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BLESSING OR BANE? TEA PARTY ENDORSEMENT EFFECT ON
CONGRESSIONAL HOUSE ELECTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The primary focus of my research is to determine how influential the Tea Party's endorsement is in elections, with special attention to House elections in 2010 and 2012. Does the Tea Party's endorsement matter in House elections? How, if at all, has the Tea Party's influence changed? A secondary focus is determining what other factors may have played a role in the 2010 election that may have exaggerated the perceived strength of the Tea Party.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The 2008 election brought about a dramatic shift in the political pendulum of the United States. The Democratic Party took control of the House and Senate as well as the executive branch. Democrats then rode into the nation's capital, under the platform that called for, "Change we can believe in," along with promises of sweeping reforms in areas such as health care.

But in a short two-year span it seemed as though everything was different. To some, the 2010 election was viewed as a referendum on President Obama's administration or on the Democrats' policies in general. A related storyline drawing headlines focused on the new wave Tea Party and the office seekers they supported. Tea Party endorsed candidates stood for just the opposite of what the Democrats and the Obama Administration had worked to accomplish. Supporters of the Tea Party campaigned for a dramatic reduction of government and rallied around a uniform enemy—Democrats. Tea Party representatives wasted no time claiming the source of their power originated from locals and grassroots campaigns (Skocpol, et. al, 2011). Locally powered Tea Party organizations soon evolved into a nationwide force.

As the election unfolded and the Tea Party "movement" gained enthusiastic support, their voices became more prominent in the media, and louder in local grassroots campaigns. On the campaign trail, movement supported candidates made sure to state

that their support came from "diverse" districts and states, and from citizens with

relatively diverse political stances (Skocpol and Williamson, 2012). When the dust

settled on the election, Tea Party organizations claimed to have elected representatives in

states as liberal as California and as conservative as Texas. Just as importantly, Tea Party

organizations had endorsed candidates in the House from almost every geographical area

of the United States save for New England. It seemed as though after the 2010 election

those endorsed by the Tea Party had gone undefeated (Zeleny, 2010). Stated another way,

it seemed as though the Tea Party's endorsement was something that *mattered.*

The narrative of the national media in regard to the Tea Party movement was one

of a conservative hard working grassroots campaign, fighting with the Republican

establishment for what is "true conservatism," and fighting as the underdog in American

politics (Montopoli, 2010). Tea Party endorsed candidates and their followers didn't just

preach Reagan conservatism—they lived and breathed it. In the summer of 2011, as a

testament to their strongly held political beliefs, members of the House Tea Party Caucus

promised to push the United States' government to a shutdown unless dramatic

government cuts were made (MacAskill, 2011). This financial debate became a true

testament as to which Republicans were going to stand by their campaign promises and

those endorsed by the Tea Party stuck by their convictions.

Although a government default was avoided, it came at a cost. The United States'

polished AAA credit rating fell to AA-plus and questions arose over who was to blame.

Was it the American people who spent money without a regard for mathematics? Was it

the years of accumulating governmental debt? The Obama Administration for stimulus

package after stimulus package? Or perhaps even those endorsed by the Tea Party who seemed unwilling to negotiate?

It was only at the site of dramatic politics and a near economic implosion that media scrutiny of the Tea Party movement became more intense (Skocpol and Williamson, 2012). As the American public became more aware of whom the Tea Party endorsed candidates were, they became more skeptical of the movement (Cooper and Thee-Brenan, 2011). Who were these members of Congress holding the U.S. economy captive? Which politicians endorsed by the Tea Party movement were authentic and who was simply a bandwagon politician?

Many questions in regard to the Tea Party have gone unanswered. In fact, as the 2012 elections approached American voters, the media, and political scientists were *still* trying to understand the conservative movement that is the Tea Party. The 2012 Republican Presidential Primary saw much attention paid to those who supported the Tea Party and which Republican candidate they would endorse with their votes (Friedersdorf, 2012). In fact, some pundits argued that one candidate, former Senator Rick Santorum, owed thanks to Tea Party activists and anti-establishment Republicans for even allowing him to be competitive (Schneider, 2012).

Against this backdrop, the primary focus of this paper is to determine how influential the Tea Party's endorsement is in elections, with special attention to House elections in 2010 and a case study review of three elections in 2012. Does the Tea Party's endorsement matter in House elections? How, if at all, has the Tea Party's influence changed? A secondary focus is determining what other factors may have played a role in

the 2010 election, and whether these factors may have exaggerated the perceived strength

of the Tea Party.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The popular narrative provided by the media, as stated earlier, was that candidates endorsed by the Tea Party made a symbolic connection with voters. Tea Party endorsed candidates were the counter to the Obama Administration as well as the anti-establishment, fiscal conservative underdogs heading into the 2010 elections. While this narrative puts great stress on the symbolism of the Tea Party's endorsement, it doesn't take into consideration other factors that may have also impacted the election simultaneously. On the contrary, it views the Tea Party and the Tea Party's endorsement as the key factor to the 2010 elections.

In contrast to this narrative, current scholarship provides evidence that campaign outcomes are affected by several variables most notably spending, incumbency, and district partisanship. In this chapter, I discuss what current scholarship tells us about campaign outcomes. Further, I explain why and how endorsements of the Tea Party may have shaped electoral outcomes in 2010.

An initial starting place in investigating congressional elections is to consider the partisan composition of the district(s). Congressional districts often are gerrymandered to favor one party, and since most voters vote along party lines, this nearly ensures that the representative of that district will be of the favored party. This behavior has been seen with such consistency that, in general elections, the more a district favors a candidate's party, the greater the probability that the candidate will win (Stone and Maisel, 2003).

Election outcomes are also heavily affected by the presence of an incumbent as, "incumbency remains a conspicuous factor in congressional elections from almost any perspective," (Jacobson, 2012). In short, incumbents rarely lose as incumbent reelection has been consistently around the 90% mark since 1950 (Jacobson, 2012). For the potential challenger, unless the sitting representative is dealing with a tremendous scandal, incumbency advantage is almost always seen as a large hurdle to overcome.

Even when incumbents are dealing with scandals and are viewed as untrustworthy constituents may at times rationalize such poor integrity by thinking, "he may be a crook, but he's our crook," (Mondak, 1995). Despite the acknowledgement that some incumbents may be corrupt, the trust incumbents build with their constituents has the ability to overshadow, "such basic political concerns as leadership qualities, party, ideology, and political issues, and it follows closely behind the incumbent's experience and personal qualities in most years," (Parker, 1989). With each reelection, the trust between incumbent and constituent only grows (Romero, 2006). Therefore incumbents who have held onto their seat for quite some time are far more difficult to defeat than newly elected incumbents.

One must be cognizant though, as stated earlier, that electoral outcomes are a culmination of several variables affecting the success or failure of a campaign— incumbent campaigns aren't fool proof, they still have to win. For that reason, incumbency advantage is not an absolute guarantee of success. Incumbents are held accountable by public opinion, whether fairly justified or unfairly justified. Such an example would be hard public opinion swings from one ideological standpoint to the other. This type of shift in constituent attitudes can work against an incumbent

representative, particularly those elected by the wave of public opinion support now soured, creating high turnovers in office (Finocchiaro, 2003).

Campaign spending can also affect the outcome of an election, though in different ways for challengers and incumbents. For challengers, campaign spending is of paramount importance as only 1 out of 3,002 candidates won a congressional election spending less than $100,000 (Jacobson, 2012). With the average House election costing nearly $800,000 challengers need to spend a substantial amount of money just to be competitive. A challenger's campaign success then is heavily reliant on their campaign spending.

Conversely, incumbents tend to have money either left over from the previous election(s) or accumulate more money while in office, building their war chest over time. This allows incumbents to gain a financial advantage over potential challengers. However, while it certainly doesn't hurt to drown out a challenger in campaign advertisements, heavy spending by an incumbent indicates a competitive contest. As incumbents spend more, the less votes they receive and the more likely they are to lose the election (Jacobson, 1990).

Quality challengers, those who have held office previously, pose a greater challenge to incumbents. Candidate quality touches upon office experiences, decision-making, and overall political savvy. A quality challenger's previous experience in office aids in their strategy to seek out incumbents who lack competence or integrity and avoid those incumbents who are viewed as trusting (Mondak, 1995). In other words, high quality challengers wait for an incumbent to either retire or be vulnerable which increases the challenger's likelihood of winning. In comparison, low quality candidates run

whenever they have the best chance to receive the party nomination without much regard for the general election (Mondak,1995).

If an incumbent is in office, high quality challengers consider the chances of dethroning the seat holder. These chances depend on the job performance of the incumbent, which factors in how well the incumbent represents her constituent's interests and the polling of her performance as a representative overall (Stone, Maisel, and Maestas, 2004). Additionally, challenging an incumbent is slightly easier if the challenger has a record to run on from holding a previous position, which many high quality challengers have. These important characteristics of high quality candidates allows them to overwhelmingly do better than political neophytes in elections overall (Mann and Wolfinger, 1980).

Endorsements have their own niche in the congressional election literature. It has been widely argued that endorsements function as information cues for voters. If a potential candidate hasn't yet convinced a voter to vote for her by election night or if the voter is uninformed about the election, endorsements may be the persuasive push for or against a candidate working as an information cue. If a voter knows little about the candidate but knows that a candidate is endorsed by a highly partisan organization, the voter can sense how liberal or conservative the individual is even making assumptions on the candidates stances on other issues (McDermott, 2006). Endorsements of these highly divisive groups work to the advantage of the candidate during the primary as it gains them favorability amongst voters in their party (Dominguez, 2011).

In a general election however, a candidate receiving an endorsement from a well-known divisive endorser will attract voters who agree with that political stance while

simultaneously dissuading opposing voters (Grossman and Helpman, 1999; Arceneaux and Kolodny 2007). Of course, much of this framework relies on the voter requiring an information cue and therefore being relatively unformed about the candidate's positions. It comes as no surprise then that some scholars argue endorsements serve little purpose for informed voters. This line of thought is founded on the belief that informed voters are less persuaded by endorsements regardless of the endorser's political leaning since informed voters are aware of and presumably vote on the issues (Baron, 1994).

If endorsements by highly divisive groups serve as cues persuading and dissuading uninformed voters, then the Tea Party's campaign theme counters the classic Downsian theoretical approach that parties' tend to moderate and appeal to the median voter (Downs, 1957). The focus of most Tea Party candidates campaigning in 2010 was one of conservative rhetoric, which considered the ideologies simply on the right and the far right. Literature suggests that this strategy focused on the extreme right of the political spectrum might work in a primary election when fighting for the party nomination (Galderisi, et. al., 2001). However, for general elections, when the voting electorate is more diverse, the strategy of a partisan themed campaign makes little theoretical sense (Holcombe, 2007). According to Downs' model then, Tea Party endorsed candidates wouldn't have the broadest electoral appeal to voters and as such, shouldn't have been competitive since they focus on only conservative partisan voters and do not have broad appeal.

It is reasonable to expect that the Tea Party's endorsement would attract those who are conservative, while dissuading those who are less conservative. The Tea Party endorsement signals that the individual endorsed is as far right as they can be in terms of

economics and social issues. For those concerned with fiscal matters, the Tea Party endorsement meant that these individuals wanted to strip entitlements to the bare bone, cut down government spending, and raise no new taxes. For voters concerned with social issues, the Tea Party endorsement showed that the endorsed was conservative on almost every social issue and stood for evangelical Christian values.

Those who are not conservative ideologues however, can be put off by the endorsement of the Tea Party, thus the endorsement of the Tea Party would work as a negative cue for these individuals. If an individual were endorsed by the Tea Party, it shows that the candidate is perhaps too far to the right then a voter would like. This could be on any number of issues, as the Tea Party positions itself to the far right of almost every issue. For instance if an individual is fiscally conservative but socially liberal, that individual may be turned off by the Tea Party's socially conservative rhetoric.

But most importantly, the Tea Party endorsement signaled to voters of the 2010 election that the endorsed stood for the exact opposite of the Obama administration, something that was key in the context of the 2010 election. For many the 2010 election revolved around the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) or "Obamacare." This was an issue that greatly disadvantaged Democrats as the American electorate was generally upset with the passing of Obamacare. Some were misinformed about the historic piece of legislation while others simply disliked the policy for being too far reaching or still others thought it was not reaching enough (Ungar, 2010). For those who viewed this healthcare reform as an overwhelming negative, the Tea Party endorsement signaled that the candidate would work night and day to chip away at Obamacare.

Further, the economic difficulties the U.S. faced, left many individuals upset with the Obama Administration and Democrats for not fixing things fast enough, particularly with the steady rise in unemployment. The bank bailouts and auto bailouts left a sour taste in the mouths of American's who viewed these policies as saving Wall Street and corporations, but not Main Street. Those endorsed by the Tea Party were generally furious at the various bailouts arguing that the banks should have failed and that the American people were left out to dry. These election issues allowed for a revolutionary rallying cry of sorts among conservatives, fiscally conservative independents, and those who felt that the economy was number one in their priority list. Thus the 2010 election was the perfect storm against the liberal agenda passed by Democrats in Congress and the Obama administration, and the perfect climate for Tea Party endorsements to argue— give us a chance to fix the "Obama problem."

Chapter 3

The Changing Electoral Context from 2010 to 2012

As stated earlier, the 2010 midterm election brought a dramatic shift in power from the previous 2008 general election. By the end of election night, the electorate had voted in support of a far more conservative political landscape. Overwhelming voter support for the Republican Party was a consistent theme not only nationally but also in different levels of government. This consistent Republican support aided in a landslide victory as the G.O.P. gained 63 seats in the House winning control of the chamber, while also adding four seats in the Senate, and adding six governorships some of which were in critical swing states for the 2012 Presidential Election.

The message the public sent to policy makers was obvious in 2010. Democrats had lost voter trust and were no longer viewed as the party best capable of handling a myriad of issues from the economy to healthcare. Rising public disapproval of Obama's historic healthcare bill and handling of the economy worked against the Democrats and in favor of Republicans. Thus, public opinion that had once favored Democrats had quickly turned on them. Further, voters felt it was now time to give the Republicans another chance at turning the country around just two years after rejecting their overall conservative ideology. This newfound trust or belief that Republicans were best suited to handle the most pressing issues facing the country was best manifested in support for the Tea Party (Roff, 2010).

Tea Partiers rode the tidal wave of public discontent, rallying around a mutual disdain for the Obama Administration and Democrats in 2010. All the while their hyper-

conservative ideology captivated the attention of those who may not have been as passionate about politics but felt cheated out by the bank bailouts while unemployment rose and debt seemed to swallow the country. Additionally, as this was the first time the Tea Party had a presence in an election, there was an air of excitement around their beliefs.

The Tea Party agenda was viewed as a fresh alternative and its candidates were viewed as serious about getting government spending under control. And as the American electorate felt they had given the "other team," a chance it was almost as though it made sense to give the Tea Party and Republicans a fair opportunity as well. With relatively little awareness of how serious the Tea Party was to their conservative principles, Americans took a risk in electing them. The support for the Tea Party's alternative approach to the nation's debt was strikingly evident as 70% of Americans felt as though leaders in Congress should consider Tea Party movement ideas (Saad, 2011).

But Americans learned how dedicated Tea Partiers were to their conservative principles after the handling of the debt ceiling in the summer of 2011. After sticking to their ideology and refusing to compromise, Republicans left the negotiations with a decreased credit rating for the country and a disproportionate amount of the blame for the negative outcome. As such, support for the Tea Party declined with 47% opposing and 30% of Americans supporting the Tea Party (Newport, 2011).

After having the opportunity to alter the country's sentiments towards Congress it appeared as though the Republican Party and the Tea Party endorsed candidates had fared no better at their turn in the House than Democrats. Congressional approval ratings matched an all-time low of 10% far different from the wary optimism Americans had

after the 2010 elections (Newport, 2012). More importantly, Americans felt the Republican Party stood in the way of progress and blamed the G.O.P. for much of the stagnation in Congress.

Republican support fell to a low directly after the debt-ceiling negotiations and their unfavorable rating generally grew afterwards (Jones, 2012). Compounding the G.O.P.'s woes was the "fiscal cliff" deadline, as it seemed that Republicans were on the losing end of a battle to strike a negotiation. Americans were in overwhelming support of higher taxes for those making over $250,000 as well as willing to blame the Republican Party if a deal was not made (Pew, 2012).

The adversity the G.O.P. faced coming into the 2012 election was evident, but not all was lost. Republican hope was still alive as approval for both parties were still low and Obama, the face of the Democratic Party, was struggling to stay above a 50% approval rating. In sum, American voters seemed to be far more confused in 2012 than in 2008 or 2010. In 2008, Republicans were the foe and public opinion back lashed. In 2010, the public was disappointed with Democrats and felt the progressive agenda had gone too far without truly helping the middle class.

But by 2012, disappointment fell relatively evenly to both parties. With high unemployment and middle class families struggling, voters sensed the change they could believe in was taking far too long. Conversely, controversial statements from Republican representatives and a historic botched debt negotiation disadvantaged the GOP. Further as Americans began to place blame increasingly on Republicans, and wish for more distance from the Tea Party extremity, it began to appear that the once positively viewed movement was now working to distance the general population from the Republican

Party.

Chapter 4

Theory & Hypotheses

A common theme seen thus far has focused on the divisiveness of the Tea Party endorsed candidates and how their hyper-partisan agenda may actually work against succeeding in general elections. This divisiveness is key in the theory that follows because Tea Party supporters and those candidates the Tea Party endorsed are quite clear on their stances—they are anything but moderate, they are extreme and that conservative extremity is a badge of honor. It is my argument then, that the Tea Party's endorsement is functioning much like a badge, or a cue to the electorate, as to how conservative the candidate is. This in turn mobilizes those who may have supported the Tea Party in the first place. But it also has the unintended consequence of mobilizing the opposition who do not want to have such an extreme candidate in office; it may also encourage moderates to support the opposing party.

The rationale behind this theory considers both the endorsement literature as well as Downs' median voter theorem. First, endorsements from divisive figures or institutions work to attract those who agree with the highly partisan stance while also discouraging voters of the opposing view to vote for that candidate (Grossman and Helpman, 1999; Acreneaux and Kolodny, 2009). This framework, as stated earlier, requires voters to be relatively informed of the endorser's positions. The endorsement of the Tea Party then works to mobilize those voters who would support their candidate while also mobilizing and incentivizing the opposition's voters as they would heavily

prefer their candidate in comparison to a candidate on the extreme opposite end of the spectrum.

In the case of informed voters, they will be less persuaded by the endorsement and vote more along the lines of the campaign issues, which serves to make the endorsement of even less importance (Baron, 1994). Even if the Tea Party's endorsement is able to attract uninformed voters, the highly partisan nature of their political agenda works counter to Downs' median voter theorem. Therefore, it can work to pull uninformed voters who may have voted for the Republican candidate anyway, while also pushing uninformed voters in the middle and to the left into the hands of the Democratic candidate. This has the effect of limiting those who can identify with the Tea Party endorsed candidate making their impact on the electorate relatively small, and primarily conservative.

Lastly, the Tea Party's endorsement does not work in a vacuum. With this in mind, one has to be cognizant of the other factors that can impact an election. Contrary to the stress that media sources placed on the Tea Party's endorsed candidates, many other variables were at place. Congressional races are a collection of factors coming together to effect the outcome of an election, chief among these factors is whether or not an incumbent is in the race and the money spent by a challenger (Jacobson, 2012). It is quite difficult to imagine, considering the many well researched traditional factors known to affect congressional races that the newly organized Tea Party's endorsement could overshadow and be of more importance than these other well established variables. Considering the literature that has been written on congressional elections and the theory

outlined above two hypotheses will be tested regarding the impact of the Tea Party's endorsement:

Hypothesis 1: The Tea Party's endorsement is unlikely to affect the outcome of the general election, all else equal.

Hypothesis 2: Traditional factors known to affect congressional races (campaign spending, challenger's previous political experience, district party strength, etc.) are more likely than the Tea Party's endorsement to affect the outcome of congressional elections.

Chapter 5

Data and Methodology

The majority of the data for this paper was obtained from Congressional Quarterly Voting and Elections Collection (CQVEC). More specifically, I gathered information about the 2010 mid-term election the first year the Tea Party was able to endorse House candidates. Although the CQVEC contains a plethora of variables, those relevant to my study were limited to: incumbency status and party affiliation of the incumbent, the year the representative was elected, percentage of the district vote for Republicans and Democrats, and electoral victory by party. I explain the significance of each variable in the study below.

My primary focus is on explaining variation in vote share for 2010 House candidates as a function of the Tea Party endorsement. As such, the percentage of the Republican vote is used as the dependent variable. The unit of analysis is the Congressional district. Districts were coded from the perspective of the incumbent. If no incumbent was present, then the district was coded from the perspective of the Republican challenger. I take this approach because I expect the effect of the Tea Party endorsement to be positive for Republicans and negative for Democrats. Therefore the effects between the two parties may cancel each other.

The primary independent variable of interest, the Tea Party endorsement, was recorded by using the Tea Party Express' "Previous Endorsement," data for House races. The decision to use the Tea Party Express' data was not arbitrary in nature, but instead

dictated by necessity. Of the prominent Tea Party organizations (Tea Party, Tea Party Patriots, and Tea Party Express) only the Tea Party Express provides accessible information regarding endorsements. There are two measures for the Tea Party endorsement, one indicates an incumbent was endorsed by the Tea Party and the other indicates a challenger was endorsed by the Tea Party. When an incumbent was endorsed by the Tea Party, they were given a code of "`1" and if the incumbent candidate wasn't endorsed by the Tea Party they were given a code of "0." If a challenger was endorsed by the Tea Party they were coded as "1" and if a challenger was not endorsed by the Tea Party they were coded as "0."

Turning to control variables, the literature suggests several variables that should be incorporated into an electoral model as stated previously. Considering that incumbency remains one of the most important factors in the outcome of a congressional election their presence in any model regarding congressional election outcomes is necessary (Jacobson, 2012). There are two measures used in the coding scheme for incumbency. The first measure indicates whether the candidate is an incumbent Republican or not (1=Republican incumbent and 0=Democratic incumbent or open seat). The second measure indicates whether the candidate is an incumbent Democrat or not (1=Democratic incumbent and 0=Republican incumbent or open seat).

How long an incumbent has been in office is also of great importance because an incumbent's relationship with their constituency develops over time (Mondak, 1995). This was coded by taking the year of the mid-term elections, 2010, and subtracting the year the incumbent was first elected. This accounts for representatives whose districts may have been redistricted. Further, in the event that a representative lost an election at

any point in their career, their calculated years since starts at their most recent reelection to office. For example, if a candidate was first elected in 2004, but lost reelection in 2006, later winning in 2008 this candidate's years since election would be two years (2010-2008).

Challenger quality is also measured as a quality challenger can pose a threat to an incumbent (Mondak, 1995). Given the different methods of measuring challenger quality this variable deserves an added explanation. Some scholars argue that the presence of an arsenal of campaign resources signals a quality challenger (Kernell, 1981). However, others argue that previous political experience not only adds a platform to run on but also provides potential contributors a list of achievements and stances so that they may feel more confident in their contribution to the candidate (Jacobson, 1983). While there is reason to believe individuals who raise plenty of campaign contributions are more competitive than those who cannot, I contend that the presence of money alone cannot completely overshadow a lack of political experience. Further, those candidates who have held previous political positions tend to be capable of raising a competitive campaign war chest as well as having a legislative record to run on. As such, only candidates with previous political experience are coded as being a quality candidate with a "1." All other candidates, regardless of the money raised who do not have previous political experience are coded as a "0."

Information regarding campaign spending during the 2010 mid-term cycle was compiled using data made available by the Center for Responsive Politics (www.OpenSecrets.org.) The decision to code the campaign money *spent* by incumbent and challenger rather than the money *raised* by the incumbent and challenger may seem

trivial. It is important to realize however, that while campaigns raise money they are not required to spend all of the money raised and can instead decide for a multitude of reasons (gaining or slipping in the polls, or in the case of many incumbents saving money for the next cycle) to either decrease or increase spending. Therefore I accounted for money spent rather than money raised. Additionally, candidates who were incapable of raising at least $5,000 were coded as having raised "0" since they haven't met the threshold for reporting campaign finances to the FEC as has been done by previous scholars (Jacobson, 2012).

The partisan leaning of the districts is also accounted for to give a better sense of how conservative districts were historically. The partisanship of the district was measured by observing the percentage of the district that voted for the Republican Presidential candidate in 2008. This provides a better understanding of how conservative the districts across the country are heading into the 2008 election. Data for the Republican share of the district vote percentage originated from the data set *The Daily Kos Presidential Election Results by Congressional Districts* for 2008.

In order to estimate the effect of the Tea Party endorsement had on the percentage of the Republican vote share, an ordinary least squares regression model is used. The model estimates the effect of the Tea Party endorsement and the other variables described above on the percent share of the Republican vote as the dependent variable. Specifically the model is as followed:

$$\text{Percent Vote Share for GOP House Candidate} = \beta_1 \text{Tea Party Endorsed Candidate} + \beta_2 \text{Tea Party Endorsed Challenger} + \beta_3 \text{ 2008 District Percent Vote McCain} + \beta_4 \text{Challenger Quality} + \beta_5 \text{Incumbent Spending} + \beta_6 \text{Challenger Spending} + \beta_7 \text{Years In Office} + \beta_8 \text{ GOP Incumbent} + \beta_9 \text{Dem Incumbent} + \varepsilon$$

I begin my analysis by running one regression for all districts and variables in the model (Model 1). The estimations that follow test individually the districts held by Republican incumbents, Democratic incumbents, and districts where there are no incumbents running. The second model evaluates the effect of the Tea Party endorsement on Republican defended incumbent seats controlling for same variables while omitting whether or not the challenger was endorsed by the Tea Party and incumbency party affiliation. The third model evaluates the effect of the Tea Party challenger's endorsement on Democratic defended incumbent seats controlling for the same variables, while omitting Tea Party endorsement for the candidate (recall that no Democratic candidate was endorsed by the Tea Party[1]) and incumbency party affiliation. Finally, the fourth model evaluates the Tea Party's endorsement effect on "open-seat" races. The sample size is 435, with 156 Republican incumbents running for reelection, 233 Democratic incumbents running for reelection, and 46 "open-seat" elections.

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[1] The Tea Party withheld from endorsing only two Republican incumbents in 2010, Peter Roskam who represents Illinois 6th Congressional district and Joseph Cao who represented Louisiana's 2nd Congressional district. Cao defeated the Democrat Bill Jefferson, who would later be sentenced to 13 years for bribery in a liberal leaning district (only 25 percent of the district vote went to McCain in 2008). The *National Journal* listed Cao as the most liberal Republican which explains why he did not receive the Tea Party endorsement. Roskam on the other hand is a peculiar omission from the Tea Party's endorsement list. He was the 53rd most conservative Republican in the 111th Congress according to the *National Journal* and is currently the Chief Deputy Whip for the Republican Party. However, the district he represents is not overwhelmingly Republican as 43 percent of the district voted for McCain in 2008.

Chapter 6

Results and Analysis

Before turning to the results of the regression analysis, an overview of the summary statistics of the variables will be helpful in understanding some of the trends seen in the overall 2010 election data. Table 1 illustrates the key independent variables and their respective means, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum. In looking at Table 1 we see that the roughly 45 percent of those in Congress were endorsed by the Tea Party. Additionally incumbents rarely went unchallenged in the mid-term elections, as 98 percent of incumbents faced a challenger. However, 75 percent incumbents challenged faced low quality challengers with no prior political experience. Lastly a common finding in many scholarly studies with regard to campaign spending is echoed in these data as well in that incumbents spent far more than their challengers on average. More specifically, incumbents spent nearly three times as much as challengers spending $1,509,458 to their competitors $559,266.90. These summary statistics are broken down more specifically for all candidates endorsed by the Tea Party in Table 2.

As Table 2 shows, it becomes quite apparent that Tea Party endorsed candidates were running in elections that were quite favorable to the Republican Party. In 2008 despite the unpopularity of the Republican Party, these districts supported McCain by an average of 55.68 percentage points. Tea Party endorsed candidates were also fortunate to have plenty of campaign money on hand spending $1,437,702. Campaign spending ranged however from $0 to over $13 million, therefore not all Tea Party endorsed

candidates have millions of dollars at their disposal. Those who challenged these endorsed candidates were on average incapable of competing dollar for dollar as these individuals spent on roughly $416,793 on their campaign. Lastly, Tea Party endorsed candidates were hardly the political outsiders many billed them to be as many had spent close to 9 years in office.

Table 3 shows the summary statistics for those candidates not endorsed by the Tea Party. It is unsurprising to find that those not endorsed by the Tea Party came from considerably more liberal districts as they supported McCain in 2008 by an average of 27.88 percentage points. Many of those not endorsed by the Tea Party were incumbents who had spent over a decade in office. As such, they were able to raise a considerable amount of campaign money on average spending $1,202,342 to their challenger average of $272,473.70.

To gain a better understanding as to who the Tea Party was endorsing, a cross tabulation is presented in Table 4 which shows the incumbency status of those endorsed by the Tea Party. In this table we see that the Tea Party was quite active in the 2010 contests, making an endorsement in almost two-thirds (64 percent) of the House contests. And, counter to their political outsider theme, they were especially likely to endorse incumbents. As Table 4 shows, nearly all Republican incumbents received the Tea Party's endorsement. This may partially explain why Tea Party endorsed candidates had such a healthy amount of campaign resources at their disposal. In contrast, just over half of the Republican challengers were endorsed.

A cross tabulation is shown in Table 5 showing the electoral outcomes for Republican candidates who did and did not receive the Tea Party's endorsement. As the

table shows, over three-quarters (77 percent) of those who received the Tea Party's endorsement won in 2010. Only two candidates who did not receive the Tea Party's endorsement won. These results are statistically significant and it can be determined that a Republican candidates electoral outcome is not independent of whether or not they receive the Tea Party's endorsement. The results in this table do not support the hypothesis that the Tea Party's endorsement will not have an effect in the general election. However, they do not account for the other variables that may affect electoral success. Therefore an OLS regression will provide more accurate analyses controlling for important electoral variables.

Turning now to the OLS regression, the results do not support either hypothesis entirely. The first hypothesis that the Tea Party's endorsement is unlikely to affect the outcome of general elections, all else equal, is refuted in Models I, III, and IV as the endorsement effect is statistically significant in these three models. The second hypothesis that the Tea Party's endorsement is unlikely to affect the outcome of congressional elections more than traditional factors is also refuted in Models I, III, and IV. The results for the four regression models can be seen in Table 6.

The effect of the endorsement is statistically significant in Models I, III, and IV. More specifically in Model I, the Tea Party's endorsement has a statistically significant effect for incumbent Republicans endorsed by the Tea Party and for Democrats facing a Tea Party endorsed challenger. Further, an endorsement for a Republican candidate leads to an increase of 9.30 percentage points in the vote share they receive, which is statistically significant at the .01 level. Republican challengers who receive an endorsement receive an increase of 4.02 percentage points in the vote share they receive.

In Model II however, the Tea Party's endorsement does not have an effect on the outcome of an incumbent Republican representative. For Republican incumbents, it may be that their constituency is already familiar with their stances and therefore do not require a cue like an endorsement to understand where they stand on the issues

In contrast, Democratic incumbents who are faced with a Republican challenger endorsed by the Tea Party appear to lose a portion of the vote share, all else equal. In these races Democratic incumbents lose 3.93 percentage points of the vote share to Tea Party endorsed Republicans. For Democratic incumbents their challenger may be new therefore receiving the Tea Party's endorsement may allow the constituency to have a better sense of where their challenger stands on popular political issues.

Lastly, in open-seat elections, the Tea Party's endorsement effect is at its greatest as shown in Model IV. In this model, the Tea Party's endorsement has an increase of 16.01 percentage point on the Republican candidate's percent of the vote share in open seat elections. The results of Model IV are strikingly different than Model II, where Republican incumbents received no boost from the Tea Party's endorsement. These results seem to echo the narrative that the Tea Party appeared to have played an influential role in the outcome of the 2010 elections.

Traditional factors such as the partisan leaning of the district, the presence of a challenger for the incumbent, and Republican incumbency were all statistically significant in Model I and the first two of these variables were significant in Model II. Challenger spending is only statistically significant in Model II where, for every $100,000 spent on an election, the Republican vote share decreases by .35 percentage points.

The Tea Party endorsement also appears to trump some traditional factors found in the congressional election literature. For instance the Tea Party's endorsement is statistically significant for incumbents and challengers while traditional factors such as challenger quality, incumbent spending, challenger spending, years an incumbent has been in office, and Democratic incumbency are not. These variables may be skewed by the large Democratic losses in 2010, however most of these variables appear not to be statistical significance in Models II and III either, therefore this argument can be refuted.

While it is helpful to see the results of the regression analysis, these statistics do not provide a clear description of the background of the Democrats who faced Tea Party endorsed Republicans, the background of the Tea Party endorsed Republicans, or why these Democrats lost. These issues are important to distinguish because it provides a better context to the congressional election results. Therefore, it is imperative to delve into these topics in order to evaluate the Tea Party's Washington outsider, underdog narrative.

Table 7 shows the electoral results of Tea Party endorsed candidates against freshman and non-Freshman Democratic incumbents. The table shows that while more than two-thirds of the freshman Democratic incumbents lost their seats, the likelihood of losing was much lower for the non-freshman incumbents (35 percent). These results have a chi-square value of 10.01 and are statistically significant. Therefore the relationship between electoral success of the Republican candidate endorsed by the Tea Party is related to the status of the Democratic incumbent.

These freshman Democrats were not only vulnerable because of their few years in service; they also held districts that were traditionally Republican strongholds. In 2008

these districts voted for John McCain at an average rate of 50.79% and in the 2004

presidential election these districts voted for George W. Bush's reelection at an average

rate of nearly 55%. The historical Republican advantage in these districts aided the

conservative victories as on average, Tea Party candidates won these districts by a 2

percentage point difference. In short, to say that these freshmen Democrats were holding

uncomfortable territory would be an understatement. In reality they were in clear enemy

territory that had been picked up in large part due to the tidal wave of disapproval of

President Bush.

Chapter 7

The Tea Party in the 2012 Elections

The different contexts of the 2010 and 2012 election may have an impact on the Tea Party's endorsement effect in 2012. As stated earlier the outcome of the 2010 election was largely billed as a rejection of the Democratic Party's progressive policies most notably Obama-care and shifting trust to the Republican Party (Roff, 2010). However the 2012 election brought up different sentiments towards the Republican Party generally and Tea Party endorsed Republicans specifically.

Heading into the 2012 elections, Americans placed most of the country's financial blame on the Republicans, viewing their refusal to negotiate as a detriment to the country (Clements, 2012). The Tea Party movement couldn't run away from the ire of the American public either. Half of Americans viewed the Tea Party movement unfavorably before the election and 58% of Americans said it had lost legitimacy (Edwards-Levy, 2013). These factors coupled with the now infamous "legitimate rape" gaffe of Tea Party favorite, Representative Todd Akin, helped to pin the Tea Party as extreme and out of touch with most Americans.

To understand the difference between the 2012 and 2010 endorsement effect of the Tea Party, I would need data about congressional elections similar to the data I collected for 2010. Unfortunately, none of the Tea Party organizations mentioned earlier contained 2012 endorsement information. Furthermore, data on the 2012 election is still being collected by sources such as the Congressional Quarterly Voting and Elections

Collection and Center for Responsive Politics. Keeping these limitations in mind a

qualitative overview will be utilized in order to gain a better understanding of the

potential effect the Tea Party's endorsement may have had in 2012. Of course, this study

is by no means perfect but by highlighting a few different cases we have a better

understanding of how the Tea Party's endorsement may have played a role in 2012. The

examples under consideration include Tea Party endorsed candidates who won and lost in

the 2012 general elections and a third who defeated a long-time Republican incumbent

during the primary.

The 2010 Victor Becomes Vulnerable in 2012

As stated earlier many Democrats who lost in 2010 were holding districts that

were historically Republican. Therefore those Republicans who won in 2010 were for the

most part, holding onto seats that were at a minimum leaning Republican in past

elections. However, many Tea Party endorsed candidates in 2012 were divisive in their

hyper-conservative stances as well as forced to defend their inability to negotiate during

the debt ceiling crisis. One such example is Allen West former Florida Congressman

perhaps best known for claiming that 78-81 Democrats were, "card carrying Marxists or

International Socialists," (Dixon, 2012).

In 2010 West defeated then incumbent Ron Klein by over 8 percentage points in a

district that had voted Republican in two presidential elections. Now in 2012, West found

his district redrawn and more favorable to Democrats. He faced essentially faced three

options: run in the same district and inevitably lose, run in another district, or sit out the

cycle. West chose to seek reelection elsewhere and chose Florida's 18th Congressional

district, held for more than 20 years by Republican Ilena Ros-Lehtinen, who decided to move elsewhere.

Despite the fact that the district had voted Republican in almost every election since Reagan, in more recent years it had grown competitive—even voting for Obama in 2008. For West this district that may have seemed to be a safe bet turned out to be anything but. He was challenged by Patrick Murphy, a former Republican turned Democrat who was dissatisfied with the Iraq war and who also had credentials as a native of Florida and as a businessman (Bendery, 2012).

The campaign between West and Murphy was fierce and became one of the most expensive contests in the 2012 cycle (Bender, 2012). However, West was caught playing defense throughout most of the campaign having to explain his divisive positions in Congress as well as the notorious accusation of the Marxist and Socialists he believed were in the Democratic Party. His conservative rhetoric was certainly not appreciated by the Democrats, which was symbolized by their active involvement in targeting West and pumping the Murphy campaign with funds as well as mobilizing Bill Clinton to the district (*National Journal*, 2012; Bender, 2012). In the end, Murphy quite literally squeaked out a victory defeating West by less than 2,000 votes (Alvarez, 2010). This Republican loss may have been avoided had West not been heralded as a champion of the Tea Party movement by figures such as Sarah Palin (Bennet, 2010).

The Staunchly Conservative Incumbent put on her Heels

Michelle Bachmann is no stranger to controversy. Bachmann has made controversial statements in the past for example calling gay marriage a, "sexual

dysfunction," Obama supporters' views, "anti-American," and claiming an HPV vaccine can lead to mental retardation (Black, 2006; Barr, 2010; Weiner, 2011). Bachmann's district was previously favorable to her and in 2012 it was realigned to make it even more favorable, becoming one of the most conservative districts in the country (*National Journal*, 2012). However with such a divisive persona, she drew the ire of many moderates and Democrats in the area, and was challenged by Democrat Jim Graves a former CEO of a hotel chain

Graves capitalized on Bachmann's blunders by creating a campaign theme around the embarrassment of Bachmann as a representative claiming that the constituency in the district deserved better representation (Howley, 2012). As polls indicated her vulnerability Bachmann attempted to paint Graves as a millionaire who was willing to, "spend millions to defeat her," concluding that, "money is nothing to him," (Howley, 2012). However as the race became even more competitive it became obvious that Graves wasn't the only individual injecting a healthy amount of money into the campaign. In reality Bachmann too was spending plenty to save her seat, outspending Graves 10-1 (Kimball, 2012). By the time election polls had closed a winner had not been decided. Eventually Bachmann would go on to win by a little over 1 percentage point in district specifically tailored for a Republican candidate such as Bachmann (Bailey, 2012).

The case of Bachmann's struggle to fend off a Democratic challenger in one of the most conservative districts in the country is perhaps one of the best, if not the best, example of the American public's negative perception of the Tea Party and their endorsed candidates. Many of Bachmann's statements run the risk of being highlighted on late night comedy shows. It is the absurdity of statements made by Bachmann and

other Tea Party endorsed candidates, as well as their knack for turning scientific findings into political debate, that has led to what Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal has called the labeling of the Republican Party as, "the stupid party," (Lee, 2013). This "stupid party" label may not have been entirely the fault of Tea Party endorsed candidates but their hyper conservative rhetoric and at times outlandish exaggerations certainly didn't help.

The Underdog Winner, Turned General Election Loser

In the previous examples of West and Bachmann, the Tea Party endorsement has been viewed as irrelevant. These two candidates were well known for debatable statements as well as divisive positions. While it may be that the Tea Party endorsement played a negative role in the general elections of 2012, the Tea Party's endorsement may have played a more positive role in the primary elections. Much of this paper has focused on the Tea Party endorsement effect on House candidates but there is no reason to believe that such an endorsement may not have an impact on the Senatorial campaigns. One Senator, Dick Lugar of Indiana, found his years of moderate bipartisanship used against him in the primary eventually leading to his defeat by a Tea Party endorsed candidate.

Lugar was challenged in the primary election by Indiana State Treasurer Richard Murdock, who wasted no time in attacking Lugar for his moderate stances. Murdock's primary campaign was seen mostly as a long-shot since a six-time incumbent Senator hadn't lost since 1950 (Blake, 2012). None the less, Murdock forged on with his campaign quickly ascribing the label of, "Obama's favorite Republican," to Lugar and attacking his votes for the DREAM Act and opposition to earmark reform (Pergram, 2012). As Lugar found himself struggling to contain Murdock's supporters, a breadth of

conservative interest groups and PACs began donating heavily to the Murdock campaign sensing Lugar's defeat (National Journal, 2012). Lugar's defeat became inevitable by the few weeks remaining in the primary and he would end up losing to Murdock 20% (Nichols, 2012).

While the story of this election upset ends for Lugar here, it is only beginning for Murdock. Entering the general election he faced Democrat Joe Donnely a lawyer and business owner who had run for office unsuccessfully several times in his career (National Journal, 2012). Since the Senate seat had been protected by Lugar for over 36 years, many assumed that it would be difficult for Donnely to defeat Murdock who entered the campaign with such a momentous victory (Kim, 2012). But it would seem that Murdock would do all he could to give Donnely a chance at victory.

Murdock's first mistake was perhaps his greatest strength, the appeal to the far-right conservatives of the Republican Party. Donnely used Murdock's rhetoric against Lugar as leverage to gain the votes of moderate and leaning voters (National Journal, 2012). Instead Donnely argued that he was the best candidate to replace Lugar as he was neither too far to the left nor too far to the right (Kim, 2012). Murdock only helped the Donnely campaign theme of being too conservative by claiming that bipartisanship, "ought to involve Democrats coming to Republicans," (Johnson, 2012).

These series of miscues helped turn the tide against Murdock in the more ideologically diverse general election, but his biggest miscue was still yet to come. Murdock had several gaffes like Bachmann and West, but he perhaps shares the title for biggest political gaffe in 2012 with Todd Akin. In his final Senatorial debate against Donnely, just weeks before the already close election, Murdock responded to a question

regarding a woman's right to an abortion when raped. He confirmed his opposition stating, "it is something that God intended to happen," (McAuliff, 2012). The highly controversial statement was attacked by Donnely, ""The God I believe in and the God I know most Hoosiers believe in, does not intend for rape to happen—ever. What Mr. Mourdock said is shocking, and it is stunning that he would be so disrespectful to survivors of rape," (McAuliff, 2012). Murdock's comments so close to the end of the general election and eerily similar to Akins in both tone and timing helped to set the stage for his defeat. He lost to Donnely by 14 percentage points.

These election profiles were used to illustrate the potential effect of the Tea Party's endorsement on the 2012 election. They of course are not better than complete electoral data of 2012, but these cases allow for some understanding of how the Tea Party's endorsement may have impacted the outcome of the 2012 elections. As Democrats gained 12 seats on the House, 2 seats in the Senate, as well as the reelection of President Obama, a full throttle rejection of the Democratic platform was not evident in 2012 despite the political climate for one. This left the Republican Party searching for answers as to how best to serve the American public concluding that they can no longer be the, "party of white people," "the candidates make tragic mistakes," or as Jindal added, "the stupid party," (Liptak, 2012; Lee, 2013).

Chapter 8

Conclusion

The results of my study provide evidence for how the Tea Party affected the 2010 and 2012 House elections. On one hand, this paper offers a better understanding as to who received the Tea Party's endorsement and debunks the common fallacy that many Tea Party endorsed candidates were political outsiders. All but two Republican House incumbents were endorsed by the Tea Party in 2010 and of those Tea Party endorsed candidates who ran for "open-seat" races, all had prior political experience. Not only was the political outsider narrative regarding the Tea Party endorsed candidates wrong, but so was the idea that that the Tea Party candidates were underdogs as 154 of the 194 Tea Party endorsed candidates in 2010 were incumbent Republicans.

Additionally, while the Tea Party played a role in Democratic losses in 2010, it wasn't the only variable making an impact. Many Democrats were in unfamiliar, or better yet enemy, territory. The seats picked up by Democrats in 2008 were primarily Republican controlled districts as they voted on average for George W. Bush at a rate of 55.87% in 2004. In 2008, despite Bush's dismal approval ratings, these districts held an unwavering conservativeness as they supported McCain on average by 50.79%. In short, these were hardly safe-seats for Democrats, particularly for freshman Congressmen as these individuals accounted for a plurality of the Democratic Party's losses in 2010.

While we have learned a considerable amount about the context of the Democratic Party's losses in 2010, there is still much more that we don't know about the Tea Party's influence in American politics. For instance, what is the Tea Party's endorsement effect in the context of the 2012 elections? The finding here show the Tea Party's endorsement was a factor in 2010 but the 2012 elections, as stated earlier, were quite different. If the Tea Party endorsement is serving as a partisan cue to voters and after having two years to have an understanding as to what the Tea Party stands for, could it be that the Tea Party's endorsement hurt Republican candidates in 2012?

Another question left unanswered is how the Tea Party's endorsement affects the outcomes of primary election. Since primary elections are notable for mobilizing highly-partisan voters, one would presume that the Tea Party's endorsement would have an impact on the primary election process. Tea Party backed candidates made huge upsets in primaries for both the House and Senate. The most notable Tea Party surprise victories include but are not limited to Christine O'Donnell of Delaware and Marco Rubio of Florida who both defeated former governors of their respective states in the Senate primaries as well as Richard Murdock who unseated Dick Lugar after 36 years in office.

Additionally, the Tea Party activists and organizations strong pull may not be limited only to House or Senate races. Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum found himself surprisingly competitive in the 2012 Presidential primary, staying longer than many other Republicans may have wanted thanks in large part to Tea Party supporters. The support of the highly conservative group caused many within the Republican Party to openly question Mitt Romney, despite the fact that Romney had a sizable advantage in appeal to a median voter and campaign resources. Moreover, as

many look forward to the 2016 Presidential election the likelihood of winning the primary for potential candidates such as Rand Paul, Marco Rubio, and Rick Santorum may rest heavily on how many Tea Party supporters they can respectively mobilize in the early primaries to create momentum and capture as voters in a sense of validity in their campaigns.

Perhaps the most intriguing question, which is unanswerable at this moment, is the potential longevity of the Tea Party. For now, the Tea Party is indeed an electoral force, which can be good for the Republican Party in the short-term. In spite of this, with changing demographics in the United States and current inter-party debate with regard to the future direction of the Republican Party, the Tea Party appears to have an unsustainable political strategy. Their hyper-conservative message appeals to older, white, male, and religious populations. However this red-meat political strategy doesn't resonate with the next generation of voters or minority voters who are making up a larger proportion of the electorate. Should younger voters hold onto their diverse and more liberal beliefs than their parents and grandparents, and the Tea Party stands their ideological ground, then their relevance in American politics will fade as older generations fade as well. Then again, while it may be difficult to imagine, the Tea Party may become more moderate to stay pertinent. The Tea Party's future in American politics is tricky to foresee, because as the cliché states, stranger things have happened. After all, their existence and quick turn around into an influential political player surprised American political scientists.

Appendix A: Tables

Table 1: Raw Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
GOP Votes	103,863.1	46,108.17	0	229,642
Dem Votes	90,210.65	38,283.61	0	232,649
Pct GOP Votes	51.69	20.56	0	100
Pct Dem Votes	46.33	19.82	0	100
Tea Party Endorsed	.45	.50	0	1
Tea Party Endorsed Challenger	.27	.44	0	1
District GOP Pres Vote 2008	44.90	14.75	5	77
District GOP Pres Vote 2004	49.88	14.35	9	78
Challenged	.98	.14	0	1
Challenger Quality	.25	.43	0	1
Incumbent Spending	$1,509,458	$1,196,731	0	$13,562,811
Challenger Spending	$559,266.90	$867,503.70	0	$6,542,738
Years Since First Elected	9.91	8.74	0	40
GOP Incumbent	.35	.48	0	1
Dem Incumbent	.53	.50	0	1

Note: N = 435. All data were collected for the 2010 House Elections.

Table 2: Summary Statistics for Tea Party Endorsed

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
District Percent McCain Vote 2008	51.84%	9.74	24	77
Money Spent	$1,437,702	$1,308,612	0	$13,562,811
Challenger Money Spent	$416,793.60	$805,301.30	0	$4,718,912
Years Since First Elected	9.05	8.46	0	40

N=271. All data were collected for the 2010 House Elections

Table 3: Summary Statistics for those not Endorsed by the Tea Party

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
District Percent McCain Vote 2008	27.88%	10.78	5	59
Money Spent	$1,202,342	$869,324.40	0	$5,366,128
Challenger Money Spent	$272,473.70	$495,213.60	0	$13,562,811
Years Since First Elected	12	9.02	0	40

N=124. All data were collected for the 2010 House Elections

Table 4: Tea Party Endorsement by Incumbency Status, Republicans Only

	Incumbent	Challenger	Totals
Endorsed	154	157	311
	(98.72)	(56.27)	(64.14)
Not Endorsed	2	122	124
	(1.28)	(43.73)	(35.86)
Totals	156	279	435
	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)

Note: N = 435. Chi^2=88.45 (p-value=.000)   All data were collected for the 2010 House Elections. Column margins are reported in parentheses.

Table 5: Tea Party Endorsement by Election Outcome

	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Totals
Republican Win	241	2	243
	(77.49)	(1.61)	(55.86)
Republican Loss	70	122	192
	(22.51)	(98.39)	(44.14)
Totals	311	124	435
	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)

Note: N = 435 Chi^2=207.02 (p-value=.001) All data were collected for the 2010 House Elections. Column margins are reported in parentheses.

Table 6 – Ordinary Least Squares Regression Model Results

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Tea Party Endorse	9.30***	3.72	-	16.01***
	(3.10)	(7.56)	-	(4.67)
Tea Party Endorsed	4.02***	-	-3.93***	-
Challenger	(1.23)	-	(.92)	-
2008 McCain vote	.85***	.85***	-.04***	.64
	(.04)	(.10)	(.03)	(.11)
Challenger Quality	-.92	-2.01	-1.15	-4.50
	(.99)	3.03	(.90)	(2.33)
Incumbent Spending ł	.00	-.02	.07	-
	(.03)	(.07)	(.04)	-
Challenger Spending ł	-.02	-.38	-.11	.03
	(.05)	(.16)	(.05)	(.14)
Years in Office	-.06	-.12	.01	-
	(.05)	(.10)	(.04)	-
Rep. Incumbency	12.31	-	-	-
	(1.53)	-	-	-
Dem. Incumbency	1.52	-	-	-
	(3.05)	-	-	-
R^2=	.87	.46	.85	.90
N =	435	156	233	46

Note: *p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Standard errors reported in parentheses. ł Marginal effect is a change of $100,000.

Table 7: Tea Party Endorsed Challenger Success by Democratic Freshman Status

	Freshman Democrat	Non-Freshman Democrat	Totals
Republican Win	21	30	51
	(67.74)	(34.88)	(43.59)
Republican Loss	10	56	66
	(32.36)	(65.12)	(56.41)
Totals	31	86	117
	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)

Note: N = 117. Chi^2 =10.01 (p-value=.002) All data were collected for the 2010 House Elections. Column margins are reported in parentheses.

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Education

B.A., Political Science, Spring 2013, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania

Honors and Awards

- American Political Science Association's Ralph Bunche Fellow

- Miller-LaVigne Political Science Scholarship

    · For outstanding undergraduate work in Political Science.

- Rock Ethic's Institute Stand Up Award 2011-2012

    · Given for ethical vocal support of the LGBT community.

- Lambda Outstanding Student of the Year 2010-2011

    · Given for outstanding support of the LGTB community.

- Phi Beta Kappa

- Charles and Sharon Bell Scholarship

- Collegiate Review Scholarship

- Eagle Scout Award

College Activities

- Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society

- Schreyer Honors College Freshman Academic Mentor

- Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society Member

- Vice President of African Student Association/Member

- Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee Board Member

- University Hearing Board Student Representative

- University Judicial Affairs Student Trial Adviser

Professional Experience

Honors Undergraduate Thesis Research, Pennsylvania State University
Summer 2012-Spring 2013
Overseen by Dr. Marie Hojnacki
- Conducting a comparative evaluation of the effect the Tea Party's endorsement had on the 2010 and the 2012 House of Representatives elections.

Independent Research, University of Oxford, St. Catherine's College
Fall 2011 Michaelmas
- Wrote three theses the first comparing Karl Marx and Max Weber's writings on religion, the second on the institutions that have affected redistribution differently within Europe and the United States, the third evaluates civil society in Syria and how we define civil society.

Toffler Associates, Consulting Firm, Washington, D.C. Research Intern
Fall 2011-Spring 2012
- Conducted research on social media as a tool to organize demonstrations within the Middle East and how governments can utilize social media trends in order to predict social unrest.

Congressional Intern, United States House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.
June 2011-August 2011
- Conducted research and summarized pros and cons of legislation for Legislative Assistants and Director of Legislative Affairs with a particular emphasis on patent reform and Social Security reform.

Professional Presentations

"Making the Most of Your College Research Experience," lecture for Dr. Nicholas J. Rowland, Associate Professor of Sociology, Pennsylvania State University—Altoona College, for Sociology 294 "Undergraduate Research." Fall 2012

"The Effects of Summer Breaks on Minority Students' Education," with Dr. Marylee Taylor, Associate Professor of Sociology, Pennsylvania State University and graduate student Khai Le, for Sociology 419 "Race and Public Policy." Spring 2012

Publications and Papers

Branch, Joshua, Nicholas Pyeatt, and Nicholas J. Rowland (2012). "Review of *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* by Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson" *Sociological Viewpoints 28*(1): 74-78.