

Research shows what drives voters to the polls

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Through several field experiments, researchers have found that the effectiveness of voter mobilization efforts depends on quality and their personal touch among minority groups. Research demonstrates that personal telephone calls have increased voter turnout by three percentage points among Asian Americans. In addition, live telephone calls to Latino voters increased voter participation while robotic calls had little impact.

The September 2005 volume of *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, **THE SCIENCE OF VOTER MOBILIZATION**, presents the results of several field experiments which are at the forefront of research in the field of voter participation. This volume is edited by Donald P. Green, Director of the Institution of Social and Policy Studies, and Alan S. Gerber, Director of the Center for the Study of American Politics, both of Yale University.

Drawing important distinctions between various forms of mobilization activities, researchers analyze partisan versus non-partisan and personal versus impersonal mobilization efforts, and the effect on specific population groups. Key articles address the need to experiment across new settings and populations. Articles by Ricardo Ramirez, University of Southern California and Melissa R. Michelson, of California State University, examine the effects of mobilizing campaigns among Latino voters through direct mail and phone efforts, as well as door-to-door canvassing. Authors, Janelle Wong, from the University of Southern California, and Neema Trivedi of Yale University, present research

results on voter participation among Asian Americans and Indian Americans.

In addition, David W. Nickerson from University of Notre Dame, offers a glimpse into the mobilizing effects of a Democratic campaign targeting young voters, while the article by Emily Arthur Cardy, Yale University, examines the mobilizing effects of direct mail and phone campaigns out of commercial phone banks. Christopher B. Mann of Yale University presents the findings of three large-scale experiments which focus on pre-election survey participation affecting voter participation.

Altogether, the articles in the September 2005 volume of THE ANNALS demonstrate the advances in knowledge gained from continual field experimentation and how the results can reshape mobilizing efforts across various segments of the population.

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