

Who Donates in Campaigns?

*The Importance of Message,
Messenger, Medium, and Structure*

DAVID B. MAGLEBY

Brigham Young University

JAY GOODLIFFE

Brigham Young University

JOSEPH A. OLSEN

Brigham Young University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108453714

DOI: 10.1017/9781108554428

© David B. Magleby, Jay Goodliffe, and Joseph A. Olsen 2018

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2018

First paperback edition 2020

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

NAMES: Magleby, David B., author. | Goodliffe, Jay, author. | Olsen, Joseph A., author.

TITLE: Who donates in campaigns? : the importance of message, messenger, medium, and structure / David B. Magleby, Jay Goodliffe, Joseph A. Olsen.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2018011051 | ISBN 9781108429276 (hardback)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Campaign funds—United States. | Political action committees—United States. | Pressure groups—United States. | Presidents—United States—Election—2008. | Presidents—United States—Election—2012. | BISAC: POLITICAL SCIENCE / Government / General.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC JK1991 .M254 2018 | DDC 324.7/80973—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018011051>

ISBN 978-1-108-42927-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-45371-4 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page xi</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>xvii</i>
1 The Importance of Donors in American Politics	I
Enduring Questions about Donors	2
The Fundraising Context in 2008 and 2012	8
Message, Messenger, Medium, and Structure	11
Continuity and Change from Prior Donor Studies	22
Our Surveys of 2008 and 2012 Federal Donors	24
Overview of the Book	26
2 Profile of Donors in 2008 and 2012	40
Presidential Donors: Then and Now	41
All Presidential Donors in 2008 and 2012	49
Comparing Donors to Voters and the General Population	58
Conclusion	64
3 What Motivates Donors to Contribute?	73
Candidate Appeal as a Motivation to Donate	73
Incentive Theory Applied to Donor Behavior	76
Previous Donor Studies	77
Limitations of the Incentive Theory When Applied to Donor Behavior	77
Motivation and Political Participation More Broadly	79
Presidential Donor Motivations in 2008 and 2012	81
Partisan Identification and Ideology	89
Empirical Patterns of Motivation	92
Conclusion	93

4	How the Internet, BCRA, and Super PACs Have Affected Campaigns, Donor Attitudes, and Behavior	98
	Legal Change: BCRA	100
	Legal Change: Super PACs	103
	Technological Change: The Internet	109
	Comparison of Online and Offline Donors	122
	Motivations	126
	Conclusion	127
5	New, Repeat, Continuing, and Lapsed Donors	138
	The Importance of the Donor List	140
	Who Were the First-Time Donors?	144
	Demographic Variables	145
	Attitudes and Behaviors	148
	The Medium of Solicitation and Donation	152
	Lapsed Donors	155
	Unsolicited Donors	161
	Conclusion	166
6	What Distinguishes Small Donors?	173
	Changing Strategic Imperatives and Conventional Wisdom about Small Donors	175
	The Number of Small Donors	182
	Diversity of Small and Itemized Donors	187
	Are Small Donors More Partisan and Polarized?	191
	Engagement of Small Donors	195
	The Importance of Messenger	198
	Small Donor Attrition and Replacement between 2008 and 2012	200
	Conclusion	203
7	The Diminished Gender Gap among Democratic Donors	212
	Partisan Gender Gap in Political Participation	212
	Partisan Gender Gap among Donors in 2008 and 2012	214
	Gender and Other Donor Demographics	219
	Interest and Participation	223
	The Democratic Party's Advantage among Female Donors	224
	Male and Female Donor Responses to Messenger, Message, and Medium	224
	Conclusion	237
8	The Timing of Donations in Presidential Campaigns	246
	The Data	250
	The Money Primary	251

Drivers of Fundraising Success	257
The Relationship between Number and Amount of Donations	259
Events and the Timing of Donations: Primary Election	262
Events and the Timing of Donations: General Election	271
Candidate Viability and the Timing of Donations	274
Small Donors in 2008 and 2012	278
Large Donors in 2008 and 2012	280
Super PACs in 2012	282
Motivations of Different Donors	283
Conclusion	284
9 Policy Implications of Changing Laws, Regulations, and of Who Donates	293
Avoiding Corruption	294
Limits on Contributions and Electioneering	294
Super PACs and “Independent” Electioneering	301
Disclosure	304
Increasing the Representativeness of Those Who Fund Campaigns	306
Tax Credits and Deductions	310
Matching Programs	317
Vouchers	320
Engagement in 2008, 2012, and Beyond	321
Conclusion	323
10 What Explains Donor Behavior?	335
Message, Messenger, Medium, and Structure	337
A Review of Findings	351
Small Donors	353
Large Donors	354
New and Repeat Donors	355
The Internet and Political Engagement	356
Solicitation and Motivation	357
Looking beyond 2008 and 2012	358
Appendix A	369
Methods	369
Record Linkage	369
Sampling Design	370
Questionnaire	376
Survey Administration	376
Weighting	378
Self-Reports	380

<i>Appendix B</i>	382
Variable Specification	382
<i>Appendix C</i>	395
List of Interviews	395
<i>Appendix D</i>	404
Multivariate Analyses	404
<i>Appendix E</i>	439
Factor Analysis	439
Factor Analysis of Participation Items (2008)	439
Factor Analysis of Items about Motivation to Contribute and Become Involved in the Election	443
<i>Index</i>	449