Political Contributing: the difference between "I did" and "I will do"

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Abstract

Individual donations are responsible for more than half of the total money raised on campaigns in the United States, while the large majority of campaign workforce is made up of volunteers. Yet, individual donors are often forgotten in light of largesum donations, and volunteers are rarely mentioned or accounted for. In addition, scholars take a forward-looking approach at campaign contributions, arguing that donors and volunteers look at the future benefits that might come from electing someone, rather than the past benefits and/or damage that already came (in the case of incumbents). This thesis challenges this view and suggests a completely new perspective with the inclusion of a retrospective approach to contributions. In this new approach, individual donors and volunteers also use the past performance of a candidate when evaluating whether to contribute or not. In order to test this, two experiments that differentiate between retrospective and prospective compaigning are conducted with the intention of suggesting that retrospective contributing is not only present, but that it might have an even stronger impact on donations than its largely studied prospective counterpart.

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Table of contents

| Abstracti |
|--|
| Acknowledgementsii |
| Table of contents iii |
| List of Figures, Tables or Illustrationsv |
| Introduction: The Retrospective Being1 |
| Chapter 1: Literature Review |
| Campaign Donations4 |
| Motivations Behind Donors' Choices5 |
| How Money Buys Influence |
| The Role of Money on Campaign Success7 |
| How Candidates Raise Money8 |
| Retrospective Voting |
| The Birth of Retrospective Voting Research10 |
| Is There Really a Distinction?12 |
| Voters' Rationality and the Retrospective Voting Paradox |
| For how long are politicians held accountable?14 |
| Policymakers and their capacities16 |
| Different Levels of Research17 |
| Different Kinds of Information18 |

| Information Processing |
|--|
| Time Perspective |
| Chapter II: The Experiments |
| The Pilot Voting Behaviour Experiment |
| Design25 |
| Analysis |
| Discussion |
| The Donating Behaviour Experiment |
| Design |
| Analysis |
| Discussion |
| Conclusion |
| Appendices |
| Appendix A: Treatments Pilot Experiment (in Hungarian)56 |
| Appendix B: Treatments Donating Behaviour Experiment61 |
| Reference List |

List of Figures, Tables or Illustrations

| Table 1: Explanatory Variables in the Pilot Experiment | |
|---|----|
| Table 2: Welch's t-test for Question 1 and Treatment Variable | |
| Table 3: Welch's t-test for Question 2 and Treatment Variable | |
| Table 4: Welch's t-test for Question 3 and Treatment Variable | |
| Table 5: Analysis of Covariance for Question 3 | |
| Table 6: Multivariate Analysis of Covariance for Questions 1 and 2 | |
| Table 7: Explanatory Variables in the Donating Behaviour Experiment | |
| Table 8: Chi-squared Test for Question 1 | 40 |
| Table 9: Chi-squared Test for Question 2 | 41 |
| Table 10: Chi-squared Test for Question 4 | 42 |
| Table 11: Chi-squared Test for Question 5 | 42 |
| Table 12: Chi-squared Test for Question 6 | 43 |
| Table 13: Exploratory Factor Analysis | 45 |
| Table 14: Logistic Regression Question 1 | 47 |
| Table 15: Logistic Regression Question 1 controlling for past vote | 47 |
| Table 16: Logistic Regression Question 4 controlling for past vote | 48 |
| Table 17: Logistic Regression Question 6 controlling for past vote | 49 |

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Introduction: The Retrospective Being

An unprecedented rise has occurred in federal congressional campaign donations and expenditures in the United States during the past few decades. In 2016 alone, and with more than five months left until Election Day at the time of writing, more than 1.7 billion dollars have been raised for Presidential and Congress campaigns¹. Based on media attention, it is easy to think that most of this money comes from big companies and private interests; interestingly enough, it does not.

Scholars have exhaustively studied the reasoning and processes behind campaign donations. The majority of the academic research and literature is focused on lobby groups specifically, how these entities function, to whom and how they donate, and what they receive in exchange for their support. On the other hand, research aimed at donations by individuals has received much less attention (whether regarding money or time contributions). The interesting aspect of this is that individual donations comprise the majority of money raised is campaigns outside of super-PACs. In 2016, over 60% of the money raised for Congressional campaigns has so far come from individuals². In terms of volunteering, although no specific numbers are available, it is very visible that the large majority of workers in campaigns are volunteers.

In addition to the lack of research on individual donations, the vast majority of studies on both organized and individual campaign contributions focus primarily on prospective donating. Research of this particular type is concerned with future indicators, where donors look at possible benefits still to come when supporting candidates. In contrast, retrospective approaches, which argue that voters and donors are concerned with past variables when pledging their money, are non-existent in the literature.

¹ https://www.opensecrets.org/overview/

² https://www.opensecrets.org/overview/

The inexistence of retrospective works in campaign finance literature indicates that there is either not enough information to validate this approach, or that scholars have seriously neglected this topic. Retrospective donating, complimenting existing prospective analysis, is necessary in order to create a more complete overview of campaign contributions. This research project investigates the question of whether retrospective donating truly exists, and whether retrospective campaigning is more, or at least as effective as prospective campaigning. In order to give evidence to the merit of this new approach, experimental design was used to analyse how individual donating behaviour changes based on the nature – prospective or retrospective – of campaign information provided

The new approach proposed by this paper draws on the vast amount of literature existent on retrospective voting. Studies in this field indicate that individuals take into account past variables (in addition to future ones), such as the past performance and experience of the candidate, when deciding whether to vote. Although it is well-established that voters and donors/volunteers act differently, as both donors and volunteers are, for example, usually more extreme in their political views (Brown, Powell, and Wilcox 1995; Francia et al. 2003; Gimpel, Lee, and Pearson-Merkowitz 2008), it is reasonable to infer that individual contributors also take past competence and experience into account when they donate funds to a campaign.

In order to look for evidence of the existence of a retrospective individual contributing behaviour, two experiments were conducted. The first experiment served as a pilot study on understanding if it is possible to treat individuals with prospective and retrospective campaign information, and expect a difference in outcome; the second and main experiment looked at time (volunteering) and money (donating) contributions, and how they are affected by prospective and retrospective campaigning.

2

The results found by this study, although limited by sample size, are revealing. They suggest that (1) retrospective donating is real and measurable; (2) individuals are significantly more likely to contribute their time (through volunteering) for political campaigns when provided with retrospective campaign information; and that (3) retrospective and prospective campaign information are likely to be equally effective in terms of generating money contributions. The outcome of this research project indicates that although currently neglected, a retrospective perspective on campaign contributions on the individual level should be further studied by social science. In addition, the use of different combinations of retrospective and prospective campaigning may bring about new ways of presenting candidates to the public, and can effectively provide novel perspectives on political campaign fundraising.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

This project is based on mainly two different fields within the social sciences: campaign donations and voting behavior. These are two extremely wide topics whose understanding is central to the concepts covered in this thesis. In this first chapter, a general overview of the literature in these two topics will be covered. In addition, because of the experimental nature of this research project, brief introductions to the psychology fields of information processing and time perspective will follow up.

Campaign Donations

The academic literature on campaign finance is focused on the outsized variable of money and the role it plays in politics. Most of the work done in this field studies campaign donations in the context of the United States. The work that is relevant to the scope of this paper is located in the fields of economics, political science, political behaviour and public psychology.

The starting point for these works is the act of donation to campaigns. Extensive research has been dedicated to why donations are made, how those who donate weigh the current costs and future benefits, as well as what is gained through monetary support of candidates. Most of this research focuses on Political Action Committees, which are organizations representing interest groups (Baumgartner and Leech 1998). Still, the focus of this research in general is the individual donor.

Individual donors are definitely not as widely studied as PACs or corporations. Yet, they are usually responsible for over half of the money raised in campaigns. Jones & Miller (1985) look at what determines how much they donate, which is related to Berg, Eastoland, and Jaffe's (1981) work on demographics of individual voters. Several others study the motivations behind individual's voting behaviour (Brown, Powell, and Wilcox 1995; Francia

et al. 2003; Gimpel, Lee, and Pearson-Merkowitz 2008), and find that these are usually ideologically polarized voters and donors.

The influence of money on campaigns and policy is extensive. The work in this field uses a prospective approach to donations. This means that any individual or organization donating are seen as looking forward into the future benefits their money can bring. There are four distinguishable sub-topics within this area: motivations behind donors' choices; how money buys influence; the role of money on campaign success; and how candidates raise money.

Motivations Behind Donors' Choices

Policy interest is often cited as the biggest motivator of political contributions. This interest is not rooted in ideology; it is based on the idea that benefits in the future outweigh current costs. Individual donors and PACs treat their donations as investments (Grimmer and Powell, 2014; Gordon, Hafer and Landa 2007; Ansolabehere, De Figueiredo and Snyder 2003; Grossman and Helpman 2001; Aggarwal 2012; Farrell 2001). Therefore, donors expect returns from their donations. Of course, the idea of campaign donations being seen as investments generates concern. Grossman and Helpman (2001) and Schattschneider (1960) argue that minorities who are able to fund politicians and make large contributions raise concerns about the whole concept of democracy.

Previous performance of a politician is almost never mentioned as an important factor for investment donors, as long as she can bring the policy changes and benefits that align closest with the donor's preference in the future. What I would like to argue throughout this thesis is that the prospective approach to donations is inherently connected to the unstudied retrospective approach to donations. In the case above, it is very easy to place the retrospective notion: if following a term, donors do not receive back their investment, they might not donate again. This shows how looking back is also a factor in campaign donations.

Within the field of prospective donations, several authors acknowledge the existence of a second group-type that donates based on ideological proximity to candidates (Grimmer and Powell, 2014; Grossman and Helpman 2001). This second group focuses on long-term benefits rather than short term profit and policy change. Indeed, Francia et al. (2003) argue that the majority of individual donors are placed within this category. They also argue that over 90% of these donors support specific social and political causes that go hand in hand with what politicians have to offer on the ideology field. A third and last group described by Francia et al (2003) includes "intimates" who donate as a form of socializing with political elites.

How Money Buys Influence

The second topic pertains to the question of whether or not money buys political influence. Much of the literature does not address this question directly, but takes a stance in order to deal with further implications this question might pose. Denzau (1986) posits that unorganized voters can have their voices heard; however, there is a "price" necessary to overrule that lack of organization. While a majority of the studies give support to the idea that money can indeed influence policy, there are a minority of studies that argue this influence is uncertain, or simply non-existent.

Relatively few studies discount money as an effective way of swaying policy. However, Bronars and Lott (1997) characterize the voting behaviour of members of congress as having inertia, unchanging even when congress members are in their final term. This indicates that money does not necessarily affect how congress members vote. Instead, interest groups simply align themselves with politicians who already have similar values, rather than trying to persuade candidates to vote in a different fashion. Aggarwal (2012) finds that corporate donations are negatively correlated to policy returns, which gives further evidence that votes cannot be wholly "bought".

Conversely, there is vast body of literature that indicates a correlation between contributions and policy privileges. This connection is not always explicit since dividends are not promised, but they are granted most of the times (Peoples 2013). Grossman (1994) and Farrell (2001) looked at corporation and top executives' donations, and found a positive correlation between policy protection and long-term profit.

The Role of Money on Campaign Success

Although money is not always seen as being able to buy policy, it is very often seen as having major influence on campaign success. The majority of papers mentioned in this review accept and work under the assumption that money is a significant factor in campaign success. Alexander (2005) argues that the only important thing in terms of campaign spending is being able to outspend the opponent. The source from where the money originates, which will be discussed in the next subsection, does not matter.

It is possible to find dissidents from this assumed status quo. Prat (2002) argues that spending not only has a marginal effect on election outcomes, but can be considered a waste of money. It is clear that campaign spending has a differentiated effect in each election, but Prat's view disregarding the importance of financing is unsound in light of the evidence for the significant impact of electoral financing. If there truly is a positive correlation between money and campaign success, it should be in politicians' best interest to simply raise or solicit more funds. Based on this, if past performance does influence the amount of money a politician raises, she should

always be concerned about her performance, or it might make it difficult for her to out-raise opponents and effectively contest elections.

How Candidates Raise Money

This fourth and final topic makes up a relatively small part of the overall campaign donation literature. The study of fundraising is not necessarily connected to this study, as it targets the way candidates actively raise money, whereas the aim of this thesis is to takes a more passive approach, by not factoring in fundraising efforts. Still, campaign finance studies seem to take different methods and objectives in fundraising for granted. Overall, the source of the money is seen as very unimportant, unless the electoral race is very close for candidates (Alexander 2005).

There are some factors that are often seen as having major influence on how much money candidates are able to raise. Kroszner & Strattmann (1998, 2005) argue that donors value politicians who establish long-term reputations for supporting or not certain policies. In addition, several authors believe that sitting on relevant, powerful committees, as well as being in a party leadership positions have a strong impact on donations received (Grier and Munger, 1991; Romer and Snyder, 1994; Ansolabehere and Snyder, 1999).

All of the factors mentioned above are directly connected to a retrospective approach to donating. Donors cannot judge candidates' policy preferences if not by looking at their past performance. The same is valid for committee memberships and party leadership, where one needs to look at the candidate's record to see what kinds of positions she holds.

Retrospective Voting

As mentioned in the introduction, the theoretical basis for the arguments defended in this thesis come from the well-established field of voting behaviour.

Within voting behaviour, both prospective and retrospective voting are studied. This section will present a general overview of the field of retrospective voting. Representative democracy is the most common model of democracy and governance in the world today. Whether on a country, state, provincial, county, municipal or any other level, the electing of officials to represent individuals is widespread. Naturally, political scientists have studied this model for over a century, paying special attention to its pivoting point: voting.

Voting, and the mechanisms that work around it, are some of the most widely discussed areas in political science. Many theories and ways of testing them have been proposed and showed results, but the discussion is ever-present. An especially intriguing area is the study of how individuals make their decisions on for whom to vote. An enormous amount of research is dedicated to answering this question, and since the 1950s, one of the leading theories points to the direction of retrospective voting.

Retrospective voting is the idea that individuals look at the past performance of politicians as an indicator of whether or not to elect or re-elect her. Downs, in his seminal *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957), states that a keystone of democracy is the capacity of citizens to hold politicians accountable for their actions. Voting is the tools through which accountability takes place, and the retrospective way of voting cuts information and decision-making costs, since it serves as a proxy for what to expect from politicians in the future.

What this thesis argues that a similar line of reasoning that works in terms of retrospective voting can also be used on trying to understand donating behaviour. As shown above, the campaign donation literature is crippled for not using a retrospective approach. Yet, voting, which can be argued to be very close to donating in their reasoning (especially when it comes to ideologue donors, also shown above), is an extremely well-established field. Exactly for how well-established this particular field is, it is important to thoroughly

investigate the nuances present in the literature, so to better acquaint ourselves with the idea of a retrospective approach.

The Birth of Retrospective Voting Research

Anthony Downs was, as mentioned before, the first researcher to theorize about voter's capacity of scrutinizing government, and punishing it for bad performance. In Down's (1957) work, bad performance is seen as weak economic performance. Economic condition is to this day the most used proxy of politician performance, but other aspects, relative to the capacities of each individual office, are also used and will be discussed later in this paper.

In the 1960s, the Michigan School started to develop its view on voting behaviour. For them, voters voted based on partisanship, lacked coherent ideologies, and lacked general knowledge of politics (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964). As a direct response to this line of thought, V. O. Key (1966), in *The Responsible Electorate*, argues that "voters are not fools", and that the low expectations set by the Michigan School are not justified. Key sees voters as active participants and observers of political performance, and that the electorate has a "role [as] appraiser of past events, past performance, and past actions" (61). Similarly, Friedrich (1963) acknowledges that the existence of a retrospective aspect to voting encourages representatives to think about how their constituents will react to their policies, making politicians more aware and careful.

Downs and Key were not alone in their belief that voters are rational beings and grade past performance. Kramer (1971) is the first to systematically research economic retrospective voting. Kramer looks at a large set of elections in the United States, spanning almost 70 years, and concludes that voters do respond to ups and downs in the economy by holding office-holders accountable for it. Still, as it is common in academia, not everybody agreed to the idea. Stigler (1973) provided the most prominent response to Kramer's argument by denying the existence of retrospective voting. The reasoning behind his denial is clear: if retrospective voting existed, then as long as the economy is healthy, politicians will continuously get re-elected. Stigler's point was taken seriously by academia, and the wave of work done in the field in the 1970s can be seen as a response of sorts to the dispute between Kramer and Stigler, generating an increase in research depth, with Kramer's side ultimately prevailing.

The 1970s were a very fruitful decade for the study of retrospective voting. Wright (1974) shows how the New Deal, under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was designed to have maximum impact on the ballots by making voters aware of the good that it had brought. Arcelus and Meltzer (1975) find out that price levels have an impact on people's perception of politician performance, while Nordhaus (1975) argues that unemployment and election cycles coincide. Tufte (1975) was the first to add indicators of past performance to research, in addition to researching the pattern where the federal government engages in policies that encourage economic-expansion during election years (Tufte, 1978).

In his 1978 article, and subsequent 1981 book, Morris Fiorina changed the study of retrospective voting with what is arguably the most important work done in the field to this day. Up until that point in time, research had focused on the larger picture, looking at general voting records, performance indicators, and economic cycles. Fiorina added a completely new view by changing the focus to individuals. What Fiorina found was that there is a connection between individual's personal economic condition and the way she votes. Where researcher before looked at overall economy conditions of the country, the author looked at how each individual felt about the development of her own finances in light of governmental policies. Fiorina concludes that although there is a connection between individual's perceptions of their economic conditions and the way they vote, this connection is not always clear

or evident. A secondary finding was that the impact of economic performance was stronger on voting at the presidential level than at congressional level. Fiorina believes that this is due to the existence of other factors over which politicians are judged, based on their official capacities. This aspect will be further discussed later in the paper.

As it is possible to see, from its inception in the 1950s to its spring in the 1970s, retrospective voting research came a long way and thoroughly developed. After Fiorina's addition of new approaches to the study, many more questions came about, and scholarly work targeted many of them. The rest of this review is dedicated to looking at specific issues within the retrospective voting literature, and how the dialogue between scholars occurs in each of them.

Is There Really a Distinction?

The first question that many scholars ask about retrospective voting is whether it really differs from prospective voting. Prospective voting can be defined as voting on the expectation of future benefits a candidate might bring, rather than on proof of past performance. Downs (1957) was indeed the first to ask this question. For him, past performance is the best indicator of future performance; thus, retrospective voters are also prospective, and vice versa. In this case, it is possible to argue that any clear-cut differentiation between prospective and retrospective voting is rather artificial. Still, much research has been done based exactly on this differentiation. Kuklinski (1981) tries to look solely at prospective explanations for election outcomes, while others (Abramowitz, 1985; Abramowitz et al., 1988) use both prospective and retrospective indicators in their analyses.

Lanoue (1994) disagrees with Downs, and argues that prospective views are not entirely based on retrospective ones, and that they have their own value. In order to reach that conclusion, Lanoue looks at both prospective and retrospective indicators, finding that retrospective indicators are stronger on explaining election results. In addition, even though he finds that the direct impact of both kinds of voting is weak, they can make a difference in tight elections. An important conclusion form this research is that retrospective voting only has a big impact in case voters believe that the government has something to do with the state of the economy. This follows the same line of reasoning found in Lockerbie's (1991) work, where voter's first have to blame the government for the economy in order to blame the president's party for economic situations. Lockerbie also tries to stress the importance of prospective voting, by arguing that it provides grounds for voters to choose between competing parties, rather than just reward or punish the incumbent. For him, retrospective voting can be very misleading. An example would be voters who have a positive outlook at the future not because of the incumbent party, but because of the expectation of a party change in the nearest elections.

It is clear that the line between retrospective and prospective approaches is not nearly as clean-cut as some researchers claim. From the inception of the idea, there are blurred explanatory lines on what influences what, and how. Still, most scholars believe that there are differences that can be empirically tested, and that is ultimately what leads most research done in this field. It is under this assumption of division that this research will try to separate between prospective and retrospective voting and donating.

Voters' Rationality and the Retrospective Voting Paradox

Pure rational choice theory, when applied to voting behaviour, would suggest that voters are forward looking. These voters would always choose candidates based on desirable characteristics that they possess and might make use of while in office (Ashworth and Bueno de Mesquita, 2008; Fearon, 1999; Gordon, Huber and Landa, 2007). Woon (2012) acknowledges this discrepancy, but argues that retrospective voters are not completely irrational, but simply suffer from cognitive limitations. Because of their state of bounded

rationality, where not all information about candidates is present, voters do act rationally and choose accountability instead of uncertainty in terms of future expectation.

Caplan (2007) also argues against the rationality of voters. He defends his theory of rational irrationality, where voters have permanently biased beliefs, which cloud their judgement, even though voters believe to be acting rationally. These biases, according to Caplan, can occur in any setting, such as religious beliefs, cultural beliefs, economic beliefs, etc. Bischoff and Siemers (2011) claim that although permanently biased beliefs may work in the case of religion and culture, they do not work with economy. Their argument is that there is no such thing as economic beliefs that cloud people's judgement: if the economy is in crisis, no beliefs will go against that notion. Still, they do claim that the electorate is indeed biased on their belief of how public policies impact the economy, for voters are rarely factual on their analysis of how economic situations came to be, and their recurrent biases play a major role in that.

Bischoff and Siemers (2011) also place the issue of retrospective voting paradox on the table. For them, if retrospective voting is indeed real, then that leaves political parties in power with a very tough decision to make: to go with popular but economically harmful policies, or policies that are unpopular, but economically beneficial policies in the long run. This decision creates the paradox of whether using the power of retrospective voting to be elected in the short term but damaging chances in future elections; or damaging the chances at the current moment, while expect better results in the future. The authors conclude that most of the times parties chose mixed policies, since the system is self-balancing.

For how long are politicians held accountable?

The ending of the last section spurs a new debate on the longevity of voters' perceptions of politicians and parties. This question brings about the usual anecdote that voters have short memory. In the case of retrospective voting, memory is arguably the most

important feature in voters' arsenal, and because of this importance, it became a big topic in the field.

Fearon (1999) says that the capacity of voters of holding politicians accountable for a long period of time is extremely important for them to be able to correctly choose between good and bad candidates. This does not come as a surprise. Still, literature seems to indicate that voters indeed do not have good memory. Krause and Melusky (2014) look specifically at this. Their research on gubernatorial races concludes that, as time passes, voters seem to forget about both good and bad policy choices. This is bad for good politicians, whose accomplishments are forgotten, but very good for bad ones, whose bad performances are slowly rehabilitated. Paldam's (2004) findings are support this theory, arguing that voters are usually limited to reviewing performance over the last two years.

Fiorina, Abrams and Pope (2003) provide a twist to the theory above. They look at the 2000 presidential election, and more specifically, at Al Gore's campaign. Based on retrospective voting theory, Al Gore should have won the public vote easily, since he was Clinton's Vice-President, and thus directly related to Clinton's economic successes. The reason why it did not happen is that Gore tried to disassociate himself from the previous government. He placed himself to the left of Clinton, and through this distancing he ended up not receiving the positive retrospective view that could have come with it. As we can see, although the time distance was well-within what is reasonable to expect voters to remember, there are other nuances that can change the effect of retrospective voting.

Another dimension that deals with how good voters' memories are is that of campaign promises. Malhotra and Margalit (2014) look deep into the question of how expectations set during the campaign affect the electorate's evaluation of the term itself. They conclude that

15

the difference lies basically on whether or not the public perceives the politician as having practical or at least theoretical authority over the course of the matter. If policymakers do have the power, then setting high expectations and not delivering is very bad on a retrospective voting perspective. On the other hand, if the office holder does not have the actual authority over the issue, the public will not punish her over it, for optimism in personalities is seen as a good trait.

On the opposing side, Elinder, Jordahl & Poutvaara (2015) look at campaign promises and the reasoning behind individual's votes. They find that over the course of two national Swedish elections in the 1990s, voters directly affected by a certain campaign promise (that eventually turned into legislation) voted based on the promise both times, rather than paying too much attention to the outcome of said promise. These findings show, again, that there are several nuances within the scope of retrospective voting, and each case is worth being explored separately.

Policymakers and their capacities

As mentioned above, Malhotra and Margalit (2014) argue that voters can, or at least should be capable of identifying when policy changes are within the scope of a policymaker's authority, and when they are not. This is not a novel concept, being noted by researchers for a long time in retrospective voting literature. Fiorina (1981) states that economic retrospective voting is only one of the many possible kinds of retrospective voting. Yet, the vast majority of literature focuses exactly on *economic* retrospective voting (ie, the electorate looks at economic conditions in order to cast their vote), even if that is not the best way of evaluating certain candidates and positions. For example, presidential, congressional and gubernatorial office holders might indeed have an impact on the economic conditions of the overall population, but judging a mayor or any lower-capacity policymaker on the same grounds can be rather unfair. In other words, politicians should only be held accountable for what they can do, and not for what is outside of their scope.

Berry and Howell (2007) are a good example of research that focuses on the level of capacity of policymakers. Instead of studying big offices, they look at school board elections. These are usually contested elections where retrospective voting is of paramount importance. The researchers use change in standardized test scores as a proxy for performance of board members, and find a correlation between higher scores and re-election. Apart from these interesting findings, the authors highlight the fallacies being often committed in retrospective voting research community, where research is done on an economic level, even if office holders do not have power over economic conditions. The authors close by stressing the importance of carefully choosing the proxies used for performance of policymakers, instead of simply using economic performance proxies in all cases.

Different Levels of Research

Most of the retrospective voting research is done on upper-level public offices, especially the presidential level. In the early days of the field, retrospective economic voting was usually analysed in presidential election, for as seen before, presidents may have a larger impact on economic condition of the country than members of congress, for example. Fiorina (1978) was one of the first to analyse this level distinction, finding that the correlation to economy is weaker in congressional elections than in presidential ones. His explanation was that on a congressional level there are other factors that matter for re-election, in addition to economic conditions. Mayer (2010) looks at presidential primaries, which are an interesting hybrid, for still being upper-level elections, but on a local scale. He finds out that past economic performance is very important, especially when presidents are seeking re-election, or when vice-presidents are seeking the presidential office.

From Fiorina on, more levels of research have been employed in the study of retrospective voting. Svoboda (1995) looks at gubernatorial races on an individual level. Up until then, only aggregate-level studies were used on gubernatorial research, with weak results. With this new approach, Sovoba was able to show some strong results between economic conditions and gubernatorial vote. Gasper and Reeves (2011) also look at the state level, and find that governors who ask for federal assistance after natural disasters receive positive retrospective votes. This shows how different offices can be judged for different aspects. Berry and Howell's (2007) school board-level research also points that way, in which specific indicators are to be used for specific offices.

On a municipality level, most research ague that retrospective voting is not very effective. Brender (2003) found out that voters only punish mayors with bad fiscal records one out of three times. Oliver and Ha (2006) also found very weak relations between mayors' past performance and re-election rates. In both cases, the lack of information available seems to be the culprit. Higher-level offices draw more attention from the media, and consequently make voters more knowledgeable. On the municipal level, the information available might not be as widespread or well-developed, making it harder for voters to make rational choices over whom to elect.

Different Kinds of Information

Information is the basis for any and all kind of retrospective analysis by voters. The more information is available to the public, the better the judgement by the electorate. Downs (1957) is the first to point out to the different kinds of information available. For him, information can be mediated and unmediated. Mediated information comes through media sources, as the name suggests. Unmediated information comes from voters' own experiences and daily life. Popkin (1991) uses a similar distinction, but under different names: media and daily life sources of information.

The importance of information, especially mediated, is not overlooked in the literature. Fiorina (1981) remarks how important mediated sources are, for individual voters are not extremely good at separating their own economic situation from the economic situation of the whole country. Oliver and Ha (2006) add to it by arguing that when there are no mediated sources of information available, voters resort to other factors, such as candidate likeability or shared partisanship. This brings back mayoral studies (Brender, 2003; Oliver and Ha, 2006) that say that the lack of information leads voters to make less-than-ideal candidate choices. Anderson (2007) further adds to this point by saying that retrospection is cognitively limited, which does not always allow for accountability, which in turn hinders democracy.

A very clear example of the importance of information is provided by Holbrook, Clouse and Weinschenk (2012). They look at the fall of Lehman Brothers in 2008, and the subsequent media coverage of the crisis. For them, the bankruptcy of the financial firm marks the point in which most voters became familiar with the economic crisis and the situation of the country. Because information was widely available, it was easier for voters to make informed decisions, and the presidential election held that year (which did not even have an incumbent running for re-election) became basically a referendum on Bush's administration. The authors show, through this, that economic retrospective voting is very much alive, and at the same time, that the context under which elections are held are of similar importance for the understanding of their outcomes.

Nadeau and Lewis-Beck (2001) also hold a similar view on context, arguing that it is very important, varies across elections, and can make or break retrospective voting (in case Lehman Brothers had gone down after the elections, maybe media coverage would not be so big and the results would be different). Previous research projects (Cheibub and Przeworski, 1999; Nadeau, Niemi & Yoshinaka, 2002) looked for a pattern for when and where retrospective voting occurs, without success. The notion that context is extremely important, especially when combined with information availability, might make it easier for that pattern to be found.

Information Processing

Understanding the way that voters (and in the case of this paper, donors as well) process information is of adamant importance to the clear analysis of the results of experiments in which participants are given information. This is the case applied to this project, where participants of all experiments were given some kind of information to process, and were eventually asked to make a decision about it. Because of the clear implications of information processing for this study, it is important to understand some basic concepts of it.

It has been common consent among social scientists over the last fifty years that individuals process information and use the processed outcome to make political choices (Brody & Page, 1972; Campbell et al., 1960; Enelow & Hinich, 1985; Kelley, 1983). This system includes long-term memory processes (knowledge that was gathered previously) (Kelly and Mirer, 1974), and on-line processes, which consist of information provided in the short-term, and expected to be "digested", so an overall evaluation is formed (Lodge, McGraw & Stroh, 1989). This kind of information processing is of extreme importance to political science because it is through these channels that politicians pass on their message to voters. In the language of this research, the long-term memory of voters includes the retrospective and the prospective information about a candidate that had been gathered before, while the short-term memory is the information that is provided about a candidate at the time (an ad, bio, pamphlet, etc). Kelly and Mirer (1974) suggest a model in which voter's information processing occurs solely though long-term memory application, where retrieval and integration of memory takes place. In this case, individuals gather a pool of information about candidates, parties, platforms and past performance, weigh in their likes and dislikes, and come up with their choices based on the highest level of affinity. Although a great number of our decisions are indeed made based solely on memory, the second type of information processing, called impression-driven model, relies on information presented "on-the-go" (Hastie & Park, 1986; Lichtenstein & Srull, 1987). In this case, if relevant information is found, individuals can shape their perceptions based on it.

According to Hastie & Park (1986) and Lichtenstein & Srull (1987), the most important determinant of what kind of process will take place at what time is the individual's objective. If someone is looking at candidate information, for example, with the intention of forming an opinion about the candidate, the impression-driven process will be used. If on the other hand, the individual does not want to form an opinion, or already has opinions about that candidate (and has no intention of changing them), then the memory-based process would be used. The implications of this analysis are very big for political science. It shows that individual's biases will hinder the efficacy of any message used on them. This message might, in the end, work; still, the memory process in place puts up a big challenge against it.

Time Perspective

The basis on which this study is built is the different time perspectives through which individuals perceive (political) information, and how they react to it. Suddendorf & Corballis (1997) argue that the functioning of human's cognitive reasoning was developed, among other factors, through the basic function of time monitoring. The research on time and how it affects behaviour clearly important for psychology based on the number of studies that take it into consideration. Since this study is directly connected to time perspectives of individuals, it is important to take it into account while analysing any findings.

Kurt Lewin (1951) was the first scholar to acknowledge and study the psychological influence of both the past and the future on one's current behaviour. In his Life Space Model, he integrates experiences of the past and expectations of the future to make up for an over view of her "life space". Lewin defines Time Perspective as "the totality of the individual's views of his psychological future and psychological past existing at a given time" (p. 75). The Life Space Model fits perfectly with the new approach proposed by this paper. An exemplification of Lewin's theory in terms of campaign contributions is that instead of expecting individuals to only look forward in time before making donations (as current literature suggests), one can expect both prospective and retrospective thought processes to lead to a decision in the current time (donating or not).

Between the 1960s and 1980s, over 200 different definitions and approaches to time perspective took place in the psychology literature (McGrath and Kelly, 1986). The eventual unification and operationalization of time categorization came with Philip Zimbardo's work in the 1980s and 1990s (Gonzales and Zimbardo, 1985; Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999). The Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) divides human cognitive processes into three different temporal frames: past, present and future (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999). In addition, the ZTPI operationalizes these three temporal frames into five categories: past-positive, past-negative, present-fatalistic, present-hedonistic and future. Ever since its creation, the ZTPI was tested in many different studies that indicate its usefulness in diverse areas, such as clinic treatments of post-traumatic stress disorder, counselling and guidance to Alzheimer caregivers (Kostal et al, 2015).

The operationalization of the ZTPI in the 1999 study comes through a questionnaire consisting of 56 questions. These questions are made from statements that take in

22

consideration past, present and future actions (individually), and ask participants to rate how characteristic the action would be of them. The survey participants are then studied on a caseby-case manner so that their characteristics are fitted to the 5-point scale mentioned above. Finally, exploratory principal-component analysis is used to infer to what degree each question corresponds to one of the five categories.

The actual importance of time perspective and of the ZTPI for this research is that it allows for the better understanding of the behaviour of donors. By using the time perspective scale, it is possible to look at experiment participants and understand what is their general time perspective inclination, and compare it to the experiment results indicating whether they would donate or not. The expectation behind this is that future-oriented individuals would donate more based on prospective campaigning, while past-oriented individuals would donate more based on retrospective campaigning.

Using a 56-question scale is rather unpractical within the scope of this research. Instead, the use of a shorter-scale, such as presented by Kostal et al (2015), makes its application feasible for this experiment. In their research, Kostal et al. add a sixth category to the ZTPI by dividing the future category into future-positive and future-negative. Still, they downgrade the number of questions from 56 to 18 by only asking three questions per category, and placing individuals within one of the categories based on their answers. It is based on these three-questions per category that this study uses the short version of the ZTPI to understand the time perspective of experiment participants and analyze how different inclinations result in different donating behaviours.

23

Chapter II: The Experiments

The main goal of this paper is to gather evidence of the different effects that prospective and retrospective campaigning pose on individual's propensity to donate.

Although the notion of retrospective donating seems to be a completely novel topic in political science, it is a forgone conclusion that neither the study of campaign donations nor of retrospective voting is new. Both are seasoned disciplines within political science that until now have not been studied in a unified way (with the exception of eventual superficial analyses of politician's electoral popularity and money raised). It is based on these well-established areas that this paper conducts its experiments, with the intention of shedding light on the potential differences between prospective and retrospective voting.

A total of two experiments were conducted for the sake of this project. The first one looks at the difference between prospective and retrospective campaigning in terms of voting intention; the second targets prospective and retrospective donations, which are at the core of the study.

The Pilot Voting Behaviour Experiment

The first experiment conducted for this paper had the objective of measuring and comparing individual's perception of retrospective campaign ads versus prospective campaign ads. The reasoning behind the experiment comes from the theoretical proposition that this paper makes. There is currently a differentiation in literature between prospective and retrospective voting; on the other hand, campaign donations are only seen as a prospective activity. It is well-known that individuals who donate are not the average party voters (as they tend to be on the extremes of the spectrum), but there is no indication that there might be a big difference between donors and voters in terms of their perceptions of campaigning, and how they make their decisions to donate and vote. Since the goal of the thesis is to bring the idea of retrospective reasoning to the sphere of campaign donations, the first step is to gather proof that there is indeed a difference to be studied.

Design

This experiment was conducted in mid-April 2016, in the town of Makó, Hungary. The location was chosen for two reasons: (a) it is to be expected that in a small town like Makó, all (or a large majority) of individuals taking the survey vote in that location, which cannot be said for larger cities to where individuals commute on a daily basis; and (b) in order to achieve a more representative sample, differently again to what would have happened in a larger city, where individuals who work or study around the location where the experiment is conducted might be overrepresented. The experiment was conducted in conjunction with a second experiment that measured regionalism on voting intentions. For the purposes of this paper, only the experiment relevant to this article will be mentioned.

A total of 42 participants took part on the experiment. Participants were informed of the survey through street recruiting, social media and word of mouth. The street recruitment occurred outside of the office where the experiment was conducted, in the central square of the town; social media recruitment happened on the town of Makó Facebook group; and the word of mouth recruitment occurred by participants who took the experiment and encouraged friends and family to also take it. Each respondent was awarded a 1000 HUF gift card upon completion of the experiment. The two main problems with the sample were (a) the relatively small sample size, and (b) the potential bias of the sample. Although the sample of 42 participants is indeed low, the resources available for this project would not have allowed for a much larger number. In addition, low-n statistical analysis (including paired t-tests, which are used in this study) is reported as being feasible and no theoretical objections are given (Winter, 2013) (in which case the small-n used is =<5, a much smaller sample than the one used in this study). The potential bias in the sample comes from the limited way in which

participants were recruited. Still, the three methods through which recruitment occurred add variety to the sample: social media is usually a tool used by younger individuals, while active street recruiting and word of mouth reach somewhat equally the whole spectrum of the population. Additionally, individuals from the age of 18 - 60+ took part on the survey, demonstrating the potential reach of the recruiting process.

A between-person design was adopted for this study. In this kind of design, treatments are assigned to different groups of participants, allowing researchers to analyze the results of each group independently, and comparing the results between the groups. This design allowed for a clean comparison between prospective and retrospective campaign information. The experiment also did not have a control group, as the expectations were simply to compare retrospective to prospective information, and no clean-cut control would be possible.

The first phase of the experiment consisted of all participants receiving a document informing them of a new regional, non-partisan office that had recently been approved, to which elections would soon take place. This office is fictitious, but none of the participants were made aware of this fact. After reading the information, participants were given a choice of four numbered cards, of which they should choose one. By choosing cards 1 or 3, the participant would receive the first treatment; by choosing cards 2 or 4, she would receive the second treatment. This method allowed for a randomized group placement.

The treatments consisted of three pamphlets, designed similarly to the standardized candidate page of the Hungarian National Election Office website. Each of the three pamphlets provided participants with information about a specific candidate. The difference between the treatments was the way the information was presented: for the first treatment, only retrospective information, such as past experience and potential past offices held, was presented; for the second treatment, only information about the candidate's platform and plans for the position were presented.

The most direct way of measuring the difference between retrospective and prospective perceptions would have been to make each participant read information on only one candidate. The problem with that is that it is extremely hard to create ads that are completely neutral from a partisan point of view, even though the fictitious office was non-partisan. In order to bypass this problem, three candidates were presented. Each one of the candidates held unique policy views, and although not extremely explicit, the information provided hinted at which party candidates may have belonged to, were this a partisan office. Still, no party name, logo or names of politicians related to the parties were provided. One of the candidates presented Fidesz-like mentality (*Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség* is a national conservative party); another showed traces of Jobbik-like policies (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* is a radical nationalist party); and the third candidate presented left-liberal tendencies, without any specific party affiliation similarity.

Through this three-candidate method, every participant read information about three different candidates who generally covered all parts of the political spectrum relevant to Hungarian politics. This was made so that even though partisanship was expected to play a role on candidate evaluation, randomization between groups and the averaging out of ratings of all three candidates would leave a general sample that would only differ in terms of how the retrospective or prospective treatments were received. In addition, the three pictures used for the candidates were swapped between them so that pictures would not play a part on individual's perceptions of candidates.

After reading the information provided, participants were asked three questions about each candidate. The first question asked them about how much they sympathize with the candidate; the second asked how likely they were to vote for the candidate; and the last one

27

asked them if they thought the ad provided all of the information a political ad should provide. All questions were to be answered on an 11-point scale, from low to high. This long scale was used to provide individuals with more choice (improving any potential variance), as well as making it a clean scale with a very clear midpoint.

Before the questions were asked, individuals were also required to fulfil an attention check. This attention check required participants to write the last two words of the second paragraph of the text. This made sure that participants were attentive to the questions, as well as making them go back to the text if necessary. Since each ad was followed directly by a set of questions, individuals had to respond the attention check for every single candidate.

Table 1: Explanatory Variables in the Pilot Experiment

Question 1: How likely are you to vote for the candidate?

Question 2: How much do you sympathize with the candidate?

Question 3: Do you think the ad provided all the information necessary?

Analysis

Of the total of 42 participants who took place in the experiment, half were assigned to each one of the treatments. The method used to measure the hypothesized difference between the means of the two groups was the Welch's Two Sample t-test. In order to check for the normality of the data, the Shapiro-Wilk normality test was conducted. It returned nonsignificant results in every single distribution, which means that the null-hypothesis that the data is normally distributed is rejected. Because of the strictness of this test, I looked at the histograms of the distributions, finding normal-like distributions across all variables, which I took as enough of an indication to run the tests. The data was analyzed in two different ways. The first was to compare the change in scores between candidates. That means that I would look at retrospective candidate A, and compare to retrospective candidate B. There are two issues that arise from that: the first is that the sample size in this case is very small (21 retrospective candidates, and 21 prospective candidates), which might affect the results and make it difficult to achieve significance; the second issue is that there is potential that respondents were influenced by partisanship while answering the questionnaire, and looking at individual candidates might not reflect the overall feeling toward retrospective and prospective information. The second way in which data was analysed was to combine the results from all three candidates from each treatment, and run the t-test between them. This fixes both the issues of a small sample size (now 63 per treatment), and eliminates the problem of partisanship.

The first set of analyses provided no surprises. No significant results were found on the nine different t-tests run (one for each candidate, for each one of the three questions). Yet, although not significant, the results do provide some insight on the matter. First, the mean scores for every candidate in every single question was higher for retrospective than for prospective information by usually around 0.5 point, but going as high as 1 full point (on the 11-point scale). Second, on the question of whether respondents sympathized with the candidate, t-tests run on two candidates returned responses that were relatively close to being significant on a 5% level (p-values of +0.094 and +0.080).

The second set of analyses is more interesting, for higher expectations were set on the overall capacity of the data to provide significant results. Still, out of the three t-tests, only one proved significant on a 95% level. Again, the variable at hand was how individuals sympathized with the candidate. For the other two questions, the p-values were not extremely high (0.11 and 0.13), but definitely not enough for safe assumptions. Once again, in the case
of all three means, prospective approach provided lower scores. The results from the Welch's Two Sample t-tests are shown below:

| Table 2: Weich's t-test for Question I and Treatment variable | | |
|---|--|--|
| How likely are you to vote for the candidate? | | |
| t = -1.5133 | Degrees of Freedom = 120.48 p-value = 0.1328 | |
| Prospective Mean = 5.75 | Retrospective Mean = 6.412 | |

Table 2: Welch's t-test for Question 1 and Treatment Variable

 Table 3: Welch's t-test for Question 2 and Treatment Variable

| How much do you sympathize with the candidate? | | |
|--|--|--|
| t = -2.3908 | Degrees of Freedom = 119.92 p-value = 0.0183 | |
| Prospective Mean = 6.133 | Retrospective Mean = 6.935 | |

 Table 4: Welch's t-test for Question 3 and Treatment Variable

| Do you think the ad provided all the information necessary? | | |
|---|--|--|
| t = -1.588 | Degrees of Freedom = 119.67 p-value = 0.1149 | |
| Prospective Mean = 6.1 | Retrospective Mean = 6.682 | |

An alternate test to try to increase the robustness of the results is the Analysis of Covariance. This analysis still looks at the means of the response variable in terms of the levels of the treatment, but also controls for continuous variables added to the model. In this experiment, participants were asked to assess their level of political knowledge (on a 11-point scale). This question can be a very interesting control for question 3, which asks participants if the information provided was all that was necessary. In this case, it is reasonable to expect that individuals who claim to be politically knowledgeable will also be confident that they have enough information to go on based on the ad. In that case, a cleaner outcome of the influence of the treatment could come about. The analysis indeed indicates that the knowledge-self assessments covariate with the responses to the information questions, based on the p and F-values; in addition, although the statistical significance of the treatment variable increased, the change was negligible, and the confidence level is still low.

| | Degrees of Freedo | m Sum of Squares | f-value | p-value |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------|---------|
| Treatment Retro | 1 | 10.4 | 2.623 | 0.1080 |
| Self-Assessed Knowledge* | 1 | 21.9 | 5.518 | 0.0205 |
| Residuals | 120 | 477.1 | | |

Table 5: Analysis of Covariance for Question 3

Although these results from question 3 are interesting, questions 1 and 2 are the most important one for this experiment as they are the most suited to indicate that retrospective and prospective perspectives can be differentiated in campaign information aspects. A different way of testing for potential effects of the treatment variable on these groups is the Multivariate Analysis of Covariance, which allows for grouping of two or more response variables to be analyzed together. Similarly to the last test, the political knowledge assessment control is used. Interestingly enough, the treatment variable is statistically significant (with a high-enough f-value), which indicates that there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This result strengthens the first set of t-test analyses, as results follow the same direction and now include the variable on likelihood to vote.

| | Degrees of Freedom | Pillai Score | Approx. f value | p-value |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------|
| Treatment Retro | 1 | 0.050 | 3.124 | 0.0476 |
| Self-Assessed Knowledge | 1 | 0.036 | 2.239 | 0.1110 |
| Residuals | 119 | | | |

Table 6: Multivariate Analysis of Covariance for Questions 1 and 2

Discussion

The results from this experiment, even though most of which are statistically insignificant, are rather telling. The intention of the experiment was to measure if and how individuals responded differently to prospective and retrospective campaign information. It is safe to assume that there is a systematic difference between the two approaches, and that retrospective seems to have fared better with the respondents. There are different reasons why that might be so. The first is that the experiment somehow influenced or provided more information in its retrospective setup than in its prospective one. I do not believe that is the case, for the information provided was rather brief, and based on their nature, each perspective has to be different from each other. The second reason is that there was some kind of bias or outliers in the sample. I also do not believe that to be the case, for the standard deviations between retrospective and prospective responses for each question are very similar. The third reason, which I believe to be the case at hand, is that there is a systemic preference for retrospective information. The one significant result in the analysis provided by the t-test tells us that in terms of sympathizing with a candidate, retrospective information is more powerful than prospective, and the MANCOVA results strengthen this perspective. In addition to these statistically-significant results, the average grades given to candidates on all three questions were higher on the retrospective than on the prospective treatments. This indicates that there seems to be some kind of preference toward retrospective information on a general basis.

Clearly, this was a limited experiment in terms of reach and funding, and there are limitations that should not be left out. First, the sample used was small, and probably not representative of the population of the town in which the experiment was conducted. Second, since participants were presented with three different candidates, there is a possibility that one of the treatments gave away some kind of information that made it unbalanced against the other candidates. Third, there is a possibility that more or less information was given in each of the treatments (prospective and retrospective), unbalancing the results. Lastly, the scale used, for potentially being too long, might have made it harder for subjects to distinguish between grades.

Although the results presented here are not necessarily revealing in terms of its logic, they do apply empirics to the yet underdeveloped experimental retrospective voting field. These results give some evidence to the fact that voters chose their candidates based more on retrospective notions such as background and experience, than on program/platform per se.

The importance of this first experiment for the entire paper is that it shows that prospective and retrospective campaigning do influence individuals in different ways. Without this acknowledgement, the theoretical basis of the paper would have to be deeply revised, if not simply parted with. These results make next stage cleaner, as it will be possible to focus on the donation part of the theory, since it is already known that the prospective and retrospective approaches have different impacts on voters (and are expected to show the same for donors).

The Donating Behaviour Experiment

The second and main experiment for this project uses the information acquired through the first experiment, and employs it in order to look at donating behaviour. The previous section explained how there seems to be a difference in response between prospective and retrospective advertising. This difference was tested in terms of voting, as voting behaviour literature has widely accepted the existence of both prospective and retrospective approaches. The second experiment uses a similar theoretical basis as the first one, but this time applies it to campaign contributions. It compares the effectiveness of prospective and retrospective campaign information on donating behaviour. The importance of this experiment is to better understand how individuals perceive and react to campaign information, and if/how this information affects their willingness to contribute.

Design

The experiment was run in late April and early May 2016, and it was carried out using Amazon Mechanical Turk, an online platform that allows researchers to post Human Intelligence Tasks to a task board. These tasks are then picked up by individuals, mostly located in the United States, who receive a certain amount of money in exchange for the completion of the task. The usage of Mechanical Turk has both advantages and drawbacks, as described in Berinsky et al. (2012). The clearest advantages are (a) the relative representativeness of the sample, which is more akin to the general population than student samples, and (b) the relative affordability of the platform when compared to the prices of running experiments with other non-student samples (in the case of this study, one response to the full questionnaire was rewarded with US\$0.60, while participants of the previous experiment in Makó received the equivalent of over \$3.50 for their participation). On the other hand, the platform does have its downsides: (a) although more representative than a

student sample, the workers on the platform tend to be younger, more left-leaning and better educated than the general population, and (b) since they are the ones who choose what tasks to take on based on the name and topic, external validity becomes a concern that researchers should take in consideration. Despite these negatives, Mechanical Turk was the most feasible way to run this experiment due to financial and time constraints. Nonetheless, the limitations brought about because of this platform are considered in the analysis section.

A total of 116 individuals took part on the experiment. These individuals were all eligible-to-vote American citizens, living in New York State, who were either Democrats or Democrat-leaning Independents. Limiting the sample only to American citizens eligible to vote is important because these are the citizens who are likely to be (a) the most knowledgeable about candidates (since they are the ones voting for these candidates), and to (b) be the ones who contribute to campaigns (as most of the times it would not make sense for a foreign individual to donate money to a campaign in which she cannot vote). The reasoning behind the choice of New York State is simple and twofold: (a) the treatment deals with a current New York Senator, and expects individuals to have some previous knowledge of the candidate, and (b) New York State is the largest state, in terms of population, in which a Senate or Gubernatorial race is taking place in 2016 (the necessity of such State for the experiment will be explained below). Finally, since the Senator used on the experiment is a Democrat-leaning Independents (the negative partisan influence will also be further explained below).

Since this study looks at retrospective and prospective donating, it is extremely important for experiment participants to have some (even if limited) knowledge of the past achievements and experience of a candidate. The most direct way of reaching this knowledge is to use current office-holders (who are running for re-election) for the experiment, since it is expected that residents of the location will at least have heard of the candidate. The use of a real candidate also helps with any external validity concerns in terms of the treatment. In addition, in order to reach a large enough sample, the best way is to look at state-wide elections, instead of district-wide ones. There are only three of such elections in the United States: presidential, gubernatorial and senate elections. The Presidential election would not be a good example for an experiment because of the large amount of media influence around it, added to individuals' strong perspectives on candidates. This way, Gubernatorial and Senate races are the best choice. Out of States in which Gubernatorial and/or Senate races are happening this year, New York State is the largest one. Because of this, New York State's incumbent Senator Chuck Schumer was the choice policymaker for this experiment.

After choosing a politician to use in the experiment, it is vital to watch for potential sources of external influence on individual's perceptions of the candidates. Since the experiment will ask individuals if they would donate or volunteer for the campaign of a candidate, it is important to control for partisanship. It is clear that a Republican would not donate to a Democrat, regardless of the nature (prospective or retrospective) of the campaign information received. Because of this, only self-identified Democrats and Democrat-leaning Independents were allowed to take the survey, excluding Independents, Republican-leaning Independents and Republicans. Although this might look as tampering with the data, and not using a representative sample of the population, it is important to remember that the goal of this project is to look at prospective and retrospective campaign ads and their influence on donations, and not on candidate or party choice.

A secondary source of external influence that is very visible is individual's own perceptions and knowledge of the candidate that is brought from outside of the experiment. This could be seen as a potential source of external infection on the design, but in this experiment is it actually seen as a source of potential. Participants taking part in this experiment are expected to have some previous knowledge of the candidate. Still, this knowledge is supposed to be equally distributed among all participants due to randomization. This way, it is reasonable to expect a roughly similar number of knowledgeable individuals in each of the two treatment groups. Because of this equal divide, if there is any difference in the results of the experiment, where individual's willingness to donate and volunteer are measured, this difference will have come directly from the treatments.

The first phase of the experiment is three questions that ask participants to identify their partisanship, citizenship and ability to vote. Those who do not qualify are barred from continuing and excluded from the sample. The second phase starts with a nine-question questionnaire on time perspective. As mentioned before, the Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) looks at individual's temporal perspectives through 56 questions (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999). Kostal et al (2015) adapted the questionnaire and downsized it to 18 questions, three for each temporal category (future-negative, future-positive, past-negative, past-positive, present-fatalistic and present-hedonistic). By asking individuals three questions covering each category, it is possible to identify the category to which individuals have more affinity. Placing participants in these categories would allow for a more specific analysis of how individuals respond to prospective and retrospective campaigning. The difference from Kostal et al's use of the scale to this experiment's is that in terms of the information provided, no negative campaigning occurs. Because of that, and also to economize on questioning, only two categories were used: past-positive and future-positive. The nine questions were automatically shuffled and presented in different randomized orders to each participants, so that no standardized priming could potentially take place.

The third phase of the experiment is the treating of participants. The Survey Gizmo platform on which the experiment was posted has a tool for randomization, which was used to divide participants into two groups of roughly similar size. First, both groups received a very short bio of Senator Chuck Schumer, which did not present any kind of policy-related information. Then, each group received six bullet-points with information on (1) immigration and job creation, (2) gun laws, (3) state-wide visits, (4) leadership within the party, (5) tax-deductions and (6)healthcare. The difference between the treatments is that on the retrospective one all bullet points referred to past actions of the Senator, while on the prospective treatment, only future actions and promises were taken into account. The bullet points were made in a way in which there would be maximum similarity between them, and in the case of some questions the only difference between the treatments is the verb tense used. All of the information provided was true. The list of points provided in the treatments can be found in the appendix.

The fourth and last phase of the experiment is the post-treatment questionnaire. This questionnaire was built with the intention of measuring both attitudinal and behavioural responses to the treatments. Attitudinal responses are the ones where individuals are asked if they would hypothetically do something; behavioural questions, on the other hand, indeed ask individuals to take action and do something. For the purposes of this study, behavioural responses would provide much more reliable data on individual's response to the treatments; still, because of the difficulty of making individuals commit through remote experiments, especially on a platform such as Amazon Mechanical Turk, where participants are actually working, attitudinal questions were also included as a safeguard.

The six first questions were the dependent variables of this experiment, while the latter 5 were controls. The first four questions were attitudinal, and asked if participants saw themselves donating to (questions 1 and 2) or volunteering with (questions 3 and 4) Chuck Schumer's campaign. Questions 5 and 6 were behavioural, and asked whether participants would like to be placed on a donors or volunteers list to be sent to Chuck Schumer's campaign office. The ordering of the questions (attitudinal first, behavioural second) was

designed so in case participants disliked the idea of being asked to donate and volunteer for a campaign, they would at least have responded some of the questions before that. A total of five control questions are posed at the end of the questionnaire, and simply ask whether participants donate to general campaigns or to Chuck Schumer's campaign in the past, if they had previously voted for Schumer, and if they saw themselves voting for Schumer in the 2016 elections.

Table 7: Explanatory Variables in the Donating Behaviour Experiment

Question 1: Based on the information above, can you see yourself donating to Schumer's campaign? (binary, attitudinal)

Question 2: Based on the information above, how much money do you see yourself contributing to Schumer's campaign? (categorical, attitudinal)

Question 3: Based on the information above and your knowledge of the candidate, would you like to be put on a mailing list for potential donors to Schumer's campaign? (binary, behavioural)

Question 4: Based on the information above, can you see yourself volunteering for Schumer's campaign? (binary, attitudinal)

Question 5: Based on the information above, how many hours do you see yourself volunteering to Schumer's campaign over the course of a month? (categorical, attitudinal)

Questions 6: Based on the information above and your knowledge of the candidate, would you like to be put on a mailing list for potential volunteers to Schumer's campaign? (binary, behavioural)

Analysis

A total of 206 individuals took part on this experiment. As mentioned above, individuals who were (a) not American, (b) ineligible to vote, or (c) Republican, Republicanleaning Independent or Independent were excluded from the sample. After the disqualification round, 116 participants completed the experiment. After the randomization process carried out by the survey platform, exactly 58 individuals were placed on each of the treatment groups.

Primary Analysis: Main Variables

The first set of analyses look at the main research questions posed by this paper: whether retrospective contributing exists, and how strong the influence of retrospective campaigning is on contributions. The six explanatory variables used in this first phase of testing correspond to the questions asked in the post-treatment questionnaire. Three questions are asked about each of money contributions and time contributions.

The first question analyzed asks participants if they see themselves donating to Chuck Schumer's campaign based on the information provided in the treatment. For the participants who received the prospective treatment, there was a 50/50 split (29 individuals in each group) on those who agreed and those who did not. On the retrospective group, 37 responses (63.7%) were positive, and only 21 (36.3%) negative. Since these are both binary variables, the Chi-squared test of independence was used in order to check whether the two categories are independent from each other. The results show that there is not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This could be due to the fact that the sample size is not large enough; yet, it is interesting to see how the retrospective treatment fared much better than the prospective one on this attitudinal question.

 Table 8: Chi-squared Test for Question 1

| Pearson's | Chi-squared test | |
|-----------|------------------|--|
| | | |

Chi-squared: 2.2497 Degrees of Freedom = 1 p-value = 0.1336

The continuation of the first question asks the participants how much they would donate to the campaign. The options provided range from "I would not donate" to "more than \$100", in \$10 increases. The natural choice for this case would have been the Welch's two-sample t-test, since the data could be seen as continuous with equal intervals between them. Still, some problems arose. The data is not normally distributed, based on both a Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test, as well as a rough estimate based on a histogram of the distribution. In line with that, the skewness and kurtosis of the sample, which could have informally allowed the running of the t-test in case the distribution was not normal, were also very high. Based on this, the option was to again use the Chi-squared test, leaving the data in its natural, categorical state. Unsurprisingly, the data returned similar results as the previous test, and the null hypothesis could again not be rejected.

 Table 9: Chi-squared Test for Question 2

| Pearson's Chi-squared test | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Chi-squared: 10.498 | Degrees of Freedom $= 8$ | p-value = 0.2318 |

The last question that deals with money donations is a behavioural one. It asks if participants would like to be put on a list of potential donors to be sent to Chuck Schumer's campaign office. Unsurprisingly, a very small number of individuals answered this question positively. Only 4 participants treated retrospectively and 5 treated prospectively agreed to be put on the list. It is visible to the naked eye that the results do not seem dependent on the treatment variable. Still, since the expected frequencies within each cell are above 5, the Chi-squared test was run. As expected, very weak results were found.

The second part of this analysis covers time contribution questions. These questions are copies of the questions on money donation, but ask respondents about time contributing (volunteering) instead. Because of the equal nature of the questions, the same tests ran in the previous three questions are again ran here. For this reason, no extended explanations of the methods used will be made.

The first question in this set is an exact pair to question #1, and asks individuals if they see themselves volunteering for Chuck Schumer's campaign. This question showed an overwhelming difference between the prospective and retrospective groups. Only 6 (10.3%) of the prospectively-treated respondents indicated that they would volunteer, while 18 (31%) from the retrospective group did the same. The results of the Chi-squared test indicate that there is enough evidence to suggest that the null hypothesis can be rejected. Individuals, in this case, seem to be affected adversely by prospective and retrospective treatments.

Table 10: Chi-squared Test for Question 4

| Pearson's Chi-squared test | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Chi-squared: 7.5652 | Degrees of Freedom $= 1$ | p-value = 0.0059 |

The fifth question asks individuals how much time they would be willing to volunteer in the space of a month. The scale goes from "I would not volunteer" to "More than 20 hours", and grows in 4-hour increases. The same method used in question #2 is applied, and the results suggest that there is not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

 Table 11: Chi-squared Test for Question 5

| Pearson's Chi-squared test | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--|
| Chi-squared: 6.8929 | Degrees of Freedom $= 5$ | p-value = 0.2287 | |

The last question analyzed against the treatment is the behavioural question on volunteering. Participants asked whether they would like to be placed on a list of potential volunteers for Schumer's campaign. In this case, differently than the rather even distribution seen in question #3, out of the 8 respondents who accepted being put on a volunteering list, 7 were treated retrospectively, and only 1 received the prospective treatment. Again, since the expected frequency in each cell is higher than 5, the Chi-squared test was run. As expected, the results provided a low p-value. The statistical significance in this case is remarkable for this is a behavioural question, which can be seen as much harder evidence than simple attitudinal questions. Since similar results were found in two different volunteer variables, this might indicate that, after all a difference in influence between prospective and retrospective information truly exists.

Table 12: Chi-squared Test for Question 6

| Pearson's Chi-squared test | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Chi-squared: 4.8333 | Degrees of Freedom $= 1$ | p-value = 0.0279 |

Secondary Analysis: Time Perspective

As much as analyzing how prospective and retrospective campaign information affects contributing behaviour, each individual is different in values, beliefs and ultimately overall behaviour. Because of this, generalization made through group-level analysis might miss important individual-level information that should have been taken into account. The way individuals think about time is essential for this research, as the whole idea of retrospective and prospective campaigning falls into the category of time perception.

The Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory, as mentioned before, consists of 56 questions which divide individual time perspective in five categories (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999). Such a large inventory of questions would be unpractical in terms of this research. Instead, the method used by Kostal et al (2015), consisting of 18 questions, was adopted. The 18-question survey targets 6 different time perspectives: past, present and future negative,

past and future positive, and present hedonistic. Due to the nature of this experiment, where only positive information is provided in either prospective or retrospective treatments, the negative questions could be cut out. In addition, the interest here is to find whether participants are more prospective or retrospective in their time perspective, so the questions dealing with the present were also cut. This way, the total number of questions used by this experiment was 6, three each for past positive and future positive perspectives. Every question uses the same 5-point scale (Very Uncharacteristic, Uncharacteristic, Neutral, Characteristic and Very Characteristic).

In order to make the data directly applicable on a statistical analysis context, and emulating the method used in the two original papers, exploratory factor analysis was the choice made. The first step before using the analysis was to check for the reliability of the data as a scale with the Cronbach's Alpha³. The six variables put together got a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.704. Considering the rule-of-thumb that indicates that values above 0.7 are acceptable, the scale seemed fine and ready for analysis.

The Explanatory Factor Analysis was conducted on the six questions in order to understand if there was a clear standardized distinction influencing each time perspective set. Standard varimax rotation was used, since the oblimin option would allow for correlation between factors, which for the purposes of this research would not be preferred. The analysis indicated that two factors were able to explain 45% of the variance on all six questions. These two factors cleanly represent retrospective (past positive) and prospective (future positive) time perspectives. The addition of a third factor would contribute to an 8% addition in variance explanation, and help explain only one question ("I complete projects on time by making steady progress"). Upon revision, this question could be seen as two questions in one, asking about both an individual's reliability and perspective of future. Because of this complicating factor, as well as for the sake of model simplicity, I decided that the two-factor solution is acceptable in representing the six questions.

³ Before the data was run, one case was excluded because the time spent in that section was too low to have reasonably read the questions, and all 9 of the replies were the same (Very Uncharacteristic).

| Ouestion | Factor I | Factor II | |
|--|-----------------|---------------|--|
| | (Retrospective) | (Prospective) | |
| Past Positive 1: Familiar childhood sights, sounds, smells | 0.631 | | |
| often bring back a flood of wonderful memories | | | |
| Past Positive 2: It gives me pleasure to think about my past | 0.773 | | |
| Past Positive 3: Happy memories of good times spring | 0.590 | | |
| readily to mind | | | |
| Future Positive 1: When I want to achieve something, I set | | 0.753 | |
| goals and consider specific means for reaching those goals | | | |
| Future Positive 2: I complete projects on time by making | | 0.531 | |
| steady progress | | | |
| Future Positive 3: I am able to resist temptations when I | | 0.494 | |
| know that there is work to be done | | | |
| Cumulative Variance | 0.234 | 0.451 | |

Table 13: Exploratory Factor Analysis

The scores for each factor were then extracted using the Regression Scores method, which was more suitable than the Bartlett's Score method because of the separate way in which the factor scores were allocated between the groups. The two new variables were centered, making a 1-unit change in the variables the equivalent of one standard deviation change. The distributions of the variables were also checked. The kurtosis and skewness were well within the acceptable ranges (-0.51 skewness and 0.47 kurtosis for the prospective variable, and -0.43 skewness and -0.05 kurtosis for the retrospective variable), and the variables were acceptably normally distributed.

Taking in consideration the dichotomous nature of four of the response variables in this paper, the logistic regression method was chosen to test the effect of treatments and time perspectives on contributing behaviour⁴. Following the same order as used in the main analysis, the first response variable asks participants if they saw themselves donating to Chuck Schumer's campaign. Before running the regression, the correlation between both prospective and retrospective time perspective variables was checked, and returned a result of +0.08. This indicates that multicollinearity should not be a concern when running regressions with these two variables. The results obtained are in line with the ones obtained in the previous analysis, but the statistical significance is stronger (yet not statistically significant with 90% certainty). In addition, it is arguable that the predictions made by this model are not valid based on loose model fit. Deviance Chi-squared test was run on the model, indicating that the fit was not very high. This condition affected all models with donation response variables.

⁴ The first method tried was Log-linear Modelling, for it would allow for strict model fit in addition to simple coefficient analysis. In order for the method to be applied, only categorical data would have to be used. For that, the time perspective scales would have to be made into categories. In order for that to happen, the past scale was inverted, and then the score of both scales added. This way, all positive results indicated individuals with more future perspective than past perspective, and vice versa.

The new time perspective binary variable was then put on frequencies tables with the treatment variable, and the four response variables (one at a time). In none of the resulting tables did at least 80% of the cells contain 5 units (and in the majority of cases some cells were empty).

In an effort to find a table that worked, the control variable for having voted for Chuck Schumer in the past (binary) was included, in order to try to have at least 80% of the cells contain 5 or more unites. Again, the effort was not successful.

Finally, a neutral perspective was added to the time perspective variable, covering individuals who had their scores very close to 0. These near-zero scores indicated that there was not much difference between the future and past perspective of the individuals. Again the eight tables mentioned above were run, and no possibly usable frequency table was found.

Because of the failing to find a frequency table that worked, due to the small sample sized involved in this analysis, the logistic regression method was employed. The binary time perspective variable created above could have been used also for the logistic regression; instead, I decided to maintain the current two variables under the interest of preserving the variation and nuisances that this continuous variable provides.

| Coefficient value Treatment Retro 0.600 1.822 0.382 0.117 Retrospective Perspective 0.079 1.082 0.196 0.685 Prospective Perspective 0.202 1.223 0.206 0.327 | | Beta | Exp Coefficient | Standard Error | P- |
|---|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|-------|
| Treatment Retro0.6001.8220.3820.117Retrospective Perspective0.0791.0820.1960.685Prospective Perspective0.2021.2230.2060.327 | | Coefficient | | | value |
| Retrospective Perspective 0.079 1.082 0.196 0.685 Prospective Perspective 0.202 1.223 0.206 0.327 | Treatment Retro | 0.600 | 1.822 | 0.382 | 0.117 |
| Prospective Perspective 0.202 1.223 0.206 0.327 | Retrospective Perspective | 0.079 | 1.082 | 0.196 | 0.685 |
| | Prospective Perspective | 0.202 | 1.223 | 0.206 | 0.327 |
| (Intercept) -0.041 0.959 0.266 0.878 | (Intercept) | -0.041 | 0.959 | 0.266 | 0.878 |

 Table 14: Logistic Regression Question 1

Residual Deviance: 153.72 on 111 degrees of Freedom

Seeing that the results of this regression were in line with the previous analysis, the potential of using a control variable, providing a robustness check, became apparent. One of the control questions asked at the end of the questionnaire was whether the participant had voted for Chuck Schumer in the past, and seeing that it could potentially have an impact on the results, it was added to the logit model. As expected, the use of the control variable strengthened the treatment coefficient and diminished its p-value. Although not statistically significant on a 5% level, the results here suggest that individuals treated retrospectively are more than twice as likely (0.708 exponential) to be willing to donate.

| | Beta Coefficient | Exp Coefficien | t Standard Error | P-value |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|---------|
| Treatment Retro | 0.708 | 2.029 | 0.414 | 0.087 |
| Past Vote | 0.631 | 1.879 | 0.415 | 0.129 |
| Retrospective Perspective | 0.077 | 1.080 | 0.199 | 0.697 |
| Prospective Perspective | 0.242 | 1.273 | 0.215 | 0.260 |
| (Intercept) | -0.415 | 0.660 | 0.373 | 0.265 |

 Table 15: Logistic Regression Question 1 controlling for past vote

Residual Deviance: 146.29 on 106 degrees of Freedom

Questions #2 and #5, which deal with how much money/how many hours participants would like to donate/volunteer are basically continuations of the first dichotomous questions. Because of this limited role, I have decided to not include them in this secondary analysis. This way, the next question looked at is the behavioural donation question. Looking back at the first analysis, the expectations for this variable were very low. Upon running the model with and without the vote control, once again no significant results were found.

The main results found in the first set of analyses came from the attitudinal volunteering question. The addition of time perspective and vote controls with this logit model should increase its power. As expected, the treatment variable showed a very low p-value, and the staggering suggestion that individuals treated retrospectively are 6.9 times (1.932 exponential) more likely to be willing to volunteer. The model fit for this and the following model, based on the chi-squared test of deviance, were very high. This suggests that it is reasonable to accept the results of the model.

| | Beta | Exp Coefficient | Standard Error | P-value |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------|
| | Coefficient | | | |
| Treatment Retro** | 1.932 | 6.903 | 0.626 | 0.00202 |
| Past Vote | 0.722 | 2.058 | 0.543 | 0.18435 |
| Retrospective Perspective | 0.259 | 1.295 | 0.278 | 0.35110 |
| Prospective Perspective | 0.083 | 1.086 | 0.309 | 0.78806 |
| (Intercept) | -3.061 | 0.046 | 0.652 | 2.72^{-6} |

 Table 16: Logistic Regression Question 4 controlling for past vote

Residual Deviance: 94.173 on 106 degrees of Freedom

The final response variable to be looked at is the behavioural volunteering question. Although not statistically significant on a 95% level in the first analysis, if following the tendencies of the time perspective and vote control regression, its statistical significance should increase. Not only were the expectations fulfilled, but the results proved to be some of the most interesting in this paper. The treatment variable became statistically significant, and the results suggested that retrospective treatment makes individuals 9.28 times (2.228 exponential) to volunteer. Yet, the other statistically significant result in this model was the Prospective Time Perspective variable. It suggested that being one standard deviation above the mean in terms of prospective outlook makes you 3.86 times (1.351 exponential) more likely to volunteer. Of course, the retrospective treatment easily erases that, but this fairly contradicting result is nonetheless very interesting. It is also important to note that the same regression ran without the vote control still shows both variables as statistically significant, with the only difference being the coefficient for the treatment being even higher (with the prospective time perspective coefficient staying roughly the same).

| | Beta | Exp Coefficient | Standard Error | P-value |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|---------|
| | Coefficient | | | |
| Treatment Retro* | 2.228 | 9.281 | 1.132 | 0.04914 |
| Past Vote | -0.243 | 0.784 | 0.852 | 0.77532 |
| Retrospective Perspective | 0.422 | 1.525 | 0.483 | 0.38270 |
| Prospective Perspective* | 1.351 | 3.861 | 0.602 | 0.02500 |
| (Intercept) | -4.656 | 0.009 | 1.236 | 0.00016 |

 Table 17: Logistic Regression Question 6 controlling for past vote

Residual Deviance: 94.173 on 106 degrees of Freedom

Although the results of most of these logistic regressions were not statistically significant (meaning that they would most likely not happen by chance), the few significant ones are still up to debate in terms of the fit of the model to the data.

Discussion

The results encountered by these two sets of analysis are very revealing. The main finding is certainly that the retrospective treatment strongly influenced participants to donate their time. This outcome covers many of the questions posed by this research project. First, that retrospective contributing does exist, as individuals seem to look back in time at the performance of politicians before deciding whether to contribute. Second, that retrospective campaigning has a different effect than prospective campaigning, and that this information differentiation may lead to different outcomes from the individuals on the receiving end. Third, the results of this analysis suggest that retrospective campaigning might be even stronger than prospective campaigning, at least in terms of time contributions.

The first surprise from these results comes from the relatively consistent difference between responses from retrospective and prospective treatments. In general, retrospective campaigning fared better, and even when the statistical significance of the results was not high enough, retrospective scores were mostly ahead. A possible reason behind this is the difference between the treatments; yet, I hardly doubt that is the case, for both treatments deal with the exact same issues, and in most cases the only difference between them is the verb tense in which the sentences are phrased. Although very early in terms of the study of prospective and retrospective campaigning, it is possible that the latter fares better in general (which was also suggested in the first experiment, when dealing with voting intentions and sympathizing with candidates). The second surprise comes from the relatively wide difference between money and time donations. At first, my expectations were that the performance between these two would be very similar across treatments. This was clearly not the case, where differences in treatment seemed to provoke largely different responses in terms of volunteering, while in terms of money donations, very similar results were found. The analysis suggests that retrospective campaigning influences individuals to volunteer more than prospective campaigning does; yet, donating behaviour stays the same. Apart from sample bias, I cannot think of a clear reason behind this difference, and further studying of the question might be necessary.

The null results found in the money donating part of the experiment (even though some of them were nearly statistically significant) are not seen as negative results. These findings might at least indicate that retrospective and prospective campaigning bear the same weight in terms of convincing individuals to donate. These results not only fail to reject the concept of retrospective contributing, which is a positive point for this research, but also indicate that it is possible that looking back in time might even be stronger than looking forward, since the significance values of some questions nearly reached the 95% threshold.

The inclusion of time perspective into this research project was an attempt at also focusing on the individual-level characteristics of participants, in addition to group-level treatments. I believe that this attempt was successful, as the results in which the temporal perspectives were included were generally strengthened. Unfortunately, not many statistically significant results came from it. Still, the one that proved significant indicated that future-looking individuals were more likely to volunteer than past-looking ones. It is clear that the measurement of the different time perspectives were relatively superficial, and the number of questions analysed small; yet, I see this intrusion into temporal psychology as worthy attempt which provided positive outcomes by strengthening the main findings of the project through individual-level characteristics.

The past vote control is, in my opinion, one of the most important variables that could have been used in an experiment of this kind. The difference between voters who in the past chose Schumer and those who did not is wide in many categories, such as knowledge, past expectations and previous successes/disappointments. What controlling for past vote ultimately does is to generate a more levelled field when analysing the results from the different treatments. Even though the results from the past vote variable were not statistically significant, results were strengthened, and the findings from the previous analysis were maintained after its inclusion.

There are many clear limitations in this research that do not allow for sweeping generalizations. First, the Amazon Mechanical Turk sample is not a perfect picture of the general population of a control. Usually better-educated and more liberal than the rest of the population, mTurkers are probably also poorer than the general population, considering that they are undertaking tasks for pay that is sometimes even less than minimum wage. This brings about another problem, which is the fact that even if more individuals would like to donate for a campaign such as the one presented in the treatments, their financial situation would not allow them to. Second, the sample comes only from the state of New York. In order for generalizations to be made, a larger part of the country should be studied. Third, the sample size itself is not very high. The limitations of partisanship for this experiment proved to make the sample smaller than it would have been otherwise. Fourth, this project focuses only on Democrats; it is still left to answer whether Republicans and Independents are also influenced the same way by prospective and retrospective campaigning. Fifth, asking individuals whether they would donate/volunteer, or even asking them to be placed in

donating/volunteering lists is one thing; seeing these individuals actually donating money or volunteering time is another. This experiment tried to avoid the attitudinal problem that usually affects political science experimental research by asking participants to be placed on a list of potential donors and volunteers. Yet, even those who did give their email addresses might not, in the end, donate or volunteer. This is a problem with no easy solution, but the enforcing of action might be fatally detrimental to research. Because of the lack of a better path, this research had to stay within the not-so-conclusive evidence realm. Sixth (and last in this list, but certainly not last in the major scheme of things), the models ran on questions 1 and 3, which cover money contributions, did not present a reliable model fit. Because of this, the results that come from it, although mostly already statistically significant, are less reliable.

Conclusion

In this thesis I explored the field of political contributions by looking at it through different lenses than what has been used to this point. More precisely, I investigated whether retrospective contributions truly occur, and whether retrospective and prospective campaigning have different effects on the contributing behaviour of individuals. The results found here suggest that, in addition to the current literature, retrospective donating should be part of the research projects in this field. This concept, which indicates that individuals look back in time before making their time and money contributions, is in direct contrast with the studies in this area which take a prospective approach to contributing for granted. The theoretical basis for this new approach draws on existing literature from the field of voting behaviour, where retrospective voting is a widely-acknowledged and well-studied area.

Aside from suggesting that retrospective donating is indeed an occurrence, the results presented here also indicate that not only retrospective contributing exists, but than in some (if not most instances), its effect are even larger than that of prospective contributing. These conclusions are drawn from experimental design, and show how in the case of time contributions, retrospective campaigning (which gives individuals information about the past, thus propelling them to behave retrospectively) is more effective than prospective. In the case of money contributions, null results were the norm. Still, even null results can support this new approach, since it does not show statistical differences between prospective and retrospective approaches (failing then to reject the retrospective approach).

Of course, this is just a very limited first step into this potential new subfield. This research has great limitations in terms of reach, sampling and design, and further research is definitely necessary in order to clearly picture retrospective donating as a phenomenon. Potential new research includes wider, more representative samples; the study of time and

money contributions in other countries; deeper delving into the psychological reasoning behind prospective and retrospective contributing, like it is done in voting behaviour; further connection between individual time perspectives and contributions; the study of individual economics characteristics in contrast with retrospective donating patterns; etc.

United States politics are, now more than ever, swayed by money. There is no perspective for this to change, and even if it does, the cultural aspects of political contributing will still be present for generations to come. The most exciting part of the research carried out in this thesis is its potential applicability within the context of American politics, as better understanding of the reasoning behind individual contributions can potentially have an impact on the outcomes of fundraising. The efforts carried here hope to present at least some indication that within this field there might be more to explore, discover, mold and ultimately use out there, in the real world.

Appendices

Appendix A: Treatments Pilot Experiment (in Hungarian)

Candidate 1 – Prospective

Makón születtem és jelenleg is a városban élek. Elsődleges feladatnak a középosztály és az agrár-gazdálkodói réteg életének könnyítését, boldogulásának elősegítését tartom. Célom, hogy számviteli képzettségem segítségével és szükséges pályázatírói háttérrel szakmai oldalról tudjam megközelíteni az EU-s támogatások elosztását és felhasználását.

Terveim között szerepel, hogy a soron következő Európai Uniós ciklusban számos nagy fejlesztést hozzak tető alá; látva lehetőségeinket, hiszem, hogy régiónkban templomok, kápolnák, teményfeldolgozó üzemek újulhatnak meg, sőt, két új híddal is tudjuk javítani tágabb régiónk infrastruktúráját. Négy év múlva akkor fogok tudni büszkén visszatekinteni régiós választott tisztségemre, ha azt olyan beruházások fogják fémjelezni, amelyek a vidékünkön élő helyi emberek valós igényein alapulnak, és hozzájárulnak nemzeti hagyományaink és a magyar gazdaság megerősítéséhez.

Nyelvismeretemből kifolyólag (német, orosz) sikeresen tudnék fogadni és tárgyalni nemzetközi delegációkkal, befektetőkkel annak érdekében, hogy minél több agrártámogatás és a családjaink életét megkönnyítő forrás érkezhessen Magyarországra. Pártomban viselt tisztségemre építve célom hogy minél több fórumot, rendezvényt tartsak, ahol megismerhetem e három megye keményen dolgozó embereinek, gazdálkodóinak, családjainak véleményét, becsatornázhatom a választott pozíció elnyerése után döntéseimbe, továbbá tájékoztathatom a fejlesztési döntésekről a térség vállalkozóit.

Candidate 1 - Retrospective

Középosztálybeli családból származom, agrármérnök és gazdálkodó felmenőkkel. Makón születtem és jelenleg is a városban élek. A gimnáziumi majd számviteli főiskolai tanulmányaim elvégzése után egy pályázatíró cégnél kaptam állást, majd az EU-s csatlakozást követően több továbbképzésen vettem részt, hogy az ott elsajátított tudással a lehető legnagyobb mértékben tudjam szolgálni hazámat és segíteni az állampolgárok életét. A régió adminisztratív igazgatásában előbb pályázati referensként, majd csoportvezetőként dolgoztam; jelenlegi pozícióm osztályvezető. Számos nagy EU-s fejlesztés tető alá hozásában működtem közre: templomok, kapolnák, termény-feldolgozó üzemek, sőt, még két híd is épült tágabb régiónkban, aminek megvalósulásában oroszlánrészem volt; különös büszkeséggel tölt el a tudat, hogy ezek kivétel nélkül olyan beruházások voltak, amelyek a vidékünkön élő helyi emberek valós igényein alapultak, és hozzájárultak nemzeti hagyományaink és a magyar gazdaság megerősítéséhez.

Nyelvismeretemből kifolyólag (német, orosz) több ízben fogadtam nemzetközi delegációkat és tárgyaltam is velük, hogy minél több agrártámogatás és a családjaink életét megkönnyítő forrás érkezhessen Magyarországra. Pártom helyi alapszervezetében elnökségi tag vagyok; fórumainkon, rendezvényeinken lehetőségem nyílt arra, hogy megismerjem e három megye keményen dolgozó embereinek, gazdálkodóinak és vállakozóinak, valamint családjainak véleményét és bízok abban, hogy ezt a választott pozíció elnyerése után is kamatoztathatom.

Candidate 2 – Prospective

A járműipari és gépészmérnöki végzettségemre, valamint a fejlesztő–ügynökségnél megszerzett tapasztalatomra alapozva elsősorban a közútfejlesztés területén, az autópályaépítések továbbvitelében tudnék régiónk hasznára lenni. Célom, hogy a pályázati koordináció mellett a nyomvonal-egyeztetéseken is személyesen jelen legyek, így lehetőségem nyílhatna, hogy számos helyi lakossal találkozzak és megismerjem véleményüket. Szülővárosom, Makó lakójaként láthattam mit jelent a térségnek egy ehhez fogható beruházás.

Célom, hogy határrégióként kezdeményezői legyünk olyan mikropályázatok kiírásának, amelyek elszakított nemzettestvéreinket hozzák közelebb az anyaország lakosaihoz: az uniós forrásokból kulturális fesztiválok létrejöttét, testvértelepülési megállapodások megkötését és magyar nyelvű könyvgyűjtemények létesítését kell támogatnunk a kisebbségi magyarság körében.

Pártom programjával összhangban lelkiismerete kívánok lenni a régió pályázati pénzeinek eloszlásának: könyörtelenül fel kell lépnünk minden korrupciógyanús kifizetés vagy akár csak visszaélésre lehetőséget adó szituáció esetén. A régió legtöbb településén továbbá nem elégséges a közbiztonság szintje sem: meggyőződésem, hogy ezzel összefüggő, rendészeti célokra, térfigyelő-kamerákra és bűnmegelőzési programokra kell fordítanunk az EU-s források jelentős részét. Ki kell állnunk továbbá a kis- és középvállalkozások mellett,

hogy minél több család és magyar vállalkozó kerülhessen előnybe a szolgáltató és a kereskedelmi multikkal szemben.

Candidate 2 - Retrospective

Makói munkáscsaládban nőttem fel, édesapám vasutas, édesanyám textilipari dolgozó volt; jómagam jelenleg is Makón élek. Autószereléssel kezdtem foglalkozni, innen kerültem a közútkezelőhöz; esti gimnáziumban érettségiztem, majd járműipari- és gépészmérnöki szakokon végeztem főiskolát. A régiót fejlesztő ügynökségnél is kapcsolódó területen kezdtem el dolgozni. A 2000-es évek végén épült régiós autópályák (M5, M43) előkészítő páláyzatait koordináltam, végigkövettem megvalósulásukat; a nyomvonal egyeztetése és területkiváltások során lehetőségem nyílt számos helyi lakossal találkozni, véleményüket megismerni.

Régóta vezetője vagyok egy határon túli magyarsággal kapcsolatot építő, nemzeti hagyományainkat őrző civil szervetnek, így nem meglepő, hogy több ízben is olyan mikropályázatok kezdeményezője voltam kiírásának, amelyek elszakított nemzettestvéreinket hozták közelebb az anyaország lakosaihoz: kulturális fesztiválok testvértelepülési megállapodások megkötéséhez létrejöttéhez, és magyar nyelvű könyvgyűjtemények létesítéséhez egyaránt hozzájárulhattam.

Pártom megyei szervezetében elnökségi pozíciót töltök be; párttársaimmal így számos közbiztonságot erősítő és a korrupciót felszámoló kezdeményezésnek részese voltam és több ízben szerveztünk nagy sikerű, teltházas fórumokat. Büszke vagyok arra, hogy a kis- és középvállalkozásoknak juttatott támogatásokkal legalább néhány család és magyar vállalkozó előnybe kerülhetett régiónkban a szolgáltató és a kereskedelmi multikkal szemben; az értük való következetes küzdelmet megválasztásom esetén is folytatni kívánom.

Candidate 3 – Prospective

Közgazdasági és külkereskedelmi tanulmányaimra építve célom, hogy minél szakértőibb, a jövő generációjának fejlődését és a települések valós igényeit szem előtt tartó fejlesztéspolitikát valósítsunk meg. Gyermekeink és unokáink sorsa azon fog múlni, hogy mennyire fognak tudni otthonosan mozogni az egyre inkább nemzetállamok felettivé váló Európában és érvényesíteni akaratukat e soknyelvű közösségben. Ennek elősegítése

érdekében csatlakoztam a regionális fejlesztési forrásokat koordináló szervezethez, és költöztem vissza a fővárosból Makóra, ahol felnőttem és ahonnan elszármaztam.

Nem célozhatunk meg kevesebbet, mint, hogy megtérülő beruházásokat hajthassunk végre: hogy az EU-s források olyan projekteket szolgáljanak, amiből vállalkozások épülnek, gyárak fejlődnek, településeinkre találjon a külföldi tőke és munkaadó. Számos jelentős idegenforgalmi fejlesztés áll még előttünk, amelyeket meg kell valósítanunk; a jövő a szolgáltató szektorban és a turizmusban van. De nem feledkezhetünk el a kiszolgáltatottakról és a leginkább rászorulókról: esélyteremtő, felzárkózató és integráló programokat kell készítenünk, hogy az elesettek és a kisebbségekhez tartozók is megtalálhassák boldogulásuk útját Magyarországon.

Hiszem, hogy az Európai Unió a szabad utazás és munkavállalás mellett hazánk nyugathoz való felzárkózásának esélyét adhatja meg, továbbá, hogy a mi felelősségünk, hogy ezeket a forrásokat jól használjuk fel. Pártom vezető gazdaságpolitikusaként is ezért fogok dolgozni: hogy az általunk lehívott pénzek egy szabadabb társadalom építését és a jövőbe – az oktatásba és az egészségügybe – való befektetést jelentsék.

Candidate 3 - Retrospective

Pedagóguscsaládban születtem, édesapám gimnáziumi tanár, édesanyám tanítónő volt. A gimnázium történelem–matematika szakjáról a budapesti Közgázon találtam magamat, ahol külkereskedelem specializáción, közgazdászként diplomáztam. Voltam gazdasági tanácsadó könyvelőcégeknél, vezettem kereskedőházat még a 2000-es évek első felében; dolgoztam az Európai Parlament mellett, segítve a Magyaroszág csatlakozását végigvivő delegációt; végül egy barátom hívására váltottam, és csatlakoztam a regionális fejlesztési forrásokat koordináló szervezethez, és költöztem vissza Makóra, ahol felnőttem és ahonnan elszármaztam.

Vezető tanácsadóként és szakmai referensként elsődleges célom az volt, hogy megtérülő beruházásokat hajthassunk végre; hogy az EU-s források olyan projekteket szolgáljanak, amiből vállalkozások épülnek, gyárak fejlődnek, amelyekkel településeinkre talál a külföldi tőke és munkaadó. Hat jelentős

59

idegenforgalmi fejlesztést követtem végig, tudva, hogy a jövő a szolgáltató szektorban van; emellett esélyteremtő, felzárkózató és integráló programokat készítettem elő, hogy a leginkább rászorulók, az elesettek és a kisebbségekhez tartozók is megtalálhassák boldogulásuk útját Magyarországon.

Hiszem, hogy az Európai Unió a szabad utazás és munkavállalás mellett hazánk nyugathoz való felzárkózásának esélyét adta meg, továbbá, hogy a mi felelősségünk, hogy ezeket a forrásokat jól használjuk fel. Pártom vezető gazdaságpolitikusaként is ezért dolgoztam: hogy az általunk lehívott pénzek egy szabadabb társadalom építését és a jövőbe: az oktatásba és az egészségügybe való befektetést jelentsék.

Appendix B: Treatments Donating Behaviour Experiment

Bio: Received by both groups

Chuck was born in Brooklyn, NY in 1950. He became the first in his family to go to college when he attended Harvard in 1967. He then went on to Law School, and in 1974, Chuck went back to Brooklyn to serve as a Representative in the New York State Assembly. In 1980, at the age of 29, Chuck was elected to the House of Representatives, where he stayed until 1998. He was then elected to the Senate, a position he holds to this day.

Chuck still resides in Brooklyn, with his wife Iris, and their two daughters Jessica and Alison.

Retrospective Information

- In 2013, Chuck led a bipartisan delegation, *the Gang of Eight*, in drafting a comprehensive immigration reform package: the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013.
- Senator Schumer has recently sponsored a bill to toughen gun control laws through mandatory background checks.
- As a candidate for Senate in 1998, Chuck promised that if elected, he would visit each one of New York's 62 counties within his first term. He kept that promise, and has since visited every county in New York State every year.
- Chuck has gained a wide experience over his almost 18 years in the Senate, including being the Chairman of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee, and the chairman of the prestigious Senate Rules Committee.
- Chuck has been a leader on creating a college tuition tax deduction for low and middle-income families. He has also sponsored a bill to improve transit ridership by college students.
- During his first term as a Senator, Chuck successfully fought budget cuts to New York Hospitals, and was instrumental in keeping veterans' hospitals open.

Prospective Information

- If re-elected, Chuck Schumer will fight for a comprehensive immigration reform that will grow our economy and bring 11 million people out of the shadows.
- Senator Schumer will continue fighting for tougher gun control laws through improved mandatory background checks.
- Chuck is a senator for the entire population of New York, so he will visit every single one of the state's 62 counties if re-elected.
- Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, who is retiring after 2016, has endorsed Schumer to succeed him as Leader. Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin also endorsed Schumer for the post.
- If re-elected, Chuck will keep on fighting for everybody's right to college education through federal help.
- As a strong proponent of low-cost, high-quality healthcare, if re-elected, Senator Schumer will fight against budget cuts for the Hospitals of New York and in favour of affordable healthcare.

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