deliberate disenfranchisement of liberal African Americans
<b>Treatment 2B (T2B):</b> Destruction of Incomplete Mail-in Ballots	Some systematic barriers to voting for one group (very unfair, especially for “unconstrained” and Republicans)	Democratic Officials (Democratic victory)	Systematic, deliberate disenfranchisement of middle class conservatives
<b>Treatment 3A (T3A):</b> Poor Blacks Permitted to Register After Legal Deadline	Rules governing elections applied inconsistently (very unfair, especially for “constrained” and Democrats)	Democratic Officials (Democratic victory)	Systematic, deliberate voter fraud favoring liberal African Americans
<b>Treatment 3B (T3B):</b> White Church-goers Permitted to Register After Legal Deadline	Rules governing elections applied inconsistently (very unfair, especially for “constrained” and Republicans)	Republican Officials (Republican victory)	Systematic, deliberate voter fraud favoring conservative church-goers

<sup>43</sup> Throughout the chapter, experimental treatment groups will be periodically referred to by their label in the far left column (e.g. T2A, T2B, etc).

<sup>44</sup> See Chapter 2 and 3 for a full explanation of the difference between “constrained” and “unconstrained” views of ideology and elections in particular. Briefly, those with a “constrained” attitude focus on the strict obedience to rules at all times, regardless of outcomes. Those with an “unconstrained” attitude prefer to focus on the outcome, regardless of rules. For elections, “constrained” people are theoretically more concerned with possible fraud, while “unconstrained” individuals are much more worried about the possibility of wrongful disenfranchisement.

As Table 4.1.1 illustrates, the electoral problems presented to each treatment group vary according to the type of problem, whether it caused random or systematic barriers to voting or involved the inconsistent application of rules, the partisan locus of responsibility, and the type and severity of the consequences. However, numerical limitations of the subject pool precluded the possibility of a 6x4 design, wherein each of these variables is included independent of the others. Conclusions based on differences in experimental treatments, therefore, must incorporate all of the characteristics of the treatment scenario, rather than distinguishing conclusively between each of the above-mentioned variables.<sup>45</sup>

Subjects were randomly assigned to treatment groups. The survey presented subjects with a series of questions about the subject's attention to and participation in politics, partisan and ideological identification, and attitude about election fairness generally, prior to the experimental treatment. Half of the respondents in each treatment group were randomly assigned to receive a series of questions about political efficacy prior to the experimental treatment, and the other half received the same questions after the treatment. Questions about the subject's likely future participation in political campaigns and in protest activity, as well as questions about types of appropriate reforms of the electoral system, were also presented after the treatment.

This design, therefore, permits the testing of a number of hypotheses involving the causal effects of different electoral administration problems on fairness attitudes, and on political behavior and responses to political crises. In the previous chapter, it was only possible to

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<sup>45</sup> That is, the numerical limits of the psychology subject pool prevented the use of all possible combinations of these variables: a) the extent of election administration problems (serious or neutral); b) the citizens affected by them (none, African Americans, white Americans); c) the responsible party (Democrat or Republican); d) the effect on the election outcome (none, Democratic win, Republican win); and e) the type of problem itself (disenfranchisement, fraud, accidental technological problem). In order to achieve enough complete surveys to make experimental cells statistically significant, at least three waves of this study (over multiple years) would have been necessary. For the purposes of this experiment, the six scenarios described in the table rows had to suffice.

examine attitudes relating to a few specific, real world elections. It was clearly established that the circumstances of the 2000 presidential election had a significant effect on some citizens' attitudes about the fairness of that election, and of subsequent elections. However, the cross-sectional data prevent any clear causal conclusions about the kind of election circumstances that affect election fairness attitudes, including the degree to which different outcomes and different types of election problems influence general attitudes about the fairness of the electoral system. This experimental design allows the untangling of some of these temporal issues, and provides a more detailed picture of the causes of election fairness attitudes. The hypotheses in both of the following sections are similar to those in the previous chapter, but they reflect this additional advantage of the experimental data.

#### **4.2 DETERMINANTS OF FAIRNESS ATTITUDES: SERIOUSNESS, TYPES, OUTCOMES**

In the previous chapter, the first section of the analysis focused on a wide exploration of what determines attitudes about election fairness. A limited role was found for some demographic variables, including race and socioeconomic status, in a self or group interest context. Other variables, such as more general orientations toward the political process, were also found to influence election fairness attitudes. Internal political efficacy, the degree to which individuals feel qualified and able to engage in political activity, is relevant, as are levels of external political efficacy, attitudes about the responsiveness of the political system and of politicians. Attention to politics and habitual media usage, both of which may make citizens more likely to think about

electoral problems and to take them seriously, were found to influence fairness attitudes.<sup>46</sup> Partisanship and ideology affect attitudes via philosophical differences as well as group interest in terms of election outcomes.

Some of the major hypotheses about the types of attitudinal and demographic variables that determine attitudes about election fairness, therefore, have already been extensively discussed as well as tested with the “real world” context captured in the ANES data. In this section, these variables are included primarily as controls. This allows a shift in focus, to investigate the ways in which the experimental treatments can enlighten us about specific election scenarios. Of particular interest are variations in attitudes according to the type and severity of the procedural problems incorporated in the different treatment scenarios. Several key questions relating to the *seriousness*, the *type* and the *outcome* of the election problems included in the scenarios can be addressed here.

#### 4.2.1 “Seriousness”

I first examine the effects of the *seriousness* of different election administration problems. Theory outlined in previous chapters suggests that the presence of procedural problems, independent of their effects, cause people to judge an election as less fair than when no procedural problems exist. It seems logical that elections in which procedural problems *do* have serious effects for some individuals will be judged as even less fair. That is, there should be some kind of ranking of these problems in terms of election fairness. I hypothesize the following:

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<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately, this survey project was approved prior to the discovery of the importance of trust in government for fairness attitudes described in the analysis in chapter 3. Measures of trust in government were therefore not included in the survey. Although trust in government is probably very relevant for the attitudes and behaviors discussed in this chapter, it will have to be taken up in another study.



H1: Elections will be perceived as very fair when there are no election administration problems.

H2: Elections will be perceived as slightly unfair when there are administration problems that have only neutral effects on the outcome.

H3: Elections will be perceived as very unfair when there are administration problems that create systematic barriers to voting for some citizens, or that prevent the rules governing elections from being applied consistently to all citizens.

To test these hypotheses, I use experimental data from the survey conducted at the University of Pittsburgh. I begin by comparing two regression models in which the dependent variable is the subject's attitude about the fairness of elections. For the first model, the question asked subjects whether, "generally, elections in America are best described as" very fair, somewhat fair, neither fair nor unfair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair. They were then presented with the hypothetical election scenario, and asked "How would you describe the result of this election?" using the same five point answer scale.

Independent variables for the regression models include race (coded 1 = black, 0 = non-black), sex (coded 1 = female, 0 = male), and a scale of household income. For party identification and ideology, the standard seven point scale measures from the ANES were included on the survey. Interest in politics was measured using the same three point scale as the ANES (where 1 = very much interested, 2 = somewhat interested, and 3 = not much interested). Participation in the 2004 presidential campaign was measured using the seven item scale included in the ANES. Scales of internal and external political efficacy were also included in the survey, in the same form as the 2000 ANES (see Appendix G for all variable coding and question wording). Finally, in the model examining fairness judgments for the hypothetical scenarios, a series of dummy variables for the treatment group are included, where the control scenarios (CDE1, CDE2, CRE1 and CRE2) are the reference category. By comparing models, it is possible to see, first, whether the subjects' attitudes about election fairness are influenced by

the same sorts of variables as were relevant for the ANES analysis in the previous chapter. Second, it is possible to examine whether the control variables influence attitudes about election fairness when a very clear and specific administration problem is identified. Most importantly, it illustrates the ranking of the scenarios for the experimental group as a whole, in terms of fairness. Results are as follows:

**Table 4.2.1: Ordinal Logistic Regression Results: Attitudes About the Fairness of Elections, All Subjects**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>General Election Fairness</b>	<b>Hypothetical Election Fairness</b>
<b>Neutral Effect Treatment (T1)</b>		1.821*** (.340) 517.8%
<b>Disenfranchisement of Democrats (T2A)</b>		3.548*** (.362) 3,374.4%
<b>Disenfranchisement of Republicans (T2B)</b>		2.855*** (.375) 1,637.4%
<b>Fraud by Democrats (T3A)</b>		2.017*** (.323) 651.6%
<b>Fraud by Republicans (T3B)</b>		1.877*** (.341) 553.4%
<b>Race</b>	1.199*** (.333) 231.7%	-.215 (.377) 19.4%
<b>Sex</b>	.315 (.203) 37.0%	.136 (.197) 14.6%
<b>Income</b>	-.026 (.020) -2.6%	.011 (.018) .1.1%
<b>Party Identification</b>	-.109 (.092) 10.3%	-.180* (.080) -16.5%

<b>Ideology</b>	-0.274* (.113) -24.0%	.046 (.097) 4.7%
<b>Interest in Politics</b>	-0.477* (.236) -37.9%	-.135 (.218) -12.63%
<b>Participation in 2004 Campaign</b>	.009 (.078) 0.9%	.107 (.078) 11.3%
<b>Internal Efficacy Scale</b>	.013 (.035) 1.3%	.036 (.033) 3.7%
<b>External Efficacy Scale</b>	.200*** (.041) 22.1%	.004 (.040) 0.4%
<b>Wald Chi2 Prob&gt;chi2 N</b>	83.82 p<.000 457	122.46 p<.000 456

Results are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors in parentheses, and odds ratios reported beneath.

\* = p<.05

\*\* = p<.01

\*\*\* = p<.000

For the first model, in which subjects were asked whether elections in America are generally fair, the relationships observed are fairly consistent with the theory and evidence in previous chapters. African American respondents were significantly and substantively more likely to think elections are generally unfair, which makes sense, given the events of the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, in addition to the long history of disenfranchisement of African Americans in the US. Conservatives, by contrast, think that generally, elections in the US are significantly fair, while liberals find them to be unfair. Those with high levels of external political efficacy think elections are fair, while those with high levels of attention to politics think that they are generally unfair. None of these findings are really unexpected, and they fit reasonably well with the theory and evidence provided in previous chapters.

More interesting is the second regression model, in which dummy variables for the hypothetical election scenario account for virtually all the variance in the dependent variable that is explained by this model. In this model, the only other variable that influences fairness attitudes is partisanship. Democrats thought the hypothetical election scenario was significantly less fair than did Republicans, independent of other influences. That is, when controlling for the type and seriousness of the election administration problem, partisanship is the only variable that influences fairness attitudes, with Democrats thinking that the hypothetical elections – in this model, the control scenarios, which are the reference category – are generally a little less fair than Republicans do. This is arguably the result of the publicity surrounding such issues in the preceding two presidential elections, which may have primed Democratic subjects to be quicker to judge elections as unfair than Republican subjects, even when the circumstances and outcome are neutral. No other variables influence attitudes about elections when the control group is the reference category.

For the three hypotheses listed above, it is now possible to create a sort of ranking of the fairness of elections, according to the seriousness of the administration problems. By examining the regression coefficients, it becomes clear that certain types of election problems are considered to be less fair than others. For those who received a treatment in which an administration problem occurred with only neutral effects, those in the T1 groups, the hypothetical election was considered to be less fair than the reference category, the C groups. However, all other treatments were considered to be even less fair. The fraud scenarios, T3A and T3B, in which some group of citizens was permitted to register to vote illegally, were next in the ranking, with average fraud by Republicans considered to be less fair than the control groups, and fraud by Democrats even less fair than that. Finally, the disenfranchisement scenarios, T2A

and T2B in which a group of citizens was illegally prevented from voting, had the largest negative impact on fairness attitudes. The fairness scale mean for the T2B group, disenfranchisement of Republicans, was significantly closer to “unfair” than the C groups, and for the T2A group, disenfranchisement of Democrats, it was an even smaller distance to “unfair” than the C groups.

The results therefore provide clear evidence for the first three hypotheses. First, election administration problems are considered to be less fair than flawless elections even when they have no discernible effects on a given group or election outcome – T1 is considered to be less fair than C. Second, more serious problems, with unmistakable effects for a group or election outcome, T2 and T3, are judged even more harshly than T1 and C. Interestingly, it also appears that disenfranchisement (T2) is typically considered to be more of a problem for the fairness of elections than is fraudulent voting (T3), controlling for the other variables in the model. Interestingly, it is considered to be *less* fair to disenfranchise African American Democrats than to disenfranchise middle class conservatives, but it is also *less* fair for African American liberals to vote fraudulently than for conservative church-goers to do so. Certainly, it is clear that the seriousness and impact of the procedural problems makes a difference for fairness attitudes, to the exclusion of all other influences but partisanship. In the next section, I examine partisan differences in election fairness attitudes.

#### **4.2.2 “Types and Outcomes”**

It is now possible to address the issue of philosophical differences – and to some extent, historical context – between ideological and partisan groups. These differences, which were described extensively in previous chapters, should theoretically lead these groups to view

different *kinds* of procedural problems as less fair than others. Democrats and liberals should be more concerned about procedural problems that *disenfranchise* some groups, while Republicans and conservatives should be more troubled by *fraud* problems, which allow some people to participate illegally. And finally, in contrast to the expectations created by procedural justice theory, there is the question of *outcomes*. That is, the outcome of the election – or, alternatively, the partisan group whose voting rights are being stymied by the procedural problems – may be determinative of fairness attitudes regardless of the type or seriousness of the problem.

Using the experimental data in which both the type of problem and the election outcome were varied, it is possible to test some hypotheses. However, because of the numerical limitations of the University of Pittsburgh subject pool, it was impossible to keep all of these variables independent from each other. The treatment conditions do vary in important ways, but the type of problem, the outcome, and the severity are somewhat conflated. For instance, the disenfranchisement scenarios – T2A and T2B – vary according to the outcome, but both are serious problems, and the partisan cause of the hypothetical election in both cases is the same as the outcome. The same holds for the fraud scenarios, T3A and T3B. Any conclusions about the effects of different characteristics of the scenarios must take these data limitations into account.

In this section, I test the following hypotheses:

H4: Democrats and liberals will be more likely than Republicans and conservatives to judge elections as unfair when there are administration problems that prevent individuals from voting who may have been eligible (disenfranchisement).

H5: Republicans and conservatives will be more likely than Democrats and liberals to judge elections as unfair when there are administration problems that permit individuals to vote who may have been legally ineligible (fraud).

H6: Elections will be judged as more fair when the outcome is favorable, regardless of the type and severity of the administration problems.

For this section of the analysis, the dependent variable is again the fairness of the hypothetical election. To investigate partisan and ideological differences in the types of scenarios and the outcomes of the elections, I compared means using one-way ANOVA within the treatment groups. I first categorized subjects according to the *type* of election problem presented in the treatment – whether it involved fraud, or disenfranchisement.<sup>47</sup> The disenfranchisement category includes both T2 treatments: T2A, the “felon purge/Republican victory,” and T2B, the “destruction of mail-in ballot/Democratic victory” groups. The fraud category includes both T3 treatments: T3A, the “poor blacks/Democratic victory” and T3B, the “white church-goers/Republican victory” groups. This part of the analysis tests for the sort of philosophical differences in focus on election administration problems described in previous chapters. If Democrats find disenfranchisement scenarios most objectionable, while Republicans find fraud scenarios to be most unfair, *regardless of the outcome of the election* (because both a Democratic and a Republican outcome are included in both the disenfranchisement and the fraud categories), it would provide evidence for the fourth and fifth hypotheses.

Second, respondents are divided according to the *outcome* of the election problem in the experimental treatment. Scenarios in which a serious problem occurred, but the outcome was a Democratic victory, included treatment groups T2B (“destruction of mail-in ballot/Democratic victory”) and T3A (“poor blacks/Democratic victory”). Republican victories included treatment groups T2A (“felon purge/Republican victory”) and T3B (“white church-goers/Republican victory”). By comparing means between outcome categories, it is possible to determine whether

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<sup>47</sup> Control and neutral treatment groups are excluded from this part of the analysis. A comparison of means revealed no significant differences within these treatment groups according to party identification or ideology. Any differences, therefore, are limited to treatments in which the scenario involved serious administration problems that impacted a given group.

the type of election problem is irrelevant in comparison to the partisan outcome of the election, providing evidence for the sixth hypothesis.

In the final part of this analysis, I examine treatment groups in which a serious problem occurs individually, as opposed to dividing them by category and outcome. This allows for a more nuanced look at whether the combination of a particular type of problem with a given outcome creates significant differences between partisan and ideological groups. Results are as follows:

**Table 4.2.2: ANOVA Comparison of Means for Election Fairness, by Scenario Type, and Ideology**

<b>Means</b>	<b>Disenfranchisement (T2)</b>	<b>Fraud (T3)</b>	<b>Republican Victory (T2A, T3B)</b>	<b>Democratic Victory (T2B, T3A)</b>
<b>Conservatives</b>	4.33 (n=49)	3.64 (n=45)	3.80 (n=49)	4.22 (n=45)
<b>Liberals</b>	4.53 (n=68)	4.07 (n=68)	4.46 (n=67)	4.14 (n=69)
<b>ANOVA results</b>	F=1.691, sig=.196	F=4.732, sig=.032	F=13.21, sig=.000	F=.185, sig=.668
<b>Republicans</b>	4.34 (n=65)	3.70 (n=60)	3.92 (n=60)	4.14 (n=65)
<b>Democrats</b>	4.53 (n=77)	4.05 (n=86)	4.36 (n=83)	4.19 (n=80)
<b>ANOVA results</b>	F=1.940, sig=.166	F=4.291, sig=.040	F=6.665, sig=.011	F=.110, sig=.740

The results of this analysis clearly show significant differences between ideological and partisan groups, based on the type of electoral problem as well as the outcome of the hypothetical election. The first two columns compare groups according to the type of election problem, independent of the outcome. For disenfranchisement scenarios, the mean for liberals and Democrats is somewhat closer to “very unfair” than for Republicans and conservatives, but the difference is not statistically significant. The direction of the relationship supports the hypothesis, but the insignificant result suggests that both ideological and partisan groups find electoral disenfranchisement to be very unfair. For fraud scenarios, conservatives and



Republicans judge the hypothetical election to be significantly *more* fair than do liberals and Democrats. The hypothesis outlined above suggested the opposite: that conservative Republicans should consider elections in which some group is permitted to vote illegally to be much less fair than would liberal Democrats. It is possible to conclude that conservative Republicans are less bothered by election fraud than some have suggested; this group's mean for the fraud scenarios is much closer to fair than for disenfranchisement scenarios. Alternatively, it could be the case that liberal Democrats are primed to react negatively to all kinds of election procedural problems, leading them to make harsher judgments of both types of scenarios than conservative Republicans. At any rate, there is no support in this table for the fourth hypothesis, that liberal Democrats view disenfranchisement scenarios as significantly less fair than conservative Republicans, and clear evidence contradicts the fifth hypothesis, that fraud is less fair than disenfranchisement to conservative Republicans. The third and fourth columns compare party and ideological groups on the basis of the outcome of the hypothetical election. This is to test for differences in fairness attitudes based on outcomes, independent of the kind of electoral problem. No significant differences exist between groups in the Democratic victory treatment groups. Liberals judged these scenarios as only slightly fairer than did conservatives, and the mean for Democrats was actually closer to "very unfair" than for Republicans. Neither difference is statistically significant, however. But for scenarios in which a Republican candidate was victorious, conservative and Republican subjects judged the hypothetical election as significantly fairer than liberals and Democrats. For Republicans and conservatives, therefore, a favorable election outcome can apparently ameliorate the injustice of the procedural problems in an election. By contrast, for liberals and Democrats, an unfavorable outcome can make procedural problems seem significantly less fair. This finding provides support for the

sixth hypothesis, that elections will be judged as more fair when the outcome is favorable, regardless of the type and severity of the election problem. The evidence here is particularly important in that it contradicts the procedural justice argument, that unfair procedures are judged independently of the outcome.

Finally, to get a closer look at the differences between partisan and ideological groups, the experimental treatments can be separated according to the type of problem, as well as the outcome (see the experimental design in Table 4.1.1 for a description of the treatment group labels). The results are as follows:

**Table 4.2.3: ANOVA Comparison of Means for Election Fairness, by Scenario Type, and Ideology**

<b>Means</b>	<b>T2A</b>	<b>T2B</b>	<b>T3A</b>	<b>T3B</b>
<b>Conservatives</b>	4.33 (n=24)	4.32 (n=25)	4.10 (n=20)	3.28 (n=25)
<b>Liberals</b>	4.78 (n=32)	4.31 (n=36)	3.97 (n=33)	4.17 (n=35)
<b>ANOVA results</b>	F=7.143, sig=.010	F=.003, sig=.954	F=.264, sig=.609	F=9.883, sig=.003
<b>Republicans</b>	4.39 (n=33)	4.28 (n=32)	4.00 (n=33)	3.33 (n=27)
<b>Democrats</b>	4.77 (n=35)	4.33 (n=42)	4.03 (n=38)	4.06 (n=48)
<b>ANOVA results</b>	F=5.316, sig=.024	F=.057, sig=.811	F=.018, sig=.894	F=7.552, sig=.008

In this table, we see that the major differences between partisan and ideological groups appear when the outcome is a Republican victory, or, stated differently, when the responsibility for electoral problems lies with Republican officials. Among subjects who received the scenario in which African Americans were unfairly disenfranchised, resulting in a Republican victory, liberals and Democrats thought the election was significantly less fair than did conservatives and Republicans. Both groups thought the scenarios in which Democratic officials disenfranchised conservative voters or encouraged minority voters to register illegally were equally unfair. But for those who read about conservative voters registering illegally, resulting in a Republican

victory, liberals and Democrats again judged the scenario as significantly less fair than did conservatives and Republicans.

Two different factors seem to be at work here. First, in the scenario involving the disenfranchisement of African Americans, the fairness judgments of liberals and Democrats seem to be unusually negative in comparison to the means for the other scenarios. Second, the fairness judgments of conservatives and Republicans seem to be unusually positive for the scenario involving the illegal registering of conservative voters. Clearly, for liberals and Democrats, the disenfranchisement of African American voters is a more heinous electoral sin than other disenfranchisement or fraud scenarios. By contrast, for conservatives and Republicans, the possibly fraudulent registration of their own voters is much *less* troubling than fraud by the opposing party, or disenfranchisement of any voters. Although these results do not speak to the specific hypotheses outlined above, they certainly make the point that the type of would-be voters involved in the electoral scenarios, as well as the outcome, modify fairness judgments in the presence of serious election administration flaws.

### **4.2.3 Conclusion**

Thus far in this chapter, the experimental data has allowed for testing of much more nuanced hypotheses about the effects of variation in election administration problems on fairness judgments than was possible with ANES data. To recap, the first set of hypotheses dealt with the seriousness of election problems in determining fairness judgments. This part of the analysis sought to discover whether procedural problems in and of themselves, absent any partisan effect, might lead citizens to judge elections as unfair in comparison to flawless election scenarios. It also tested whether the addition of more serious effects, including disenfranchisement or

fraudulent registration of certain voters, would cause subjects to see elections as even less fair. These hypotheses were supported by the evidence, suggesting that although subjects are troubled by the presence of procedural problems independent of effects, the more serious the results, the more negative the fairness judgments.

The second part of this section compared subjects according to partisanship and ideology. This allowed for the testing of hypotheses involving philosophical differences between groups, which should theoretically have led conservatives and Republicans to judge fraud scenarios as less fair than disenfranchisement scenarios. In fact, the opposite was true – they thought fraud scenarios were significantly more fair than did liberals and Democrats. Furthermore, when coupled with a Republican victory, conservatives and Republicans were much more likely to judge the hypothetical fraudulent election as fair. Meanwhile, although significant differences were not found between groups for disenfranchisement scenarios independent of outcome, liberals and Democrats did judge a scenario in which African Americans were wrongly disenfranchised as significantly less fair than conservatives and Republicans.

The conclusion to draw here, therefore, is firstly that the seriousness of the problem matters. However, election administration problems *in and of themselves* are also a problem for judgments of election fairness. Second, the philosophical differences between groups that have been extensively outlined in previous chapters do not appear to be as important as the outcome of the election, or the identity of the group involved in the controversy. That is, when a Republican victory results from the fraudulent registration of conservative voters, Republicans and conservatives are *not* bothered by fraud. Furthermore, when a Democratic victory results from the illegal disenfranchisement of conservative voters, Democrats and liberals are not significantly more bothered by disenfranchisement than Republicans and conservatives. The

expectations of procedural justice theory, therefore, have been met in part, but must be modified by these findings about the importance of outcomes and groups in controversial situations.

### **4.3 EFFECTS OF ELECTORAL PROBLEMS ON ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR**

In this section, I use the experimental data described above to examine the *results* of election problems, in terms of important political attitudes, and political behavior. The vast literature that has accumulated during recent decades on the increasing negativity of public attitudes about government has focused almost entirely on the front end of these questions. That is, researchers have attempted to determine why citizens have lost their positive regard for government and democracy. The previous analysis created a detailed picture of what causes citizens to judge elections as unfair. But what difference do such judgments make? Do watershed moments in politics that highlight the inadequacies and incompetence of our institutions and officials cause a shift in support for the political system? Perhaps they affect political efficacy, the degree to which citizens believe involving themselves in politics is useful and productive. Perhaps they reduce political participation, making citizens more apathetic. On the other hand, such moments might mobilize citizens, promoting an increased desire to take control of the political arena. The experiment conducted at the University of Pittsburgh includes a number of pre- and post-manipulation measures designed to answer these questions. I use data from the experiment to test hypotheses relating to political efficacy, diffuse and specific support for the electoral system, and political participation.

### 4.3.1 Political Efficacy

Political efficacy lies at the core of important attitudes about democracy and government legitimacy, tapping attitudes about the responsiveness of government institutions and politicians, as well as about the individual's belief in her own capacity to engage in political activity in a useful way. In order to test the effects of election administration problems on political efficacy, a question order experiment was embedded in the survey. Half of the respondents were randomly assigned to receive a battery of questions measuring internal and external political efficacy prior to reading about the hypothetical election, and half received it after it (see items 5-7 in Appendix G for wording and coding of efficacy variables). This experiment is designed to test whether problems with the administration of elections causes differences in political efficacy between pre- and post-manipulation groups. The experimental nature of this survey should guarantee that the efficacy treatment is the only variable that affects this difference, given the random assignment of subjects to pre- and post-manipulation groups. I compare subjects on the basis of the efficacy question order experiment, in order to test for differences in political efficacy according to the seriousness of election problems. I hypothesize the following:

H7: Compared to subjects who received the political efficacy questions *prior* to reading the experimental scenario, political efficacy will be slightly lower for subjects who received the questions *after* reading about a neutral-effect scenario, and lower still for those who read about a scenario in which a serious problem affected a given group.

To test this hypothesis, I ran ordinal logistic regression equations, using the entire sample, with both internal and external political efficacy as dependent variables. This analysis should illustrate whether significant differences exist between the pre and post-manipulation groups. The independent variable of most importance is the pre/post-manipulation variable, where 1=efficacy questions were asked prior to the experimental treatment (presentation of the

hypothetical election scenario), and 0=efficacy questions were asked following the treatment. To test for differences between types of hypothetical election scenario, I created an interaction term for the scenario type and the question order. Scenario type is coded 1=Control (treatment groups labeled C in the experimental design), 2=Neutral (treatment groups labeled T1), and 3=Problem Election (treatment groups labeled T2, T3). Results are as follows:

**Table 4.3.1: Ordinal Logistic Regression Results, Efficacy Questions, According to Pre-Post Treatment**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Internal Efficacy</b>	<b>External Efficacy</b>
<b>Pre/Post-Manipulation</b>	-0.884 (.601) -58.67%	-0.016 (.604) 1.6%
<b>Treatment Scenario Type</b>	-0.058 (.169) -5.6%	.035 (.148) .3.6%
<b>Pre/Post Manipulation x Treatment Scenario Type</b>	.317 (.224) 37.3%	-0.029 (.227) 2.9%
<b>Wald Chi2 Prob &gt; chi2 N</b>	3.45 sig.=0.3272 479	0.37 sig.=0.9457 478

Results are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors and odds ratios reported below. NB: Lincom calculations failed to show any significant differences for the interaction term and the main effects of the variables.

- \* = p<.05
- \*\* = p<.01
- \*\*\* = p<.000

The results clearly fail to show any effect for the question order experiment in determining political efficacy, both internal and external. The experimental treatments did not, therefore, have any significant effect on the political efficacy of the subjects. No support has been found for the seventh hypothesis. This is not altogether surprising, given the limited influence of election fairness attitudes on the efficacy levels of ANES respondents, described in the previous chapter. Certainly it is cause for some optimism about the effects of election

administration problems on political attitudes. Citizens apparently evaluate their own capacity to participate in the political arena, as well as the responsiveness of politicians and the political system, independent of such crisis moments as these election scenarios represent.

#### **4.3.2 Diffuse and Specific Support for the Electoral System**

In this section, I examine the kinds of reforms that citizens feel are appropriate in dealing with election administration problems, in order to assess diffuse and specific support for the electoral system in the wake of a problematic election. Diffuse support, in the sense of institutional legitimacy, is supposed to supply public acceptance of the institution's mandate – in the case of elections, the mandate to declare outcomes that are non-preferred for some citizens – and mass compliance with its decisions. Specific support, by contrast, refers to public attitudes about specific outcomes and actors. In the case of elections, we would usually expect specific support to rise and fall with the individual's response to the partisan outcome of elections, and in the case of procedural problems, with perceptions of localized responsibility for those problems. However, given widespread diffuse support, fluctuations in specific support should have little impact on the extent to which citizens view the elections process as legitimate and fair.

As yet, the consequences of damage to diffuse and specific support for any institution are unclear. Research to date has focused on the front end of this issue – that is, what *causes* lowered diffuse and specific support? In this study, I aim to discover whether different types of procedural problems in the electoral system are perceived as serious enough to call the legitimacy of the process into question. If this is the case, I would expect citizens to choose reforms that are both strong and diffuse, in order to radically change the way elections are administered in America. I argue that this is particularly likely for politically vulnerable groups



in society, such as African Americans, and for Democrats, whose faith in the electoral system may have been damaged by the controversial elections of 2000 and, to a lesser extent, 2004. By contrast, for citizens whose faith in governmental institutions is likely to be stronger and less subject to fluctuations caused by single events, I expect a higher likelihood of choosing specific reforms that punish individual administrations instead of reforming the electoral system altogether.

Two questions are included on the experimental survey pertaining to reform of the electoral system in the United States.<sup>48</sup> Subjects were presented with a number of possible reforms, ranging from strong to weak, both diffuse (institutional) and specific (referring to particular administrations and officials). Subjects were asked to indicate which, if any, of these reforms were appropriate. The choices they made provide evidence as to whether diffuse and specific support for the electoral system decreases as the result of different types of election problems. Subjects who want to radically reform the electoral system, removing power from the state administrations and subjecting them to legally binding dictates of another body, I would argue, have lost diffuse support for the current system. By contrast, those who choose reforms that punish specific administrations or officials for electoral misadministration have interpreted electoral problems as a localized problem, requiring a limited solution that does not significantly alter the current system.

By comparing experimental treatment groups, therefore, it is possible to investigate the causes of subjects' attitudes about the need for electoral system reform. Reforms suggested by the control group, for instance, may reflect a *general* belief that the electoral system is in need of some restructuring. That is, these subjects may have entered the experiment with a pre-

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<sup>48</sup> The reform items were positioned in the survey *after* the experimental treatments and all other questions pertaining to elections.

conceived belief that the electoral system should be reformed, regardless of any information they might have received in the experimental treatment. Also, by comparing neutral treatment groups (T1) with groups that received the scenarios in which a serious problem was described (T2 and T3), it is possible to test whether certain kinds of election scenarios (varied according to the type and outcome of election problem) affect support for the electoral system. Finally, I examine whether there are partisan or racial group differences in support for the electoral system. That is, do partisan and racial characteristics affect the degree and type of reform, regardless of – or in conjunction with – the particular experimental scenario? I propose the following hypotheses:

H8: Subjects who read about an election in which problems occurred with an indisputable effect for one party will choose more diffuse and specific reforms than subjects who read about an election problem with a neutral effect, while subjects in the control group who read about a flawless election will choose the least diffuse and specific reforms.

H9: Subjects who read about an election in which there was an unfavorable outcome will choose more and stronger diffuse and specific reforms than subjects for whom the outcome of the hypothetical election was favorable.

H10: African American and Democratic subjects will choose more diffuse and specific reforms than other subjects, particularly when presented with a disenfranchisement scenario.

To test the eighth hypothesis, I constructed a scale of diffuse reforms and a scale of specific reforms, in which weak reforms count for one point, moderate reforms for three points, and strong reforms for nine points (see Appendix G, items 8 and 9 for a list of the reforms).<sup>49</sup> The scale scores represent the number and strength of the reforms each subject prefers. Higher scores indicate more, and more radical, reforms. I then regressed the scale on a series of dummy variables for the experimental treatment conditions, in order to test whether the different kinds of

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<sup>49</sup> For each kind of reform (weak, moderate and strong), it was possible for subjects to choose two options, one a reform at the federal level, and the other at the state level. This was intended to allow conservative subjects to indicate a preference for strong reforms without having to advocate a federal solution to electoral problems. The values of the scale, therefore, are set so that two weak reforms rank lower than one moderate reform, and two moderate reforms plus two weak reforms rank lower than one strong reform. This way, the scale measures the strength of the reforms chosen by the subject, as well as the number.

hypothetical election scenarios had different effects on the reform suggestions. The results are as follows:

**Table 4.3.2: Ordinal Logistic Regression: Experimental Treatments on Diffuse and Specific Reforms**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Diffuse Reforms</b>	<b>Specific Reforms</b>
<b>T1 (Neutral Treatment)</b>	-.235 (.281) 20.9%	-.231 (.280) -20.6%
<b>T2A + T2B (Disenfranchise)</b>	-.223 (.255) 20.0%	-.011 (.251) 1.1%
<b>T3A + T3B (Fraud)</b>	.173 (.257) 18.9%	-.297 (.247) -74.3%
<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	4.96	2.67
<b>F</b>	sig.=0.1749	sig.=.4458
<b>N</b>	479	478

Results are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors and odds ratios reported below.<sup>50</sup>

\* = p<.05

\*\* = p<.01

\*\*\* = p<.000

These results clearly show that none of the treatment conditions in and of themselves make a significant difference in the number and strength of reforms that subjects indicate as appropriate. That is, the details of the hypothetical election scenarios do not cause subjects to react more strongly in terms of reforming the electoral system, at least by comparison to the control group. Aside from the intercepts, none of the coefficients are statistically significant, and the models themselves are not statistically significant either. This may mean that diffuse and specific support for the electoral system is unrelated to attitudes about specific election controversies. Alternatively, it may be that reactions to the scenarios are overwhelmingly

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<sup>50</sup> ANOVA analysis of differences between means for each group also failed to show any significant differences across the C, T1, T2 and T3 groups on either of the reform scales (diffuse or specific). Results are available on request.

conditioned by other variables, such as the desirability of the outcome, which would wash out differences between treatment groups. Given the partisan differences in outcomes for treatment groups, it seems particularly important to test whether subjects differ within treatment groups according to party identification. To test the ninth hypothesis, therefore, that subjects choose reforms on the basis of the favorability of the outcome, I compared means using ANOVA for Democrats and Republicans within the control groups (C), the neutral treatment groups (T1), Democratic victory (T2B and T3A) and Republican victory (T2A and T3B) for the scales of diffuse and specific reforms. The results are as follows:

**Table 4.3.3: ANOVA Comparisons of Diffuse Reforms Between Party Groups, According to Treatment**

Means	Control	T1	Democratic Victory (T2B + T3A)	Republican Victory (T2A + T3B)
Democrats	10.48 (n=40)	7.60 (n=43)	9.33 (n=80)	8.27 (n=83)
Republicans	4.52 (31)	5.31 (n=26)	6.38 (n=65)	6.62 (n=60)
ANOVA	F=12.02, sig=.001	F=1.45, sig=.233	F=5.01, sig=.027	F=1.74, sig=.189

**Table 4.3.4: ANOVA Comparisons of Specific Reforms Between Party Groups, According to Treatment**

Means	Control	T1	Democratic Victory (T2B + T3A)	Republican Victory (T2A + T3B)
Democrats	5.53 (n=40)	3.67 (n=43)	3.78 (n=80)	4.34 (n=82)
Republicans	2.97 (n=31)	3.77 (n=26)	4.20 (n=65)	3.33 (n=60)
ANOVA	F=6.34, sig=.014	F=.010, sig=.922	F=.332, sig=.565	F=1.92, sig=.169

The results of these comparisons show some statistically significant differences between partisans in terms of their attitudes about the appropriate reforms of the electoral system. For both diffuse and specific reforms, Democrats in the control group, who read about a flawless election, suggested significantly more and stronger reforms than Republicans. Similarly,

Democrats who read about a scenario in which a Democratic victory resulted from election fraud by Democrats or disenfranchisement of Republican voters also chose significantly more and stronger diffuse reforms than did Republicans. However, no differences emerged between partisan groups within neutral treatment groups, nor within the groups that read about a Republican victory. In fact, the means for Democrats are actually slightly lower on the diffuse reform scale when the scenario involved a Republican victory.

Although these results do not show a consistent pattern of outcome effects – and therefore contradict the ninth hypothesis – they nonetheless indicate that Democrats are more inclined to reform the electoral system, as well as to punish specific administrations, in light of electoral problems. Perhaps the most interesting finding in this respect is the result for the control groups, where the mean for Democratic subjects is about twice as high as Republicans for both diffuse and specific reforms. In other words, even in the absence of serious election problems, Democrats believe the electoral system is much more in need of fundamental reform than do Republicans. And although the results for the majority of the treatment groups do not indicate a statistically significant difference between parties on the specific reform scale, the means for Democrats are noticeably higher in all groups for institutional, diffuse reforms.

The final part of this analysis is designed to look more specifically at partisan and racial differences in the number and strength of suggested electoral reforms. I hypothesized that African Americans and Democrats would be more likely to choose more diffuse and specific reforms than other subjects. To test this, I ran ordinal logistic regressions with the diffuse and specific reform scales as the dependent variables. Independent variables include the seven point scale of party identification, race, dummy variables for the type of election scenario received by the respondents (whether the scenario involved fraud or disenfranchisement), an interaction term

for race and disenfranchisement scenarios, and an interaction for party identification and disenfranchisement scenarios. The interaction term is included to investigate racial and partisan differences on the scenario type that African Americans historically, and Democrats recently, have been most troubled by. The results are as follows:

**Table 4.3.5: Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for Diffuse and Specific Reforms**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Diffuse Reforms</b>	<b>Specific Reforms</b>
<b>Party Identification</b>	-.231*** (.056) -20.6%	-.149** (.055) -13.8%
<b>Race</b>	-.416 (.492) -34.0%	.895* (.423) 144.7%
<b>Disenfranchisement Scenario</b>	-1.003* (.430) -63.3%	-.560 (.469) -42.9 %
<b>Fraud Scenario</b>	.247 (.200) 28.0%	-.218 (.200) -80.4%
<b>Race x Disenfranchisement Scenario</b>	1.763* (.699) 483.0%	.050 (.604) 5.1%
<b>Party x Disenfranchisement Scenario</b>	.211* (.094) 23.5%	.175 (.112) 19.1%
<b>Wald Chi2 Prob &gt; chi2 N</b>	28.64 p<.0001 473	19.69 p<.0031 472

Results are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors and odds ratios reported below.

\* = p<.05

\*\* = p<.01

\*\*\* = p<.000

The results of the diffuse reform analysis show several interesting relationships. To begin with diffuse reforms: Democratic respondents chose significantly more, and stronger, diffuse reforms from the list than Republican respondents, even controlling for scenario type.

The variable for disenfranchisement scenarios shows that respondents who received this type of experimental treatment actually chose fewer diffuse reforms overall than those who received the other kinds of treatment. However, the interaction terms for the disenfranchisement scenarios and race and party identification reveal that the disenfranchisement scenarios cause African Americans to choose significantly more and stronger reforms than non-black respondents in those treatment groups.<sup>51</sup> For Democrats as a group, however, other kinds of treatment scenarios drive them to choose more diffuse reforms. Alternatively stated, Republicans who receive disenfranchisement scenarios were more likely to choose more diffuse reform measures than those in other treatment conditions. The lincom calculations for these interaction terms (see Appendix H for statistically significant calculations) illustrate that Democrats are significantly more likely than Republicans to choose more diffuse reforms, both when they have received a disenfranchisement scenario, and when they have not. The same goes for African American respondents, who are significantly more likely than white respondents to choose more diffuse reforms, and even more so when they have received a disenfranchisement scenario.

For specific reforms, party identification is also statistically significant, with Democrats again choosing more and stronger specific reforms than Republicans. The relationship is substantively smaller than for diffuse reforms, however. In this model, race is an important influence, with black respondents also choosing more and stronger specific reforms than non-black respondents after having read about a disenfranchisement scenario. For non-black respondents, however, reading about a disenfranchisement scenario does *not* cause a statistically

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<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately, limitations of the undergraduate subject pool made it impossible to over-sample African Americans for this study. The number of black respondents in the sample is 33 out of 480. 12 black respondents were included in the disenfranchisement conditions, and 12 in the fraud conditions. This is a small number, and it is certainly necessary to remember that the sample size may be insufficient for robust conclusions to be drawn on the basis of these results. Future studies should include a greater number of African American subjects to test such hypotheses.

significant increase in the number of specific reforms chosen. Finally, the interaction of party and disenfranchisement scenarios is also significant here. Lincom calculations indicate that when disenfranchisement is set to “0” – that is, for those who did *not* receive a disenfranchisement scenario – Democrats are significantly more likely to choose more specific reforms than are Republicans (see Appendix H). However, this does not hold for those who have received a disenfranchisement scenario – in this case, Democrats and Republicans are not significantly different in choosing more specific reforms. In other words, it appears that disenfranchisement may be considered sufficiently egregious to stimulate Republicans to similar degrees of electoral reform at the specific level as Democrats would prefer.

The tenth hypothesis, that African Americans and Democrats will choose more and stronger diffuse and specific reforms than non-black respondents and Republicans, is therefore largely supported by these data. The interaction effects of race and scenario type suggest that election administration problems that involve the disenfranchisement of would-be voters are particularly offensive to African Americans, who react by calling for more radical, institutional reforms to the electoral system, and for change at the level of the specific administration.<sup>52</sup> Democrats, too, are primed to react more strongly than Republicans in the wake of electoral administration problems, but reform attitudes are apparently somewhat influenced by scenario type for subjects on both ends of the partisan spectrum. In other words, it may be that Democrats believe under most circumstances that the electoral system, and to a lesser degree, the individuals

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<sup>52</sup> For a more clear picture: ANOVA analysis indicated that African American subjects choose significantly more and stronger diffuse and specific reforms than non-black respondents, when all treatment groups are included.

<b>Means</b>	<b>Diffuse</b>	<b>Specific</b>
<b>Black</b>	10.21 (n=33)	5.79 (n=33)
<b>Non-black</b>	7.54 (n=440)	3.78 (n=439)
<b>ANOVA</b>	F=3.765, sig.=.050	7.000, sig.=.008



and administrations currently in charge of it, need substantial reform. Republicans, by contrast, are much less concerned about the state of election administration in America, however, the evidence clearly suggests that they are sufficiently roused by disenfranchisement to express support for specific reforms. Although the experimental treatment had some effect on diffuse and specific support for the electoral system, therefore, it remains important to note that African American and Democratic individuals are probably somewhat less supportive of the electoral system from the very outset. Among these citizens, diffuse support for the electoral system may be wavering, and specific support for those currently in charge of administering elections is probably quite shallow.

### **4.3.3 Political Behavior**

In the final part of this chapter, I examine the effects of electoral administration problems on political behavior. Thus far, this section has focused on the attitudinal effects of electoral problems, including the limited effect on political efficacy, and the degree to which citizens want to reform the electoral system following problematic elections. However, we still do not know whether electoral problems that disenfranchise some citizens or allow others to vote illegally, or that simply highlight incompetence in the running of elections, cause citizens to become more politically mobilized or more apathetic. Short of observing actual behavior, this experiment seeks to measure future political participation by asking subjects whether the information in the election scenarios makes them more or less likely to engage in campaign activities and other forms of participation in future.

The experiment includes a scale of items of campaign participation, presented after subjects read the hypothetical election scenario. The activities in the scale range from political proselytizing; to attending rallies; displaying campaign paraphernalia; donating money to candidates, parties and other groups; and voting. Subjects were asked to indicate whether the information in the hypothetical scenario would change the likelihood of their engaging in these behaviors in future elections (Appendix G, item 11). A question assessing the likelihood of future protest activity in light of the hypothetical election scenario was also included, following the participation scale (Appendix G, item 12). By comparing levels of likely future participation and protest activity across treatment groups, it is possible to determine the effects of electoral problems in mobilizing or demobilizing citizens. That is, some types of electoral problems may leave some citizens feeling demoralized and unwilling to participate in future. By contrast, some may be inspired to involve themselves more thoroughly in politics in the future, to raise awareness and prevent repetition of electoral problems. I use these data to examine the effect of different types of electoral problems, as well as different individual-level variables including race, partisanship, political efficacy, and engagement in the political process, on likely future participation. The following hypotheses are tested:

H11: Citizens with low levels of political efficacy and little interest in politics will react to election problems with a reduced likelihood of future campaign participation, while citizens with high levels of political efficacy and greater interest in politics will react to election problems with a greater likelihood of future campaign participation.

H12: Citizens with low levels of political efficacy and little interest in politics will react to election problems with a reduced likelihood of future political protest, while citizens with high levels of political efficacy and greater interest in politics will react to election problems with a greater likelihood of future political protest.

To test the eleventh and twelfth hypotheses, I regressed the likely future participation scale and the measure of likely future protest activity on a number of variables. The dependent variable for the first model, likely future participation, is an additive scale of items (coded

1=much more likely, 5=much less likely) ranging 6-30, where low values=greater likelihood of participation. For the second model, the dependent variable is a simple five point scale of future protest activity. The question reads, “Now imagine the new president wanted to start a national policy that you thought was a bad idea. Do you think that you would be more likely to protest such a policy in some way if you had found out that there were election problems when that president was elected?” The scale is coded 1=much more likely to protest, 2=somewhat more likely, 3=neither more nor less likely, 4=somewhat less likely, and 5=much less likely.

Independent variables for both models include demographic control variables, race, income and partisanship. Race and income are included because of their traditional association with efficacy and political participation, and partisanship because of the partisan nature of some of the treatment conditions. Two measures of engagement in politics, including an item measuring habitual attention to politics (coded 1=very interested, 2=somewhat interested, 3=not much interested), and a scale of participation in the 2004 presidential campaign (including the same seven items as the dependent variable), are also included in the model. Scales of internal and external political efficacy are included in the analysis as independent variables, with low scores corresponding to high efficacy. A dummy variable for treatment groups that received a scenario with a serious problem (T2 and T3) is included in the model, and interacted with the measure of attention to politics, and with internal and external efficacy, to test for differences in behavior as previously hypothesized. Finally, the five-point measure of the fairness of the hypothetical election (1=very fair, 5=very unfair) is included as an independent variable (see Appendix G for wording of all items).

**Table 4.3.6: Ordinal Logistic Regression Analysis of Likely Future Political Participation**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Campaign Participation</b>	<b>Protest Activity</b>
<b>Race</b>	-.779 (.435) -54.1%	.538 (.423) 71.3%
<b>Income</b>	-.037* (.019) -3.6%	.005 (.019) 0.5%
<b>Party Identification</b>	.019 (.056) 1.9%	.249*** (.051) 28.3%
<b>Attention to Politics</b>	.226 (.337) 25.4%	.238 (.332) 26.9%
<b>Participation in 2004</b>	-.314*** (.077) -26.9%	-.109 (.083) -10.3%
<b>Efficacy</b>	.017 (.040) 1.7%	.002 (.035) 0.2%
<b>Serious Electoral Problem</b>	-.996 (.692) -36.9%	.681 (.785) 97.6%
<b>Hypothetical Fairness</b>	.047 (.084) 4.8%	-.182* (.087) -16.6%
<b>Attention x Problem</b>	-.241 (.404) -21.4%	-.181 (.388) -16.6%
<b>Efficacy x Problem</b>	.039 (.046) 4.0%	-.015 (.045) -1.5%
<b>Wald Chi2</b>	75.42	38.01
<b>Prob &gt; chi2</b>	sig.=.000	sig.=.000
<b>N</b>	457	457

Results are ordinal logistic regression coefficients, with robust standard errors and odds ratios reported below.

NB: Lincom calculations failed to show any significant differences for any of the interaction terms in these models or for the main effects of the variables.

\* =  $p < .05$

\*\* =  $p < .01$

\*\*\* =  $p < .000$

For the scale of likely future political participation, only two variables are statistically important, income and prior political participation. Subjects with higher income were significantly less likely to expect to participate in the next election given the information

presented in the experimental treatment. Alternatively stated, subjects with lower income expected significantly higher levels of future political participation after having read the experimental treatment, suggesting that those who are economically disadvantaged are more mobilized by electoral problems than those who are financially well-off. This could be related to the traditional relationship between financial status and partisanship, in which poorer individuals are more Democratic. That is, these subjects may be more influenced by recent electoral history to mobilize in response to electoral administration problems. The relationship is not substantively large, however, with a change in the odds of participating of only -3.6% for each unit of the income variable. The other important influence on future participation is that of prior political participation. Participation levels in the 2004 campaign were significantly predictive of future political participation. However, the individuals who participated more in the 2004 election were actually significantly less likely to participate at higher levels in future elections. That is, subjects who did *not* participate in the 2004 campaigns reported being significantly *more* likely to participate in future elections, as a result of the information presented in the experimental treatment, with a substantively sizeable increase in the odds of participating of 26.9% for every one unit less of participation in 2004. This is reason for optimism for democratic engagement, suggesting that the effect of electoral problems may be to mobilize citizens previously disengaged from the political process. Nonetheless, neither of the hypothesized relationships held. Efficacy and attention to politics were not predictive of expected future participation, when controlling for each of these other variables.

For expected future protest activity, again, only two variables are statistically significant. Partisanship has a statistically significant, positive relationship with future protest activity, indicating that Republican subjects were significantly less likely to protest undesirable policies

instituted by a president elected by a flawed process. A one unit shift toward Democratic on the partisan scale, by contrast, produces a 28.3% increase in the odds of protesting an undesirable policy instituted by such a president in future. This finding points to the possibility that recent electoral history may have significantly influenced attitudes about the electoral process and the proper way to respond to electoral problems, reflecting contemporary attitudes of Democratic Americans about undesirable policies of President George W. Bush, and Republicans' desire to support the administration's policies. Perceptions of the fairness of the hypothetical election scenario are also significant. Subjects who thought the experimental scenario was one unit toward fair were significantly more likely to experience a 16.6% decrease in the odds of protesting in future. Conversely, the odds of protesting in future increase 16.6% for each unit toward "fair" on the scale. This can also be interpreted as reason for optimism about the political effects of electoral process problems. It may be that electoral problems mobilize citizens to engage with the political process, rather than causing apathy. Again, however, none of the hypothesized relationships holds. Efficacy and attention to politics are not significant influences on future protest activity.

#### **4.3.4 Conclusion: Results of Electoral Problems**

In this section, I have used experimental data to examine three major questions about the effects of election administration problems on attitudes and behavior. Beginning with political efficacy, the analysis focused on the influence of different types of election scenarios, which varied in seriousness as well as outcome. I hypothesized that political efficacy would be reduced by serious electoral problems, particularly when the outcome was undesirable. However, the results clearly showed that in fact, the experimental treatments had no effect on internal or external

political efficacy. In other words, citizens' belief in their own ability to get involved in politics, and the responsiveness of the political system to their actions, is quite independent of electoral controversies.

In the second section, I examined the effects of different election scenarios on diffuse and specific support for the electoral system. Although some effects were found for different kinds of election problems, the most striking finding was the tendency of Democrats and African American subjects to suggest more, stronger diffuse and specific reforms of the electoral system. This was particularly so for those subjects who received a disenfranchisement scenario. The implication of these findings is that Democrats and African Americans have slightly less diffuse support for the electoral system, and are more willing to punish specific administrations as well as to radically reform electoral institutions than are Republicans and non-black citizens.

Finally, I examined the effect of election problems on political behavior. The analysis dealt with "likely future participation," both campaign participation and protest activity. Results suggested that the effect of electoral administration problems on citizens was not influenced at all by political efficacy, or by habitual attention to politics. Instead, subjects may be driven largely by existing attitudes about the electoral process and current administrations. For protest activity, partisanship and perceptions of the fairness of the hypothetical election scenario were solely determinative, suggesting that subjects reacted to the information in the experimental treatment according to their existing beliefs about current electoral and political issues. Future participation is probably driven in part by similar concerns, with lower income subjects expecting greater participation than higher income subjects. Prior political participation is also relevant, however, suggesting that electoral problems may have a mobilizing effect on some citizens.

Although there are null findings for several of the hypotheses tested in this section, the results do provide some good news for researchers concerned about waning political participation and democratic engagement. That is, controversial moments in American politics may actually have a mobilizing effect on citizens. Efficacy may help insulate Americans from the apathy that might otherwise result from disillusionment with political problems, and although support for the electoral system may have fallen somewhat among African Americans and Democrats in recent years, the behavioral effect seems to be a proactive one. That is, citizens may suggest significant reforms to the electoral system, but they also plan to involve themselves in legitimate political activity in the wake of election controversies.

#### **4.3.5 Conclusion: Entire**

The analysis in this chapter has employed experimental data from an original survey conducted with undergraduates at the University of Pittsburgh. The benefits of these data lie chiefly with the internal validity afforded by the experimental design. That is, the causal direction of statistical relationships can be determined with somewhat greater certainty, given the temporal order of treatments and measures, the random distribution of respondents within experimental groups, and the addition of a control group with which to compare treatment groups. Furthermore, the experimental study allows for the manipulation of a series of variables that cannot be duplicated in a real world context, such as the details of election administration problems.

Having said this, there are serious limitations to the data in this study. Some of these stem from the homogeneity of the college student population in terms of demographic characteristics, coupled with other traits that often set this group apart from the general



population, including “less-crystallized attitudes, less-formulated senses of self, stronger cognitive skills, stronger tendencies to comply with authority, and more unstable peer group relationships” (Sears, 1988, p.313). Conclusions about the analysis must be modified by the possibility that these findings might not generalize to the population as a whole. For instance, it may be that this subject pool is slightly more susceptible to the persuasiveness of the experimental treatments, and that therefore, the results are more dramatic than might be found in a more attitudinally stable population. Other limitations include the small number of African American respondents in the sample. It is difficult to make clear generalizations about racial differences given the low numbers of black subjects. Finally, there is the distinct possibility that attitudes about elections are strongly influenced by contemporary events, despite the supposedly neutralizing effect of random distribution across treatment groups. All of these caveats are important to note in making causal inferences on the basis of the experimental treatments in this study.

Having said this, the results of this study accord at least in part with the evidence provided in the previous chapter. The evidence is indicative of the health of American democracy. Citizens do judge elections harshly when administration problems disenfranchise groups or allow some people to vote illegally. However, one problematic election is insufficient to damage political efficacy, and in the face of electoral controversy, subjects mobilize to involve themselves in the system and protect their interests through legitimate political activity.

## 5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined the attitudinal and behavioral effects of a major breakdown in the administration of US elections. In November 2000, the most controversial election in decades took place. The campaign itself was relatively pedestrian, but the extremely close result in Florida led to a month of bitter partisan wrangling over the White House. Information about the causes of this administrative disaster gradually emerged over the ensuing months and years. A variety of serious problems were discovered, including inaccurate voter rolls and faulty voting technology. Some errors affected specific groups disproportionately, such as African Americans, while others randomly affected citizens according to geographic location. Although many citizens were satisfied with the fairness of the 2000 election, findings in this dissertation have shown that an almost equal number continue to believe the process that year was very unfair, and furthermore, that the conduct of subsequent elections has also fallen short of expected standards.

The purpose of this study was to discover, first, what determines citizens' attitudes toward the fairness of the election administration in 2000, and then of subsequent elections in 2002 and 2004. That is, are attitudes driven by partisan outcomes alone, or do demographic variables and attitudes about the political system more generally play a part? Second, does the belief that the 2000 elections was unfair influence such key political attitudes as trust in government and political efficacy, and does it have an effect on political participation? Both of these questions were first examined using data from the nationally representative surveys

conducted by the American National Election Studies (ANES). The external validity and longitudinal design of these surveys provided evidence that the 2000 election was – and still is – widely perceived as unfair, and although partisan attitudes are partly responsible for driving this view, other influences are also relevant. Furthermore, trust in government and interest in political campaigns have declined over time as a result of the election controversy. These two questions were then tested in an original experimental survey conducted at the University of Pittsburgh in 2005. Despite the limitations of these data in terms of sample, the analysis illustrated that different kinds of election problems interact with the outcomes to determine attitudes about election fairness. The data also showed that the effect of unfair elections is both to increase the likelihood of calling for radical reforms of electoral institutions, and to mobilize citizens to participate in the political process. In this conclusion, I recap the major findings from each chapter. I then discuss the limitations of the study, and its implications for future research.

## **5.1 WHAT DETERMINES FAIRNESS ATTITUDES?**

The first section of both the analyses dealt with the determinants of election fairness attitudes. Procedural justice theory suggests that the fairness of procedures, independent of the outcome, determines attitudes about the justice of an institution or process. ANES data analyzed in Chapter 3 provided evidence that prior to 2000, the vast majority of citizens thought their elections were fair. Beginning with the election of 2000, however, clear partisan and ideological differences in fairness attitudes began to emerge. Attitudes about that election, both in 2000 and retrospectively in 2002 and 2004, were overwhelmingly influenced by these variables, with liberal Democrats far more likely to see the 2000 election as unfair. Interestingly, they were also

more likely to see the 2004 presidential election as unfair. It appears that either the desirability of the outcome, or ideological differences in election administration priorities (discussed at length in Chapter 1) drive fairness attitudes.<sup>53</sup> However, other contributing factors included attitudes about the political system more generally. In particular, low trust in government, an expanding phenomenon in the US, was highly predictive of negative fairness judgments, as was low external political efficacy.

Findings presented in Chapter 4, the analysis of experimental survey data, suggest that partisan differences in attitudes about the 2000 election discovered in the ANES data may be due largely to the partisan script that has developed since that year regarding election procedures and the 2000 controversy. When different types of election misadministration problems are presented to subjects, it is the type and seriousness of the problem that causes individuals to see elections as unfair, much more than the partisan outcome. That is, even in the absence of a specific partisan effect, citizens judged elections with procedural problems as less fair than those with no procedural problems. Elections in which problems with serious consequences occur are judged as less fair, regardless of outcome.

A key hypothesis of this study involves ideological differences about the types of electoral problems that are considered unfair. Extant literature suggests that conservatives see election fraud as much more problematic than disenfranchisement. By contrast, liberals are generally more interested in eliminating barriers to voting, regardless of the possibility of fraud. In fact, the opposite was true in this study. Conservative Republicans in the experimental study are much less concerned by fraud (in the form of illegal registration) than disenfranchisement,

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<sup>53</sup> No questions about priorities in election administration – preventing fraud or disenfranchisement – were included in the ANES data, so it is impossible to determine whether it is this, or ideological congruence with the outcome, that underlies election fairness attitudes. This question is taken up in the analysis of the experimental survey data instead.

particularly when the fraud is committed by Republicans. Liberal Democrats judge the disenfranchisement of African Americans to be particularly unfair, but they also think fraud is unfair. The theory of underlying philosophical differences in election fairness attitudes is seriously undermined by these findings. Instead, political expediency may be much more relevant.

In sum, procedural problems in elections are viewed seriously by Americans. However, the outcome of the election – including the partisan and racial composition of groups affected by problems – is almost certainly a conditioning factor in citizens' judgments of election fairness. Attitudes about the trustworthiness of government and the responsiveness of politicians and the political system also feed these attitudes.

## **5.2 EFFECTS OF FAIRNESS JUDGMENTS**

The second half of both analyses dealt with the attitudinal and behavioral effects of unfair elections. Having determined that many citizens believe that the 2000 election was unfair, the next question is whether unfair elections actually influence other political attitudes and behaviors. This study employed ANES data to study the effect of election fairness attitudes on internal and external political efficacy, and trust in government. Evidence from the analysis suggests that external political efficacy and trust in government diminished over time as the result of election fairness attitudes. Between 2000 and 2004, citizens who expressed a belief that the 2000 election was unfair also experienced a drop in trust in government and in external efficacy. Although the limitations of these data restrict the validity of causal inferences, it is

clear that a strong link exists between negative judgments of the fairness of the 2000 election, and declining trust in government and political efficacy.

The experimental study produced no effect of election problems on political efficacy. However, interesting results emerged in terms of diffuse and specific support for the electoral system. When presented with a hypothetical election problem, Democrats and African Americans in the experimental study indicate a belief that the election system is in need of some kind of reform, regardless of the details of the hypothetical election. After reading a disenfranchisement scenario, African American subjects call for radical diffuse reforms, suggesting that their diffuse support for the election system is shallow at best. Republicans are also more roused by disenfranchisement scenarios than any other, but in general, these citizens are much less interested in election reform than are Democrats.

Of course, although the experimental design is intended to exclude the context of election administration problems in America today, attitudes are almost certainly informed at least to some extent by what happened in 2000 and 2004.<sup>54</sup> Democrats in general, and African Americans, have significantly less diffuse and specific support for the contemporary electoral process, and would be much more open to the possibility of radical reforms. It is hard to imagine that they are not influenced by the recent history of elections in America.

In terms of political behavior, both the ANES and the experimental survey data provided some reason for optimism. Evidence indicates that an unfair election (as judged by respondents) has a mobilizing effect, inducing citizens to become more interested in politics, and to express intentions of greater political participation in the future. Much extant research has implied that declining trust in government will lead – at best – to political apathy, with citizens disengaging

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<sup>54</sup> However, by limiting the sample to young university students who are less likely to have been politically engaged in the 2000 election, this effect is theoretically reduced.

from the democratic process. At worst, it may lead to illegitimate forms of political protest activity (Bernstein 2001). Instead, this study illustrates that unfair elections actually provoke citizens to pay more attention to politics, and to get actively involved in the democratic process via campaign activity.

### **5.3 FUTURE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY, AND A FEW CAVEATS**

One major consequence of the 2000 election debacle was to drive legislators to initiate substantial election reform, via the *Help America Vote Act* (HAVA; see Chapter 1 for a full discussion of this act). In 2006, nearly half of the American states missed one or more of the HAVA deadlines (Election Reform Information Project 2006). Much confusion remains over how best to implement the HAVA provisions, and the amount of funding available for future maintenance of the new systems. Congress has devolved much responsibility for continuing election reform to the states, with potentially serious consequences for the consistency and coherence of reform efforts (Election Reform Information Project 2006).

The results of this study, therefore, remain highly relevant for the future of election legitimacy in America. The controversial 2000 presidential election had a serious effect on important political attitudes and behaviors for some citizens. Americans are sharply divided along party and racial lines in their interpretation of what happened, echoing and reinforcing the partisan acrimony of political debate in recent years. Diffuse support for the election system may have suffered among some citizens – particularly African Americans – as a direct result of the 2000 election. Findings in this study also suggest that trust in government, as well as citizens' faith in the responsiveness of the political system, have decreased in the wake of the

2000 controversy. The ongoing failure of federal and state government to rectify the problems of 2000 suggests that future elections could also be tainted by such ambiguity and controversy, doing further damage to Americans' faith in the legitimacy of their elections.

Nonetheless, the results of the behavioral analysis are encouraging. The mobilization effect observed in the data analysis fits with anecdotal reports of a surge in campaign participation and voting registration in the lead-up to the 2004 presidential election (McFadden 2004). The response to electoral problems, therefore, may be limited to legitimate democratic political activity.

In the wider context of governmental legitimacy, trust in government, and procedural justice, this study provided important evidence that a watershed moment of perceived incompetence and fierce partisan fighting decreases trust in government. Evidence suggests that accounts of the US government failing to fulfill what citizens believe are its basic roles, have played a significant part in the declining trust documented in the past fifty years. In particular, procedures that are seen as unfair cause citizens to judge government more harshly, regardless of their outcomes. In future, election administrators should reform procedures and institutions to ensure their neutrality, and to remove any trace of self interest on behalf of those who decide outcomes. For instance, all efforts should be made to prevent election arbitration by individuals or groups that have a stake in the outcome. Finally, citizens should be educated as to the inherent "messiness" of democracy. The conflict and compromise inherent in democratic debate is something citizens apparently fail to grasp in a meaningful way (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002). A better understanding of this and a more realistic view of efforts to solve political problems through democratic means may help alleviate negative judgments of crisis moments in politics.



Limitations of the data employed in this dissertation make it difficult to draw true causal inferences. Cross-sectional data such as the ANES measure independent and dependent variables simultaneously, and even the longitudinal study using the panel data cannot control for external influences. Causality cannot be mathematically determined, so theory must supply sufficient reason to interpret results. However, it is minimally clear that strong relationships exist between trust in government, external political efficacy, and judgments of the fairness of elections. Although it is possible that the election of 2000 did not itself have the sole determinative role in decreasing trust in government and external efficacy between 2000 and 2004, these attitudes are tied closely together. Future studies should strive to control the temporal order of variables and limit external influence when disentangling these relationships.

For the experimental study, standard caveats apply in terms of using undergraduate samples to generalize to the population as a whole. Obviously, a more persuasive subject pool would be a national random sample, representative of the population at large. Undergraduates frequently display less crystallized attitudes about politics, and may therefore be more susceptible to the experimental manipulation, resulting in exaggerated findings (Sears 1988). This sample may also have been influenced by the 2004 presidential election, and the attendant allegations of registration fraud on the University of Pittsburgh campus itself (Roddy 2004). Finally, compared to older adults, undergraduates may be slightly more idealistic, with a greater propensity for political activism, thereby inflating their expectations of future political participation (Sears 1988). Each of these factors must be taken into account when assessing the veracity of these findings. Further research should test these findings with a more representative sample. Nonetheless, the experimental design provides valuable insight into the effects of different kinds of election scenarios. The findings illustrate that adherence to election

procedures is a major influence on judgments of the fairness of elections, and on expectations of future political behavior.

#### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

The 2000 presidential election was a major turning point for election processes in the United States. It highlighted countless flaws in the electoral process, produced impassioned debate over the meaning of fair elections, and culminated in substantial legislative action. The attitudinal, behavioral and legislative effects of the 2000 election will be noticeable in American elections for years to come. Certainly, it will remain the reference point for electoral legitimacy. This dissertation has attempted to examine the ways in which Americans make judgments about the fairness of election procedures, highlighting different variables that influence their perceptions of election fairness. It has also provided evidence that unfair elections can have serious consequences for political attitudes and behaviors. Trust in democratic procedures and faith in the responsiveness of government may have declined in recent years as the result of watershed moments of policy failure and self-interested behavior by politicians. However, the American public still reacts with increased efforts to engage with and participate in the political process.

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTION WORDING: CHAPTER ONE

#### 1996

In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the last election in the United States, where would you place it on this scale of one to five where 1 means that the last election was conducted fairly and 5 means that the last election was conducted unfairly?

1 = Last election conducted fairly.

2

3

4

5 = Last election conducted unfairly.

#### 2000

[Please continue thinking about the November election.] In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the presidential election we've just had, do you believe it was very fair, somewhat fair, neither fair nor unfair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair?

1 = Very fair.

2 = Somewhat fair.

3 = Neither fair nor unfair.

4 = Somewhat unfair.

5 = Very unfair.

#### 2002

All things considered, would you say that the 2000 presidential election was decided in a way that was fair or unfair?

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that it was fair/unfair?

- 1 = Approve strongly.
- 2 = Approve not strongly.
- 4 = Disapprove not strongly.
- 5 = Disapprove strongly.

In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the Congressional elections we've just had, do you believe they were very fair, somewhat fair, neither fair nor unfair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair?

- 1 = Very fair.
- 2 = Somewhat fair.
- 3 = Neither fair nor unfair.
- 4 = Somewhat unfair.
- 5 = Very unfair.

### 2004

All things considered, would you say that the 2000 presidential election was decided in a way that was fair or unfair?

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that it was fair/unfair?

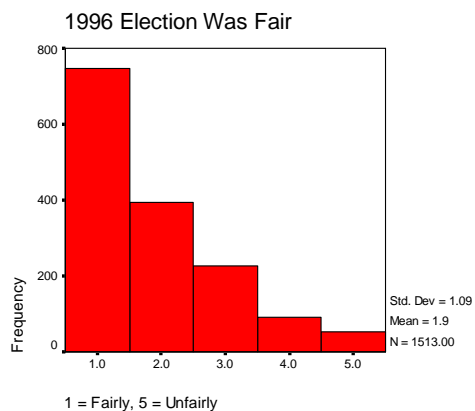
- 1 = Fair – strongly.
- 2 = Fair - not strongly.
- 4 = Unfair - not strongly.
- 5 = Unfair – strongly.

[Please continue thinking about the November election.] In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the presidential election we've just had, do you believe it was very fair, somewhat fair, neither fair nor unfair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair?

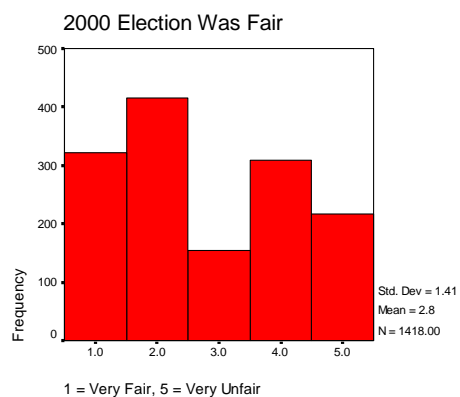
- 1 = Very fair.
- 2 = Somewhat fair.
- 3 = Neither fair nor unfair.
- 4 = Somewhat unfair.
- 5 = Very unfair.

## APPENDIX B

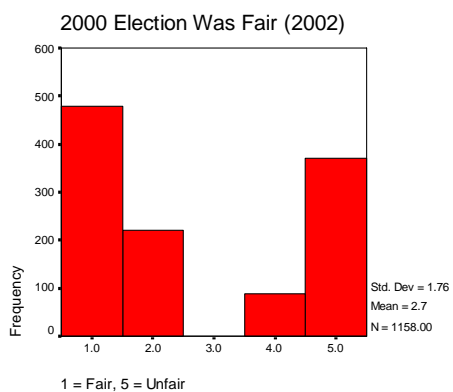
**Figure B1: Fairness of the 1996 Presidential Election**



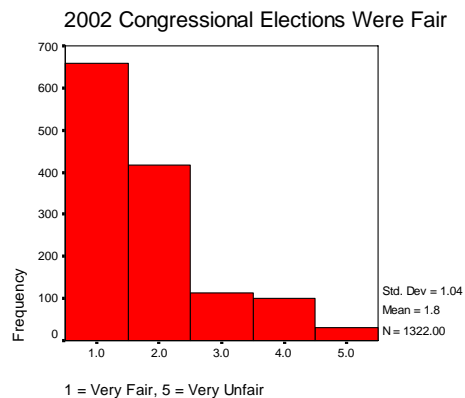
**Figure B2: Fairness of the 2000 Presidential Election**



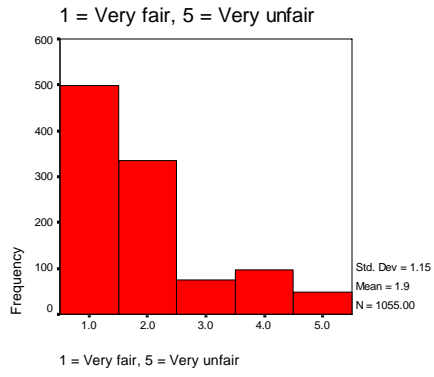
**Figure B3: Fairness of the 2000 Pres. Election (in 2002)**



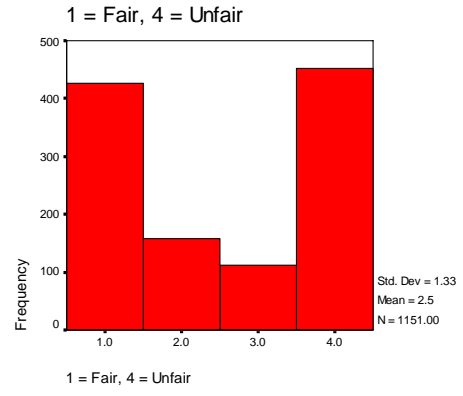
**Figure B4: Fairness of the 2002 Congressional Election**



**Figure B5: Fairness of the 2004 Presidential Election**



**Figure B6: Fairness of the 2000 Pres. Election (in 2004)**



## APPENDIX C

### VARIABLE CODING AND ALPHA RELIABILITY STATISTICS: CHAPTER THREE

#### 1996

**Pre-election survey: conducted between September 3<sup>rd</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1996.**

**Post-election survey: conducted between November 6<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1996.**

#### **Dependent Variable: Fairness of 1996 Elections (Post)**

1 = Last election conducted fairly.

2

3

4

5 = Last election conducted unfairly.

. = Missing.

#### **Independent Variables:**

##### **Race (Pre)**

1 = Black

0 = Non-black

##### **Education Level (Pre)**

1 = 8 grades or less and no diploma or equivalency.

2 = 9-11 grades, no further schooling (including 12 years without diploma or equivalency).

3 = High school diploma or equivalency test.

4 = More than 12 years of schooling, no higher degree.

5 = Junior or community college level degrees.

6 = Ba level degrees; 17+ years, no advanced degree.

7 = Advanced degree, including LLB.

. = Missing.

##### **Household Income (Pre)**

1 = A. None or less than 2,999.

2 = B. \$3,000-4,999.

3 = C. \$5,000-6,999.

4 = D. \$7,000-8,999.

5 = E. \$9,000-9,999.

6 = F. \$10,000-10,999.

7 = G. \$11,000-11,999.

8 = H. \$12,000-12,999.

9 = J. \$13,000-13,999.  
10 = K. \$14,000-14,999.  
11 = M. \$15,000-15,999.  
12 = N. \$17,000-19,999.  
13 = P. \$20,000-21,999.  
14 = Q. \$22,000-24,999.  
15 = R. \$25,000-29,999.  
16 = S. \$30,000-34,999.  
17 = T. \$35,000-39,999.  
18 = U. \$40,000-44,999.  
19 = V. \$45,000-49,999.  
20 = W. \$50,000-59,999.  
21 = X. \$60,000-74,999.  
22 = Z. \$75,000-89,999.  
23 = AA. \$90,000-104,999.  
24 = BB. \$105,000 and over.  
88 = Missing.

**Gender (Pre)**

1 = Female  
0 = Male

**Party Identification (Pre)**

0 = Strong Democrat.  
1 = Weak Democrat.  
2 = Independent-Democrat.  
3 = Independent-Independent.  
4 = Independent-Republican.  
5 = Weak Republican.  
6 = Strong Republican.  
. = Missing.

**Ideology (Post)**

1 = Extremely liberal.  
2 = Liberal.  
3 = Slightly liberal.  
4 = Moderate.  
5 = Slightly conservative.  
6 = Conservative.  
7 = Extremely conservative.  
. = Missing.

**Region (Pre)**

1 = South  
0 = Non-South.

**Political Efficacy Scale: Alpha = .6356 (Post)**

Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.  
5 = Agree strongly.  
4 = Agree somewhat.  
3 = Neither agree nor disagree.  
2 = Disagree somewhat.  
1 = Disagree strongly.  
. = Missing.



Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with these statements. The first is: Public officials don't care much what people like me think.

5 = Agree strongly.

4 = Agree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

1 = Disagree strongly.

. = Missing.

People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

5 = Agree strongly.

4 = Agree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

1 = Disagree strongly.

. = Missing.

### **Trust in Government Scale: Alpha = .6464 (Post)**

Not using the booklet - People have different ideas about the government in Washington. These ideas don't refer to Democrats or Republicans in particular, but just to the government in general. We want to see how you feel about these ideas. For example: How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right -- JUST ABOUT ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, or ONLY SOME OF THE TIME?

4 = Never.

3 = Only some of the time.

2 = Most of the time.

1 = Just about always.

. = Missing.

Do you think that people in government WASTE A LOT of the money we pay in taxes, WASTE SOME OF IT, or DON'T WASTE VERY MUCH of it?

3 = Waste a lot.

2 = Waste some.

1 = Don't waste very much.

. = Missing.

Would you say the government is pretty much RUN BY A FEW BIG INTERESTS looking out for themselves or that it is RUN FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL THE PEOPLE?

1 = Govt. run by a few big interests.

0 = Govt. run for benefit of all.

. = Missing.

Do you think that QUITE A FEW of the people running the government are crooked, NOT VERY MANY are, or do you think HARDLY ANY of them are crooked?

3 = Quite a few are crooked.

2 = Not very many are crooked.

1 = Hardly any are crooked.

. = Missing.

### **Political Participation Scale (Post)**

We would like to find out about some of the things people do to help a party or a candidate win an election. During the campaign, did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.  
. = Missing.

Did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?

1 = Yes.  
0 = No.  
. = Missing.

Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, speeches, dinners, or things like that in support of a particular candidate?

1 = Yes.  
0 = No.  
. = Missing.

Did you do any (other) work for one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.  
0 = No.  
. = Missing.

During an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. Did you give money to an INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE running for public office?

1 = Yes.  
0 = No.  
. = Missing.

Did you give money to a POLITICAL PARTY during this election year?

1 = Yes.  
0 = No.  
. = Missing.

Did you give any money to ANY OTHER GROUP that supported or opposed candidates?

1 = Yes.  
0 = No.  
. = Missing.

In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren't registered, they were sick, or they just didn't have time. How about you--did you vote in the elections this November?

1 = Yes.  
0 = No.  
. = Missing.

### **Interest in Politics (Post)**

In general, how much attention did you pay to news about the campaign for President -- A GREAT DEAL, QUITE A BIT, SOME, VERY LITTLE, or NONE?

5 = None.  
4 = Very little.  
3 = Some.  
2 = Quite a bit.  
1 = A great deal.  
. = Missing.

## 2000

**Pre-election survey: conducted between September 5<sup>th</sup> and November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2000.**

**Post-election survey: conducted between November 8<sup>th</sup> and December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2000.**

### **Dependent Variable: Fairness of 2000 Elections (Post)**

Please continue thinking about the November election. In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the presidential election we've just had, do you believe it was very fair, somewhat fair, neither fair nor unfair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair?

- 1 = Very fair.
- 2 = Somewhat fair.
- 3 = Neither fair nor unfair.
- 4 = Somewhat unfair.
- 5 = Very unfair.
- . = Missing.

### **Race (Pre)**

- 1 = Black
- 0 = Non-black

### **Social Class (Pre)**

- 1 = Average working class.
- 2 = Working class -- NA if average or upper.
- 3 = Upper working class.
- 4 = Average middle class.
- 5 = Middle class - NA if average or upper.
- 6 = Upper middle class.
- . = Missing.

### **Education Level (Pre)**

- 1 = 8 grades or less and no diploma or equivalency.
- 2 = 9-11 grades, no further schooling (incl. 12 years without diploma or equivalency).
- 3 = High school diploma or equivalency test.
- 4 = More than 12 years of schooling, no higher degree.
- 5 = Junior or community college level degrees (AA degrees).
- 6 = BA level degrees; 17+ years, no advanced degree.
- 7 = Advanced degree, including LLB.
- . = Missing.

### **Household Income (Pre)**

- 1 = A. NONE OR LESS THAN \$4,999
- 2 = B. \$5,000-\$9,999
- 3 = C. \$10,000-\$14,999
- 4 = D. \$15,000-\$24,999
- 5 = E. \$25,000-\$34,999
- 6 = F. \$35,000-\$49,999
- 7 = G. \$50,000-\$64,999
- 8 = H. \$65,000-\$74,999
- 9 = J. \$75,000-\$84,999
- 10 = K. \$85,000-\$94,999
- 11 = M. \$95,000-\$104,999
- 12 = N. \$105,000-\$114,999
- 13 = P. \$115,000-\$124,999
- 14 = Q. \$125,000-\$134,999
- 15 =R. \$135,000-\$144,999

16 = S. \$145,000-\$154,999  
17 = T. \$155,000-\$164,999  
18 = U. \$165,000-\$174,999  
19 = V. \$175,000-\$184,999  
20 = W. \$185,000-\$194,999  
21 = X. \$195,000-\$199,999  
22 = Y. \$200,000 and over  
. = Missing.

**Gender (Pre)**

1 = Female  
0 = Male

**Party Identification (Pre)**

0 = Strong Democrat.  
1 = Weak Democrat.  
2 = Independent-Democrat.  
3 = Independent-Independent.  
4 = Independent-Republican.  
5 = Weak Republican.  
6 = Strong Republican.  
. = Missing.

**Ideology (Pre)**

1 = Strong liberal.  
2 = Not strong liberal.  
3 = Had to choose liberal.  
4 = Had to choose moderate.  
5 = Had to choose conservative.  
6 = Not strong conservative.  
7 = Strong conservative.  
. = Missing.

**Region (Pre)**

1 = South  
0 = Non-South

**Political Efficacy Scale: Internal Efficacy, Alpha = .7531 (Post)**

'I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country.' Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Disagree strongly.  
4 = Disagree somewhat.  
3 = Neither agree nor disagree.  
2 = Agree somewhat.  
1 = Agree strongly.  
. = Missing.

'I consider myself well-qualified to participate in politics.'

Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Disagree strongly.  
4 = Disagree somewhat.  
3 = Neither agree nor disagree.  
2 = Agree somewhat.  
1 = Agree strongly.  
. = Missing.

'I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people.' Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Disagree strongly.

4 = Disagree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Agree somewhat.

1 = Agree strongly.

. = Missing.

'I think that I am better informed about politics and government than most people.' Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Disagree strongly.

4 = Disagree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Agree somewhat.

1 = Agree strongly.

. = Missing.

'So many other people vote in the national election that it doesn't matter much to me whether I vote or not.' Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Agree strongly.

4 = Agree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

1 = Disagree strongly.

. = Missing.

**Political Efficacy Scale: External Efficacy, Alpha = .6172 (Post)**

'Public officials don't care much what people like me think.' Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Agree strongly.

4 = Agree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

1 = Disagree strongly.

. = Missing.

'People like me don't have any say about what the government does.' Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Agree strongly.

4 = Agree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

1 = Disagree strongly.

. = Missing.

'Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.' Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?

5 = Agree strongly.

4 = Agree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

1 = Disagree strongly.

. = Missing.

**Trust in Government Scale: Alpha = .6437 (Post)**

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right – just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

4 = Never.

3 = Only some of the time.

2 = Most of the time.

1 = Just about always.

. = Missing.

Do you think that people in government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?

3 = Waste a lot.

2 = Waste some.

1 = Don't waste very much.

. = Missing.

Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?

2 = Govt. run by a few big interests.

1 = Govt. run for the benefit of all.

. = Missing.

Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?

3 = Quite a few are crooked.

2 = Not very many are crooked.

1 = Hardly any are crooked.

. = Missing.

**Political Participation Scale (Post)**

We would like to find out about some of the things people do to help a party or a candidate win an election. During the campaign, did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, speeches, dinners, or things like that in support of a particular candidate?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you do any (other) work for one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

During an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. Did you give money to an individual candidate running for public office?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you give money to a political party during this election year?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you give any money to any other group that supported or opposed candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren't registered, they were sick, or they just didn't have time. Which of the following statements best describes you: One, I did not vote (in the election this November); Two, I thought about voting this time - but didn't; Three, I usually vote, but didn't this time; or Four, I am sure I voted?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

### **Interest in Politics (Post)**

Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you were very much interested, somewhat interested, or not much interested in following the political campaigns this year?

3 = Not much interested.

2 = Somewhat interested.

1 = Very much interested.

. = Missing.

## **2002**

**Pre-election survey: conducted between September 18<sup>th</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002.**

**Post-election survey: conducted between November 6<sup>th</sup> and December 6<sup>th</sup> 2002.**

Because of data limitations in the 2002 dataset that ICPSR has not yet cleared up, I chose to use only the panel respondents from 2002. A number of variables of particular interest – including, for example, education, race and age, were not properly included in the 2002 dataset for both panel respondents and fresh cross-section respondents. I therefore used only the data from panel respondents, within the “2000 and 2002 merged” dataset.

### **Dependent Variable: Fairness of 2002 Elections (Post)**

1 = Very fair.

2 = Somewhat fair.

3 = Neither fair nor unfair.

4 = Somewhat unfair.

5 = Very unfair.

. = Missing.

### **Dependent Variable: Fairness of 2000 Elections, asked in 2000 (Post)**

1 = Approve strongly.

2 = Approve not strongly.

3 = Disapprove not strongly  
4 = Disapprove strongly.  
. = Missing.

**Race (Pre)**

1 = Black.  
0 = Non-black.

**Social Class (taken from 2000 data)**

1 = Average working class.  
2 = Working class -- NA if average or upper.  
3 = Upper working class.  
4 = Average middle class.  
5 = Middle class - NA if average or upper.  
6 = Upper middle class.  
. = Missing.

**Education Level (Pre)**

1 = 8 grades or less and no diploma or equivalency.  
2 = 9-11 grades, no further schooling (including 12 years without diploma or equivalency).  
3 = High school diploma or equivalency test.  
4 = More than 12 years of schooling, no higher degree.  
5 = Junior or community college level degrees.  
6 = Ba level degrees; 17+ years, no advanced degree.  
7 = Advanced degree, including LLB.  
. = Missing.

**Household Income (Pre)**

1 = \$0-\$14,999.  
2 = \$15,000-\$34,999.  
3 = \$35,000-\$49,999.  
4 = Just about \$50,000.  
5 = \$50,000-\$64,999.  
6 = \$65,000-\$84,999.  
7 = More than \$84,999.  
. = Missing.

**Gender (Pre)**

1 = Female.  
0 = Male.

**Party Identification (Pre)**

0 = Strong Democrat.  
1 = Weak Democrat.  
2 = Independent-Democrat.  
3 = Independent-Independent.  
4 = Independent-Republican.  
5 = Weak Republican.  
6 = Strong Republican.  
. = Missing.

**Ideology (Pre)**

1 = Extremely Liberal.  
2 = Liberal.  
3 = Slightly Liberal.  
4 = Moderate; Middle of the Road.



5 = Slightly Conservative.  
6 = Conservative.  
7 = Extremely Conservative.  
. = Missing.

**Region (Pre)**

1 = South.  
0 = Non-South.

**Political Efficacy Scale: Internal Efficacy, Alpha = .4644 (Post)**

'I consider myself well-qualified to participate in politics.' Do you AGREE, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, or DISAGREE with this statement?

3 = Disagree.  
2 = Neither agree or disagree.  
1 = Agree.  
. = Missing.

'I think that I am better informed about politics and government than most people.' (Do you AGREE, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, or DISAGREE with this statement)?

3 = Disagree.  
2 = Neither agree nor disagree.  
1 = Agree.  
. = Missing.

'So many other people vote in the national election that it doesn't matter much to me whether I vote or not.' (Do you AGREE, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, or DISAGREE with this

3 = Agree.  
2 = Neither agree nor disagree.  
1 = Disagree.  
. = Missing.

**Political Efficacy Scale: External Efficacy, Alpha = .6730 (Post)**

'Public officials don't care much what people like me think.' Do you AGREE, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, or DISAGREE with this statement?

3 = Agree.  
2 = Neither agree nor disagree.  
1 = Disagree.  
. = Missing.

'People like me don't have any say about what the government does.' (Do you AGREE, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, or DISAGREE with this statement)?

3 = Agree.  
2 = Neither agree nor disagree.  
1 = Disagree.  
. = Missing.

**Trust in Government Scale: Alpha = .6718 (Post)**

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right -- JUST ABOUT ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, or only SOME OF THE TIME?

4 = Never.  
3 = Only some of the time.  
2 = Most of the time.  
1 = Just about always.  
. = Missing.

Do you think that people in government waste A LOT of the money we pay in taxes, waste SOME of it, or DON'T WASTE VERY MUCH of it?

3 = Waste a lot.

2 = Waste some.

1 = Don't waste very much.

. = Missing.

Would you say the government is pretty much run by A FEW BIG INTERESTS looking out for themselves or that it is run for THE BENEFIT OF ALL THE PEOPLE?

2 = Govt run by a few big interests.

1 = Govt run for the benefit of all.

. = Missing.

Do you think that QUITE A FEW of the people running the government are crooked, NOT VERY MANY are, or do you think HARDLY ANY of them are crooked?

3 = Quite a few are crooked.

2 = Not very many are crooked.

1 = Hardly any are crooked.

. = Missing.

### **Political Participation Scale (Post)**

We would like to find out about some of the things people do to help a party or a candidate win an election. During the campaign, did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, speeches, dinners, or things like that in support of a particular candidate?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you do any (other) work for one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

During an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. Did you give money to AN INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE running for public office?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you give money to A POLITICAL PARTY during this election year?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you give any money to ANY OTHER GROUP that supported or opposed candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren't registered, they were sick, or they just didn't have time. How about you--did you vote in the elections this November?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

### **Interest in Politics (Post)**

Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been VERY MUCH INTERESTED, SOMEWHAT INTERESTED or NOT MUCH INTERESTED in the political campaigns so far this year?

3 = Not much interested.

2 = Somewhat interested.

1 = Very much interested.

. = Missing.

## **2004**

**Pre-election survey: conducted between September 3<sup>rd</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2004.**

**Post-election survey: conducted between November 6<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2004.**

### **Dependent Variable: Fairness of 2004 Elections (Post)**

1 = Very fair.

2 = Somewhat fair.

3 = Neither fair nor unfair.

4 = Somewhat unfair.

5 = Very unfair.

. = Missing.

### **Dependent Variable: Fairness of 2000 Elections, asked in 2004 (Pre)**

1 = Fair – strongly.

2 = Fair – not strongly.

3 = Unfair – not strongly.

4 = Unfair – strongly.

. = Missing.

### **Race (Pre)**

1 = Black

0 = Non-black

### **Social Class (Pre)**

0 = Lower class.

1 = Average working class.

2 = Working class.

3 = Upper working class.

4 = Average middle class.

5 = Middle class.

6 = Upper middle class.

7 = Upper class.  
. = Missing.

**Education Level (Pre)**

1 = 8 grades or less and no diploma or equivalency.  
2 = 9-11 grades, no further schooling (including 12 years without diploma or equivalency).  
3 = High school diploma or equivalency test.  
4 = More than 12 years of schooling, no higher degree.  
5 = Junior or community college level degrees.  
6 = Ba level degrees; 17+ years, no advanced degree.  
7 = Advanced degree, including LLB.  
. = Missing.

**Household Income (Pre)**

01 = A. None or less than \$2,999  
02 = B. \$3,000 -\$4,999  
03 = C. \$5,000 -\$6,999  
04 = D. \$7,000 -\$8,999  
05 = E. \$9,000 -\$10,999  
06 = F. \$11,000-\$12,999  
07 = G. \$13,000-\$14,999  
08 = H. \$15,000-\$16,999  
09 = J. \$17,000-\$19,999  
10 = K. \$20,000-\$21,999  
11 = M. \$22,000-\$24,999  
12 = N. \$25,000-\$29,999  
13 = P. \$30,000-\$34,999  
14 = Q. \$35,000-\$39,999  
15 = R. \$40,000-\$44,999  
16 = S. \$45,000-\$49,999  
17 = T. \$50,000-\$59,999  
18 = U. \$60,000-\$69,999  
19 = V. \$70,000-\$79,999  
20 = W. \$80,000-\$89,999  
21 = X. \$90,000-\$104,999  
22 = Y. \$105,000-\$119,000  
23 = Z. \$120,000 and over.  
. = Missing.

**Gender (Pre)**

1 = Female.  
0 = Male.

**Party Identification (Pre)**

0 = Strong Democrat.  
1 = Weak Democrat.  
2 = Independent-Democrat.  
3 = Independent-Independent.  
4 = Independent-Republican.  
5 = Weak Republican.  
6 = Strong Republican.  
. = Missing.

**Ideology (Pre)**

01 = Extremely liberal.  
02 = Liberal.

- 03 = Slightly liberal.
- 04 = Moderate; middle of the road.
- 05 = Slightly conservative.
- 06 = Conservative.
- 07 = Extremely conservative.
- . = Missing.

**Political Efficacy Scale (External only): Alpha = .6900 (Post)**

“Public officials don’t care what people like me think.” Do you AGREE STRONGLY, AGREE SOMEWHAT, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, DISAGREE SOMEWHAT, or DISAGREE STRONGLY with this statement?

- 5 = Agree strongly.
- 4 = Agree somewhat.
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree.
- 2 = Disagree somewhat.
- 1 = Disagree strongly.
- . = Missing.

“People like me don’t have any say in what government does.” Do you AGREE STRONGLY, AGREE SOMEWHAT, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, DISAGREE SOMEWHAT, or DISAGREE STRONGLY with this statement?

- 5 = Agree strongly.
- 4 = Agree somewhat.
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree.
- 2 = Disagree somewhat.
- 1 = Disagree strongly.
- . = Missing.

**Trust in Government Scale: Alpha = .6105 (Post)**

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right – JUST ABOUT ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, or ONLY SOME OF THE TIME?

- 4 = Never.
- 3 = Only some of the time.
- 2 = Most of the time.
- 1 = Just about always.
- . = Missing.

Would you say the government is pretty much RUN BY A FEW BIG INTERESTS looking out for themselves or that it is run for the BENEFIT OF ALL THE PEOPLE?

- 2 = Govt run by a few big interests.
- 1 = Govt run for the benefit of all.
- . = Missing.

Do you think that people in government WASTE A LOT of the money we pay in taxes, WASTE SOME of it, or DON'T WASTE VERY MUCH of it?

- 3 = Waste a lot.
- 2 = Waste some.
- 1 = Don't waste very much.
- . = Missing.

Do you think that QUITE A FEW of the people running the government are crooked, NOT VERY MANY are, or do you think HARDLY ANY of them are crooked?

- 3 = Quite a few are crooked.
- 2 = Not very many are crooked.
- 1 = Hardly any are crooked.

. = Missing.

**Political Participation Scale (Post)**

We would like to find out about some of the things people do to help a party or a candidate win an election. During the campaign, did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, speeches, dinners, or things like that in support of a particular candidate?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you do any (other) work for one of the parties or candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

During an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. Did you give money to an INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE running for public office?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you give money to a POLITICAL PARTY during this election year?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Did you give any money to ANY OTHER GROUP that supported or opposed candidates?

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

Summary: vote and registration status.

1 = Yes.

0 = No.

. = Missing.

**Interest in Politics (Post)**

Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been VERY MUCH interested, SOMEWHAT interested or NOT MUCH interested in the political campaigns so far this year?

3 = Not much interested.

2 = Somewhat interested.

1 = Very much interested.

. = Missing.

## APPENDIX D

### LINCOM CALCULATIONS FOR INTERPRETING INTERACTION TERMS: CHAPTER THREE

**NB: Lincom calculations were performed for all interaction terms in all models in this chapter, for each variable and for the main effect. Only lincom calculations that illustrate statistically significant differences are included in this appendix. All others, including some components of the interaction terms, were not statistically significant and are not reported.**

Table 3.1.1			
<b>2000</b>			
<i>Race x Trust</i>			
Trust = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.229	.044	.000
Trust + Race*Trust	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.354	.114	.001
<i>Race x External Efficacy</i>			
External Efficacy = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> Z
	.144	.041	.001
<b>2002</b>			
<i>Race x Trust</i>			
Trust = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.333	.057	.000
<i>Race x External Efficacy</i>			
External Efficacy = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.124	.060	.038
External Efficacy + Race*External Efficacy	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.346	.155	.025

<b>2004</b>			
<b><i>Race x Trust</i></b>			
Trust = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.365	.067	.000
<b><i>Race x External Efficacy</i></b>			
External Efficacy = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.205	.065	.001
<b>Table 3.1.2</b>			
<b>2000 in 2004</b>			
<b><i>Race x External Efficacy</i></b>			
External Efficacy + Race* External Efficacy	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.696	.228	.002
<b>Table 3.2.1</b>			
<b>External Efficacy</b>			
<b><i>Race x Fairness '00 in '02</i></b>			
Fairness '00 in '02	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.232	.058	.000
<b>Trust</b>			
<b><i>Race x Fairness '00 in '02</i></b>			
Fairness '00 in '02	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.272	.058	.000
<b>Participation</b>			
<b><i>Race x Fairness '00 in '02</i></b>			
Fairness '00 in '02	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.168	.060	.005



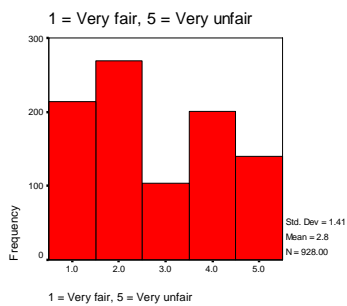
## APPENDIX E

### FAIRNESS ATTITUDES FROM 1996 TO 2004

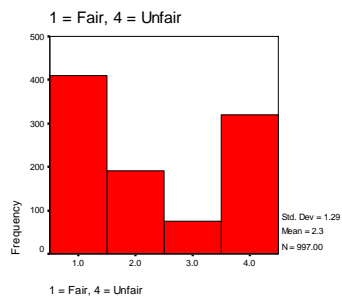
#### Distribution of Fairness Attitudes from 1996 to 2004

	2000 in 2000	2000 in 2002	2002 in 2002	2000 in 2004	2004 in 2004
<b>Mean</b>	2.77	2.30	1.83	2.52	1.92
<b>Median</b>	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
<b>Mode</b>	2.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	1.00
<b>Std. Devtn.</b>	1.41	1.29	1.06	1.33	1.15
<b>N</b>	928	997	904	1151	1055

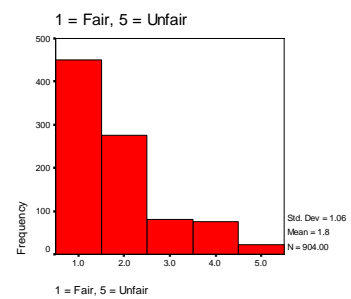
**Fig. 1: 2000 in 2000**



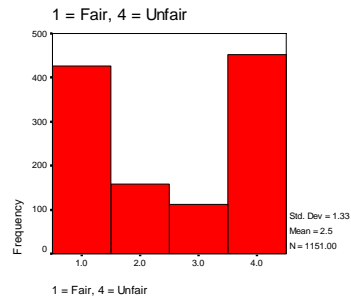
**Fig. 2: 2000 in 2002**



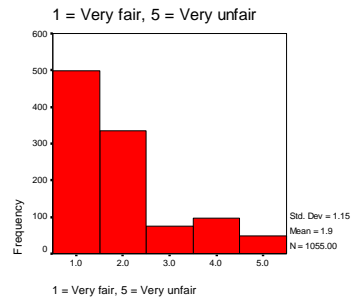
**Fig. 3: 2002 in 2002**



**Fig. 4: 2000 in 2004**



**Fig. 5: 2004 in 2004**



## APPENDIX F

### WORDING OF EXPERIMENTAL VIGNETTES

#### Control (C)

1. In Pennsylvania in 2008, it was revealed following the election that there were no significant problems in the administration of the election. The election machinery worked smoothly, provisional ballots were given to all voters who needed them, and the absentee ballots were all distributed and counted without a problem. This was the case nationwide. However, without the Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania, the [Democratic or Republican] candidate would not have won.

#### Treatment 1 (T1)

2. In Pennsylvania in 2008, it was revealed following the election that the electronic voting machines that were newly installed in some counties were faulty. Instead of accurately recording people's votes, these machines recorded the name of the opposite candidate. That is, when the voter pressed the Republican candidate's button, a vote was cast for the Democratic candidate, and vice versa. However, the effect of this problem was neutral. Neither of the candidates gained a large number of votes from the faulty machines, and they were discovered in time for the problem to be fixed before the final election tally was reported. However, without the Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania, the [Democratic or Republican] candidate would not have won.

#### Treatment 2A (T2A)

3. In Pennsylvania in 2008, it was revealed following the election that the office of the Republican secretary of state used a very inaccurate "felon purge" list to update the voter rolls right before the presidential election. The "felon purge" list matched names and social security numbers with a very low standard of accuracy to scrub convicted felons off the rolls. That is, names that were similar but had a different spelling, and social security numbers that were up to three digits off, were all taken off the voter rolls. When legitimate voters who had been wrongly removed from the rolls came to vote on Election Day, they were turned away without being allowed to vote. They must now go through a long and difficult process to prove to the state that they have never been convicted of a

felony. Most of these voters were poor and African American, from heavily Democratic counties. Without the Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania, the Republican candidate would not have won.

Treatment 2B (T2B)

4. In Pennsylvania in 2008, it was revealed following the election that the office of the Democratic secretary of state used a highly selective process in determining which counties would be encouraged to use mail-in ballots. The counties that were encouraged to use these ballots were heavily Republican, populated mostly by white middle class voters, the majority of whom did register for a mail ballot. However, a very large number of these votes were thrown out by the election office, because many people did not notice a small box on the ballot paper that they had to check, to promise that they were “mentally competent”. These Republican counties lost many votes as a result. Without the Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania, the Democratic candidate would not have won.

Treatment 3A (T3A)

5. In Pennsylvania in 2008, the Democratic secretary of state declared that new voter registrations from the urban minority neighborhoods would be accepted after the legal deadline, right up to Election Day, to make it easier for disadvantaged voters to exercise their voting rights. It was revealed after the election, however, that some of the new registrations were not completed properly or notarized as required by law. Without the Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania, the Democratic candidate would not have won.

Treatment 3B (T3B)

6. In Pennsylvania in 2008, the Republican secretary of state declared that new voter registrations from church registration drives would be accepted after the legal deadline, right up to Election Day, to make it easier for new voters to exercise their voting rights. It was revealed after the election, however, that many of the new registrations were not completed properly or notarized as required by law. Without the Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania, the Republican candidate would not have won.

## APPENDIX G

### VARIABLE CODING: CHAPTER FOUR

#### 1. Interest in Politics

Some people don't pay much attention to politics. How about you? Would you say that you are usually:

- 1 = Very interested.
- 2 = Somewhat interested.
- 3 = Not much interested.

#### 2. Media Usage

From what media source do you normally get your information about politics? Check all that you would consult on a regular basis (additive scale).

- 1 = The national network news
- 2 = The local television news
- 3 = A newspaper
- 4 = Cable news shows, such as CNN or Fox
- 5 = Talk radio
- 6 = Television entertainment shows, such as "The Daily Show" or "The Tonight Show"

#### 3. Ideology

We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

- 1 = Extremely liberal.
- 2 = Liberal.
- 3 = Slightly liberal.
- 4 = Moderate, middle of the road.
- 5 = Slightly conservative.
- 6 = Conservative.
- 7 = Extremely conservative.

#### 4. Party Identification

Many people in this country consider themselves Democrats, while many others consider themselves Republicans. Many others do not attach such labels to themselves, but tend to like one party more than the other. What about you? Would you consider yourself:

- 1 = Strong Democrat.
- 2 = Moderate Democrat.
- 3 = Independent Democrat.
- 4 = Independent independent.
- 5 = Independent Republican.
- 6 = Moderate Republican.

7 = Strong Republican.

### **5. Internal Efficacy (Additive Scale)**

“I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country.”

“I consider myself well qualified to participate in politics.”

“I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people.”

“I think that I am better informed about politics and government than most people.”

“So many other people vote in the national election that it doesn’t matter much to me whether I vote or not.”

1 = Disagree strongly.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

4 = Agree somewhat.

5 = Agree strongly.

(All variables were coded so that low values correspond to high efficacy, both for individual items and for the scale.)

### **6. External Efficacy (Additive Scale)**

“Public officials don’t care much what people like me think.”

“People like me don’t have any say about what the government does.”

“Sometimes government and politics seem so complicated that a person like me can’t really understand what’s going on.”

1 = Disagree strongly.

2 = Disagree somewhat.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree.

4 = Agree somewhat.

5 = Agree strongly.

(All variables were coded so that low values correspond to high efficacy, both for individual items and for the scale.)

### **7. Efficacy Pre/Post Treatment**

1 = Questions administered prior to experimental treatment

0 = Questions administered after experimental treatment

### **8. Federal Reforms**

The U.S. Constitution allows state governments to have full control over electoral processes. If the federal government wanted to reform the way elections are run in the United States, which of the following do you think would be a good way to go about it? Check as many as you think would be appropriate (if none, leave blank).

- a. Creation of a federal, non-partisan body to administer elections.
- b. Creation of a set of federal guidelines which states will be legally required to follow.
- c. Creation of a set of federal guidelines which will be recommended to states, but not legally required.
- d. Penalties for state administrations that are responsible for problems in previous elections, and for those that fail to correct electoral problems before the next election.

### **9. State Reforms**

If state governments wanted to reform their electoral processes, which of the following do you think would be a good way to go about it? Check as many as you think would be appropriate (if none, leave blank).

- a. Impeachment of officials in charge of elections in the state where the problem occurred.
- b. Creation of a state non-partisan body to oversee elections, removing power from the partisan officials responsible.
- c. Creation of a set of statewide guidelines which current officials will be legally required to follow.
- d. Creation of a set of statewide guidelines which current officials which will be recommended but not required to follow.
- e. Penalties for state officials that were responsible for the problems in previous elections, and for those that fail to correct electoral problems before the next election.

### 10. Political Participation in 2004

- a. We would like to find out about some of the things that people do to help a party or a candidate win an election. During the 2004 presidential campaign, did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates?
- b. Did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?
- c. Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, speeches, dinners, or things like that in support of a particular candidate?
- d. Did you do any other work for one of the parties or candidates?
- e. During an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. Did you give money to a political party or to any other group that supported or opposed candidates, or to an individual candidate running for public office?
- f. Did you vote in the 2004 presidential election?

1 = Yes

0 = No

(Additive Scale)

### 11. Likely Future Participation

- a. Please think back to the information in the imaginary scenario described above. If you found out that this information was a true description of what happened in your state in the last election in 2004, would that change the likelihood of your voting in future presidential elections?
- b. Talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates?
- c. Wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?
- d. Go to any political meetings, rallies, speeches, dinners, or things like that in support of a particular candidate?
- e. Do any other work for one of the parties or candidates?
- f. Give money to a political party or to any other group that supported or opposed candidates, or to an individual candidate running for public office?

1 = Much more likely.

2 = Somewhat more likely.

3 = Neither more nor less likely.

4 = Somewhat less likely.

5 = Much less likely.

(Additive Scale)

### 12. Likely Future Protest Activity

Now imagine the new president wanted to start a national policy that you thought was a bad idea. Do you think that you would be more likely to protest such a policy in some way if you had found out that there were election problems when that president was elected?

1 = Much more likely to protest.

2 = Somewhat more likely to protest.

3 = Neither more nor less likely to protest.

4 = Somewhat less likely to protest.

5 = Much less likely to protest.

### 13. Election Fairness: General

Do you think that generally, elections in America are best described as:

1 = Very fair

2 = Somewhat fair

3 = Neither fair nor unfair

4 = Somewhat unfair

5 = Very unfair

### 14. Election Fairness: Hypothetical

How would you describe the result of this election?

1 = Very fair

- 2 = Somewhat fair
- 3 = Neither fair nor unfair
- 4 = Somewhat unfair
- 5 = Very unfair

**15. Sex**

- 1 = Female
- 0 = Male

**16. Race**

- 1 = Black
- 0 = Non-black

**17. Income**

- 1 = None or less than \$4,999
- 2 = \$5,000-\$9,999
- 3 = \$10,000-\$14,999
- 4 = \$15,000-\$24,999
- 5 = \$25,000-\$34,999
- 6 = \$35,000-\$49,999
- 7 = \$50,000-\$64,999
- 8 = \$65,000-\$74,999
- 9 = \$75,000-\$84,999
- 10 = \$85,000-\$94,999
- 11 = \$95,000-\$104,999
- 12 = \$105,000-\$114,999
- 13 = \$115,000-\$124,999
- 14 = \$125,000-\$134,999
- 15 = \$135,000-\$144,999
- 16 = \$145,000-\$154,999
- 17 = \$155,000-\$164,999
- 18 = \$165,000-\$174,999
- 19 = \$175,000-\$184,999
- 20 = \$185,000-\$194,999
- 21 = \$195,000-\$199,999
- 22 = \$200,000 and over



## APPENDIX H

### CALCULATIONS FOR INTERPRETING INTERACTION TERMS : CHAPTER FOUR

**NB: Lincom calculations were performed for all interaction terms in all models in this chapter, for each variable and for the main effect. Only lincom calculations that illustrate statistically significant differences are included in this appendix. All others, including some components of the interaction terms, were not statistically significant and are not reported.**

Table 4.3.5			
<b>Diffuse Reforms</b>			
<i>Race x Disenfranchise</i>			
Disenfranchise = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	-1.003	.430	.020
Disenfranchise + Race*Disenfranchise	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	-1.419	.690	.040
<i>Party ID x Disenfranchise</i>			
Disenfranchise = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> Z
	-1.003	.430	.020
Party ID = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	-.231	.056	.000
Disenfranchise + PartyID*Disenfranchise	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	-1.234	.462	.008
<b>Specific Reforms</b>			
<i>Race x Disenfranchise</i>			
Race = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	.895	.423	.034
<i>Party ID x Disenfranchise</i>			
Party ID = 0	Coefficient	Std. Error	P> z
	-.149	.055	.007

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