

The Impact of Campaign Visits on Predicted Voter Choice in the 2016 Presidential Election

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ABSTRACT

This thesis conducted research on the impact of campaign visits on levels of predicted voter choice within the 2016 U.S. Presidential election. Data on discrete events throughout the campaign were collected to first determine the impact of particular newsworthy events on predicted voter choice. The data show that the impact of these events dissipates prior to Election Day, leading to a minimal impact on voter decision making. Additionally, data were analyzed on the occurrence of both candidate and surrogate visits, attempting to add to the field of research regarding the impact of campaign visits on voters. Throughout the analysis, both safe and swing states were taken into consideration, to determine if campaigns have a similar impact in different types of states. Overall, fourteen individual states were examined, providing a rather small sample size, but focusing on where campaigns were concentrated most. The results showed that the minimal effects hypothesis is still mostly affirmed, but that candidate visits appear to have a greater influence on predicted voter choice than do surrogate visits, regardless of the popularity of the surrogate.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

This thesis conducted research on the impact that candidate visits had on voters. The research focused on the 2016 U.S. Presidential election. In addition to focusing on the role of campaign visits, eight specific events from the campaign were selected to attempt to determine the impact that newsworthy events had on voters. The data show that the impact of these events is not lasting and does not appear to have an impact on the outcome of the election. Additionally, visits by both candidates and surrogates (those visiting on behalf of a candidate) were analyzed in order to determine whether these visits led to a change in voter choice. Throughout the analysis, states favoring one candidate as well as divided or swing states were taken into consideration to determine if campaigns impacted voters in different states in different ways. Overall, fourteen individual states were examined, providing a rather small sample size, but focusing on where campaigning was concentrated most. The results showed that candidate visits have very little impact on whom voters ultimately choose, but that candidate visits appear to have a greater influence on this than do surrogate visits, regardless of the popularity of the surrogate.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

The outcome of the 2016 presidential election was one of the most dynamic and unexpected in U.S. history. Both candidates were “unprecedented” in some way and the campaign was riddled with scandals and breaking news stories (Kurtzleben 2016). Because of the heavy volume of news coverage on the campaign as well as the extensive use of surrogates throughout the campaign, the 2016 election presents a good case for studying the impact of campaign appearances on predicted voter choice. Throughout the 2016 general election campaign, both candidates campaigned extensively and also utilized surrogates to a high degree. In fact, in the last 100 days of the campaign, Donald Trump stopped in the six states of Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Michigan, and Wisconsin “a total of 133” times. “Over the same time period, Hillary Clinton visited the first five of those states a total of 87 times,” (Terrell 2016). Although these numbers are impressive, these counts do not include the number of visits conducted by the numerous surrogates both candidates utilized. Because of the interesting dynamic of the campaign including that Clinton had a greater number of surrogates and that Trump himself made a large number of campaign stops, 2016 presents a strong test case for analyzing the impact that campaign appearances have on predicted voter choice. This thesis examines the impact of such appearances as well as the effects that discrete events have on polling numbers. It also examines the impact of a candidate visit versus a surrogate visit on expressed voter preferences prior to the election.

Presidential campaigns are a widely debated phenomena in American politics. Researchers have examined the question “do campaigns matter?” in many different ways.

Political science scholarship seems to be rather inconclusive when determining the answer to this question. Holbrook (1996) states throughout his research that campaigns do in fact have an impact on public opinion regarding the outcome of elections, but that the evidence of how great the impact is can be difficult to measure (45). He also provides some clarity as to the goal of campaigns, stating that “campaign events are expected to have an effect on public opinion: This effect is to influence changes in candidate preference during the campaign period” (Holbrook 1996, 63-64). The expectation when conducting this research is that campaign appearances will lead to a change in predicted voter choice. Because the goal of the campaign is to influence voters regarding their choice of candidate, it is expected that candidate and surrogate appearances will impact this choice. The goal of this project is to explore just how much of an impact campaign visits by candidates and surrogates have on voter preferences.

Although some researchers agree that campaigns do in fact affect the outcomes of elections, others believe that there is not enough evidence to support this. The latter argue that because campaigns are constants, they are already taken into account in election data and so do not impact the outcome (Bélanger and Soroka 2012, 703). Because the norm for 20th and early 21st century elections includes extensive campaigning, it is hard to determine the actual effect of campaigns since there is no way to examine an election without the presence of campaigns (Bélanger and Soroka 2012, 703). In addition, because both candidates campaign, some assume that campaign effects cancel out one another, which leads to the conclusion that campaigns do not matter in the outcome of elections (Lewis-Beck and Tien 2012, 233). Likewise, Hill, Rodriquez, and Wooden (2010) “present no evidence that appearances by a candidate changed the outcome of an election, either in one state or nationally” or had a meaningful impact on the “margin of victory” (244, 246). Research conducted by Herr (2002) tends to agree, stating that

less than 8% of voters shift their preferences during the campaign, and that most of those that do change their preferences during the campaign “tend to cancel one another out” (905).

Others argue that campaigns are an essential decision-making aspect of the election process in that they help voters to decide whether they will vote and for whom they will vote. Holbrook states that 63% of voters already know for whom they will vote by the end of the nominating conventions. Although this would seem to be an argument against the role of campaigns, he states that, “the remaining 37% constitute a significant portion of the electorate that, if mobilized by a campaign, can play an important role in the outcome” (Holbrook 1996, 12). Additionally, this 37% of voters tend to be those without strong loyalty to a particular party, and are therefore more likely to be convinced by aspects of a campaign (Holbrook 1996, 12). Holbrook expands on these thoughts by stating that although campaigns may only influence a very small percentage of the electorate, they could be particularly important in closer elections (Holbrook 1996, 13). This is important to note, especially with the closeness of elections over the past several election cycles.

Goal of Research

As elections have become more competitive in recent years with a smaller margin of victory for the winning candidate, campaigns have narrowed in scope to target particular audiences, specifically those in states holding larger numbers of votes in the Electoral College. This targeted approach to campaigning raises the question of whether focused campaign events make a difference to voters. Evidence of the changing nature of campaigns can be seen by looking at the number of states where campaigns have been focused in more recent elections. In 2004, both candidates focused their campaign efforts across 11 states (Nagourney and Seelye

2004). The 2008 election saw campaigns focused in 15 states, and 2012 targeted only nine states (Abramowitz 2012; Peters 2012). This trend continued for the 2016 election. In fact, for the 2016 election, two-thirds of all candidate visits occurred in only six states (Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia) (National Popular Vote). This points to questions surrounding the impact of campaign visits on predicted voter choice within these targeted states. Because campaigning has narrowed to focus on fewer states in recent years, the question of how much of an impact it actually has on voter choice becomes even more important to answer. This project answers this question in the context of the 2016 presidential election by asking, “Did campaign visits affect predicted voter choice?” More specifically, this research explores the role that campaign visits played over the course of the election in shifting levels of predicted voter choice at the state level.

Although there are several different facets of presidential campaigns, campaign visits by major-party candidates or high-ranking surrogates from the traditional start of the campaign on Labor Day (September 5, 2016) through Election Day (November 8, 2016) are the primary focus of this research. Most of the current literature does not examine the impact of candidate and surrogate visits; however, other relevant scholarship has been conducted on campaigns and should be examined.

There have been several other compelling research projects conducted which study the impact of campaigns and appearances; however, this project does not only assess the impact of candidate visits, but also considers the impact that surrogate visits have on shifting voter preferences. Previous literature tends to focus on campaigns as a whole, failing to isolate specific facets of the campaign, such as visits. Although there has been some research on the impact of campaign events, the work defines such events very broadly and does not focus specifically on

candidate visits nor does it often mention the impact of surrogate visits. In recent campaigns, candidates have made more stops in fewer states and surrogates have been used heavily. With this becoming the new norm of campaigns, it is important to understand the impact these aspects have on the outcome of the election as measured through predicted voter choice. The goal of this research is to add to empirical evidence from the 2016 presidential general election by examining the role of campaign visits in influencing predicted voter choice as well as the impact that discrete events have on voter preferences throughout the campaign.

Theoretical Framework

Before examining the impact that campaign visits have on predicted voter choice, the reasoning behind this expected outcome must be explored. There has been previous research conducted that indicates campaign visits may have an impact on predicted voter choice. Voters have a desire and a need for knowledge about candidates that helps them decide for whom they will vote. One of the main places they acquire this knowledge is from campaign events and the news coverage that is generated as a result of these events. Holbrook (1996) elaborates on this theory by explaining the “‘on-line’... model of candidate evaluation” (52). In this theory, he states that as events occur, voters are exposed to more information regarding the candidates. The information spread by these events “cause[s] a corresponding shift in candidate support toward the candidate favored by the event. When the next important event occurs, it is expected that mass opinion will again shift in the direction of the candidate favored by that event” (Holbrook 1996, 53). As voters are exposed to information throughout the campaign, they continue to “stay ‘on-line’... and update their evaluations of the candidate as events unfold and new information is made available” (Holbrook 1996, 53).

Although not all voters are exposed to campaign events directly, the impact of a campaign event, particularly a visit, reaches more potential voters than simply those that attend the event. The news media play an important role in extending the impact of campaign events, allowing for the information to be spread to more voters. Despite the fact that news media coverage is not directly considered as a variable in this thesis, the impact of visits on voter decision making is still analyzed thoroughly. The occurrences of specific campaign visits are considered, which allow for changes in the polls surrounding these events to reflect the impact that a visit had, whether it is from news coverage or the exposure of the voters that actually attended the event.

When considering the audience that attends campaign events, several different schools of thought exist on this as well. Researchers have found evidence that campaigns, and more particularly campaign events, target both strong party members expected to vote for the candidate as well as “swing voters and independents” (Dawkins 2017, 101). It is interesting that these groups may be the intended target of campaign events whereas undecideds are not mentioned, as both of the former groups are already expected to vote in the election. This is one facet of the thesis that is greatly limited, because there is no inclusion of data on what type of voters attended the campaign events. Although the results show the net changes in support which helps to account for decisions made by undecideds, the results do not separate out impacts from event exposure and news coverage. There is no way to account for which impacts come from those attending the events and which come from additional news coverage or advertisements. While this may be a weakness of the paper, the research still examines the overall impact that visits appear to have on predicted voter choice, using the occurrence of visits as an indicator of

voter exposure to information, whether by attending an event or seeing news coverage from an event.

Literature Review

Because of the numerous opinions that exist regarding campaign impacts, many different studies have been conducted on this topic. These studies focus on the overall impact of campaigns, looking at multiple factors and compiling their overall impact on the outcome of the vote. Examples of this can be seen in the research of Holbrook. His research on the role of campaigns analyzed the impact that conventions, debates, campaign events, and national conditions collectively had on changes in public opinion leading up to an election (Holbrook 1996, 151). Likewise, the research conducted by Hansen and Pedersen (2014) focused on the impact of campaigns on public opinion, but their approach took a wider perspective, defining “election campaign” in a very loose manner, with the goal of determining if election campaigns have an influence on voter choice (303). Additional examples can be drawn from the research of Erikson and Wlezien. Their research tends to focus more on the durability of campaign effects and whether or not certain effects persist throughout the campaign to Election Day. Additionally, they focus more on the shifts in voter preference during the campaign rather than what specifically seems to influence these fluctuations in voter preference (Erikson and Wlezien 2012, 2).

When looking at the literature that focuses more specifically on the impact of campaign visits, several more recent studies have examined campaigns as a whole. Hill, Rodriguez, and Wooden address the changing nature of the minimal effects hypothesis. They explain this long term supposition by stating that “one explanation of the minimal effects hypothesis is that one

candidate's efforts are offset by the efforts of his or her opponent.... The result is that any electoral advantage from the actions of one candidate is mitigated by the responses of an opponent. Both candidates are effective, but there is no visible change in voter support" (Hill, Rodriquez, and Wooden 2010, 248). Although the minimal effects hypothesis has lost ground in recent years, some researchers still support this prediction. As the hypothesis has been reexamined, some researchers have supported it, while others have concluded that campaigns help to increase voter awareness of the campaign, often leading to slightly increased voter participation, if not a shift in preferences (Hill, Rodriquez, and Wooden 2010, 244; Herr 2002, 905). This increased level of participation could potentially be used as a measure for the impact of appearances, but it would be difficult to determine which candidate's appearances impacted the voters if their preference was not swayed by the visit (Herr 2002, 906).

Outcomes

In order to better measure the phenomena of campaigns, campaign appearances are examined more closely in conjunction with predicted voter choice to determine possible overall impacts. Campaign appearances are analyzed by looking at the direct relationship between candidate and surrogate visits and changes in each candidates' level of support. An additional level of analysis is present when considering the impact that discrete events have on predicted voter choice. This analysis is presented as the first hypothesis. The research shows that the impacts of discrete events on voter preferences are not lasting and dissipate prior to Election Day. This finding then allows for analysis to shift focus to further research regarding campaign appearances, since the data demonstrates that discrete events do not impact the final outcome of the election. The second hypothesis focuses on the connection between the number of

appearances and the percentage change in the level of support for each candidate. This analysis is done both in swing states and safe states. The findings indicate that there is no direct relationship between the number of campaign appearances and the percentage change in each candidates' support.

Finally, the third hypothesis looks at the differing impact of candidate visits versus surrogate visits. The results show that even though there is little overall impact from campaign appearances, candidate visits do appear to lead to greater shifts in predicted voter choice than do surrogate visits. These findings present new evidence that can be added to the current literature on the subject. It appears that campaign appearances do not lead to sizeable changes in predicted voter choice. Although the results do not suggest that campaign appearances have much effect, they still lead to important conclusions regarding the role of surrogates as well as the impact of discrete events on levels of support for each candidate as measured through predicted voter choice.

In the following sections, the research design of this thesis is explained. First, the variables under consideration and the key questions are presented, followed by an examination of the methods used to conduct this research. Throughout the methods section, three hypotheses emerge that direct the focus of this research to discrete events throughout the campaign, the impact of campaign visits on predicted voter choice, and the role that surrogates play in the campaign. Following the discussion of the methods, the results are presented. The results lead to several new conclusions, opening the door for several implications of the research, including areas of future interest and possible extensions of this research into additional areas.

Chapter Two: Research Design and Methods

As Chapter One mentioned, the goal of this research is to add to the field concerning the impact and importance of U.S. presidential campaigns, particularly candidate and surrogate visits. As campaigns have grown longer and more expensive, it is unclear if they have grown more effective in shifting voter preferences. It is important for future candidates, as well as those targeted by campaigns, to know the impact that campaigns have on voters. In order to examine the research conducted, the variables under consideration must first be described.

Questions and Variables

This thesis addresses three specific questions regarding candidate appearances and predicted voter choice. First, how do discrete events during the campaign impact changes in predicted voter choice in comparison with campaign visits? Second, how much do campaign appearances impact the final outcome of voting? Third, do candidate or surrogate visits lead to greater changes in predicted voter choice? These questions are explored through the collection of polling data, as well as a compilation of information on campaign visits. These three questions point to several variables that are the focus of exploration.

The main variables under consideration are campaign visits and predicted voter choice. The dependent variable, predicted voter choice, is measured at the state and national levels and measures the likely outcome of the election based on reported voter preference at the time of various surveys. The independent variable, campaign appearances (including both candidate and surrogate visits), is defined as a visit by a major party candidate (including vice-presidential candidates) or a “high-ranking surrogate” to eligible voters in a particular state ranging from

Labor Day to Election Day. A “high-ranking surrogate” is defined as a surrogate mentioned in at least three major sources tracking the campaign (selected from a list of five sources tracking the campaign). Information is drawn from *Politico*, *NBC News*, *CNN*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *The New York Times*. Democratic surrogates include Bill Clinton, Chelsea Clinton, Anne Holton, Joe Biden, Barack Obama, Michelle Obama, Elizabeth Warren, and Bernie Sanders (Burns and Harris 2016; Chozick and Flegenheimer 2016; Kreig 2016; Mehta 2016; Murray 2016; Ocasio 2016; Seitz-Wald and Vitali 2016; and Terrell 2016). The list of those considered to be Republican surrogates is much shorter, including only members of Trump’s family: Donald Trump Jr., Eric Trump, Ivanka Trump, and Melania Trump (Seitz-Wald and Vitali 2016; Kreig 2016).

Although there were several well-known party officials endorsing Trump throughout the campaign, such as Rudy Giuliani and Ben Carson, none of these met the criteria outlined above to be considered “high-ranking surrogates.” One of the other reasons for Trump’s lack of high-ranking surrogates was the low number of party members endorsing Trump. *The New York Times* states that “though local elected officials and some members of Congress have campaigned with him, Mr. Trump has almost entirely lacked the political star power of a conventional campaign” (Burns and Harris 2016). Additionally, many high-ranking Republicans, including former Presidents George H.W. and George W. Bush, chose not to endorse Trump, leaving him to rely on his family as his main source of campaign support (Burns and Harris 2016). *The Atlantic* also addresses the use of surrogates in the campaign, discussing the disparity of surrogates between the two candidates. Clinton had several strong backers including Barack Obama and former President Clinton. In contrast, Trump could not call upon “most of the big-name Republicans [...]—George W. Bush, Mitt Romney, John McCain, Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio,

Paul Ryan- [because they were] hostile to him” (Beinart 2016). This explains the lack of surrogates used by Trump on the campaign trail and shows that Clinton clearly holds the advantage in this aspect of the campaign. Although she holds a numerical advantage in the surrogate field, “the surrogate gap is unlikely to prove decisive” (Beinart 2016). Despite the fact that Trump relied heavily on his family for campaigning, his visits alone exceeded those of Clinton’s in the final 100 days of the campaign (Isenstien et al. 2016). These differences in campaign tactics help to balance out the total number of visits for each party. One additional variable considered is “discrete events” occurring throughout the campaign. This variable serves as an additional independent variable for the first hypothesis. Once the impact of these events has been discussed, focus shifts to the impact of campaign appearances. These discrete events will be considered for the purpose of ruling out additional factors that affect predicted voter choice in order to better see the impact that comes solely from campaign appearances.

Hypotheses and Methods

As previously mentioned, campaign visits are not the only factor influencing shifts in predicted voter choice. Often, other events that occur during the time of the campaign can influence the polls; however, these shifts in polls do not usually last until Election Day. These events are often referred to as “October surprises,” and can be influential in the campaign. Erikson and Wlezien address these events, concluding that “embarrassing gaffes, clever TV ads, and the like rarely have major long-term impact” (2012, 12). The impact of these types of events is “slight and often of temporary duration” (Erikson and Wlezien 2012, 12). Although these events are referred to as campaign events, this research extends the notion to additional discrete events that may occur during campaigns. This leads to the first hypothesis.

H-1: Discrete events during the campaign will be associated with a shift in predicted voter choice, but state polls will return to levels closer to those preceding the event prior to Election Day.

Although other researchers have explored similar predictions, this research isolates these events and separates them from other campaign events. In other research, the variable campaign events has included things such as fundraising events, canvassing or get out the vote events, as well as a strong push in advertising. Although these additional types of events may impact voter decision making, the scope of this paper does not allow for consideration of such effects.

Discrete events are selected based on a compilation of several election analyses, focusing on major events that evidently affected the outcome of the election. The information for identifying these events is drawn from *ABC News*, *Politico*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and *FiveThirtyEight*. *ABC News* and *Politico* each published a list of major events that potentially affected the election (Stracqualursi 2016; Shafer 2016). These events are then compared to news coverage from the campaign from the other three sources to select the final events for consideration. Events that are mentioned on one of the two lists, and also receive news coverage by the three additional news sources, are selected. The events chosen include the three presidential debates, Clinton's "basket of deplorables" comment, Trump's tax return controversy, the release of the Access Hollywood video, the WikiLeaks of the Podesta emails, and the Comey letter to Congress (see Appendix A). Although FiveThirtyEight also mentions the follow-up investigation of WikiLeaks as well as Comey's second letter regarding the Clinton investigation, the dates of these events did not allow for sufficient polling to occur between the event and the election. Although these events may potentially have affected the actual outcome of the election, they do not influence the data within this paper because the polling data used to

measure predicted voter choice throughout this research ended on the same date (November 6, 2016) that these additional discrete events occurred or received news coverage. The discrete events included are analyzed by looking at individual state polls from fourteen selected states.

These particular states are selected mainly because of the campaigning that took place in them. The states chosen either have a large number of visits from both candidates (swing states) or mainly receive visits from one candidate (safe states). Although the term “safe states” is typically used to define states where one particular candidate has a strong base of support, throughout this paper “safe states” refers to states where campaigning is asymmetrical in nature. This definition still aligns with the more typical definition, as the presence of asymmetrical campaigning indicates that the state is not highly contested by the candidates and that one candidate likely has a strong base of support in the state. If one candidate did not have a strong base of support within the state, campaign visits would likely be much more symmetrical in nature. The use of asymmetrical campaigning as a measure of safe states allows for the researcher to have a clearer picture of the impact that visits have. By looking at states with singular visits, data are collected that potentially show the impact of only one visit, whereas in swing states, the impacts of visits are often overlapping. All of the safe states examined except for Arizona and Colorado also fit the more traditional definition of safe states, but are included due to the campaigning that occurred within them. Because of the need for information on the frequency of both candidate and surrogate visits, the focus must be on states where both parties visited regularly but also on states where only one candidate campaigned extensively or campaigned markedly more than his or her opponent. Using both swing and safe states provides more diverse results that will hopefully lead to a more thorough interpretation of the data. The “swing” states, or states with heavy campaigning, include Florida, Michigan, North Carolina,

Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The “safe” the states are Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Texas.

In order to best measure the impact of these events, the FiveThirtyEight aggregated state polls are placed on a line graph showing Trump’s change in support relative to Clinton’s. The discrete events are also shown on the graph, allowing for an overall examination of the changes in voter preferences over the course of the campaign, but more specifically in conjunction with the occurrence of these events. Because most of the discrete events under consideration were covered in national news outlets, changes in predicted voter choice in safe states are examined within the same time frame to attempt to determine if changes in swing states likely occurred following these discrete events and not due to some other influence. It is important to note that there are several other factors that could also lead to changes in reported predicted voter choice that are outside the scope of this research. Although influences such as TV, radio, and internet advertisements; and canvassing or “get out the vote” efforts are not included within the analysis of this data, it is important to acknowledge that they could also be influencing shifts seen in the polls. Although they potentially play an important part in presidential campaigns, including them within the scope of this research is not feasible.

Once discrete events are analyzed to determine their possible impact on the election, the focus shifts to the impact that campaigns have on the outcome of the election. When looking through the previous research on campaigns, several researchers have concluded that campaigns matter. To clarify this further, researchers have refined the question being asked, focusing on “where, when, for what, and for whom” campaigns matter (Jacobson 2015, 32). As mentioned previously, this new focus on the impact of campaigns shifts away from the popular minimal effects hypothesis, focusing more on the slight impacts that campaigns can have and attempting

to extrapolate these impacts to determine the contributing factors. As research has focused in on the impact of campaign appearances, several observations have emerged. First, although one would expect a greater impact from appearances in battleground or swing states due to the fact that there is likely a higher number of undecided voters, the impact of these appearances is often canceled out by the opponent's visits, making it difficult to measure the impact. Hill, Rodriquez, and Wooden focused on this, emphasizing the importance of distinguishing between safe states and swing states in the data analysis. If the distinction is not made, the data can present misleading evidence of a candidate's impact from visits. They explain why candidates still campaign in swing states even though it appears to have little impact on the outcome of the election. Campaign visits to swing states are still critical to the campaign because "if candidates do not make an appearance, they allow their opponent the opportunity to build an advantage, and they risk losing the election as Dewy did when he did not counter Truman's more frequent appearances" (Hill, Rodriquez, and Wooden 2010, 248). They conclude that campaign appearances can potentially boost candidate support or reduce support for the opponent (Hill, Rodriquez, and Wooden 2010, 246).

Although there is evidence to support the impact of campaign appearances on the outcome of the election, the clarifying question becomes, "How *much* do campaigns matter?" Holbrook addresses this issue by stating that while the goal of campaigns is to "generate information for the purpose of persuasion," the outcome of this can be greatly affected if candidates do not campaign evenly (1996, 52; 55). Additionally, when considering the role of campaigns to "influence the behavior of individual citizens" (Jacobson 2015, 32), and that state campaign visits tend to have a more localized impact due to more local media coverage, it follows that:

H-2: As the number of campaign visits increases, support for that candidate (relative to his/her main opponent) will increase.

In order to test this hypothesis, individual states are treated as distinct cases. Data are drawn from an aggregated average of statewide polls calculated by FiveThirtyEight. The total number of candidate visits, as well as the total number of surrogate visits, are taken into consideration, but are considered together to form one variable referred to simply as “campaign visits.” As campaigns progress, the majority of visits tend to occur in more heavily contested areas. In order to account for this, data from both heavily visited states and sparsely visited states are considered. As previously mentioned, the swing states are Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. These particular states have been selected due to the fact that they were predicted to be states with close outcomes before the election and are the six states where two-thirds of all campaigning occurred (National Popular Vote). Additionally, the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Texas are selected for examination as well due to a more asymmetrical level of campaigning. These states have been chosen because, as explained by Hill, Rodriguez, and Wooden, “if a candidate appearance does have an impact, it is more likely to be seen in a safe state, where there is less chance it will be offset by an opponent’s appearance” (2010, 248). Once again, it is important to examine the safe states as well as battleground states to compare the impact of appearances and to account for the cancelling factor of opposing visits in the battleground states.

Additionally, data from the FiveThirtyEight national poll are used as an additional measure for comparison to the other states being examined to show changes in the states that may be from additional factors other than the event itself. By including the national polls in examining this hypothesis, it is possible to examine additional factors that may be influencing

shifts in the polls, such as advertisements by candidates or additional coverage from the news media, without including it as an actual variable within the study. Although advertising and the media play a large role in the campaign, because of the narrow scope of this research, the focus is on campaign events, specifically visits. The inclusion of discrete events in the first hypothesis helps to account for some of the impact that the news media may have on campaigns.

When considering the campaign, some events drew more attention and attendees than others. This is due to the nature of campaigns. The goal of campaign events is to “grab the public’s attention,” with both “highly visible events” as well as “less visible but presumably still consequential events” that occur throughout the campaign (Holbrook 1996, 64; 126). In describing the differences, presidential debates fall into the former category, drawing more news and public attention, while things such as “major campaign speeches [and] high-visibility endorsements” fall into the latter (Holbrook 1996, 64). These lesser events still draw news coverage and attention from voters, but not to the same degree as events involving a candidate. This conclusion seems to imply that voters are more responsive to attention from a candidate than from a surrogate, leading to the third hypothesis.

H-3: Visits from a presidential or vice-presidential candidate will lead to greater shifts in predicted voter choice than when visits are made on behalf of candidates by surrogates. Investigating this hypothesis is of interest in the 2016 election, particularly because of the nature of some of the Democratic surrogates. With names such as Barack Obama, Michelle Obama, Bill Clinton, and Bernie Sanders, it is possible that voters would be more influenced by these representatives than by the candidate herself. Although this is a possibility, the study looks at the changes that occurred in predicted voter choice for the overall group of surrogates or candidates, rather than separating out the impacts of individual surrogates. Though this would make for an

interesting research project, the research here focused on the average impact that candidate and surrogate visits have, rather than the impact that specific surrogates or candidates have on predicted voter choice.

In order to test this hypothesis, data are analyzed from the fourteen states previously mentioned. Visits in a particular state are compared along with the net change in candidate support to determine if candidate visits or surrogate visits are associated with bigger shifts in voter choice. Data collected for the first hypothesis also is relevant to testing this hypothesis. It was important to rule out other potential sources of influence on predicted voter choice polls. Therefore, once the impact of discrete events is determined, this is taken into account when analyzing the level of change present in polls surrounding campaign visits that fall near the occurrence of discrete events. In order to thoroughly test this hypothesis, aggregated data from FiveThirtyEight are used to look at individual campaign visits by type and determine if a pattern exists related to the shift in polls surrounding visits from either a candidate or a surrogate. In using the aggregated state polls, changes in voter preference are measured by looking at the change in support for a candidate from the first poll of the campaign to the last poll of the campaign. Because the testing of these hypotheses requires the comparison of swing states and safe states, it may lead to the conclusion that some additional factors contribute to changes in predicted voter choice other than campaign visits, such as the influence of the news media, campaign advertisements, or other aspects of campaigns. However, this project is limited in scope and only focuses on the potential impact of campaign visits and a few discrete events. Because this is just one small part of campaigns, this research will hopefully provide room for future research into the additional impacts of campaigns on predicted voter choice.

Chapter Three: Findings

As Chapter Two covered the questions and methods used in this thesis, the findings and implications of the three previously mentioned hypotheses will be discussed in Chapter Three. The testing of these data was outlined in the previous chapter and allowed for specific results to be collected on each hypothesis. The findings are presented below, along with more specific details regarding the process of data collection, analysis, and the testing of each hypothesis.

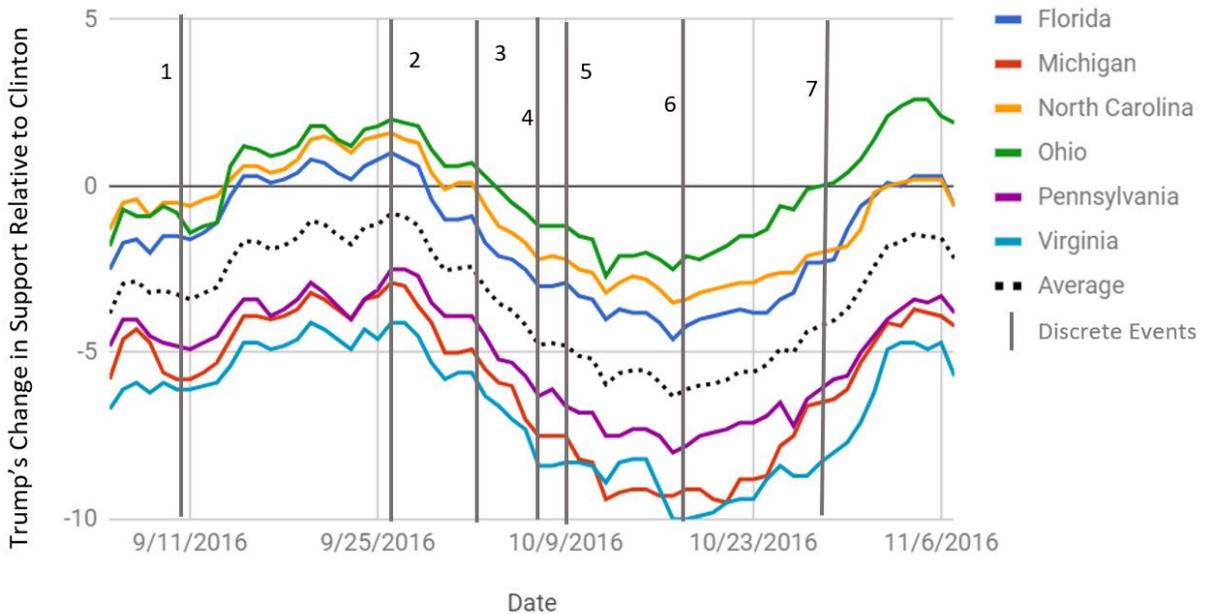
Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis states that discrete events during the campaign will be associated with a shift in predicted voter choice, but state polls will return to levels closer to those preceding the event prior to Election Day. Examining the effects of such events is important in order to put the possible influence of campaign appearances in the appropriate context when looking at changes in the polls that may be related to events that occurred throughout the campaign.

In order to examine the impact that these events may have had on predicted voter choice, the FiveThirtyEight aggregated state polling data is used to create a timeline for each state under examination. These lines track the daily changes in the polls for each of the fourteen states in the study; the figure also includes an average line for the states under consideration as well as vertical lines for each of the eight events included. Polls for both Trump and Clinton are examined, allowing for the data to show the net change in results. This is presented as Trump's change in support relative to Clinton's. By examining the results in a manner that demonstrates net change in support, the data measure actual changes in support and can help account for undecideds that have made a decision regarding for whom they will vote. This allows for

changes to represent more than simply an increase in support for both candidates. One graph is made for swing states and one for safe states, so that differing effects can be observed for each group of states. (See Figures 3.1 and 3.2.)

Figure 3.1 Change in Support- Swing States

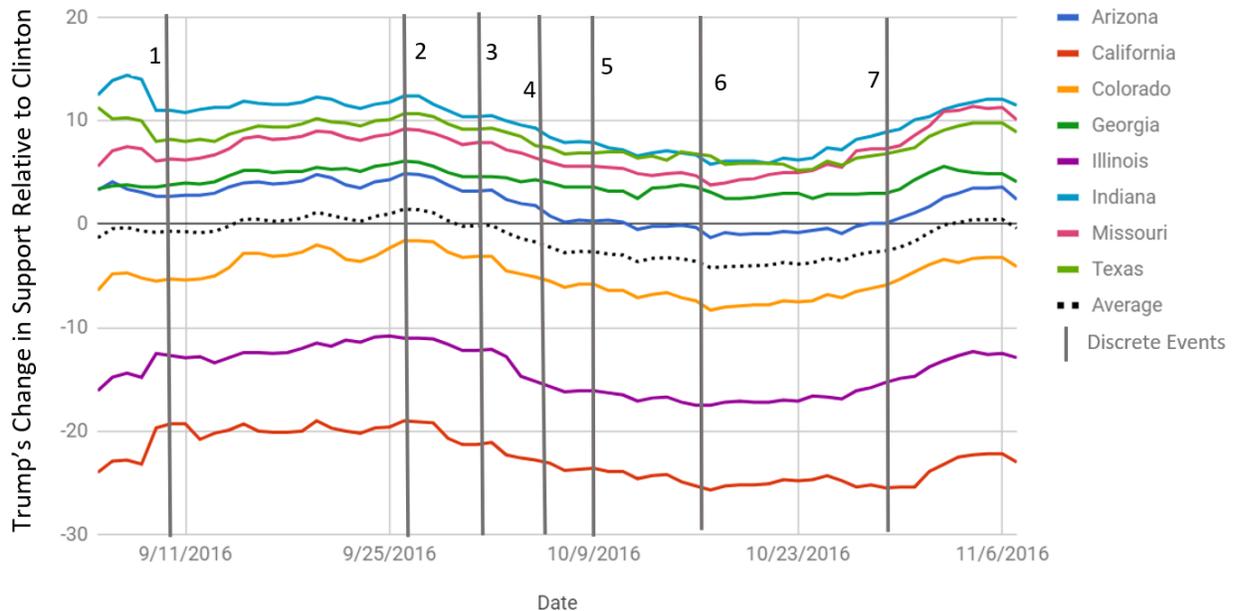


Change in support is calculated by using the aggregated state polls from FiveThirtyEight. This graph represents the support for Trump relative to Clinton. Vertical gray lines mark the dates that discrete events occurred within the campaign. Discrete Events: 1- 9/10 Clinton's "Basket of Deplorables" Comment, 2- 9/26 First Presidential Debate, 3- 10/3 Trump's Tax Return Controversy, 4- 10/7 Access Hollywood Video and WikiLeaks of Podesta Emails, 5- 10/9 Second Presidential Debate, 6- 10/19 Third Presidential Debate, 7- 10/28 Comey Letter.

Figure 3.1 displays the daily shifts in polls for the swing states under consideration. The lines appear to support the hypothesis, as most of the changes following events appear to dissipate prior to the election. Although there are many shifts throughout the campaign, it appears these shifts have very little lasting impact on predicted voter choice. The greatest shifts in support appear to occur following events five (Second Presidential Debate) and seven (Comey Letter). Although the graph shows that most states decrease support for Trump relative to Clinton following the second debate, it is likely that these decreases are partially due to event four (Access Hollywood Video and WikiLeaks of Podesta Emails) but are showing after event five because of the close proximity of the dates. Although all states show a decrease of approximately

2 percentage points in support following event five, they all recover to the same level or higher prior to event seven. Following event seven (Comey Letter), there appears to be a measurable shift as well. From the release of the Comey Letter on October 28, 2016 to the end of polling on November 7, 2016 all states appear to increase in support for Trump approximately 2.5 percentage points. Because this event occurred so close to Election Day, it is impossible to know how predicted voter choice would have changed if more polls had been conducted after this event. Although there was not time for this impact to dissipate, the other shifts in predicted voter choice did not appear to linger to Election Day, at least in these swing states. It is important to note how close in proximity some of these events occurred to one another. Because of this, it is likely that some of the effects of these events will overlap, making it more difficult to isolate the impact of one particular event.

Figure 3.2 Change in Support- Safe States



Change in support is calculated by using the aggregated state polls from FiveThirtyEight. This graph represents the support for Trump relative to Clinton. Vertical gray lines mark the dates that discrete events occurred within the campaign. Discrete Events: 1- 9/10 Clinton’s “Basket of Deplorables” Comment, 2- 9/26 First Presidential Debate, 3- 10/3 Trump’s Tax Return Controversy, 4- 10/7 Access Hollywood Video and WikiLeaks of Podesta Emails, 5- 10/9 Second Presidential Debate, 6- 10/19 Third Presidential Debate, 7- 10/28 Comey Letter.

Although it could be expected that shifts in swing states would be similar to one another because they do not favor one candidate over another, it was not expected that changes in the level of candidate support would also be similar to one another in safe states. In safe states, one might expect that events affecting the candidates nationally would not have as much effect in states that already leaned heavily to one candidate or another because a majority of voters have already decided for whom they will vote. While this does appear to be accurate to some extent in that safe states did not show drastic changes in support, all of the safe states appear to shift by very similar percentages throughout the campaign. The parallels in these changes from state to state show that discrete events have a similar impact on voters across the country and the type of state where the impacts are measured does not matter much.

The evidence suggests that the first hypothesis is supported. Although this analysis excludes other factors that may have influenced the changes in support, Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show that although support for the candidates is initially affected by these events, their overall support remains largely unaltered by the end of the campaign. It appears as though certain events affected one candidate more than another, which is also to be expected. In the swing states, it appears that Trump's net level of support moved in the expected direction following each event. The events that showed Clinton in a positive light (including the three presidential debates) or Trump in a negative light appear to have led to a decrease in net support for Trump whereas the events that showed Trump in a positive light or Clinton in a negative light appear to have led to an increase in net support for Trump. It also appears as though the *Access Hollywood* video (event four) caused a stronger reaction among voters than did the release of the Podesta emails (also event four) which occurred on the same day. The expectation following these two events would be no change in support, because the *Access Hollywood* video would likely have a

negative impact on Trump's support and the Podesta emails would likely negatively affect Clinton's support. However, following these events, Trump's net support decreased in all states except for Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, Trump's support increased, but then sharply decreased about a day after the occurrence of these events.

The directional changes from Figure 3.2 display an expected outcome, but it is surprising that all of the safe states demonstrated such similar shifts in support where one would think that stronger support for one candidate or another would minimize the effect that certain events had on the level of support. Although the shifts following events are much smaller in safe states, all of the safe states under examination appear to have shifted support in a similar pattern. Even though actual levels of support in the safe states may have differed greatly, the percentage change in support is similar among them. One event that did not appear to change support in the expected direction is the third presidential debate (event six). Although most news sources reported the results of the debate as a victory for Clinton, Trump's support began to increase in both safe and swing states following the debate (Cillizza 2016). One possible explanation for this could be that his support is recovering from the release of the *Access Hollywood* video, returning to a level closer to that predating the release of the video, which would also support the hypothesis.

In order to take a closer look at the changes in the level of support for each candidate surrounding these events, an additional poll can be utilized for analysis. Although the aggregated state poll is useful in looking at the overall trend of changes, looking at one individual poll from each state under consideration can also be beneficial because it provides a more detailed examination of the changes that occur following discrete events. The aggregated data are useful, but the individual state polls show the actual levels of support within the states being examined,

allowing for a closer look at the specific impacts following the occurrence of an event. One such poll is the *Ipsos* poll, analyzed by FiveThirtyEight in its overall campaign study. FiveThirtyEight gathers and assesses the various *Ipsos* polls for each of the states in consideration.¹ In order to examine the short term impact that these discrete events have on changes in predicted voter choice, poll levels are examined prior to the event and after the event. After the event has occurred, two polls are observed to determine if changes were lagged or lasting in nature. These changes are then compared to the final poll of the campaign, ending on November 6, 2016. This final poll is used to observe the lasting nature of the impact these events have. For later events, this second poll is sometimes the same as the final poll. Although not all poll date ranges align exactly with the occurrence of the events under consideration, the benefit of using the same polling organization for all events in all examined states outweighs the slight lack of accuracy in some situations due to the dates of the polls. In order to best focus the research, results from two swing states and three safe states are examined more closely. Additional state tables are available in Appendix B.

Table 3.1 *Ipsos* Polls Change in Support- Ohio

Ohio						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	-2	-1	+3	0	Poll Prior: 9/2-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/10-9/15 2 nd Poll: 9/16-9/22 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	-1	+1	0	

¹ All *Ipsos* polls received a rating of A- on a scale ranging from A+ to F from FiveThirtyEight. The rating scale is based on an analysis of “the historical accuracy of each firm’s polls along with its methodology” (Silver 2018). Although the *Ipsos* polls were conducted over the internet, the higher rating by FiveThirtyEight shows the accuracy of the polls. All samples were of likely voters and sample size ranged from 264 to 1,839 with an average sample size of 537. All states being examined with the exception of Arizona conducted 12 polls in the time period under consideration. Arizona conducted 11 polls in this time period.

Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	0	0	+3	+3	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	-4	+5	+1	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	0	0	+3	+3	Poll Prior: 9/23-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	-4	+5	+3	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	0	+2	+1	+3	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/21-10/27 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-4	+3	+2	+1	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	0	+2	+1	+3	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/21-10/27 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-4	+3	+2	+1	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	+2	+1	0	+3	Poll Prior: 10/7-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	+1	+1	+5	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	0	+1	0	+1	Poll Prior: 10/21-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/28-11/3 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	0	0	+2	

Data for this table are drawn from *Ipsos* polls conducted from September 2, 2016 to November 6, 2016. Change in support is shown from the poll prior to the event to the first poll following the event, from the first poll following the event to the second poll following the event, and from the second poll following the event to the final poll of the campaign ending on November 6. For additional information on the changes in poll levels see Appendix B.

The results in Table 3.1 show interesting fluctuations in the polls. The changes from poll to poll appear minor, with no change greater than +5 from one poll to the next. The average total change in level of support for each party is 2.07 points. Although the only event that showed no change in the total level of support is the “basket of deplorables” comment, the other changes appear minor as well. No events show a total change above +5 either, showing that the effects have dissipated. When looking at the events with total changes of +1 (Debate #1, AH Video and Podesta Emails, Debate #2, and Comey Letter to Congress) the hypothesis is supported further, as three of the four events have individual poll changes of ± 4 or greater but still end up with a

total change of only +1. This shows that the changes in polls are being cancelled out by later polls.

Table 3.2 Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	0	+2	-1	+1	Poll Prior: 9/2-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/15 2 nd Poll: 9/16-9/22 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-3	0	+2	-1	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	-3	-1	+3	-1	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	-3	+2	+2	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	+1	-1	+3	+3	Poll Prior: 9/23-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+4	-3	+2	+3	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-1	-3	+6	+2	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-3	+3	-1	-1	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-1	-3	+6	+2	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-3	+3	-1	-1	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	+7	-1	0	+6	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/28-11/3 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	0	0	-1	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	-1	0	0	-1	Poll Prior: 10/21-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/28-11/3 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	0	0	0	

Data for this table are drawn from Ipsos polls conducted from September 2, 2016 to November 6, 2016. Change in support is shown from the poll prior to the event to the first poll following the event, from the first poll following the event to the second poll following the event, and from the second poll following the event to the final poll of the campaign ending on November 6. For additional information on the changes in poll levels see Appendix B.

The results in Pennsylvania (Table 3.2) are very similar. Although there are fewer events with a total change of zero, there are several events with individual poll changes that cancel out. In fact, all of the events in the figure above except for the “basket of deplorables,” Debate #3, and Comey Letter to Congress have poll changes that cancel out. The fact that the poll changes cancel each other out supports the argument that the impact of these events is minimal and will dissipate prior to the election because the impact on voters is already not lasting past one or two polls following the event.

When looking at the outcome of the changes in support in the swing states as displayed in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, it appears as though the hypothesis is still supported. There is no clear pattern that emerges among the states, but it is evident that most events have some sort of impact that dissipates prior to the final poll. Additionally, the results in these states highlight the reason that these states are classified as swing states. For example, in Table 3.1, Ohio demonstrates that the impact of these events can be a little unpredictable in swing states, but that the effects are not lasting to the end of the campaign. Interestingly, in Ohio, Trump’s support dips after Clinton made the “basket of deplorables” comment, but then recovers prior to the end of the campaign. One would expect that Clinton’s support would have been affected by this comment, not Trump’s. This change in support is potentially a result of some additional factor that is not being accounted for within the data. Additionally, Clinton loses support after the first debate, which was seen as a Clinton victory, but then also recovers by the end of the campaign (Cillizza 2016). Although these changes do not align with shifts in the expected direction, the changes do still support the hypothesis that a shift will occur but will dissipate prior to Election Day.

The numbers appear to support this hypothesis, but it is important to note that the data do not account for the margin of error in the aggregated data or for undecideds choosing for whom

they will vote within these changing numbers. Although these aspects are not accounted for, the results still present valuable information. These poll results report the proportion of the two party vote that each candidate is predicted to earn, but changes within these polls could be due to voters deciding for whom to cast their vote. Some of this can be accounted for by looking at the results from several safe states to determine if the same type of variation is present.

Table 3.3 Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Arizona

Arizona						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	+2	+1	-2	+1	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/22 2 nd Poll: 9/23-10/6 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+2	0	0	+2	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	+1	-4	+2	-1	Poll Prior: 9/9-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/23-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	0	-3	+3	0	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-4	0	+2	-2	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	-3	+4	-1	0	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-4	0	+2	-2	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	-3	+4	-1	0	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-4	0	+2	-2	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	-3	+4	-1	0	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	0	+2	0	+2	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/24-11/6 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	0	-1	0	-1	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+5	n/a	0	+5	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/24-11/6 2 nd Poll: N/A Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	-1	n/a	0	-1	

Data for this table are drawn from Ipsos polls conducted from August 26, 2016 to November 6, 2016. Change in support is shown from the poll prior to the event to the first poll following the event, from the first poll following the event to the second poll

following the event, and from the second poll following the event to the final poll of the campaign ending on November 6. For additional information on the changes in poll levels see Appendix B.

In Arizona, the individual poll changes are greater, but the total change for most events is low, with all but one total change falling at or below ± 2 . Additionally, there are four instances where the total change is zero. These lower changes in the level of support make sense in a safe state because a majority of voters likely already know for whom they will vote and are less likely to be influenced by campaign visits. Interestingly, all of these total changes of zero occur with the Democratic results (Debate #1, Trump Tax Return Controversy, AH Video and Podesta Emails, and Debate #2). This lack of change in support for Clinton is particularly interesting because her chances of winning in Arizona were slated at about 33% (Silver 2016). It would follow that voter preference would shift more in regards to Clinton, even if in a negative way in this situation, rather than showing minimal changes in her support overall.

Table 3.4 Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Georgia

Georgia						
Event	Party	□ after first poll	□ after second poll	□ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	-2	+5	-3	0	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/22 2 nd Poll: 9/23-9/29 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+5	0	-1	+4	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	+2	+2	-2	+2	Poll Prior: 9/9-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	-1	0	-1	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	+1	-1	0	0	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-2	+2	-1	-1	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	+1	-1	0	0	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-2	+2	-1	-1	

Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	0	0	0	0	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/14-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/28-11/3 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	0	-1	-1	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	-1	0	0	-1	Poll Prior: 10/7-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/14-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/28-11/3 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	-1	0	+1	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	0	0	0	0	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/28-11/3 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	-1	0	-1	

Data for this table are drawn from *Ipsos* polls conducted from August 26, 2016 to November 6, 2016. Change in support is shown from the poll prior to the event to the first poll following the event, from the first poll following the event to the second poll following the event, and from the second poll following the event to the final poll of the campaign ending on November 6. For additional information on the changes in poll levels see Appendix B.

The results in Georgia are similar in that there are several instances with a total change of zero, however these are not all focused on the Democratic candidate. Out of the fourteen results, five show total changes of zero and only two are above +2. The remaining changes are at ± 1 .

Additionally, Debate #1, Trump Tax Controversy, and AH Video and Podesta Emails all show poll changes that cancel one another out. Once again, the results in this individual state appear to support the conclusion that the effects from these events do not linger long term.

Table 3.5 *Ipsos* Polls Change in Support- Texas

Texas						
Event	Party	□ after first poll	□ after second poll	□ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	+3	-3	+1	+1	Poll Prior: 9/2-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/15 2 nd Poll: 9/16-9/22 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-2	+4	+6	+8	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	+2	+7	-8	+1	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	-2	+7	+6	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	+2	+7	-8	+1	Poll Prior: 9/23-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	-2	+7	+6	

AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	+7	-5	-3	-1	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-2	+7	0	+5	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	+7	-5	-3	-1	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-2	+7	0	+5	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	-4	+1	0	-3	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-5	+5	0	0	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+1	0	0	+1	Poll Prior: 10/21-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/28-11/3 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+6	-1	0	+5	

Data for this table are drawn from *Ipsos* polls conducted from September 2, 2016 to November 6, 2016. Change in support is shown from the poll prior to the event to the first poll following the event, from the first poll following the event to the second poll following the event, and from the second poll following the event to the final poll of the campaign ending on November 6. For additional information on the changes in poll levels see Appendix B.

The final safe state being examined is Texas. The results in Texas are particularly interesting because the individual poll changes are rather large, but the total changes are low in several instances. For example, when looking at the Republican results for Debate #1, the total change is +1, but the previous poll changes are +2, +7, and -8. It is interesting that there are such large fluctuations in a safe state like Texas, especially for the Republican candidate who is highly favored in Texas. The results following the AH Video and the Podesta Emails also show an interesting outcome. Once again, looking at Trump's results, the individual polls show changes of +7, -5, and -3 for a total change of -1. When looking at the directional changes that occur, Trump gains support in the first poll following both the first debate and the tax controversy, despite the expectation that both of these events would decrease his level of support. Additionally, his support appears to have jumped notably following the release of the *Access Hollywood* video, although it decreases again by the second poll following the event. This is also the day the story was released regarding Clinton's leaked emails, however, most polls reflected

changes more in favor of Clinton than Trump in terms of these two events. These results appear quite different from the results in other states, but they still support the hypothesis because most of the events showed some change in support that dissipated prior to Election Day.

When considering the results for tables 3.1 through 3.5, it is important to acknowledge the fact that some of the impacts of events overlap. Because the events occurred close to one another, it is highly likely that some of the impacts had not fully dissipated by the time an additional event occurred. This likely causes some changes in the results measuring the impact on predicted voter choice. Because it is nearly impossible to separate out the impact that each individual event caused, it is important to be aware of the potential for overlapped impacts when viewing the results and drawing conclusions regarding the implications of the data. Although this may weaken the conclusions drawn from this data, the results still provide meaningful insight into the role of discrete events in the campaign.

As demonstrated in the above tables, it appears that most discrete events or “October surprises” that occurred during the campaign had some effect on the polls, however, most of the fluctuations dissipated by Election Day. Although it is important to account for these discrete events when looking at polling data from the campaign, these data demonstrate that events did not play a major role in altering the outcome of the election. Because this data analysis establishes the role that discrete events play in the campaign, analysis can now focus on the impact of campaign visits. Although the discrete events focused on do not cover all newsworthy events throughout the campaign, they captured the largest stories of the campaign from September 5, 2016 to November 6, 2016. By focusing on the major events of the campaign and determining their impact, the same conclusion could be extended to lesser events that occurred. With the new conclusion that these events do not directly alter the outcome of the election, more

focus can be given to the impact of campaign appearances without dedicating additional resources to the impact of the media, including both the news media as well as advertising efforts by candidates on the outcome of the election. Although the media and canvassing efforts likely play a role in the election, the scope of this thesis does not allow for a more in depth analysis of the role of the news media and advertising beyond the discrete events just covered.

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis focuses on the impact that campaign visits have on the level of support for each candidate. The prediction is that as the number of campaign appearances increases, so will support for that candidate, relative to his or her opponent. By looking at relative changes in support, decisions by undecided voters can be accounted for within the data as well. The net change shows not only an increase in support for one particular candidate, but accounts for increases that have occurred for both candidates, which could be due to undecideds choosing for whom to vote. Looking at net changes shows the difference in support between candidates, accounting for potential increases for both candidates coming from undecided voters choosing for whom they will vote. This hypothesis considers candidate and surrogate visits as one variable, which also helps to account for the disparity between Trump's surrogates and Clinton's surrogates. Because the data only tap the total number of visits and not the number of surrogates conducting the visits, the differing number of surrogates is not relevant. Additionally, the data do not account for visits conducted by surrogates and candidates together. Although this consideration is not present within the analysis of the results, potential voters would have exposure to both the candidate and the surrogate, so these visits are counted as both a surrogate and a candidate visit. Even though Clinton had more surrogates, she made fewer visits than

Trump. This helped to even out their total visit numbers, with a total of 247 Republican campaign appearances and 298 Democratic campaign appearances.

When collecting data for H2, aggregated state polls from the FiveThirtyEight election analysis are used to calculate changes in the level of support for each candidate in the states under consideration. Once again, the fourteen states previously mentioned are used to measure the possible impact of campaign visits on changes in predicted voter choice levels. A comparison of means table is created to show the relationship between the change in level of support for a candidate and the total number of campaign visits. This table compares the change in support from the first poll of the campaign to the final poll of the campaign, taking into consideration changes in the opponent’s support as well, with the overall number of campaign visits that occurred during the campaign. Table 3.6 shows Trump’s visits relative to Clinton’s as well as Trump’s change in support relative to Clinton’s from the first poll of the campaign to the final poll of the campaign. For this particular hypothesis, the states are considered the cases or observations examined, providing a total of 14 test cases. This approach allows for a thorough examination of the changes that occurred in a candidate’s level of support by allowing for comparison across the states being examined, rather than simply looking at the results in one particular state.

Table 3.6 Impact of Campaign Visits on Trump’s level of Support- Safe and Swing States

Trump's visits relative to Clinton's	Average Change in Trump support relative to Clinton's	States
-25 – -20	-1.90	1
-19 – -15	0	0
-14 – -10	-0.85	2
-9 – -5	-1.30	2
-4 – 0	1.12	3
1 – 5	1.26	4

6 – 10	-1.65	2
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Data for this table are drawn from the FiveThirtyEight aggregated state polls. The table shows Trump’s mean support relative to Clinton’s mean support. This calculation is based on the net change in support for Trump minus the net change in support for Clinton from the first poll on September 5, 2016 to the final poll on November 7, 2016. The number of visits, also from September 5 through November 7, includes both candidate and surrogate visits. For a full list of states and the number of visits in each state see Appendix C.

At first look, the data do not appear to support this hypothesis. As the number of Trump visits relative to Clinton increases, there is no clear pattern in the average level of support. Although nine of the fourteen instances move in the expected direction, they do not move in a linear fashion. For instance, in Table 3.6 Trump’s average support is 1.26 points higher than Clinton’s in states where he visits 1 to 5 times more than Clinton. However, in states where he visits 6 to 10 times more than Clinton, his support on average is 1.65 points lower than Clinton’s. This inconsistency in the results leads to a rejection of the hypothesis. One additional factor to consider when looking at the results is the possibility that like the impact of discrete events, the impacts of campaign visits could also be dissipating throughout the campaign. This is very possible, especially since the data are only looking at the first and last poll of the campaign and do not look at fluctuations throughout the campaign. Although this is a possibility, this research does not look at the changes throughout the campaign in association with visits beyond the figures available in Appendix D.

An additional perspective on this hypothesis can be seen by examining the results separated by swing and safe states. (See Tables 3.7 and 3.8.)

Table 3.7 Impact of Campaign Visits- Swing States

Trump’s visits relative to Clinton’s	Average Change in Trump support relative to Clinton’s	States
-25 – -20	-1.90	1
-19 – -15		
-14 – -10	-0.85	2
-9 – -5	-1.60	1
-4 – 0		

1 – 5	0.10	1
6 – 10	-1.00	1
Total	-0.88	6

Number of visits is calculated as Trump’s net visits, accounting for the number of visits also made by Clinton’s campaign. Average change in support is Trump’s net change in support from the first poll of the campaign to the last poll of the campaign, also accounting for changes in Clinton’s support. Visits includes both candidate and surrogate visits.

Table 3.8 Impact of Campaign Visits- Safe States

Trump’s visits relative to Clinton’s	Average Change in Trump support relative to Clinton’s	States
-9 – -5	-1.00	1
-4 – 0	1.12	3
0 – 5	0.85	3
6 – 10	-2.30	1
Total	-0.33	8

Number of visits is calculated as Trump’s net visits, accounting for the number of visits also made by Clinton’s campaign. Average change in support is Trump’s net change in support from the first poll of the campaign to the last poll of the campaign, also accounting for changes in Clinton’s support. Visits includes both candidate and surrogate visits.

When looking at the data separated by safe and swing states, a similar conclusion emerges.

Tables 3.7 and 3.8 do not support the hypothesis. Once again, the results are not linear. For example, in Table 3.7, Trump’s average level of support relative to Clinton’s is only positive once, at 0.10 points in the 1 to 5 visits category. Even though he has 6 to 10 more visits than Clinton in some states, his average level of support is one point lower than Clinton’s in these states. Additionally, when looking at the results from safe states (Table 3.8), in the states where Trump has 4 fewer to the same number of visits as Clinton, his average support is 1.12 points higher than Clinton’s. Trump’s level of support is an average of 2.30 points lower than Clinton’s even though he has 6 to 10 more visits than Clinton in these particular states. These results do not support the hypothesis that as the number of campaign visits increases, so will the support for one candidate, relative to his or her opponent. According to these results, there does not appear to be a relationship between the number of visits and the change in support for a candidate.

Based on previous research by Hill, Rodriquez, and Wooden, it would seem that impacts would

be more apparent once the data were divided by swing and safe states, but that does not appear to be the case. Once swing and safe states are separated, the results appear even less conclusive than when the states are considered together. This seems to go against the research conducted by Hill, Rodriguez, and Wooden (2010), stating that if impacts from campaign visits existed they would be more likely observed in safe states. It is likely that this difference in findings is due to a small sample size and a lower number of test cases or data points.

Although these results suggest that visits did not cause an impact on the net change in support for a candidate, they did not examine the impact that a single visit may have had on support based on short term or day-to-day changes in the polls. In order to have a better perspective on the impact a single visit can have on the level of support for a candidate, one can examine figures showing aggregated state polls along with the occurrence of visits. Because the data has been aggregated to show the change reflected in multiple polls, most day-to-day changes are so minor, they do not present enough information to draw conclusions regarding the hypothesis, but they can still be used to provide an alternative perspective. These graphs help to show the frequency and occurrence of visits alongside shifts in the polls. (See Appendix D.) These figures can also be used to examine whether impacts from visits may dissipate throughout the campaign as do the impacts from discrete events.

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis builds on the findings of the second hypothesis, focusing on the differing impact of candidate versus surrogate visits on predicted voter choice. The prediction is that visits by a presidential or vice-presidential candidate would have a greater impact on a candidate's level of support than would a surrogate visit. In order to test this hypothesis, the

FiveThirtyEight aggregated state polls are once again utilized as a source of voter preference. Only the first poll and the last poll of the campaign are used, looking at the overall change in support for each candidate. These two polls are utilized in order to look at the total impact that campaign visits might have, rather than looking at individual changes that might occur throughout the campaign. Results for this hypothesis are separated by party, showing the impact for both Republicans and Democrats. Because there is a difference in the number of surrogates, analyzing the data by party will help to account for some of this difference. There is no assumption that each party will present different results, but this separation can allow the researcher to also look at the effectiveness of each parties' surrogates. Safe states and swing states are treated equally in this test because the focus is on the overall impacts of candidate versus surrogate visits rather than on the differing impacts within the states.

Table 3.9 Impact of Republican Candidate and Surrogate Visits

Republican Candidate Visits			Republican Surrogate Visits		
Number of Visits	Avg. Change in Support	States	Number of Visits	Avg. Change in Support	States
0-10	1.04	7	0-10	1.08	9
11-20	1.70	3	11-20	1.01	4
21-30	2.44	3	21-30	3.50	1
31-40	2.80	1	31-40		
Total	1.99	14	Total	1.86	14

Average change in support is calculated from the FiveThirtyEight aggregated state polls' first and last poll of the campaign. The number of visits is for the duration of the campaign from Labor Day through Election Day. There were a total of 161 Republican candidate visits and a total of 86 Republican surrogate visits.

When looking at Table 3.9, it appears as though candidate visits did have a positive impact on predicted voter choice, as the average change in support increases as the number of Republican candidate visits increases for each interval. For example, when there are 0 to 10 Republican candidate visits, the average change in support from the first poll of the campaign to the final poll of the campaign is 1.04 points. This increase in support continues as the numbers of visits increases. When Republican candidates Donald Trump or Mike Pence visit 31 to 40 times, the average change in support is 2.80 points. However, this does not continue for the Republican

surrogate visits. First of all, there are fewer surrogate visits than candidate visits. Second, the average change in the 11 to 20 visit range does not appear to support the hypothesis, as the change of 1.01 is less than the change of 1.08 points in the 0 to 10 visits range. Because there is not a fourth value, it is difficult to know if this value is an outlier or if the data simply do not support the hypothesis.

Another option for analysis of these results is to look at the averages for both candidate and surrogate visits. When looking at the averages in Table 3.9, the average for Republican candidate visits is higher by 0.13 percentage points than the average for Republican surrogate visits. The mean seems to be a more reliable measure in this case, showing that candidate visits did have a greater impact on support than did surrogate visits. This conclusion seems logical considering there are more candidate visits by Republican candidates than their surrogates. Therefore, Republican visits appear to loosely support the hypothesis, although the number of instances lending support to this is rather low. One additional point to consider when determining the accuracy of the results is the low number of states considered. Although the analysis could have included more states, the results are limited to reporting on only fourteen states which could potentially lead to skewed results. Also, the results are based only on data from one polling agency, which once again limits the validity of the results to the accuracy of the polling agency. Because of this, it is difficult to conclude that these results would be confirmed if tested in more states or with additional polls.

Table 3.10 Impact of Democratic Candidate and Surrogate Visits

Democratic Candidate Visits			Democratic Surrogate Visits		
Number of Visits	Avg. Change in Support	States	Number of Visits	Avg. Change in Support	States
0-10	0.62	10	0-10	0.61	9
11-20	0.63	3	11-20		
21-30			21-30	-0.10	1
31-40	0.90	1	31-40	0.70	4
Total	0.72	14	Total	0.40	14

Average change in support is calculated from the FiveThirtyEight aggregated state polls' first and last poll of the campaign. The number of visits is for the duration of the campaign from Labor Day through Election Day. There were a total of 118 Democratic candidate visits and a total of 180 Democratic surrogate visits.

Table 3.10 shows the impact that Democratic candidate and surrogate visits have on predicted voter choice. When looking at the impact candidate visits have, it appears as though the results did move in a positive linear direction, although the change in support at the 0 to 10 visit range (0.62) and the 11 to 20 visit range (0.63) are only 0.01 point apart. Additionally, neither Hillary Clinton nor Tim Kaine made between 21 and 30 visits in any one state. The results for Democratic surrogate visits do not appear to move in a positive linear manner. With the exception of the 21 to 30 visit range which showed a decrease in support of 0.10, the results could potentially move in this manner, but it is too difficult to conclude this since no surrogate visited a state between 11 and 20 times. It appears as though for the Democrats, candidate visits have more of an impact on predicted voter choice than did surrogate visits based on an average change of 0.72 for candidate visits and an average change of 0.40 for surrogate visits. This also appears to loosely support the hypothesis. This is particularly interesting when considering the Democratic results because there are 180 Democratic surrogate visits and only 118 Democratic candidate visits in the 14 states examined here; this might have meant that surrogate visits have a greater impact due simply to the fact that there are more appearances and a greater chance for voters to interact with surrogates. However, this does not appear to be the case and voters seem to be impacted to a higher degree by candidates than surrogates, even if the surrogates are making more public appearances and interacting with voters more.

Although the data appear to support this hypothesis, there are several important aspects of this analysis to point out. First of all, because the analysis looks at Republican and Democratic results separately, there is no consideration for visits occurring at the same time by a candidate of the opposing party. Second, there is also no consideration for the number of times a candidate or

surrogate visits a particular state. This could lead to skewed results because it does not isolate the impact that these multiple visits could be having, especially when potentially being compared to a state without multiple visits. Third, this hypothesis looks only at the possible impact of surrogate and candidate visits, but once again does not consider alternative factors that could lead to changes in predicted voter choice. So although the data appear to loosely support the hypothesis, it is important to remember the context of the tested data and also account for these additional implications. One final aspect to note regarding these results is the fact that these results are unlikely to produce statistically significant values if tested further and would not be likely to be reproduced in a larger set of data or in a real-world setting. The hypothesis is loosely supported, but there are several factors that could reverse this finding if further data testing were conducted.

Summary

The results show that two out of the three hypotheses are supported, although loosely. The impacts of discrete events do dissipate prior to Election Day. Campaign appearances have minimal effects on changes in predicted voter choice, but it appears as though candidate visits have a greater impact than do surrogate visits. Although the major expectation of the research about campaign appearances is not supported, there are still many implications of this research. By exploring the impact of campaign appearances with a specific focus on candidate and surrogate visits, the conclusions of the data analysis have led to several possible expansions of this research that could potentially develop the field of research and lead to new areas of exploration. These implications will be discussed further in the concluding chapter.

Chapter Four: Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

The research in this thesis examined two major facets of the American presidential campaign process. By focusing the hypotheses on the impact of discrete events throughout the campaign as well as on the influence that campaign appearances have on predicted voter choice, a more complete picture of the importance of campaigns can be viewed. The first hypothesis surrounding the impact of discrete events is supported. Discrete events do in fact affect voter preferences when they occur, but the shifts in preference do not appear to endure until Election Day. In a world where the news media essentially have unrestricted access to the lives of candidates, this finding could be seen as a positive for the candidates. However, this dissipating impact could be a negative for voters. It is possible that if candidates know that these “October surprises” have little chance of changing the final outcome of the election, they will be less concerned with avoiding scandal or other negative newsworthy events. This is just one possible implication of this finding. On a positive note, it is also possible that these types of events could also begin receiving less news media attention if their lack of lasting impact is revealed.

Once a conclusion is reached regarding the role that discrete events play in the campaign, the focus is shifted to the results of the other hypotheses. The second hypothesis does not appear to be supported. Although presidential candidates spend millions of dollars every election cycle and travel the country visiting potential voters, the evidence presented in this thesis does not indicate that these visits make an impact on projected voter decisions. Although it is important to remember that there has not been a one-sided campaign by which to examine this hypothesis, it

is important to point out the lack of impact that campaign appearances, whether by candidates or surrogates, have on changing support throughout the general election campaign.

This poses a potential future question for researchers surrounding the use of campaign resources and time. Should candidates change the way they campaign in order to take advantage of other avenues rather than visits? This question could lead to future research on other aspects of campaigns that appear to influence voters the most. Although the second hypothesis did not find support, the third hypothesis is supported loosely, showing that candidate appearances may carry more weight with potential voters than do surrogate visits. It is possible that candidates would not need endorsements from public figures in order to run a successful campaign. When addressing the issue of endorsements and the use of surrogates, according to the findings here, it appears that it does not matter how well known the surrogates are, voters would still prefer to hear from a candidate. This is particularly interesting in 2016 with several former presidents on the campaign trail. Even though the surrogates are very popular, voters evidently are more influenced by an appearance from a candidate than by an appearance from a surrogate. While these data show that candidates have a greater impact on voters than do surrogates, it is possible that these differences in the reported voter preference could be due to voter turnout or other efforts such as advertising and voter mobilization campaigns. Once again, due to the limited nature of this thesis, the data analyzed do not account for these additional factors that could likely have an impact on reported predicted voter choice.

Although this research covered campaign appearances extensively, several other facets of campaigns could be examined to extend this research. In order to fully understand the dynamic nature of campaigns, it would be necessary to analyze the role of the news media and advertising, both at the state and national levels, as well as looking at the demographics of voters

and how different voters were specifically influenced by campaigns. Additionally, it would be interesting to do further research on the use of surrogates and to attempt to determine the individual impact that specific types of surrogates had to see if whom a candidate selects as a surrogate plays into their impact on voters. These are possible extensions for future research that could add to the field of campaign research.

Conclusion

Although many researchers have concluded that campaigns matter, it appears as though campaign appearances do not matter much to voters, at least for affecting reported voter choice. Extensive research has been conducted on the impact of campaigns with multiple findings reported by many different researchers. Despite the fact that millions of dollars are spent on presidential campaigns each cycle, it appears as though campaign appearances during the presidential campaign do not ultimately influence the outcome of the election. Although appearances do shift support slightly, none of these shifts seem to produce a weighty enough impact to change the final outcome of the election. Additionally, discrete events throughout the campaign appear to have an even smaller impact on the final decisions of voters. Prior to this research, little had been explored by researchers regarding the impact of campaign visits, both by candidates and surrogates.

This thesis has analyzed the impact that candidates and surrogates have on predicted voter choice, focusing on the 2016 presidential election. After looking at a selection of both swing states and safe states, the conclusion is that campaign appearances have a minimal effect on voter decision making, but that candidate visits have a greater impact than do surrogate visits. This finding does not align with the original prediction that campaign visits would impact

predicted voter choice. Although the data examined show that candidate visits have a slightly greater impact on predicted voter choice than do surrogate visits, it is important to remember that these results do not take into consideration the impact of media coverage, referring both to media sponsored by candidates and news media covering the candidates, particularly in the realm of an ad-blitz that could have coincided with the occurrence of these visits. Although the media coverage that candidates receive and sponsor potentially has a great impact on the decision making process of voters, the limitations of this research did not allow for a deeper investigation into this role.

When considering the implications of this research, several areas could emerge for future research. First, additional research could be conducted looking into the impact that media coverage of the campaign has on the outcome of the election. Because the research showed that campaign visits did not impact predicted voter choice, future research could look into what aspects of the campaign do impact voter decision making. Although the focus on discrete events helped to explain the role of some of the news media influences present in the campaign, additional time and resources could be dedicated to this area of focus in the future, particularly looking at the media coverage that is sponsored by a candidate. Advertising is a large area of the campaign that could potentially be influencing changes in voter preference. Without further research into this area, it is difficult to conclude that the results within this paper are definitive because it is difficult to completely account for the role of advertising and media coverage. Second, now that this research shows that campaign appearances evidently lead to minimal changes in the outcomes of elections, further research could be dedicated to examining what factors of the campaign do influence voter preferences, such as the previously mentioned television advertisements, posters and signs, and press conferences. If campaign appearances are

not leading to consequential changes in voter preferences, it is important to investigate what is leading to changes in order to better understand the function of campaigns but also for candidates to run more efficient campaigns.

An additional area of potential research emerges when looking at alternative dependent variables. It is evident that predicted voter choice is not affected by campaign appearances. In order to extend this research in additional directions, future research could be conducted to test whether campaign appearances lead to impacts regarding other areas of the campaign, such as voter turnout or how knowledgeable voters are regarding the candidates and the issues of the campaign. Looking back to the theoretical framework of this thesis, it would be interesting for researchers to extend this exploration into how much campaign events effect how knowledgeable different types of voters are. Knowing that certain populations of voters are targeted by the campaign, it would be interesting to examine what impact events specifically have on different groups of voters. Additionally, future research could focus more on voter mobilization and look into what impacts campaign events had on voter turnout, especially among undecideds, which is the group least likely to vote in elections. By shifting the focus of research to alternate impacts, it is possible that researchers could learn more about how campaigns function to inform and influence the decision making of voters, as well as to what knowledge regarding the candidates and the election voters are most responsive.

The importance of campaign events has been debated for decades, but researchers are still inconclusive on the role that they play. Through the collection and analysis of 2016 election data, this thesis has concluded that campaign appearances do not cause meaningful change in predicted voter choice, and the manner in which campaigns are conducted should be reevaluated. Although discrete events draw major attention from the news media, voters do not appear to be

affected by these events in the long term. Because of these findings, clarification has been provided on the importance that campaigns play and the door has been opened for future research into the role that campaigns should take and on how voter preferences are most influenced throughout the campaign.

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Appendix A

Chart of Discrete Events

Date	Event	Sources Cited	Links
9/10/2016	Basket of Deplorables	fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/putting-hillarys-basket-of-deplorables-in-context/
		ABC News	http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/key-moments-2016-election/story?id=43289663
		WSJ	https://www.wsj.com/articles/hillary-clintons-deplorables-comment-clashes-with-recent-pitch-1473638792?mod=searchresults&page=31&pos=10
		NY Times	https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/11/us/politics/hillary-clinton-basket-of-deplorables.html
10/3/2016	Trump Tax Returns	fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-tax-returns-story-may-eat-up-precious-time-for-trump/
		politico	https://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/2016-election-biggest-stories-230790
		NY Times	https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/02/us/politics/donald-trump-taxes.html
		NY Times	https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/01/us/october-surprises-dont-necessarily-sway-elections-or-occur-in-october.html
		WSJ	https://www.wsj.com/articles/donald-trump-urged-congress-to-loosen-tax-rules-in-early-1990s-1475786072?mod=searchresults&page=25&pos=6
10/7/2016	Access Hollywood Video	fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/will-the-trump-tape-have-a-bigger-effect-on-the-race-than-past-controversies/
		fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/trump-sexual-assault-chat/
		fivethirtyeight	http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/election-update-polls-show-potential-fallout-from-trump-tape/
		politico	https://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/2016-election-biggest-stories-230790
		ABC News	http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/key-moments-2016-election/story?id=43289663
		NY Times	https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/01/us/october-surprises-dont-necessarily-sway-elections-or-occur-in-october.html
		WSJ	https://www.wsj.com/articles/video-puts-spotlight-on-

			donald-trumps-history-of-lewd-comments-1475985718?mod=searchresults&page=24&pos=1
10/7/2016	WikiLeaks Podesta Emails	politico	https://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/2016-election-biggest-stories-230790
		ABC news	http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/key-moments-2016-election/story?id=43289663
		NY Times	https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/01/us/october-surprises-dont-necessarily-sway-elections-or-occur-in-october.html
		WSJ	https://www.wsj.com/articles/democrats-look-to-neutralize-impact-of-leaked-speeches-1476058832?mod=searchresults&page=23&pos=14
		fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/WikiLeaks-hillary-clinton/
10/28/2016	Comey Letter to Congress	fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/election-update-the-fbi-is-back-this-time-with-anthony-weiner/
		fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/election-update-four-ways-forward-for-clinton-after-the-fbi-news/
		fivethirtyeight	https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/election-update-comey-or-not-trump-continues-to-narrow-gap-with-clinton/
		ABC News	http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/key-moments-2016-election/story?id=43289663
		NY Times	https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/01/us/october-surprises-dont-necessarily-sway-elections-or-occur-in-october.html
		WSJ	https://www.wsj.com/articles/relevant-emails-in-clinton-probe-could-be-identified-by-election-day-experts-say-1477941736?mod=searchresults&page=16&pos=1

Appendix B

Change in Support Following Discrete Events- Ipsos Polls

Data for these charts are drawn from *Ipsos* polls conducted from September 5, 2016 to November 6, 2016. Change in support is shown from the poll prior to the event to the first poll following the event, from the first poll following the event to the second poll following the event, and from the second poll following the event to the final poll of the campaign ending on November 6.

Ipsos Polls Change In Support- Florida

Florida						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	-3	-5	+2	-6	Poll Prior: 9/2-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/15 2 nd Poll: 9/16-9/22 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	+3	-1	+1	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	+1	-2	+3	+2	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/23-9/29 2 nd Poll: 9/30-10/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	+1	-1	-1	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-2	-2	+5	1	Poll Prior: 9/23-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/15 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	-1	0	0	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-2	+2	+3	+3	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	0	0	-1	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-2	+2	+3	+3	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	0	0	-1	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	+1	+2	0	+3	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	-2	+1	0	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+2	0	0	+2	Poll Prior: 10/21-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-2	+1	0	-1	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Michigan

Michigan						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	+1	-2	+6	+5	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/22 2 nd Poll: 9/23-9/29 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	-4	+7	+3	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	-4	-1	+8	+3	Poll Prior: 9/9-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	-1	+2	+3	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-2	+4	+4	+6	Poll Prior: 9/23-9/29 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+5	+1	+1	+5	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-1	+4	+4	+7	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	+1	+1	+1	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-1	+4	+4	+7	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	+1	+1	+1	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	-4	+5	+3	+4	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-4	+3	+2	+1	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+5	+3	0	+8	Poll Prior: 10/21-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	+2	0	+5	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- North Carolina

North Carolina						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	-1	-1	+4	+2	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/16-9/29

	Democratic	+2	-4	+2	0	2 nd Poll: 9/30-10/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	-1	-1	+5	+3	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-4	+2	0	-2	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-1	+1	+4	+4	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	+1	-1	+2	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-1	+1	+4	+4	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	+1	-1	+2	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-1	+1	+4	+4	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	+1	-1	+2	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	+1	+5	-2	+4	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/14-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	-1	-1	-1	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+5	-2	0	+3	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	-1	0	-2	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Virginia

Virginia						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	+1	+2	+1	+4	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/15 2 nd Poll: 9/16-9/22 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-3	0	-1	-4	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	-1	-2	+4	+1	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	-1	-3	-1	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-1	-2	+4	+1	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+2	-1	-3	-2	

AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-2	+5	-1	+2	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	-1	-2	-4	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	0	0	+2	+2	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	-1	-2	-4	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	0	+3	-1	+2	Poll Prior: 10/7-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	0	-2	-3	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+3	-1	0	+2	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	-2	0	-2	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- California

California						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	-8	+4	+4	0	Poll Prior: 9/2-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/15 2 nd Poll: 9/16-9/22 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	-3	-1	-1	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	0	-6	+10	+4	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	+5	-7	-1	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	+4	-6	+10	+8	Poll Prior: 9/23-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-3	+5	-7	-5	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-6	+4	+6	+4	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+5	-2	-5	-2	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-2	0	+6	+4	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/14-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/21-10/27 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	+1	-6	-2	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	0	+5	+1	+6	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20

	Democratic	+1	-5	-1	-5	1 st Poll: 10/21-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+5	+1	0	+6	Poll Prior: 10/21-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-5	-1	0	-6	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Colorado

Colorado						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	+1	+1	-3	-1	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/22 2 nd Poll: 9/23-10/6 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+1	+3	+3	+7	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	+1	-4	+1	-2	Poll Prior: 9/9-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/23-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/20 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+3	0	+3	+6	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-4	0	+1	+5	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/27 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+2	-2	+3	+3	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-4	0	+1	-3	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/21-11/2 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	0	+4	-1	+3	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-4	0	+1	-3	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/21-11/2 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	0	+4	-1	+3	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	+1	0	0	+1	Poll Prior: 10/7-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-11/3 2 nd Poll: 10/24-11/6 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	611/ Democratic	+3	0	0	+3	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	-1	n/a	0	-1	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/24-11/6 2 nd Poll: N/A Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+2	n/a	0	+2	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Illinois

Illinois						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	+2	-5	+8	+5	Poll Prior: 9/2-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/15 2 nd Poll: 9/16-9/22 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	0	-1	-2	-3	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	0	-4	+12	+8	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/13 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+4	+3	-9	-2	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-4	+1	+11	+8	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	-3	-6	-6	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-4	+1	+11	+8	Poll Prior: 9/30-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	-3	-6	-6	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	+1	+7	+4	+12	Poll Prior: 10/7-10/13 1 st Poll: 10/14-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/21-10/27 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-3	-1	-5	-9	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	+7	+5	-1	+11	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-10/27 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	-5	0	-6	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	+5	-1	-1	+3	Poll Prior: 10/21-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-4	0	0	-4	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Indiana

Indiana						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	-2	-4	+4	-2	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/22 2 nd Poll: 9/23-10/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	+2	+1	+6	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	-4	-1	+5	0	Poll Prior: 9/9-9/22

	Democratic	+2	+1	0	+3	1 st Poll: 9/23-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/20 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	-7	+7	0	0	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/27 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+3	+1	-1	+3	
AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-1	+6	0	+5	Poll Prior: 9/23/10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	+1	-1	+1	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-1	+6	0	+5	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/27-11/2 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	+1	-1	+1	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	+6	-1	0	+5	Poll Prior: 10/7-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	+1	-3	0	-2	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	-1	+1	0	0	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/27-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/31-11/6 Final Poll: 10/31-11/6
	Democratic	-1	0	0	-1	

Ipsos Polls Change in Support- Missouri

Missouri						
Event	Party	Δ after first poll	Δ after second poll	Δ after final poll	Total Δ	Poll Dates
"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16	Republican	-2	-2	-1	-5	Poll Prior: 8/26-9/8 1 st Poll: 9/9-9/22 2 nd Poll: 9/23-10/6 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+1	+2	+3	+6	
Debate #1 09/26/16	Republican	-2	-1	0	-3	Poll Prior: 9/9-9/22 1 st Poll: 9/23-10/6 2 nd Poll: 10/7-10/20 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+2	0	+3	+5	
Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16	Republican	0	0	0	0	Poll Prior: 9/16-9/29 1 st Poll: 9/30-10/13 2 nd Poll: 10/14-10/27 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	0	+6	-2	+4	

AH Video and Podesta Emails 10/07/16	Republican	-1	-1	+1	-1	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/21-11/2 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	0	+4	-1	+3	
Debate #2 10/09/16	Republican	-1	-1	+1	-1	Poll Prior: 9/23-10/6 1 st Poll: 10/7-10/20 2 nd Poll: 10/21-11/2 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	0	+4	-1	+3	
Debate #3 10/19/16	Republican	-1	+1	0	0	Poll Prior: 10/7-10/20 1 st Poll: 10/21-11/2 2 nd Poll: 10/24-11/6 Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	+4	-1	0	+3	
Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16	Republican	0	n/a	0	0	Poll Prior: 10/14-10/27 1 st Poll: 10/24-11/6 2 nd Poll: N/A Final Poll: 10/24-11/6
	Democratic	-2	n/a	0	-2	

The following charts were created with data from *Ipsos* polls conducted in each state ranging from September 5, 2016 to November 6, 2016. The charts show results for both Republicans (R.) and Democrats (D.). The poll prior to the event shows the level of support for that candidate in the poll ending closest to the event in question. The first poll after the event shows the level of support for the poll beginning on or shortly after the event itself. The second poll after the event shows the level of support in the second poll conducted after the event occurred. The final poll refers to the level of support in the final poll of the campaign, usually ending on November 6, 2016. "Change in Support" refers to the change in support between the two preceding polls. For example, the change in support between the poll prior to the event and the first poll after the event, the change in support between the first poll after and the second poll after the event, or the change in support between the second poll after and the final poll. The change in support shown is only between two polls at a time and does not represent any net changes in support. Because of when some of the later events took place, the second poll after the event was not available or was the same as the final poll of the campaign. In instances where this was the case, "n/a" has been entered into the chart.

"Basket of Deplorables" 09/10/16															
Poll	FL	MI	NC	OH	PA	VA	AZ	CA	CO	GA	IL	IN	MO	TX	National
R. Poll Prior to Event	47	41	45	46	44	37	46	32	43	48	34	56	53	48	35
R. 1st Poll After Event	50	42	44	44	44	38	48	24	44	46	36	54	51	51	38
(change in support)	-3	+1	-1	-2	0	+1	+2	-8	+1	-2	+2	-2	-2	+3	+3

R. 2nd Poll After Event	45	39	43	43	46	40	49	28	45	51	31	50	49	48	36
(change in support)	-5	-2	-1	-1	+2	+2	+1	+4	+1	+5	-5	-4	-2	-3	-2
R. Final Poll	47	45	47	46	45	41	47	32	42	48	39	54	48	49	39
(change in support)	+2	+6	+4	+3	-1	+1	-2	+4	-3	-3	+8	+4	-1	+1	+3
D. Poll Prior to Event	47	43	46	47	49	50	40	60	41	38	52	32	34	31	40
D. 1st Poll After Event	46	43	48	47	46	47	42	63	42	43	52	35	35	29	40
(change in support)	-1	0	+2	0	-3	-3	+2	+3	+1	+5	0	+3	+1	-2	0
D. 2nd Poll After Event	49	39	44	46	46	47	42	60	45	43	53	37	37	33	41
(change in support)	+3	-4	-4	-1	0	0	0	-3	+3	0	-1	+2	+2	+4	+1
D. Final Poll	48	46	46	47	48	46	42	59	48	42	51	38	40	39	42
(change in support)	-1	+7	+2	+1	+2	-1	0	-1	+3	-1	-2	+1	+3	+6	+1

Presidential Debate #1 09/26/16															
Poll	FL	MI	NC	OH	PA	VA	AZ	CA	CO	GA	IL	IN	MO	TX	National
R. Poll Prior to Event	45	42	44	43	46	40	48	28	44	46	31	54	51	48	38
R. 1st Poll After Event	46	38	43	43	43	39	49	28	45	48	31	50	49	50	37
(change in support)	+1	-4	-1	0	-3	-1	+1	0	+1	+2	0	-4	-2	+2	-1
R. 2nd Poll After Event	44	37	42	43	42	37	45	22	41	50	27	49	48	57	37
(change in support)	-2	-1	-1	0	-1	-2	-4	-6	-4	+2	-4	-1	-1	+7	0
R. Final Poll	47	45	47	46	45	41	47	32	42	48	39	54	48	49	39

(change in support)	+3	+8	+5	+3	+3	+4	+2	+10	+1	-2	+12	+5	0	-8	+2
D. Poll Prior to Event	49	43	48	46	46	47	42	60	42	43	53	35	35	33	41
D. 1st Poll After Event	48	45	44	46	49	50	42	61	45	43	57	37	37	34	43
(change in support)	-1	+2	-4	0	+3	+3	0	+1	+3	0	+4	+2	+2	+1	+2
D. 2nd Poll After Event	49	44	46	42	46	49	39	66	45	42	60	38	37	32	43
(change in support)	+1	-1	+2	-4	-3	-1	-3	+5	0	-1	+3	+1	0	-2	0
D. Final Poll	48	46	46	47	48	46	42	59	48	42	51	38	40	39	42
(change in support)	-1	+2	0	+5	+2	-3	+3	-7	+3	0	-9	0	+3	+7	-1

Trump Tax Return Controversy 10/03/16															
Poll	FL	MI	NC	OH	PA	VA	AZ	CA	CO	GA	IL	IN	MO	TX	National
R. Poll Prior to Event	46	39	44	43	42	40	49	24	45	48	33	54	48	48	37
R. 1st Poll After Event	44	37	42	43	43	39	45	28	41	49	31	47	48	50	37
(change in support)	-2	-2	-2	0	+1	-1	-4	+4	-4	+1	-2	-7	0	+2	0
R. 2nd Poll After Event	42	41	43	43	42	37	45	22	41	48	27	54	48	57	38
(change in support)	-2	+4	+1	0	-1	-2	0	-6	0	-1	-4	+7	0	+7	+1
R. Final Poll	47	45	47	46	45	41	47	32	42	48	39	54	48	49	39
(change in support)	+5	+4	+4	+3	+3	+4	+2	+10	+1	0	+12	0	0	+8	+1
D. Poll Prior to Event	48	39	48	44	45	48	42	64	45	43	53	35	36	33	43
D. 1st Poll After Event	49	44	46	46	49	50	39	61	47	41	57	38	36	34	43
(change in support)	+1	+5	-2	+2	+4	+2	-3	-3	+2	-2	+4	+3	0	+1	0

D. 2nd Poll After Event	48	45	47	42	46	49	43	66	45	43	60	39	42	32	44
(change in support)	-1	+1	+1	-4	-3	-1	+4	+5	-2	+2	+3	+1	+6	-2	+1
D. Final Poll	48	46	46	47	48	46	42	59	48	42	51	38	40	39	42
(change in support)	0	+1	-1	+5	+2	-3	-1	-7	+3	-1	-9	-1	-2	+7	-2

Access Hollywood Video Released															
WikiLeaks Podesta Emails															
10/07/16															
Poll	FL	MI	NC	OH	PA	VA	AZ	CA	CO	GA	IL	IN	MO	TX	National
R. Poll Prior to Event	44	38	43	43	43	39	49	28	45	48	31	50	49	50	37
R. 1st Poll After Event	42	37	42	43	42	37	45	22	41	49	27	49	48	57	38
(change in support)	-2	-1	-1	0	-1	-2	-4	-6	-4	+1	-4	-1	-1	+7	+1
R. 2nd Poll After Event	44	41	43	45	39	42	45	26	41	48	28	54	47	52	38
(change in support)	+2	+4	+1	+2	-3	+5	0	+4	0	-1	+1	+6	-1	-5	0
R. Final Poll	47	45	47	46	45	41	47	32	42	48	39	54	48	49	39
(change in support)	+3	+4	+4	+1	+6	-1	+2	+6	+1	0	+11	0	+1	-3	+1
D. Poll Prior to Event	49	45	44	46	49	50	42	61	45	43	57	37	37	34	43
D. 1st Poll After Event	48	44	46	42	46	49	39	66	45	41	60	38	37	32	44
(change in support)	-1	-1	+2	-4	-3	-1	-3	+5	0	-2	+3	+1	0	-2	+1
D. 2nd Poll After Event	48	45	47	45	49	48	43	64	49	43	57	39	41	39	43
(change in support)	0	+1	+1	+3	+3	-1	+4	-2	+4	+2	-3	+1	+4	+7	-1

D. Final Poll	48	46	46	47	48	46	42	59	48	42	51	38	40	39	42
(change in support)	0	+1	-1	+2	-1	-2	-1	-5	-1	-1	-6	-1	-1	0	-1

Presidential Debate #2 10/09/16															
Poll	FL	MI	NC	OH	PA	VA	AZ	CA	CO	GA	IL	IN	MO	TX	National
R. Poll Prior to Event	44	38	43	43	43	39	49	28	45	48	31	50	49	50	37
R. 1st Poll After Event	42	37	44	43	42	39	45	26	41	48	27	49	48	57	38
(change in support)	-2	-1	+1	0	-1	0	-4	-2	-4	0	-4	-1	-1	+7	+1
R. 2nd Poll After Event	44	41	49	45	39	39	45	26	41	48	28	54	47	52	38
(change in support)	+2	+4	+5	+2	-3	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+5	-1	-5	0
R. Final Poll	47	45	47	46	45	41	47	32	42	48	39	54	48	49	39
(change in support)	+3	+4	-2	+1	+6	+2	+2	+6	+1	0	+11	0	+1	-3	+1
D. Poll Prior to Event	49	45	44	46	49	50	42	61	45	43	57	37	37	34	43
D. 1st Poll After Event	48	44	48	42	46	49	39	64	45	43	60	38	37	32	44
(change in support)	-1	-1	+4	-4	-3	-1	-3	+3	0	0	+3	+1	0	-2	+1
D. 2nd Poll After Event	48	45	47	45	49	48	43	65	49	43	57	39	41	39	43
(change in support)	0	+1	-1	+3	+3	-1	+4	+1	+4	0	-3	+1	+4	+7	-1
D. Final Poll	48	46	46	47	48	46	42	59	48	42	51	38	40	39	42
(change in support)	0	+1	-1	+2	-1	-2	-1	-6	-1	-1	-6	-1	-1	0	-1

Presidential Debate #3 10/19/16
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Poll	FL	MI	NC	OH	PA	VA	AZ	CA	CO	GA	IL	IN	MO	TX	National
R. Poll Prior to Event	44	41	43	43	39	39	45	26	41	49	28	47	48	52	38
R. 1st Poll After Event	45	37	44	45	46	39	45	26	42	48	35	54	47	48	36
(change in support)	+1	-4	+1	+2	+7	0	0	0	+1	-1	+7	+7	-1	-4	-2
R. 2nd Poll After Event	47	42	49	46	45	42	47	31	42	48	40	53	48	49	36
(change in support)	+2	+5	+5	+1	-1	+3	+2	+5	0	0	+5	-1	+1	+1	0
R. Final Poll	47	45	47	46	45	41	47	32	42	48	39	54	48	49	39
(change in support)	0	+3	-2	0	0	-1	0	+1	0	0	-1	+1	0	0	+3
D. Poll Prior to Event	48	45	47	42	49	49	43	64	45	41	57	38	37	39	43
D. 1st Poll After Event	49	41	48	45	48	48	43	65	48	43	56	39	41	34	44
(change in support)	+1	-4	+1	+3	-1	-1	0	+1	+3	+2	-1	+1	+4	-5	+1
D. 2nd Poll After Event	47	44	47	46	48	48	42	60	48	42	51	36	40	39	42
(change in support)	-2	+3	-1	+1	0	0	-1	-5	0	-1	-5	-3	-1	+5	-2
D. Final Poll	48	46	46	47	48	46	42	59	48	42	51	38	40	39	42
(change in support)	+1	+2	-1	+1	0	-2	0	-1	0	0	0	+2	0	0	0

Comey Letter to Congress 10/28/16																
Poll	FL	MI	NC	OH	PA	VA	AZ	CA	CO	GA	IL	IN	MO	TX	National	
R. Poll Prior to Event	45	37	44	45	46	39	42	26	43	48	35	54	48	48	36	
R. 1st Poll After Event	47	42	49	45	45	42	47	31	42	48	40	53	48	49	37	
(change in support)	+2	+5	+5	0	-1	+3	+5	+5	-1	0	+5	-1	0	+1	+1	

R. 2nd Poll After Event	47	45	47	46	45	41	n/a	32	n/a	48	39	54	n/a	49	39
(change in support)	0	+3	-2	+1	0	-1	n/a	+1	n/a	0	-1	+1	n/a	0	+2
R. Final Poll	47	45	47	46	45	41	47	32	42	48	39	54	48	49	39
(change in support)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0
D. Poll Prior to Event	49	41	48	45	48	48	43	65	46	43	56	39	42	34	42
D. 1st Poll After Event	47	44	47	47	48	48	42	60	48	43	51	38	40	40	45
(change in support)	-2	+3	-1	+2	0	0	-1	-5	+2	0	-4	-1	-2	+6	+3
D. 2nd Poll After Event	48	46	46	47	48	46	n/a	59	n/a	42	51	38	n/a	39	42
(change in support)	+1	+2	-1	0	0	-2	n/a	-1	n/a	-1	0	0	n/a	-1	-3
D. Final Poll	48	46	46	47	48	46	42	59	48	42	51	38	40	39	42
(change in support)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix C

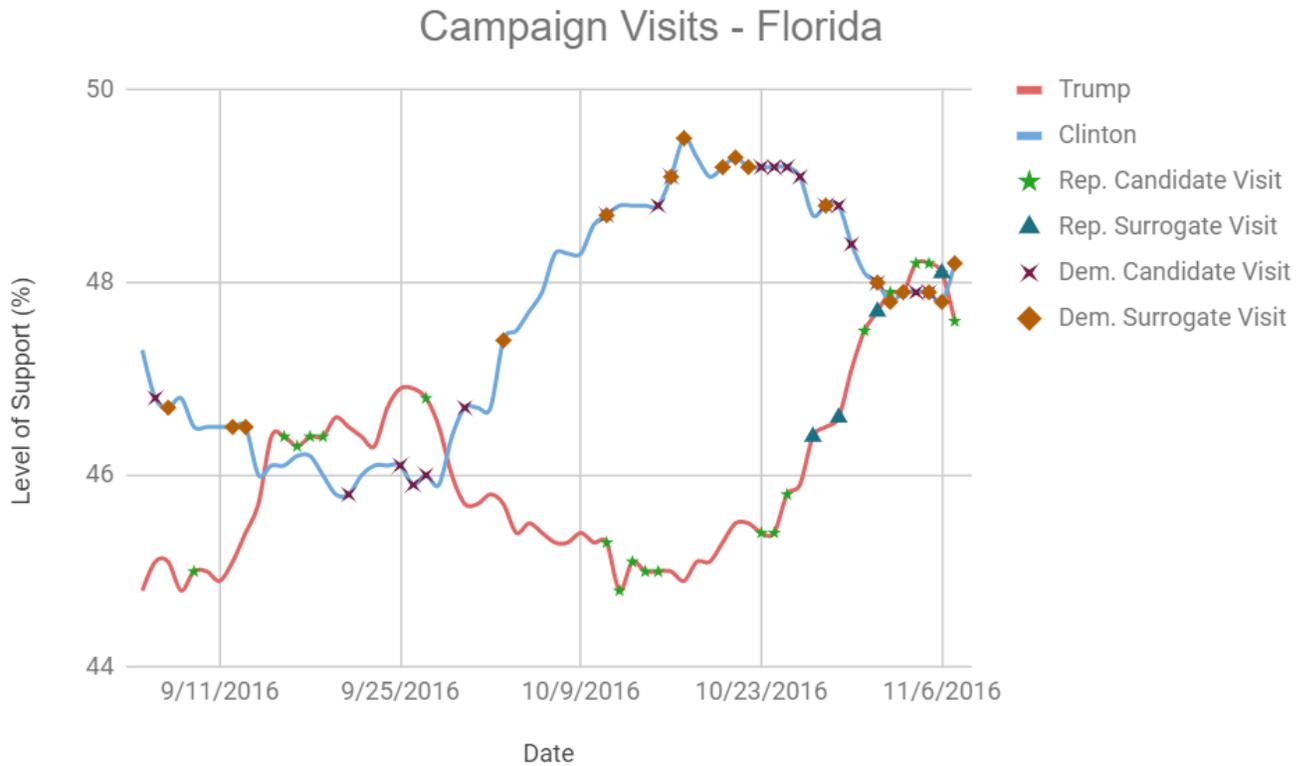
Total Number of Visits for Each Party

State	Trump Visits	Clinton Visits	Trump net visits	Pence Visits	Kaine Visits	Pence net visits	Republican Surrogate Visits	Democrat Surrogate Visits	Republican net Surrogate visits
Swing States									
Florida	35	36	-1	9	17	-8	11	30	-19
Michigan	14	8	6	6	4	2	11	22	-11
North Carolina	31	24	7	14	13	1	14	34	-20
Ohio	30	18	12	12	5	7	22	33	-11
Pennsylvania	28	26	2	13	9	4	14	35	-21
Virginia	18	5	13	10	5	5	4	5	-1
Safe States									
Arizona	7	3	4	4	2	2	1	3	-2
California	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	5	-5
Colorado	16	3	13	6	1	5	6	8	-2
Georgia	3	0	3	3	0	3	1	0	1
Illinois	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1	3	-2
Indiana	2	0	2	2	0	2	0	0	0
Missouri	2	0	2	2	0	2	0	1	-1
Texas	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Average	13	9	5	6	4	2	6	13	-7

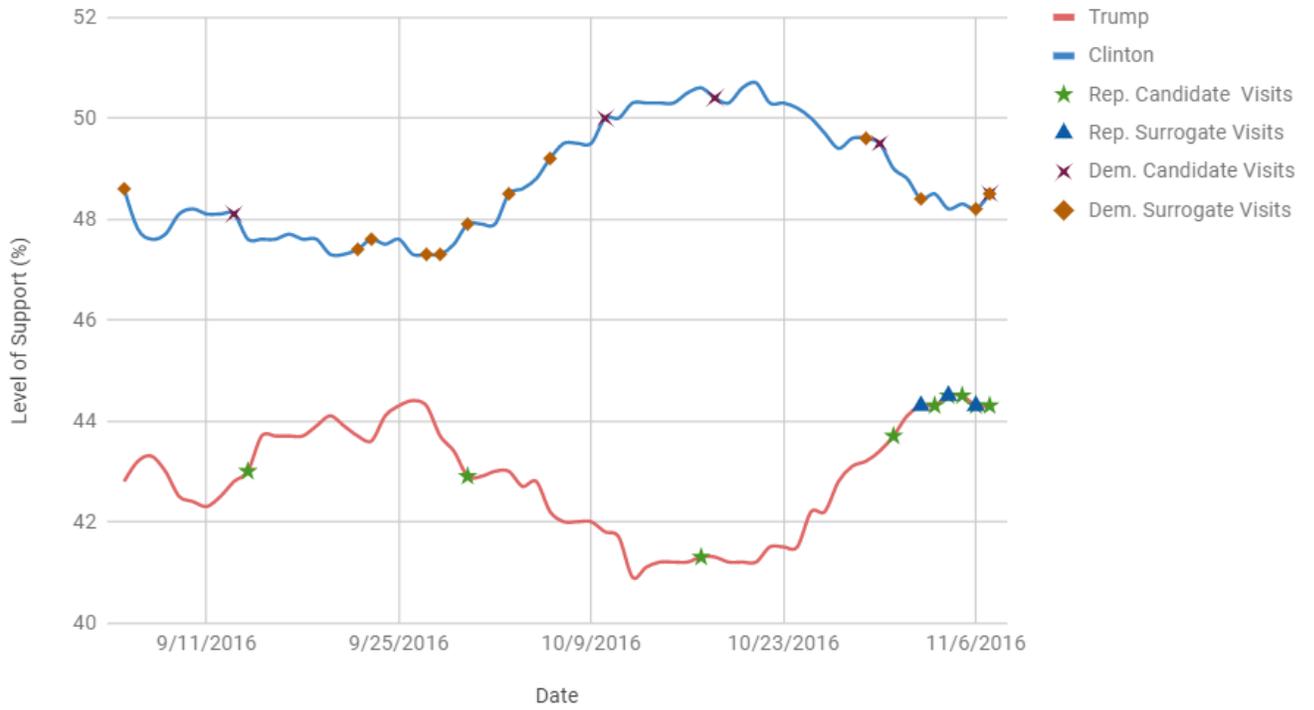
This table tracks visits that occurred between September 5 and November 7, 2016. There were a total of eight Democratic surrogates including Joe Biden, Barack Obama, Michelle Obama, Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders, Bill Clinton, Chelsea Clinton, and Anne Holton. There were a total of four Republican surrogates including Donald Trump, Jr., Eric Trump, Ivanka Trump, and Melania Trump.

Appendix D Occurrence of Campaign Visits by State

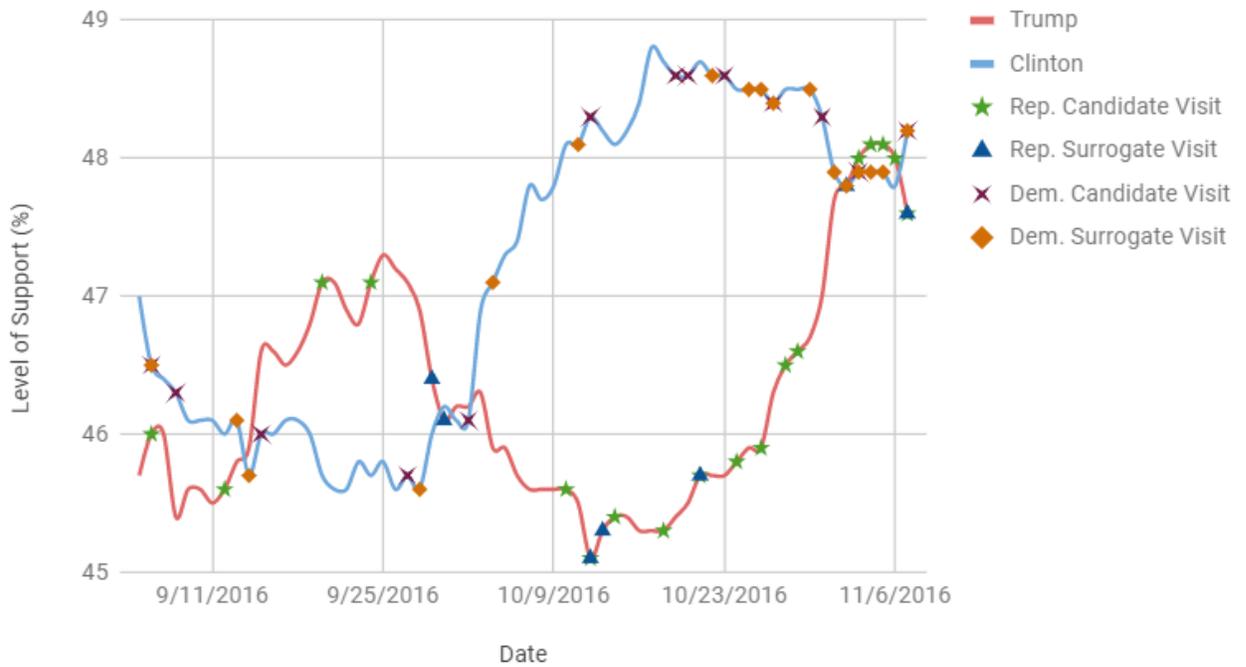
The following graphs show the dates of both candidate and surrogate visits for the fourteen states being examined throughout this paper. Data for each graph were drawn from *FiveThirtyEight's* aggregated state polls as well as various news sources confirming the dates of visits. Although the impacts of discrete events on the final election have already been discussed, it is important to note that these changes can still be observed on the graphs in conjunction with the dates of visits. For comparison to the dates of discrete events and their impacts see figures 3.1 and 3.2.



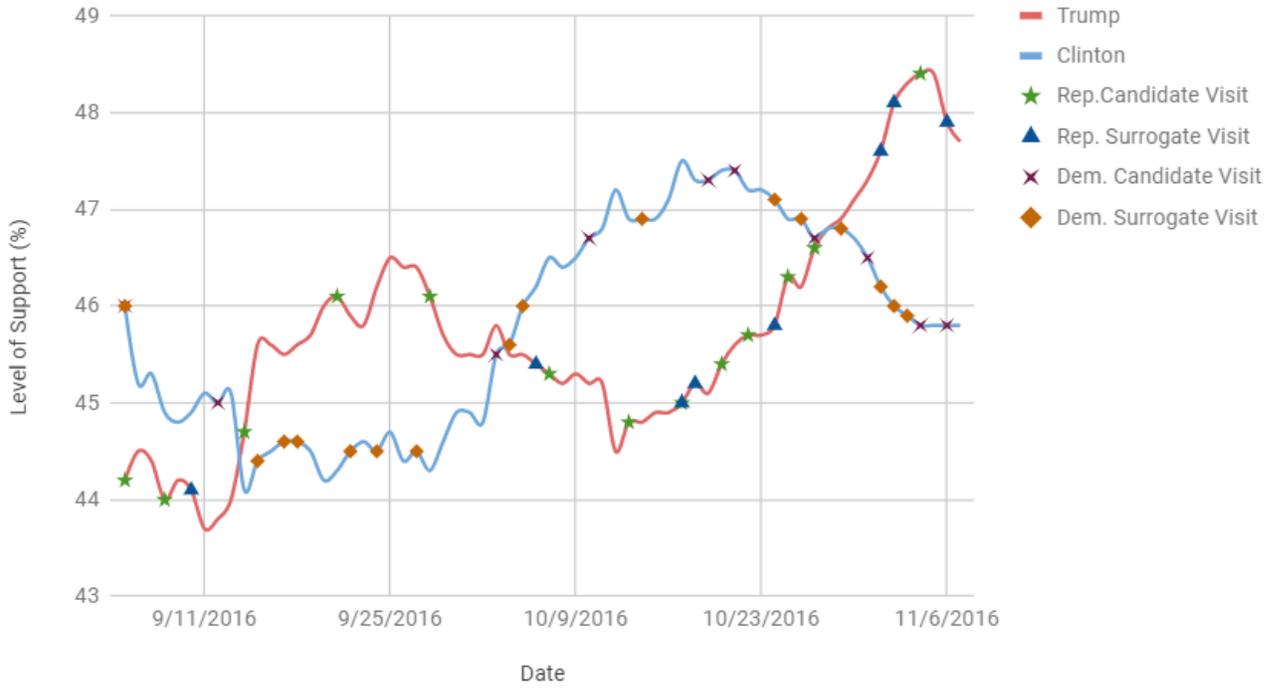
Campaign Visits- Michigan



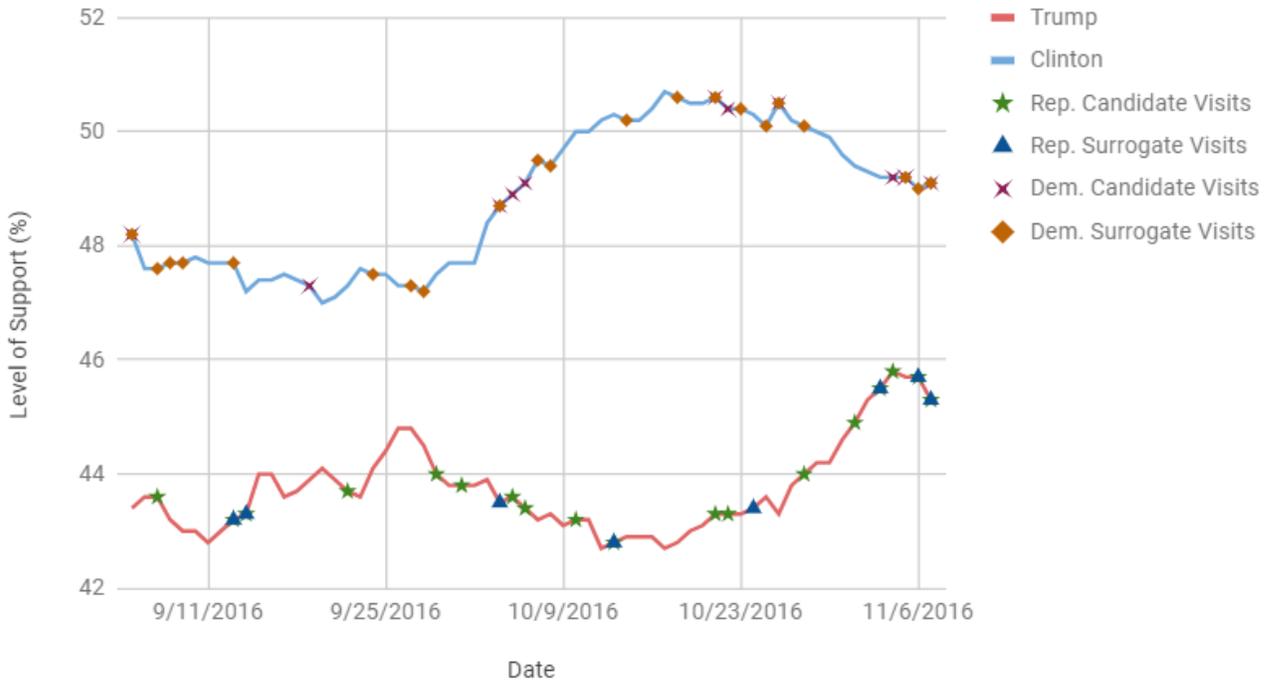
Campaign Visits- North Carolina



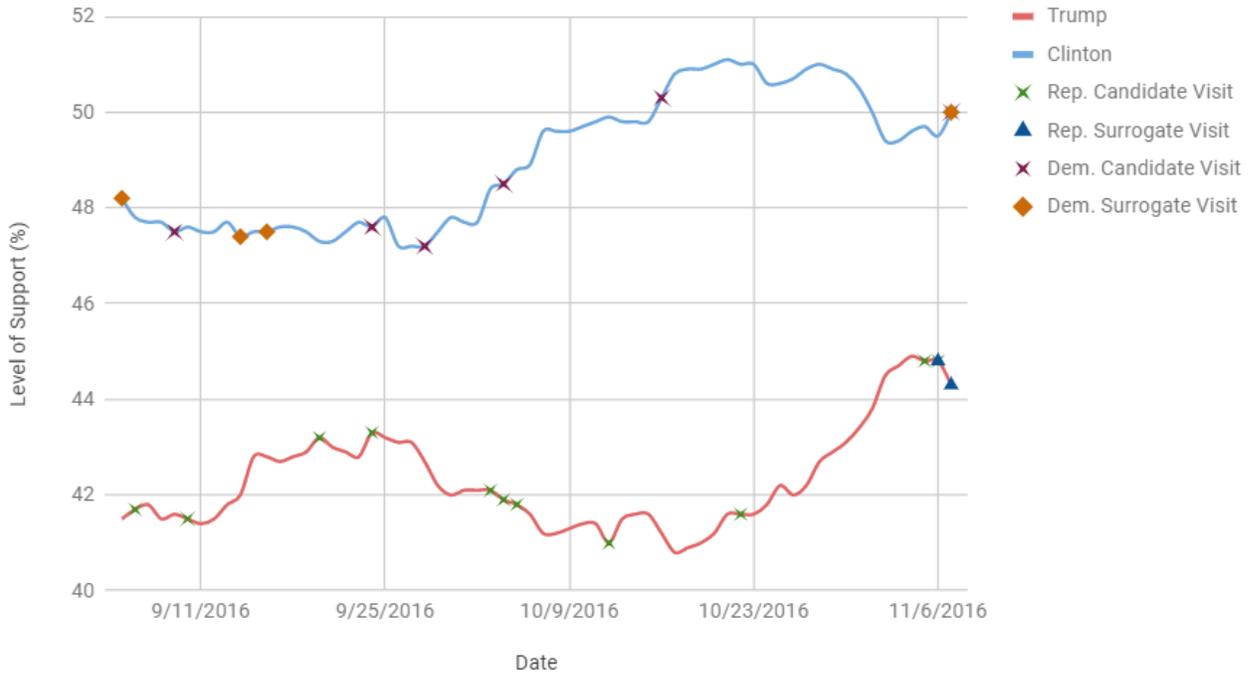
Campaign Visits-Ohio



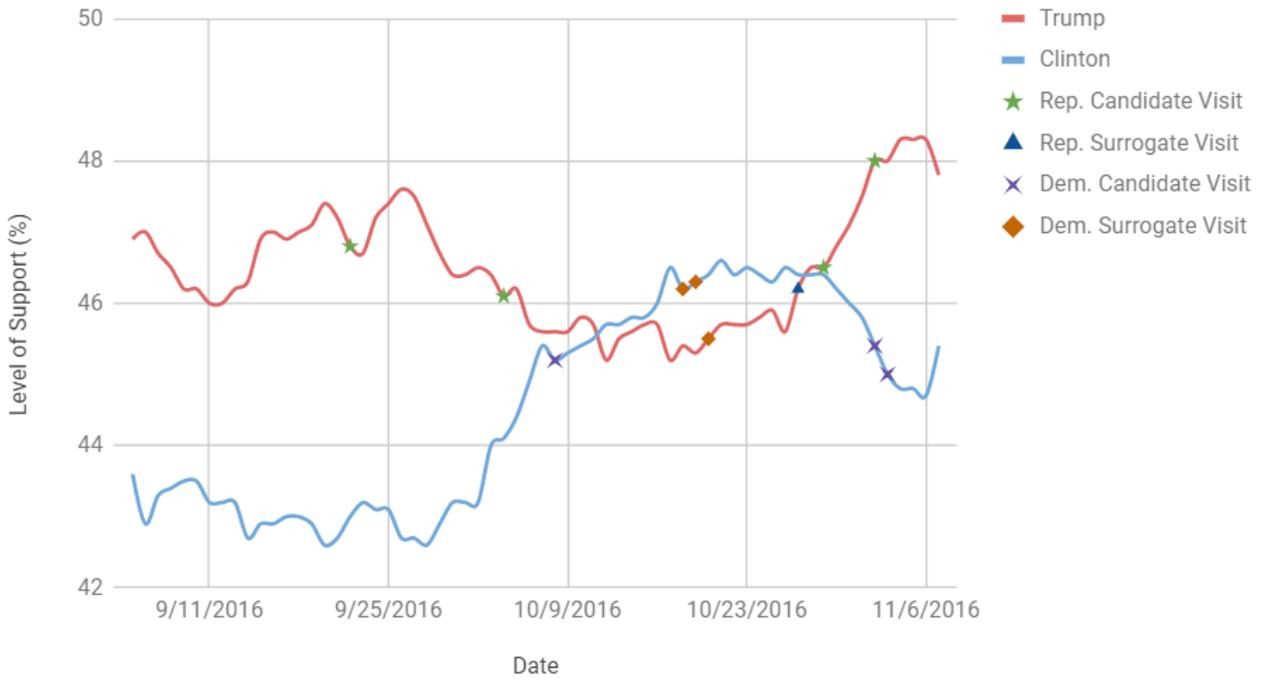
Campaign Visits- Pennsylvania



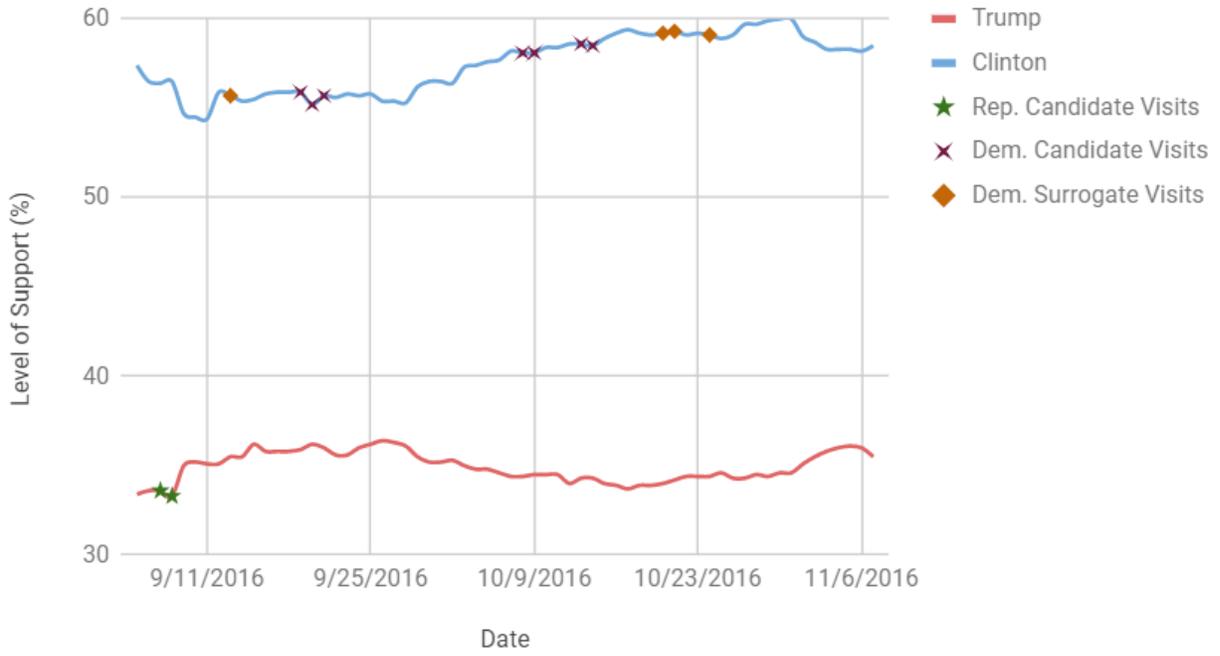
Campaign Visits- Virginia



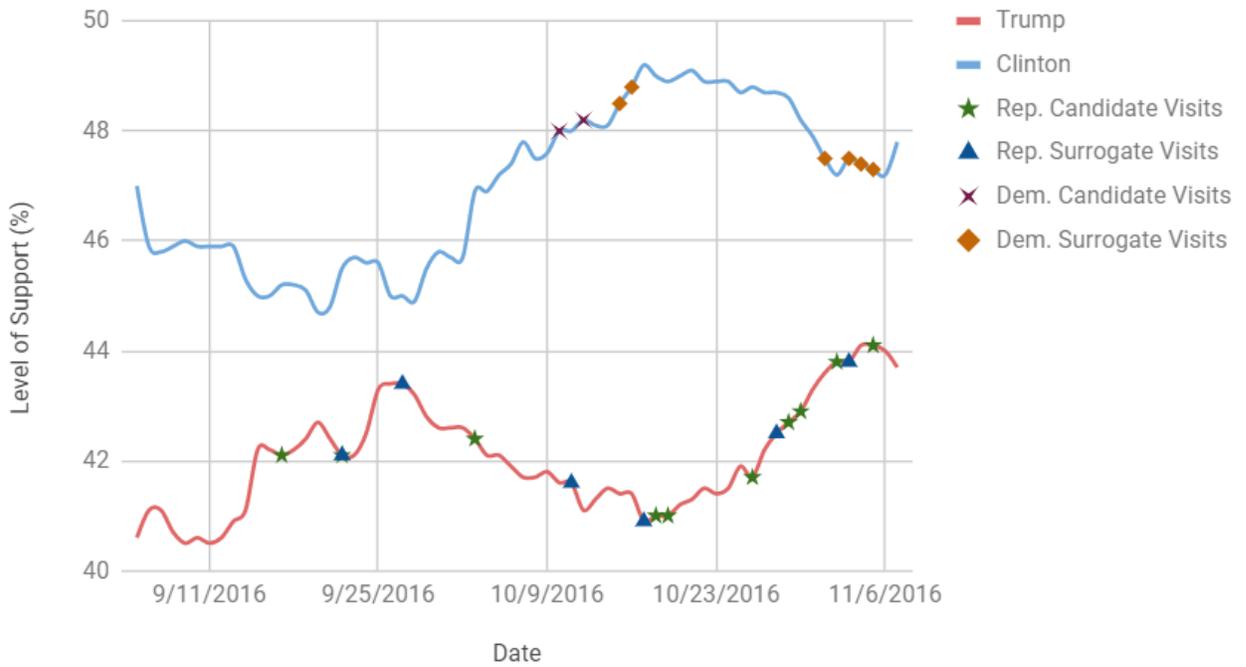
Candidate Visits- Arizona



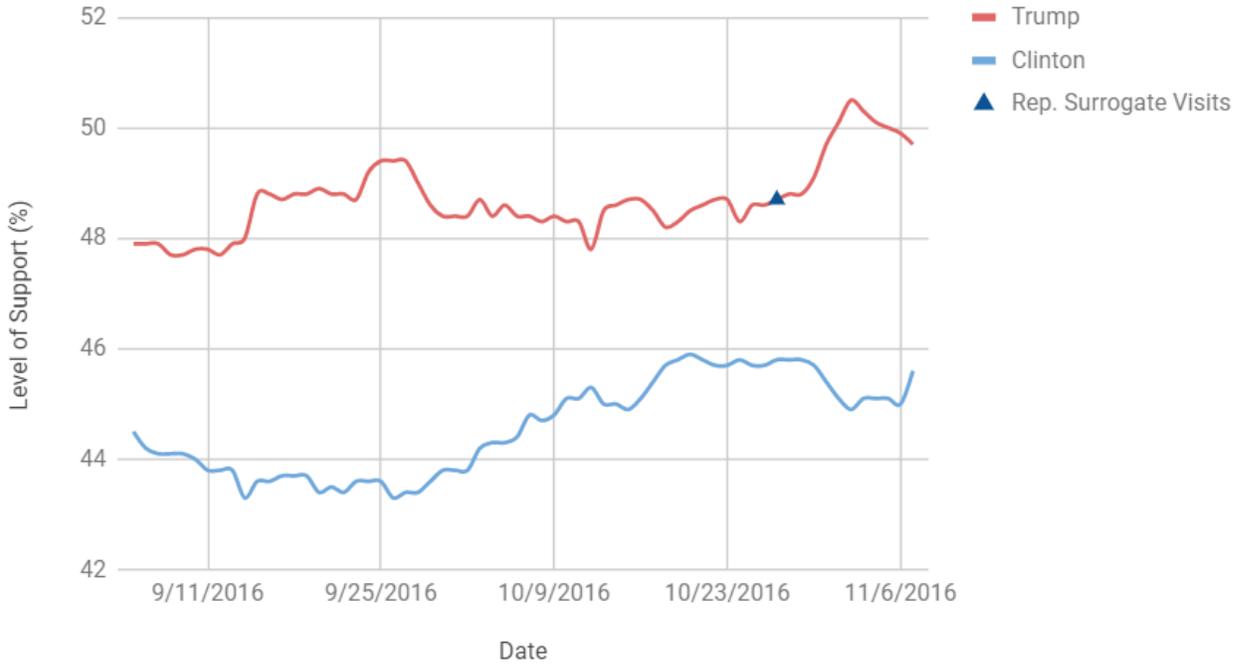
Campaign Visits- California



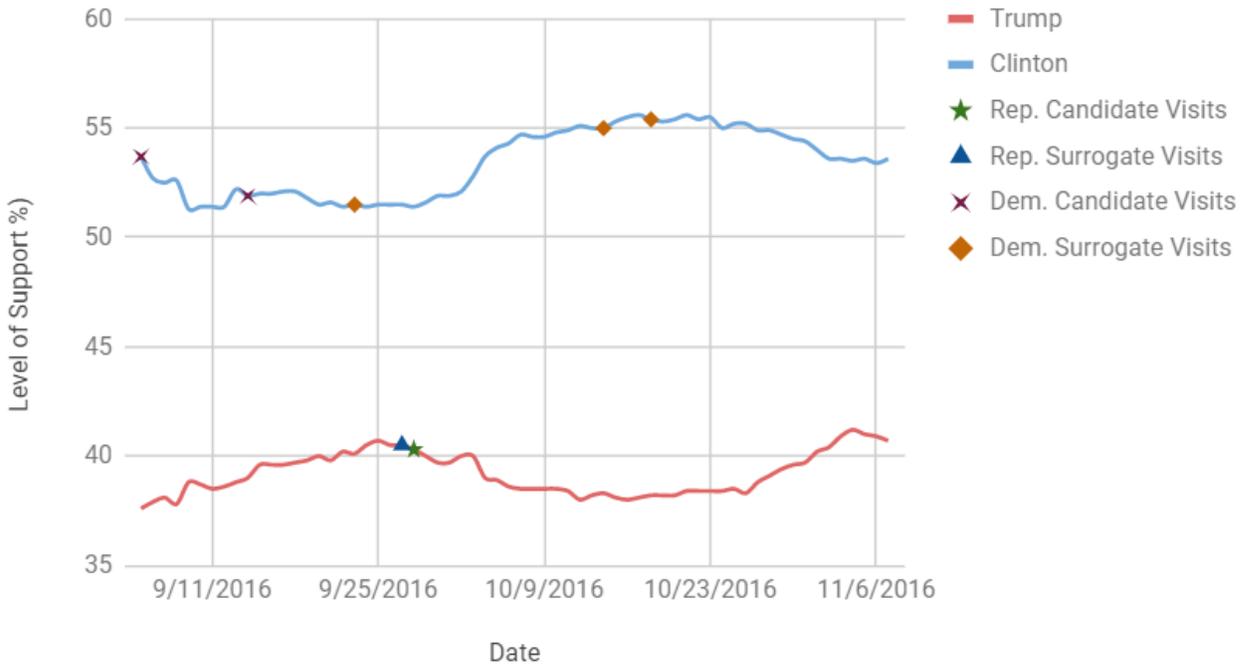
Campaign Visits- Colorado



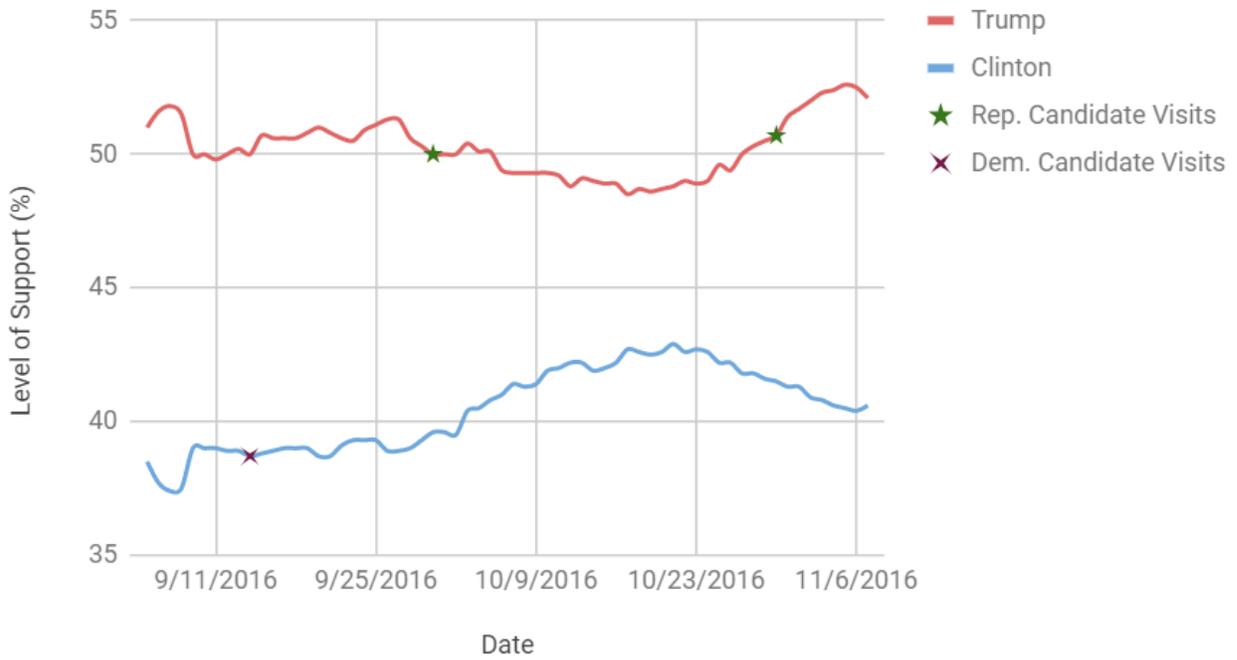
Campaign Visits- Georgia



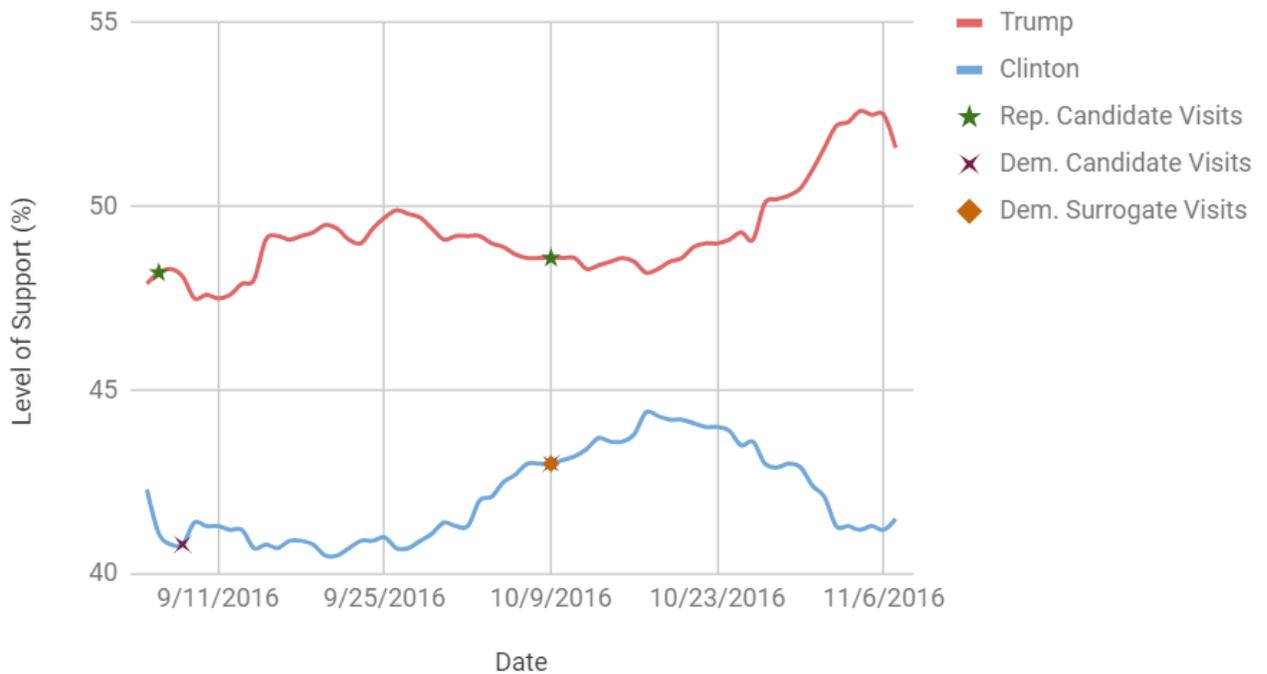
Campaign Visits- Illinois



Campaign Visits- Indiana



Campaign Visits- Missouri



Campaign Visits- Texas

