

**ENCOURAGING POLITICAL DEFECTION:
The Role of Personal Discussion Networks in Partisan
Desertions to the Opposition Party and Perot Votes in 1992***

by

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Abstract

Drawing upon data from a unique study of the 1992 American presidential election, this article demonstrates that personal discussion networks influence voting behavior, independent of candidate evaluations and partisanship. These social networks encouraged two different kinds of defections from otherwise-expected behavior. People were more likely to vote for Perot if their personal discussants supported him and to convert preferences for him into a Perot vote on election day. Partisans also were more likely to defect to the other major party if their discussion network failed to fully support the candidate of their own party. These results withstood controls for candidate evaluations and partisanship as well as for selective exposure to discussants and selective perception of their preferences. They show the importance of adding social context to personal attitudes, interests, and partisanship in explaining voting behavior. VOTING, DISCUSSION NETWORKS, PARTISAN DEFECTION, THIRD-PARTY VOTING

While most voters support the candidates from their party in the two-party mainstream, defections to the opposing major party or to non-major-party candidates often have played an important role in the outcomes of American elections. Defections by partisans from the candidates of their party sometimes provide the winning edge in American elections, and they underlie the well-known incumbency advantage below the presidential level. Votes for third-party or independent candidates¹ can shift the competitive balance between major party candidates, and occasionally they are sufficient to elect someone outside of the two-party mainstream as the Ventura election dramatizes. Both kinds of defection, then, have been significant in American electoral politics.

Since the first studies of partisanship (Campbell *et al.* 1960), the sources of defections by party loyalists have become familiar. Strength of partisanship is inversely related to defections, with strong partisans being the least likely to desert their party's candidates (Converse 1966a). Beyond this, partisan defection is typically attributed to the short-term circumstances of a particular contest, especially the qualities of the candidates. Sometimes candidates are so well regarded (Converse and Dupeux 1966) or have performed so well in office (Key 1966, Fiorina 1981), or their opponents are so deficient on these grounds, that they gain substantial support from partisans of the opposition party. In elections below the presidential level, where voter interest is lower and candidates are less well-known, sheer candidate visibility (Stokes and Miller 1966; Beck et al. 1992, Jacobson 2001) can be a powerful force in luring partisans to vote for the candidate of the other party. Partisan defections can play a particularly important role in the party system changes associated with realignments, as veteran voters unhappy with their party often defect to the opposition without changing their party identifications,

while new voters are bringing their party into line with their vote (Beck 1977; Beck 1982).

Third-party and (recently) independent voting derives from both similar and somewhat different sources. In the general case, party loyalty obviously inhibits non-partisan voting. Support for the principal third-party or independent candidates for president in recent decades (Wallace in 1968, Anderson in 1980, and Perot in 1992 and 1996) and for Ventura for Governor in Minnesota declined as strength of loyalty to a major party increased, with self-proclaimed independents more likely to desert the two-party mainstream than any of the partisans (Rosenstone *et al.* 1996, p. 245; on Ventura, see Lacy and Monson 2002). More important in leading voters to consider the third-party option, as Rosenstone *et al.* (1996) maintain, is the failure of the two major parties to run appealing candidates or to address important voter concerns.

Yet, major-party failures often are insufficient to generate support for a third-party candidate unless that candidate can overcome the barriers erected against third parties by the American electoral system. Former President Theodore Roosevelt possessed the standing to scale them in 1912, and Ross Perot gained credibility through the resources he could command. As the leading study of third-party voting puts it (Rosenstone *et al.* 1996, pp. 266-67):

“Ross Perot’s success was due largely to his ability to use his wallet to crush almost all of the constraints that had hindered his predecessors. His money bought ballot access, it brought news coverage normally accorded to major party candidates, it bought advertising, it bought appearances in the debates, and it bought credibility.”

Whether due to his visibility alone or to the diminution of “wasted vote” concerns his visibility produced, Perot’s considerable resources helped him to poll a sizable 19 percent of the popular vote. Of course, this probably would not have happened if the major parties had offered more attractive candidates and if Perot had not been seen as such an appealing candidate in his own right.

A focus on such factors as partisan strength and candidate credibility, visibility, and appeal locates the explanation for defections ultimately in the attitudes and orientations of the individual voter. Beginning with the classic statement of the social-psychological approach to voting, *The American Voter* (Campbell *et al.* 1960), and its contemporaneous rational choice classic, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (Downs 1957), this “personal calculus” approach has dominated the study of voter choice in general. An emphasis on selecting respondents for surveys so that they are independent of one another, which is efficient for statistical inference purposes, reinforces this view of the electorate as an aggregation of autonomous decision-makers, each basing the vote decision upon personal attitudes and orientations.

Although the “personal calculus” approach has fostered great understanding of voting behavior in American elections, it is an incomplete account of the factors guiding electoral choices. An earlier research tradition (Lazarsfeld *et al.* 1944; Berelson *et al.* 1954), relegated to the background by the social-psychological and rational-choice theoretical paradigms of the 1960s, emphasized the social sources of voting. This older tradition does not gainsay the importance of individual attitudes and orientations. Rather than viewing voters as wholly autonomous decision-makers, however, it sees them as making their voting choices within a particular social context that can lead voters with the

same attitudes and orientations to come to a different vote decision in one social setting rather than another. That is, the social context not only influences the kinds of attitudes and orientations voters develop in the first place, but it also channels voting choices in particular directions beyond what would be expected from their attitudes and orientations alone.

This paper examines the influence of a particular social context, the voter's personal discussion network, on a particular kind of voting behavior: the voter's choice to defect from either their party loyalty or the two-party mainstream. Personal networks played a key role in the earlier Columbia studies and have been shown to be the most influential social factor in voting for president in recent years (Beck *et al.* 2002). They may be even more important in supporting, even encouraging, party defections or third-party voting. The 1992 contest is especially appropriate for studying such defections. In it, numerous partisans deserted their party for the opposition candidate, which produced the largest non-major-party popular vote in eighty years.²

The natural attractiveness of the 1992 case for studying such voting defections can be exploited for theoretical purposes because of the existence of a unique survey of the American electorate in that year -- the American component of the Comparative National Election Project (CNEP).³ At its core is a nation-wide post-election telephone survey of the adult electorate, whose respondents will be referred to subsequently as the "main respondents." The survey collected considerable information on main respondents' social settings, especially their discussion networks, and also asked them numerous questions about Perot in addition to standard questions about the major-party candidates. The focus of this paper is on understanding how much the main respondents'

social contexts supported, or failed to support, their decisions to defect from their party or the two-party mainstream.

The CNEP survey collected information on the discussion networks of main respondents based upon both their own perceptions and direct measurements of their discussants' political views. Main respondents were questioned about the political content of messages coming from up to five discussants, the first four of whom were not selected by employing political criteria. Because "weak ties" hold such great promise for fostering defections from group norms, as Granovetter (1973) has theorized, it is important to probe beyond the first few discussants who come to mind. They usually contain a heavy mixture of close relatives and friends and are most similar to the individual in political attitudes, as was the case in the American CNEP study. Main respondents also were asked to provide identifying information for the discussants they had mentioned, and telephone interviews were completed with a "snow ball sample" containing a substantial number of them. (See the appendix for more details on the survey.)

The following analysis draws upon these data to estimate the influence of personal discussants on vote decisions over and above the individual attitudes and orientations that lie at the foundations of most voting behavior models. It also addresses the threats to influence from both selective exposure and selective perception by restricting analysis to discussants selected by non-political criteria and by employing the snowball sample data. The result is a clear and decisive account, for 1992 at least, of the role personal discussants played in supporting and even encouraging political defections.

The Role of Social Networks in Voting: Theoretical Considerations

The hypothesis that guides this inquiry is straightforward: Voters are more inclined to vote for an independent (or third-party) candidate or to defect to the other party's candidate, *ceteris paribus*, when this behavior is supported in their social setting. Based on the results of previous analysis of these data (Beck et al. 2002) and other research on support for deviance (Finifter 1974), an important source of such social support is seen as coming from discussion networks. Having even one discussant supporting party defections or third-party voting can move the voter in this "deviant" direction, and of course having more support in the network can enhance this effect. The *ceteris paribus* condition is important as well, because what is hypothesized is that when the voter favors a candidate from the other party or from a third party, social support for that preference may be instrumental in converting that preference into a vote. Sometimes, under particular conditions, pressures of the social network can even go so far as to overcome individual preferences for another candidate. Defection is difficult in the American two-party system, either from one's party or from the two-party mainstream, considering the many pressures that operate to suppress it. Support from personal discussants helps the voter to surmount these difficulties – in short, to encourage political defection.

Several dimensions of personal networks regulate their potential for political influence (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995). In size, these networks range from the limited circles of the social isolates who live alone and interact with few people outside of the home to the extensive circles of those who live in large extended families, come into contact with others at their job, or mix with many others in their neighborhoods,

churches, and other venues of social interaction. In political content, some networks are remarkably insulated from political life and politics only rarely is discussed, while others contain rich political fare. Some personal networks are built by choices of discussants that have nothing to do with politics *per se*, although a political tone may be set as a by-product of other selection criteria, and others may be determined by applying an explicit political “litmus test” for inclusion.

Personal networks as well are a product of personal choice, but only among available options. We choose a spouse and friends from the alternatives available to us, but we often are stuck with our particular set of relatives, co-workers, and neighbors, however much we can regulate the content of discussions with them. Granovetter (1973) has shown that it is often the discussants with whom we have the weakest ties, who were least the products of our own choice, that have the greatest effects on our views – mainly because they are the most likely to be different. Such “weak tie” discussants may play a particularly important role in encouraging political deviation, and it is necessary to extend the discussion network under analysis so that they will be included.

Social Encouragement for Perot Voting

Third-party and independent candidates for president face formidable barriers to success in American elections (Rosenstone *et al.* 1996). Plurality election of presidential electors in the states and the majoritarian requirement of the Electoral College increase the risk of wasted votes for non-major-party candidates. As if these institutional impediments were not enough, the major parties and their candidates have lavish campaign budgets and enjoy the benefits of heavy free coverage from the mass media. Third-party candidates also face voter skepticism, not only for their staying power given

these circumstances, but also because almost all voters possess at least a modest identification with one of the major parties. Throughout much of American history, these barriers have been sufficiently imposing to relegate third-party and, more recently, independent candidates to the fringes of presidential competition. The most successful of them in the twentieth century before H. Ross Perot in 1992 were either well-established major party politicians (e.g., Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 and Robert LaFollette in 1924) or the beneficiaries of a regional concentration of support (e.g., LaFollette in 1924 and George Wallace in 1968), and none of them could gain the presidency. Not willing to waste their votes, the typical supporters of third-party candidates have deserted them when the time finally came to cast a ballot.

Perot won a larger share of the popular vote for president than any third-party candidate since Theodore Roosevelt in 1912. Nearly 19 percent of the vote is a far cry from the 39 percent of popular vote preferences at which Perot had peaked in early June. Yet, it is an impressive total considering his withdrawal from the race in July and the low level of support (about 10% in the Gallup Poll) he polled upon his return to the contest in October. Support for third-party candidates usually collapses by election day, but Perot was able to avoid the wholesale evaporation of support that had undermined most previous non-major-party candidates.

What accounts for the unusual level of support for this particular independent candidate? As Rosenstone *et al.* (1996) argue persuasively, the millions he spent on building his organization, getting his message out, and gaining a line on state ballots; the attention devoted to him by the mass media; and his inclusion in the presidential debates helped Perot to be seen as a credible alternative in a time of voter disillusionment,

especially with President Bush in 1992. Social support for Perot preferences also may have played an important role in the desertions from major-party voting that sustained his candidacy. To test this hypothesis, the impact on the Perot vote of having Perot discussants is estimated, with controls for key individual attitudes concerning the candidates for office in 1992 and party loyalties.

The Impact of Pro-Perot Discussants

Panel A of Table 1 contains the results of a Logit analysis of post-election reports of the vote for and against Perot on evaluations of each candidate, intensity of loyalty to a major party, and the number of perceived discussants for each candidate. (See the appendix for a full description of these variables and all other variables employed in the models to follow.) This is a hard test of discussant impact because it looks for its effects over and above those of party identification and candidate evaluations. These variables are well known to be powerful predictors of the vote, even the non-major-party vote, presumably leaving little room for additional explanatory variables. Moreover, the candidate evaluations themselves can be affected by pre-election political discussion, which further stacks the deck against finding a residual discussant effect. The control variables perform as expected. Candidate evaluations and major-party loyalties all prove to be highly significant predictors of the Perot vote, and in the expected direction: positive for Perot evaluations, negative for Clinton and Bush evaluations, and negative for intensity of loyalty to a major party.

(Table 1 about here)

Even in the presence of such powerful predictors, social support for Perot in the form of pro-Perot discussants plays a key role in vote choice. As the number of pro-Perot

discussants grows, the Perot vote increases, *ceteris paribus*. The unstandardized Logit coefficient is not only positive, but it also is highly significant – and almost five times its standard error. By contrast, again as expected, the more pro-Bush or pro-Clinton discussants voters had, the less likely they were to cast a ballot for Perot. The coefficient for Bush is highly significant, the one for Clinton almost so at the conventional .05 level.

Examination of the bivariate relationship between pro-Perot discussants and the Perot vote sheds further light on the nature of this relationship. The Perot vote climbs from 8% to 27% going from no to one pro-Perot discussant, then rises to 49%, 85%, and 100% with two, three, and four (the empirical maximum) pro-Perot discussants, respectively.⁴ What constrained the Perot vote in 1992 from being even greater, given these results, was the fact that very few voters were in social settings in which even one (19%) and, especially, more than one (10%) of their discussants themselves favored Perot. Moreover, very few voters (12%) had a discussion network in which a majority of the discussants measured in this study favored Perot. When their discussant majority favored Perot, nearly a majority of the voters (49.6%) cast a ballot for him. Independent and third-party candidates candidates, even when they are as popular as Perot, in short, face the added barrier of limited support for voter defection from the two-party mainstream within the social networks of their possible supporters.

Table 1 further shows, for comparative purposes, what was demonstrated more comprehensively elsewhere (see Beck *et al.* 2002): The vote for each of the major party candidates is similarly enhanced with increased social support – again, after taking candidate evaluations and party loyalty, this time measured from Republican (low) to Democratic (high), into account. The coefficients for the Bush vote (panel B) are

particularly well behaved. They are easily significant in every case, and with the expected signs. The coefficients for the Clinton vote (panel C) are consistent with our expectations as well, except that the effect of the number of Clinton discussants is barely significant at the .05 level and the figure for Bush discussants falls just short of significance.

In sum, social effects on Perot voting are merely a particular illustration of a general phenomenon: social reinforcement is an important contributor to vote support for all candidates, not just third-party candidates. The impact of support from social networks, however, was greatest for Perot and least for Clinton. This suggests that voters favoring third-party or independent candidates are most in need of extra encouragement from their discussants, presumably to overcome the barriers of credibility and vote wasting that confront them. By contrast, voters favoring the front-runner, who is advantaged in so many other ways, especially by the media in 1992 (as Dalton *et al.* 1998 show), are least in need of social support for their predilections (see Beck *et al.* 2002).

The importance of social support for Perot voting can be shown in two even more exacting ways. What distinguishes supporters of third-party or independent candidates from those of major-party candidates is that the former often do not vote for the candidate they once preferred. Many of his early supporters deserted Perot during the campaign and ended up favoring, then voting for, Bush or Clinton for president. Others preferred Perot to his opponents through election day, yet did not end up voting for him. The role of social support from discussion networks in each case can be addressed by comparing actual Perot voters with those who did not vote for Perot within each supporter group,

both the larger number who preferred him at some point during the campaign and the smaller number who liked him more than the other candidates at the end.

Main respondents were asked if they had ever seriously considered Perot as their preferred candidate. Given the trial heat figures Perot polled in June, it stands to reason that there would be a substantial number of Americans who once considered him; that number is a somewhat surprising 50.7 percent of the sample. Twenty-five percent of them ended up voting for Perot, 54 percent voted for a major party candidate, and 21 percent did not vote. That Perot had lost three-quarters of his onetime supporters by election day is a familiar refrain for non-major-party candidates, even in a year of a record vote for an independent.

Social support from the discussion network is related to the ultimate vote decision of those who had considered Perot at some point during the campaign. Only 16 percent of his onetime supporters ended up casting a Perot vote when they had no discussants favoring him. Perot support rises in sizable steps from this level to 27% for respondents with one pro-Perot discussant, 49% with two, 68% with three, and 100% with four pro-Perot discussants. Perot's problem was that only a minority (44%) of those who at one point had considered him had at least a single Perot discussant in their network, and only 16% had more than one. This level of social isolation, and it was surely less in 1992 than typical election, is another barrier that erstwhile non-major-party supporters face.

The post-election candidate evaluations can be used to identify those respondents who preferred Perot to both Bush and Clinton at the end of the campaign. About one in six respondents (15.6%) favored Perot post-election, and a decisive majority of those who did (61.2%) voted for him. Discussant support nicely differentiates those finally

preferring Perot who did and did not end up voting for him. Among those favoring Perot on election day but who had no Perot discussants, a bare majority (51.9%) ended up as Perot voters. Put more graphically, almost half of those who preferred Perot for President at the end of the campaign deserted him by either voting for a major party candidate or failing to vote. Conversion of a preference for Perot into a vote for him rose, almost steadily, as more Perot discussants were present in the respondent's social network: to 58% with one discussant, 78% with two, 72% with three, and 100% with four. Here too, even among those who liked Perot better than the major party candidates on election day, social support figured prominently in votes for him. Perot's problem was that less than two-thirds even of those who preferred him had at least one discussant who agreed with them, and a paltry 28.2% had more than one.

Multivariate Logit analysis controlling for other strong predictors of the Perot vote, presented in Table 2, confirms the importance of having pro-Perot discussants *ceteris paribus*. As before, the analysis controls for evaluations of each presidential candidate, the intensity of party loyalty, and the number of pro-Bush and pro-Clinton discussants. Even by this stern test, the number of Perot discussants remains consequential, among both those who preferred Perot at some time during the campaign and those who liked him better than Bush and Clinton in the end.

(Table 2 about here)

Panel A of Table 2 demonstrates that the number of pro-Perot discussants is significantly related to an ultimate Perot vote among those who seriously considered him at some time during the campaign, even after controlling for powerful predictors of the Perot vote. The controls behave as one would expect them to, in direction if not always

in significance. The Perot discussants' coefficient, which is the focus of attention, is highly significant and more than four times its standard error. The extent of Perot support in the discussion network remains a potent predictor of the vote above and beyond other key variables, especially including the post-election evaluations of each of the candidates. An important part of the story of the decline in Perot support during the election campaign, in other words, is told by the lack of social support for defection to Perot in discussion networks.

Panel B of Table 2 takes this analysis one step further, by concentrating solely on the 206 respondents who liked Perot better than Bush and Clinton at the end of the campaign. Other things being equal, these are the people one would expect to provide overwhelming support for Perot. So strong is the relationship between candidate liking and the vote for major-party candidates in earlier studies, in fact, that the former has occasionally been treated as a surrogate for the latter (Page and Jones 1979). Yet, other things were not equal when it came to voting for the independent Perot. For reasons that cannot be adequately explored with the data in hand, at the center of which may be concern about wasting a vote, the conversion of relative preferences into votes is affected by social support for Perot. Not much of the variance in the vote is explained by the control variables this time (only absolute pro-Perot liking is significant, as one would expect it to be), but having pro-Perot discussants still matters. The coefficient for it is well over two times its standard error and highly significant.

Addressing the Threats to Inference

Unfortunately, perceived discussant presidential preferences, which lie at the core of the results in Tables 1 and 2, may be determined by -- that is, may be endogenous to --

the respondent's own presidential preferences. This endogeneity may occur for one or both of two reasons: First, political discussants may be selected initially to support one's presidential preferences. Second, people may selectively misperceive the preferences of their discussants to bring them into line with their own presidential choices. Fortunately, several unique features of the design of the CNEP study permit systematic exploration of each possibility.

First, the discussant selection method adopted in this study mitigates against a choice of discussants for political reasons. For the first four of the five named discussants, interviewers asked for people with whom the respondent talked about "important matters," not necessarily politics.⁵ This general discussant identifier, placed after a series of demographic questions that diluted the political focus of the survey, was unlikely to yield discussants chosen because of their agreement with the respondent's presidential preferences. Instead, the first four discussants were mostly relatives, especially spouses, and close friends; the main respondent rarely or never talked politics with about a third of them. Moreover, to alleviate concern that stopping at four discussants missed a substantial number of Perot discussants in the network, only 30 percent of the main respondents could identify up to four "important matters" discussants. For their fifth discussant, to make sure explicitly-political discussants were not entirely overlooked, respondents were asked to name someone else with whom they "talked about the presidential campaign." Sixty percent were able to identify such a person.

To guard against contamination through selective exposure for political reasons, the Logit analyses presented in Tables 1 and 2 were replicated using only the first four

“important matters” discussants. The values of the Logit coefficients for pro-Perot discussants were almost identical in the replicates for four discussants to those reported in Tables 1 and 2, and all other coefficients in the equations were virtually the same as they had been for the five discussants. The number of Perot discussants remained a highly significant predictor of the Perot vote in the replication of Table 1, Panel A; the coefficient was .81, more than four times its standard error of .18 and significant at the .000 level. Replication of Table 2, panel A, for the first four discussants produced a Perot discussant coefficient of .48, more than three times its standard error (.14) and significant at the .000 level. The coefficient for the Table 2, panel B replication was .41, more than twice its standard error (.18) and significant at the .01 level. Selection of discussants to support one’s Perot preferences can be ruled out, on these grounds, as the reason why there is such a pronounced Perot discussant effect.

Second, interviews conducted directly with a “snow-ball” sample of the named discussants permit an exploration of the other source of endogeneity, the possibility of selective misperception of discussants’ preferences. These discussant interviews were not numerous enough to yield comprehensive characterizations of the voter’s social network in more than a minority of cases. Nonetheless, they provide a valuable validation test for the perception-based measures.

As it turns out, the main respondents reported their discussants’ presidential preferences with impressive accuracy. Over three-quarters of them (78.3%) correctly perceived the vote preference of the discussant.⁶ Another 4.6 percent admitted that they could not detect discussant preferences. Only a small number (4.9%) mistook their discussant’s preference for one major party candidate over the other, but those

inaccuracies do not affect analysis of the Perot vote. The remaining misperceptions involved the Perot vote. Slightly more respondents reported that their discussants favored a major party candidate when they really voted for Perot (7.1%) than perceived a Perot vote when the discussant had ended up casting a major party ballot (5.1%). It is with these two groups of main respondents that the potential for selective perception biases to support defection lies.

To test for the possibility that the results in Tables 1 and 2 are the products of selective misperception, their Logit equations were replicated using actual discussant preferences (dichotomized into pro-candidate or not due to the small number of cases) instead of perceived preferences. The results appear in Table 3. Despite the limited number of cases overall and the few discussants interviewed for most main respondents,⁷ the results are the same in most respects. The control variables are well behaved and parallel their counterparts in the earlier tables. Only in the changes in sign for Bush and Clinton discussants in the “considered Perot” condition (Table 3, panel B vs. Table 2, panel A) is there a difference. Most important, the coefficients for having at least one actual Perot discussant are all about twice their standard errors and significant at the .03 level in Table 3. The impact of having Perot discussants is not an artifact of selective misperception.

(Table 3 about here)

The design of the CNEP American study, with its “important matters” discussant identifier and its snow-ball interviews with actual discussants, has provided useful ways to test the results of Tables 1 and 2 against distortions due to selective exposure and selective perception.⁸ Neither of these threats turns out to be serious, and the key original

results and the inferences drawn from them withstand rigorous testing. Having Perot discussants is related to the decision to deviate from the two-party mainstream by voting for independent Ross Perot, even after controlling for candidate evaluations, partisanship, and discussant support for the major party candidates and allowing for selective exposure and selective perception. Social support deserves to be added to the list of familiar individual political orientations in explaining votes for Perot in 1992 -- and becomes a plausible factor in third-party voting for other years as well.

Social Encouragement for Partisan Defection

Electoral defection is manifested in a second way, within the constraints of the two-party system. In every election, some Democratic and Republican party identifiers vote for candidates of the opposing party. The American long ballot, with its numerous choices, makes partisan defection especially tempting, especially in view of the widely proclaimed American norm of “voting for the person, not the party.” Because the powers of American governing institutions are checked and balanced through both separation of powers and federalism, furthermore, the consequences of defection by partisans are less than they would be for a parliamentary system within a centralized polity, where control of the whole of government turns upon a single election result. For these reasons, and more, partisan defections are fairly common in American voting behavior. Indeed, in the 1992 CNEP survey, paralleling the NES estimates for the same election, 7.0 percent of Democratic and 12.6 percent of Republican party identifiers, and a total of 9.3 percent of all partisans, voted for the presidential candidate of the other major party.⁹ The frequency of partisan defectors for president in 1992 is small, but there are enough of

them in the sample (N=93) to support empirical inquiry into how social support might affect their behavior.

Most studies of partisan defections focus on short-term candidate and issue factors that lead voters to stray from their partisanship to support the other party's candidate. For example, John Kennedy's Catholicism was seen as responsible for the defection of numerous Protestant Democrats to Republican Richard Nixon and of Catholic Republicans to Kennedy in 1960 (Converse, 1966b). In 1964 and 1972, it was the perceived ideological extremism of Republican Barry Goldwater (Converse *et al.* 1965) and Democrat George McGovern (Miller *et al.* 1976), respectively, that led to widespread defections of their own party's loyalists and their landslide defeats. In other years, negative retrospective assessments of the incumbent administration (Truman's in 1952, Ford's in 1976, Carter's in 1980, Bush's in 1992, and Clinton's in 2000) contributed noticeably to defections. In studying defections below the presidential level, candidate visibility and attractiveness are prominently cited as powerful motivations for deserting one's own party's candidate (Beck *et al.* 1992; Jacobson 2001). To this list should be added weakness of partisanship. As Converse (1966a) demonstrated so elegantly in his "normal vote" analysis, the winds of short-term forces increase in effectiveness as partisan strength diminishes.

The Impact of Pro-Bush and Pro-Clinton Discussants

This study takes a different approach to explaining partisan defection. Without questioning that motivations for defection may lie in the individual voters' orientations, it focuses on the complementary role of the social setting in promoting or constraining defections. Partisans who receive the greatest social support for their partisanship

through their discussion networks, it is hypothesized, should be most inclined to support their party's candidate for president. Alternatively, partisans who find little social support for their preferences are most likely to defect to the other party. The following analysis examines these expectations directly, with controls for the individual attitudes that are most conducive to ultimate voting decisions – feelings about the candidates and intensity of partisanship.

Table 4 presents Logit analysis results for defectors versus loyalists among major-party voters for Democrats and Republicans, respectively.¹⁰ The “full model” (Panels A and C) includes the same explanatory variables as were employed in Table 1, except that partisan intensity is used throughout because the analysis is performed separately for Democrats and Republicans. Unlike the case with votes for third-party candidates or independents, where powerful strategic considerations intrude, votes for major party candidates are so strongly predicted by candidate evaluations that it may not be wise to include them as controls, especially considering the reduced number of cases available for analysis. Therefore, a “reduced model” also is estimated with the candidate evaluation variables removed (see panels B and D).

(Table 4 about here)

As is shown in Panels A and C of Table 4, only some of the perceived preferences of personal discussants have a significant impact on defection to the rival party. Partisan defections result, at least at the .05 level of significance, from having fewer discussants to support one's own partisanship. By contrast, having more discussants who support the rival major-party candidate or Perot comes close to attaining significance for Democratic defectors to Bush, but it falls far short of significance for Republican defectors to Clinton.

It is the absence of discussants in support of one's own party rather than the presence of supporters of the opposition that best accounts for defections by major-party identifiers. Neither of these relationships is as significant as the ones reported for the Perot vote, in part because they are based on considerably fewer cases, but they are substantial. Even in the presence of powerful controls that may leave little variance in the vote left to be explained, in short, the social setting defined by discussants matters.

The effects of discussant preferences are clarified in the reduced models of Panels B and D. First, with candidate evaluation variables no longer soaking up so much variance, partisan intensity emerges as an important predictor. The stronger the partisanship, the less the defections – a result that squares with expectations. Parallel discussant effects also emerge as highly significant once candidate evaluations are removed. A clear “pull” into defection by discussants who support the rival party candidate now joins the “push” away from loyalty due to a lack of discussants supporting the main respondent's own party candidate. For Republicans defecting to Clinton, the “pull” of pro-Clinton discussants is considerably more important than the weak “push” due to absent Bush loyalists, although both coefficients are highly significant. By contrast, Democratic defections to Bush are linked about as much to the dearth of pro-Clinton discussants as to the number of pro-Bush discussants. These somewhat contrasting results suggest that “against the current” defections, away from the winner, may have somewhat different roots than defections to the winner.

Addressing the Threats to Inference

There is persuasive evidence, then, that both support for the major party-opponent and lack of support for one's own party's candidate within personal discussion networks

induce defections from partisanship. Yet, as before, it is possible that the results are artifacts of purposive selection of discussants and/or selective misperception of discussant preferences to support one's voting choices. Special features of the design of the CNEP study again permit an assessment of each of these threats to inference.

To test for the possibility that main respondents have selected discussants to bolster their inclinations to defect, the analysis is restricted to only the first four discussants. These four discussants were identified as people with whom "important matters" were discussed and, consequently, are unlikely to have been chosen because of their political views.

When panels A and C of Table 4 are replicated dropping the last discussant, the results (not shown here) are virtually the same. As before, defections of Democrats to Bush are significantly more likely as the number of pro-Clinton discussants decreases ($B = -.74$). They also grow with the number of pro-Bush discussants ($B = .56$), and this time the coefficient attains the .05 level of significance. Similarly, defections of Republicans to Clinton are more likely as the number of pro-Bush discussants decreases, with a coefficient ($B = -.74$) that is larger and somewhat more significant than in Table 4C. The control variables for the 4-discussant replicates of panels A and C of Table 4 are basically unchanged as well.

Results similar to those in reduced-model panels B and D from Table 4 also are obtained using only the first four discussants. The number of both pro-Bush ($B = .83$) and pro-Clinton ($B = -.90$) discussants are significant in the panel B replicate, as are the Bush ($B = -.62$) and Clinton ($B = .99$) coefficients for the panel D replicate. In neither case is the pattern of results thrown into question by dropping explicitly political

discussants to rely upon only the “important matters” discussants. Democratic defections are tied to both the weakness of social support for the Democrat and the presence of pro-Bush support in about equal measure. Republican defections, on the other hand, remain somewhat more linked to the presence of Clinton discussants than to the absence of Bush discussants, although both are important.

The Table 4 results are not as directly corroborated using information from actual discussants, although in the end it is clear that the substantive conclusions are not affected by selective misperception. As is shown in Table 5, panels A and C, the full model with its 7 predictors yields significant discussant effects for the familiar negative relationship between having Bush discussants and Republican defections to Clinton.¹¹ The other relationships, however, do not come even close to significance – because, it appears, the candidate feeling variables soak up so much shared variance. Once these variables are removed, in the reduced models presented in panels B and D of Table 5, the results are entirely consistent with those of Table 4. Having discussants who favor their party’s candidate reduces defections by Democrats to Bush and by Republicans to Clinton, just as the presence of discussants who favor the other party’s candidate raises defection rates. Only for Democratic defections to Bush does the pro-Bush discussant coefficient fall short of significance at conventional levels – and it by only .006.

(Table 5 about here)

The results of Table 4, in short, are not attributable to problems of endogeneity. Lack of support for the candidate of their party within their own discussion group and, albeit to a lesser degree, support for the opposing party’s candidate encourage partisan defections. These results hold up under powerful controls and tests for endogeneity

allowed by the unusual design of the CNEP study. Social support matters in the fidelity to party of major-party voters, although not quite in the same way that it matters for the Perot vote.

Towards a Theory of Social Support for Defection

Taking advantage of widespread defections and third-party voting in the 1992 presidential election and a unique study design to investigate them, this paper has demonstrated that political discussion networks play an important role in political defections. Voting for Ross Perot was enhanced by the presence of Perot supporters within the person's discussion network, even among those who already had considered voting for Perot and those who liked him better than his major-party opponents on election day. Among partisans, defections to the opposition party's candidate were more likely in the absence of discussion network support for their own party's candidate and the presence of discussants favoring the opposition. These findings are highly robust. They emerged even with powerful controls for partisanship and candidate evaluations, which implies that the effects of discussants operated beyond influencing either long-term or short-term predispositions. They withstood tests for selective exposure and selective perception, both of which could be gauged in this study. When the campaigns had ended and voters had made their choices, defection from the two-party mainstream or from one's own party was enhanced by the support it found within the discussion network.

This is in part a story of the importance of social reinforcement for unconventional behavior. Many third-party sympathizers and potential party defectors are contemplating going against the grain of their own habits and quite often their own

social settings. If they can find one or more people within their social networks who echo their predilections, they are significantly more likely to follow through on them. Of course, in some years and some social settings, this reinforcement is absent and defection is dampened. Especially when it came to third-party voting, 1992 offered one of those probably-rare occasions when support for defection was not difficult to find in the social setting.

The results also suggest that the nature of this reinforcement is somewhat different between third-party voting and party defection and, within defectors, for the winning and losing candidates. To take the unconventional step of voting for a third-party candidate, it is important for voters to have others in their immediate social environment who share their third-party proclivities. This can be thought of as positive reinforcement, “pulling” the voter into a Perot vote in 1992. Defection from party, on the other hand, seems to be motivated more by the “push” of a social setting that lacks support for the party of identification than the “pull” of discussants who like the opposition.

There also is a pure social influence element to this story. The fact that many Americans who preferred Perot did not end up voting for him owes, at least to some degree, to the absence of social network support for Perot. Analysts often attribute perceptions that third-party votes will be wasted to readings of public opinion generally, perhaps conveyed via omnipresent public opinion poll results. This study suggests an alternative and more direct explanation of such perceptions: Failing to find support in their immediate social environment, supporters of third-party candidates conclude that the third-party cause is hopeless. With candidate evaluations controlled, defections to the

opposition party also may be the work solely of social pressures. In short, there is reason to believe, based on the analysis of this paper, that social network influences often can overcome personal attitudes in presidential voting behavior.

Conclusion

This study has important implications for the study of voting behavior. For several decades the powerful currents of the Michigan model (Campbell *et al.* 1960) and the rational choice model (Downs 1957, Fiorina 1981) carried the field of voting behavior past its traditional roots in a more sociological approach (Lazarsfeld *et al.* 1944, Berelson *et al.* 1954). The result was well-specified models of voting as individual choices based on personal attitudes, orientations, and rational calculations. Overlooked was voting as a social act in response to social influences that constrain, channel, and even overcome personal factors.

This article shows that the social setting matters significantly in accounting for defections from the voting behavior that otherwise would be expected based on the personal-choice model. Partisans translate their party identifications into votes within a particular social context rather than in social isolation. When this context contains individuals who prefer the opposition party's candidate or a third-party candidate, defections are more likely – even in the presence of personal evaluations that support one's own-party candidate. That many partisans cannot resist this social influence requires a rethinking of the power of partisan identifications: When challenged by the social environment, they can be overcome, as perhaps is exemplified by voting patterns in the South beginning in the 1960s. It is probably less surprising that the discussion network plays such an important role for non-partisans. Nonetheless, that votes for Perot,

even among those who prefer Perot, are significantly tied to the social support they receive provides evidence of the power of social context from another direction.

Based on these results, it is time to bring considerations of the social context, and particularly the personal discussion network, back into studies of voting behavior. As was suggested in a previous analysis of the CNEP data, which went well beyond discussion networks (Beck *et al.* 2002),¹² the vote is a function of both a personal and a social “calculus.” Considering both is necessary for fully specified models of the vote decision, and of the role of partisanship in them.

Although this analysis has succeeded in showing that social settings are related to voting behavior, it leaves some key questions about this relationship unexplored. First, what is cause and what is effect? Careful tests for perceptual distortion and controls for key attitudinal predictors of the vote have helped to address this question. Yet, in the end, cross-sectional data cannot effectively answer this question, and longitudinal data are needed. Second, various questions about how social influence is exerted remain to be addressed. Does the aggregate advantage a candidate enjoys in particular setting matter more than the presence of one oppositional source? Do some kinds of discussion partners have more influence than other kinds? What differences are there in these patterns between citizens who are more and less attentive to politics (Zaller 1992)? Third, 1992 was but a single case, and a peculiar one at that -- with a media so uniformly giving negative coverage to one of the candidates (Dalton *et al.* 1998). Will results from it generalize to other elections? Finally, how are social contexts created in the first place? Personal networks are to some degree constructed by individual voters and to some degree imposed by forces beyond them. The extent of self-determination versus external-

imposition undoubtedly varies considerably across individuals, and surely even across national settings. Understanding of these differences, and other matters in the process of network creation, is important for a social context theory of voting behavior.

Answers to these various questions lie far beyond the scope of this article. Its goal instead was more modest, yet in some ways more fundamental: To show that the social setting is an important source of defections from partisanship and encouragement for third-party voting. Now that this goal has been achieved, it seems even more important to pursue the challenging agenda these questions pose for further research on the influence of the social context in voting behavior.

Endnotes

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1. The terms “third-party” and “independent” candidates are used interchangeably in this paper to characterize the vote for the independent candidate Perot in 1992. The major difference between these two types of non-major-party voting is that independent candidates have no one else on their ticket, while third parties often nominate candidates for other offices too. Independent candidates have been a phenomenon of recent times, whereas virtually all non-major-party candidates in earlier times were nominees of third parties.

2. In the National Election Study data, the benchmark for estimating national parameters for voting behavior, a third of all voters deviated in 1992 – in equal numbers from their party to vote for the opposition party candidate (17%) and from the two-party mainstream to vote for the independent (17%). Similar estimates derive from the American Cross-National Election Project (CNEP) survey used in this paper: 33% deviated, 17% for Perot and 16% for the candidate of the other party.

3. The five-nation CNEP employed the same theoretical framework and study design to examine the effects of the social intermediation process on voting in the first

national election of the 1990s in Britain, East and West Germany, Japan, and Spain, as well the United States.

4. The progression in Perot voting as the number of pro-Perot discussants increases here, and similar patterns for Perot voting in subsequent analysis, supports the view that the relationship is more or less linear rather than the result of the mere presence of a single Perot supporter.

5. This name generator builds on the work of Burt (1986) and is intended to capture patterns of political discussion that emerge naturally in broader communications. For considerations involved in this and alternative name generators, see Laumann (1973), Burt (1986), Marsden (1987), Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995), and Huckfeldt, Sprague, and Levine (2000).

6. This paper focuses on the presidential preferences of discussants. Because they are more likely to be discerned in discussions than are actual partisan loyalties, main respondents were asked to report their discussants' vote preferences rather than party identifications.

7. One actual discussant was interviewed for 273 main respondents, two discussants for 173 respondents, three discussants for 70 respondents, and four discussants for three respondents. Because of the restricted number of actual discussants and the limited number of discussants interviewed, this analysis determined only whether the main respondent had an actual pro-Perot, pro-Bush, and pro-Clinton discussant rather than counting the total number of discussants for each candidate.

8. Designing a study to address the most serious threats to inference is preferable to post-hoc statistical manipulations, which often require Herculean assumptions about

both measurements and relationships. The presence of checks for endogeneity in the CNEP design enables this analysis to avoid a reliance on multi-stage estimators and other statistical “corrections.”

9. Partisans are defined as those with Democratic or Republican identifications, however weak they may be. There is considerable controversy over whether so-called “independent leaners,” who chose “independent” or other non-partisan options in answer to the initial question about party identification, should be treated as partisans or independents (see, *inter alia*, Miller 1991 and Keith *et al.* 1992). The strategy used in the present paper increases the number of deviants available for analysis, but it runs the risk of including as partisans voters who may be reporting their vote choice for that year as if it is their partisanship and, thereby, possibly skewing the results. To gauge the extent of this risk, the analysis was replicated with “independent leaners” coded as independents. While a reduction in the number of cases of defection affected the significance of the coefficients, they were remarkably similar to those in the “leaners as partisans” analysis. More important, the substantive conclusions were unaffected.

10. Some partisans of course also “defected” to vote for Perot. Because they were analyzed in the first part of this paper, they are excluded from the analysis here.

11. Because of restricted numbers of cases, as stated in note 7, actual discussants were coded only for the presence or absence of supporters of each candidate.

12. Preliminary analysis of defection also was conducted on a full social context model, which included partisan messages from newspaper, television news, secondary organizations, and political parties as well as discussion networks. Not only did data limitations preclude adequate consideration of some of these variables, especially in

dealing with the Perot vote, but also only discussants among them proved to be at all important for either partisans' defections or third-party voting. This paper, therefore, restricts its attention to discussion networks.

Appendix

Study Design and Variables

Key Features of the Study Design

Main Respondent Survey. Respondents for the survey of citizens (main respondents) were chosen by a stratified cluster sample. Forty counties were drawn with replacement by probabilities proportionate to population size from strata defined by population size, mean educational level, and population change. Los Angeles County was randomly drawn twice, so it had double the number of interviews. Within counties, Survey Sampling, Inc., identified sample phone numbers through random-digit-dialing methods. At each residential phone number, respondents were chosen by a modified version of the Kish (1949) method. In all, 1318 main respondents were interviewed, an average of 33 per county, from the day after the election through the end of January. The interviews averaged more than an hour in length and were conducted using the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) facilities of the Center for Survey Research at Indiana University. The response rate for the survey is 48 percent, calculated as the ratio of completions to the sum of completions, refusals, and partial completions. The resulting sample overestimates voters and educated adults compared to census figures, but the estimated vote percentages are within 1.6% of the official vote and more accurate than American National Election Study's post-election sample.

Personal Discussant "Snowball" Survey. At the end of the main respondent survey, the interviewer requested the phone number or address of each of up to five named discussants. A random "snowball" sample of discussants for whom contact information was available was then interviewed by telephone using the CATI facilities of

the Center for Survey Research at Indiana University and of the Polimetrics Laboratory of the Department of Political Science at Ohio State University. A total of 271 named spouse and 841 non-spouse discussion partners were interviewed. At least one discussant was interviewed for forty percent of the main respondents, and two or more were interviewed for 18.6%.

Measurement of Key Variables

Votes for Bush, Clinton, and Perot. Each respondent was asked how he or she had voted in the presidential election. Of the 79.3% reporting that they had voted, 44.4% reported a Clinton vote, 38.8% a Bush vote, and 16.7% a Perot vote. Where the vote for each candidate is analyzed, the variable is coded as “1” for the candidate in question and “0” for the other two candidates.

Perot Preferences. To be able to study the erosion in Perot support from various points during the campaign to election day, a series of questions was asked to determine whether respondents preferred Perot over the other candidates at some time during the campaign. Voters for the major party candidates and non-voters who said they preferred one of those candidates were asked: “Did you ever seriously consider Perot as your preferred candidate?” When responses to these various questions are combined, a bare majority (50.7%) of the sample preferred Perot at some point during the campaign: 167 voted for Perot; another 364 seriously considered him as their preferred candidate but voted for Bush or Clinton; 62 preferred him but did not vote; and 75 preferred Bush or Clinton in the end but had preferred Perot at one time and did not vote.

Party Identification and Partisan Intensity. The CNEP survey employed somewhat different questions for measuring party identifications than the conventional

National Election Study measure. Deviations from the NES standard were used to elicit party identifications in a way that was more sensitive to how partisanship is cognized by voters in Europe, as “leaning toward” rather than “thinking of oneself as.” In addition, nine, rather than the conventional seven, ultimate response categories were allowed to yield finer gradations in partisan feeling. The CNEP questions were: “Some people lean toward a particular political party for a long time, although they may occasionally vote for a different party. Do you generally lean toward a particular party? Which one? (If independent, don’t lean, or don’t know:) If you had to choose, do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or to the Democratic party? (If named party:) Taken altogether, how strongly or weakly do you lean toward the party?” The **party identification variable** used in this paper was a nine-point scale ranging from strong Democrat = +4 to strong Republican = -4. “Independent,” “other party,” and “don’t know” were coded as 0; and refusals (N = 5) eliminated as missing data. In selecting Democrats and Republicans for Tables 4 and 5, this variable was trichotomized into leaning, weak, moderate, and strong Democrats (codes +1 to +4); leaning, weak, moderate, and strong Republicans (codes -1 to -4); and non-partisans (including independents, and others without a major-party identification). The **partisan intensity variable** was created by folding the party identification variable at its 0 mid-point so that strong Democrats and strong Republicans received the same score, 4, and independents and “other party” identifiers received a score of 0.

Bush, Clinton, and Perot Feeling Scales. Respondents were asked to rate their feelings toward Bush, Clinton, and Perot. The question was: “I’d like to get your feelings toward the major candidates for president by asking you to rate each one on a

scale that runs from 0 to 10. Zero means you feel most unfavorable toward the candidate, 10 means you feel most favorable toward the candidate, and 5 means you feel neutral toward the candidate.” All but a small handful of respondents (9 for Bush, 7 for Clinton, and 10 for Perot) were able to provide a favorability rating. Using this eleven-point scale was necessary to adapt the conventional 101-point thermometer scale for telephone administration. Given the rarity of ratings off the decile points in the thermometer scale, however, the 11-point measure is probably little different from the 101-point measure.

Perceptions of Candidate Supported by Personal Discussants. Each of the 1318 citizen survey (or main) respondents was asked to identify four people they had “talked with about matters that are important to you” in the last six months. Then they were asked to name a fifth person they had “talked with most about the events of the recent presidential election ... aside from anyone ... already mentioned.” These main respondents also described key personal characteristics and political views of each of the discussants they identified, including “Which candidate do you think (discussant name) supported in the presidential election this year?” Coded responses included preferences for each candidate individually as well as for multiple candidates. Information was provided on a total of 3,737 discussants overall. Most named discussants (78.9%) were “important matters” discussants, for 30 percent of whom politics was only rarely or never discussed, and the remaining 21 percent were explicitly identified as political discussants.

Candidate Supported by Interviewed Discussants. The same questions and coding scheme were used as for perceived candidate support variable above, except that the questions were asked directly to the discussant named by the main respondent.

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TABLE 1
Perceived-Discussant Impact on Presidential Vote,
controlling for Candidate Evaluations and Partisanship

Explanatory Variables	A Perot Vote among Voters			B Bush Vote among Voters			C Clinton Vote among Voters		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
# perceived Bush discussants	-0.59	0.14	0.000	0.49	0.12	0.000	-0.20	0.14	0.074
# perceived Clinton discussants	-0.20	0.13	0.064	-0.26	0.14	0.035	0.19	0.12	0.052
# perceived Perot discussants	0.77	0.16	0.000	-0.40	0.21	0.028	-0.72	0.19	0.000
Pro-Bush feelings	-0.17	0.06	0.005	0.82	0.09	0.000	-0.52	0.08	0.000
Pro-Clinton feelings	-0.32	0.06	0.000	-0.44	0.07	0.000	1.09	0.10	0.000
Pro-Perot Feelings	1.06	0.09	0.000	-0.50	0.07	0.000	-0.49	0.07	0.000
Party ID (Democrat is hi)				-0.36	0.07	0.000	0.30	0.07	0.000
Partisan Intensity (Strong is hi)	-0.44	0.12	0.000						
Constant	-4.50	0.85	0.000	-1.23	0.77	0.056	-2.07	0.77	0.004
-2 Log likelihood	366.60			360.35			345.58		
Cox & Snell R-square	0.42			0.62			0.64		
Nagelkerke R-square	0.70			0.84			0.86		
Number of cases	996			996			996		

Note: Cell entries for each variable are the unstandardized logit coefficient (B), its standard error (S.E), and its 1-tailed level of significance. The base for each panel is all voters.

TABLE 2
Perceived-Discussant Impact on Perot Vote,
controlling for Candidate Evaluations and Partisanship

Explanatory Variables	A. Perot Vote among Those Considering Perot at Some Time during Campaign			B. Perot Vote among Those Preferring Perot at End of Campaign		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
# perceived Bush discussants	-0.24	0.12	0.023	0.08	0.17	0.327
# perceived Clinton discussants	-0.03	0.10	0.372	0.15	0.15	0.156
# perceived Perot discussants	0.52	0.12	0.000	0.42	0.16	0.005
Pro-Bush feelings	-0.04	0.05	0.181	-0.03	0.07	0.321
Pro-Clinton feelings	-0.17	0.05	0.000	-0.02	0.07	0.413
Pro-Perot Feelings	0.62	0.07	0.000	0.28	0.12	0.010
Partisan Intensity (Strong is hi)	-0.22	0.09	0.009	-0.17	0.13	0.103
Constant	-3.98	0.68	0.000	-1.96	1.03	0.010
-2 Log likelihood	522.88			257.32		
Cox & Snell R-square	0.29			0.08		
Nagelkerke R-square	0.43			0.11		
Number of cases	665			206		

Note: Cell entries for each variable are the unstandardized logit coefficient (B), its standard error (S.E.), and its 1-tailed level of significance. The base for panel A is all respondents who said that they seriously considered voting for Perot at some time during the campaign. for The base for panel B is all respondents who said that they preferred Perot to Bush and Clinton in the post-election survey, after the campaign had ended.

TABLE 3
Actual-Discussant Impact on Perot Vote,
controlling for Candidate Evaluations and Partisanship

Explanatory Variables	A. Perot Vote among Voters			B. Perot Vote among Those Considering Perot during Campaign			C. Perot Vote among Those Preferring Perot at End of Campaign		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Any actual Bush discussants	-0.14	0.50	0.388	0.55	0.38	0.072	0.51	0.51	0.158
Any actual Clinton discussants	-0.26	0.52	0.312	0.65	0.39	0.047	1.02	0.52	0.026
Any actual Perot discussants	0.90	0.49	0.034	0.69	0.37	0.030	0.87	0.47	0.032
Pro-Bush feelings	-0.18	0.09	0.022	-0.09	0.07	0.104	-0.09	0.10	0.178
Pro-Clinton feelings	-0.23	0.09	0.007	-0.18	0.07	0.005	-0.07	0.10	0.255
Pro-Perot feelings	1.34	0.15	0.000	0.90	0.11	0.000	0.41	0.18	0.014
Partisan Intensity (Strong is hi)	-0.62	0.17	0.000	-0.34	0.14	0.007	-0.26	0.19	0.086
Constant	-6.95	1.34	0.000	-6.14	1.11	0.000	-2.46	1.60	0.062
-2 Log Likelihood		167.85			241.73			121.35	
Cox & Snell R-square		0.45			0.36			0.13	
Nagelkerke R-square		0.74			0.52			0.18	
Number of cases		518			346			107	

Note: Cell entries for each variable are the unstandardized logit coefficient (B), its standard error (S.E), and its 1-tailed level of significance. The base for panel A is all voters who had discussants interviewed. The base for panel B is all respondents who had discussants interviewed and seriously considered voting for Perot at some time during the campaign. The base for panel C is all respondents who had discussants interviewed and preferred Perot to Bush and Clinton at the end of the campaign.

TABLE 4
Perceived-Discussant Impact on Presidential Vote Defections,
with controls

Explanatory Variables	Democrats for Bush (=1) vs. Clinton (=0)						Republicans for Clinton (=1) vs. Bush (=0)					
	A. Full Model			B. Reduced Model			C. Full Model			D. Reduced Model		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
# perceived Bush discussants	0.39	0.28	0.080	0.66	0.16	0.000	-0.56	0.31	0.034	-0.60	0.16	0.000
# perceived Clinton discussants	-0.77	0.36	0.017	-1.13	0.27	0.000	0.15	0.32	0.318	0.83	0.15	0.000
# perceived Perot discussants	1.01	0.71	0.078	-0.45	0.47	0.170	-0.30	0.62	0.312	0.19	0.24	0.220
Pro-Bush feelings	1.01	0.23	0.000				-1.16	0.26	0.000			
Pro-Clinton feelings	-0.77	0.18	0.000				1.43	0.26	0.000			
Pro-Perot Feelings	-0.33	0.18	0.034				-0.17	0.17	0.166			
Partisan Intensity (Strong is hi)	0.10	0.31	0.378	-0.33	0.20	0.047	-1.00	0.42	0.008	-0.83	0.18	0.000
Constant	-1.16	2.06	0.286	-1.06	0.52	0.022	0.31	2.02	0.439	0.11	0.45	0.406
-2 Log likelihood		71.37			163.03			60.85			243.93	
Cox & Snell R-square		0.32			0.15			0.50			0.21	
Nagelkerke R-square		0.74			0.34			0.88			0.37	
Number of cases		396			397			403			404	

Note: Cell entries for each variable are the unstandardized logit coefficient (B), its standard error (S.E.), and its 1-tailed level of significance. Panels A and B contain Democratic party identifiers who voted for Bush (=1) and Clinton (=0). Panels C and D contain Republican party identifiers who voted for Clinton (=1) and Bush (=0). Pure independents are eliminated, and leaners are partisans.

TABLE 5
Actual-Discussant Impact on Presidential Vote Defections,
with controls

Explanatory Variables	Democrats for Bush (=1) vs. Clinton (=0)						Republicans for Clinton (=1) vs. Bush (=0)					
	A. Full Model			B. Reduced Model			C. Full Model			D. Reduced Model		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Any actual Bush discussants	0.89	1.07	0.204	1.79	0.70	0.056	-2.93	1.60	0.034	-1.45	0.49	0.002
Any actual Clinton discussants	-1.22	1.03	0.119	-1.49	0.66	0.012	-0.85	1.55	0.292	1.36	0.50	0.004
Any actual Perot discussants	1.64	1.14	0.076	1.01	0.74	0.088	0.87	1.31	0.254	0.88	0.56	0.066
Pro-Bush feelings	0.90	0.33	0.003				-1.59	0.55	0.002			
Pro-Clinton feelings	-0.61	0.26	0.009				1.38	0.44	0.001			
Pro-Perot Feelings	-0.32	0.28	0.128				0.06	0.21	0.394			
Partisan Intensity (Strong is hi)	0.04	0.44	0.466	-0.26	0.28	0.176	-1.27	0.75	0.046	-0.76	0.23	0.000
Constant	-2.19	2.78	0.216	-2.29	0.93	0.007	2.93	3.36	0.191	0.07	0.65	0.460
-2 Log likelihood		35.39			78.90			26.37			134.73	
Cox & Snell R-square		0.28			0.11			0.52			0.20	
Nagelkerke R-square		0.71			0.27			0.90			0.35	
Number of cases		206			206			210			210	

Note: Cell entries for each variable are the unstandardized logit coefficient (B), its standard error (S.E.), and its 1-tailed level of significance. Panels A and B contain Democratic party identifiers who voted for Bush (=1) and Clinton (=0). Panels C and D contain Republican party identifiers who voted for Clinton (=1) and Bush (=0). Pure independents are eliminated, and leaners are partisans.