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A political profession : motivating pre-service teachers to participate in our democracy

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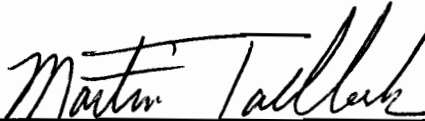
PARTICPATE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

By

Jennifer Cottle

An Action Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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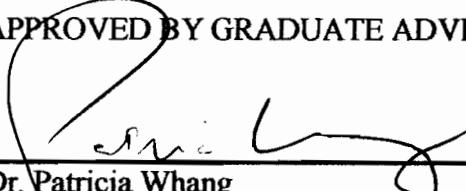
BY JENNIFER COTTLE

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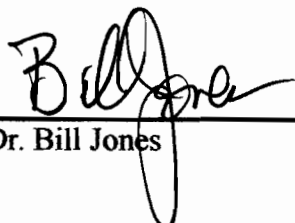
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Dr. Patricia Whang   DATE

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ABSTRACT

This mixed-method study looks at the voting motivations and behaviors of sixty-two pre-service teachers. Responses from frequent, infrequent and nonvoting teachers were compared to gain an understanding of how to impact the viewpoints and behaviors of nonvoting or infrequent voting pre-service teachers The data revealed significant differences between the voting frequency groups in two variables. Results will be shared with Student California Teachers Association and California Teachers Association.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter One: Statement of Purpose, Rationale, Overview

Teachers teach the next generation of citizens. They can be seen as heroes or portrayed as resisters' to change but almost everyone remembers a caring, influential teacher that they had during their school years. Teachers have a unique opportunity to influence and change lives, as well as work towards socially just policies that will improve the lives of their students. They can be the voices that stand up and defend public education against the current attempt to deem it a failure, thus paving the way for privatization. Educators need to be active in the political realm as they witness the many problems public schools face, and therefore are in the best position to do something about it. Teachers can be players in the political platform by being the voices for those who can not vote and the leaders in education today.

Researcher Background and Statement of Problem

The policies put forth by our current federal administration concern me. From the environment to foreign policy, I feel the current federal administration policies do not benefit the whole, and do not work to support those people who need resources the most. My personal impression has been that laws are often passed that give large corporations and influential individuals exactly what they want, while short changing the American people.

I worked for several years in an under performing, overcrowded and underfunded school, and have seen the damage that these factors have on students, their educational opportunities and their communities. My students were provided with barely the basic

supplies such as books. Teacher's aides and other resource teacher support, clerical staff, family and parent programs were also lacking. Considering the vast majority of the students from this under performing school started kindergarten with an academic deficit, the lack of financial and personal support only compounded the problem. In stark contrast, I am currently working in one of the wealthiest school districts in the state of California and can confirm the unimaginable inequities that exist between our most privileged and needy students in California's public elementary schools. The experience of working in these drastically different schools only solidified my belief that current education policy does not serve all students equitably. In my experience, historically disadvantaged students are being underserved because they receive inadequate resources, the least experienced teachers, and are subject to a one size fits all education policy.

As a classroom teacher, it seems to me that relatively few people were willing to say or do much about what is happening in poor, under performing schools. Surprising considering how much of the population either has children in public schools or works in or with public schools. When I first heard the phrase "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) I thought, "Who could argue with that"? Yet with the disparities between the policy and reality, I felt policymakers were not seeing or perhaps not hearing what is really happening in our poor and under performing schools.

This led me to question, "Who is going to tell the policy makers and inform the rest of the population about what is happening in schools"? Where I worked, most parents were immigrants and predominately, if not solely Spanish speakers (or speakers of another language) and many of them were illiterate in their first language. I found that they felt they were unable to do much to change the situation in their schools, particularly

since much of the decision-making is not a local but state or federal decision, or were unaware of any problems that needed to be addressed. Many did not or could not vote in Monterey County and were appreciative of all that the school currently offered. On the other extreme, the highly educated parents of the students I teach now are living in wealthy areas and fund their children's education by donating time and money to their schools. Their children truly do have the best education that a school could provide. Parents in this community do not have much incentive to push for change in education policy because it rarely affects them.

What makes teachers such a crucial piece to the puzzle, other than the obvious fact that they teach our future citizens, is that they work in these schools on a daily basis and can attest to the situations. Teachers can be advocates for students and their communities and serve as role models by voting and participating in our democracy. Soon to be teachers, such as those that I have focused on in this study, are more likely to be employed in poor school districts or under performing schools within districts (Darling-Hammond, 2003). These districts and schools have a harder time finding and keeping good teachers due to their less appealing working conditions.

Teachers also face legislative hurdles such as the recent attempts by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to change teacher tenure and tie pay to student performance. Luckily the tenure and performance measures were overwhelmingly defeated, but the message that they sent remains: teachers are solely responsible for the large population of students not achieving. When these measures are proposed, it only reaffirms to me that policymakers are not focused on the blatant social and economic

inequities. It is not fair to students, teachers or schools to compare poor and underfunded schools with wealthy schools that clearly start off with a big advantage.

In addition, teachers are powerful role models for students. Their participation in our democratic society can influence students by modeling that participatory citizens vote and create change.

Purpose of Action Thesis

I want to understand how to impact the viewpoints and behaviors of nonvoting or infrequent voting pre-service teachers. A pre-service teacher is defined as a teacher who is currently in a teaching credential program. Increasing voter turnout among teachers is important because teaching is a political affair (Ginsburg, 1995). Politicians, business people and "experts" have their hands in most aspects of schools from curriculum design and approval, school finances, to standards for faculty and students. If teachers feel one way or another on such issues as standardized tests, scripted curriculum, school choice, mandated reforms and severe sanctions, then they have already developed a political opinion. Teachers' work and working environments are defined by federal and state policy. These issues just mentioned are at the forefront of the debate about the direction that public education should take. Few studies have been conducted that look at the voting behaviors and motivations of pre-service or active teachers (Henderson, Czaja, & McGee, 1996; Grossman, 1981; Black, 1977; Larson, 1976). Considering the political nature of teaching, I believe it is in the best interest of students, teachers and our democracy that teachers, in this case, pre-service teachers, participate in our democracy through voting.

Overview of Action Thesis

My hope is that my research will shed light on the voting motivations and influences of pre-service teachers. Teachers, as a whole, working towards socially just policies, could impact education policy whether at the local, state or national level. Pre-service teachers are just beginning their careers in education. As many of the current K-12 teaching force retires in California, these newly hired teachers could be a force to be reckoned with if they flex their political muscle.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The Oxford American Dictionary defines a democracy as, "government by the whole people of a country, especially through representatives whom they elect" (Ehrlich, Flexner, Carruth, & Hawkins, 1980, p.226). "Democracy is based on participation" (Slater, 1998, p.60), thus putting most of the political power in the hands of the people. Shultz (2002) wrote, "we must have a democracy that is participatory, one in which the people understand the key public issues of the day and are equipped and willing to actively influence the action taken on them" (p.1). One way to actively participate is by voting. Voting allows citizens to indicate how they want their present and future to unfold.

Voter Turnout and Politicians' Motivations

Even with the passionate campaigns of the most recent and important presidential election, only 64% of the U.S. population voted in the November 2004 election (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Typically, voters tend to be white, well educated, older, upper to middle income earnings, and married (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980), although minorities did turnout in higher numbers in the 2004 election than in previous elections (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). The State of California held a special statewide election in November 2005 and only 70.67% of eligible voters registered to vote (Report of Registration, 2005). Of those 70.67% eligible voters that registered, only 50.1% of them voted (Kerns, 2005). The Public Policy Institute of California stated that:

> The demographic profile of the special election voters was similar to the profile of voters who frequently participate in statewide elections, with the

exception of under-representing younger voters under age 35. Voters were predominately older, white, college-educated, affluent, and homeowners. Men and women voted in equal proportions. (*2005 Special Election Voter Profiles*, 2005, p.1)

Why should this matter? Because who votes does make a difference. Wattenberg (2002) argues that, "Newly elected officeholders need to assess the makeup of the coalition that put them into office in order to start working on keeping these people satisfied and ready to reelect them" (pp. 67-68). Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) wrote that "because political leaders cannot afford to mobilize everyone, they concentrate their efforts on people they have the greatest chance of mobilizing" (p.31). For minorities, as well as the less educated, the young, the poor and single citizens, their concerns will generally not be found at the top of the list of agenda items for politicians and policy makers. Even if their concerns are mentioned, they often lack the political clout to hold politicians accountable for campaign promises. What this means for schools that serve this very population who are not politically active is that school reform will continue to focus on and ensure that those who are voting are satisfied with the decisions being made about their public schools and the choices they are offered for their children.

Voting is an expression of your personal opinion, which either supports or rejects a candidate, measure, proposition, etc. There are many reasons why people do not vote (Doppelt & Shearer, 1999). For example, voters feel as though their vote does not matter. They are worried that their vote does not really count when there are millions of others voting. Yet, elections have been decided by very few votes (America Votes, 2005). We can recall the recent 2004 presidential election where it came down to a few votes in a few states that made the difference. Other nonvoters or infrequent voters feel there are

not any candidates or issues worth voting for, they do not know how or where to vote, politics is not a big part of their or their families' lives, politics is run by special interests, or they are too busy to vote (Wattenberg, 2002).

California Voter Foundation

The California Voter Foundation, at calvoter.org, "is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization promoting and applying the responsible use of technology to improve the democratic process" (California Voter Foundation, 1996. n.p.). The California Voter Foundation studied, between July 25 to September 22, 2004, infrequent and nonvoters' attitudes toward voting in California. The survey used in this thesis is based on California Voter Foundation's original survey. They looked at the responses from 2,145 participants relating to the incentives for voting, barriers to voting, and sources of information and influence.

Infrequent and nonvoters expressed that voting was important, voting was an important way to express your opinion and support candidates. Barriers included growing up in a family that did not discuss politics, moving around too often and feeling that politics is controlled by special interests. Infrequent and nonvoters also stated they were too busy to vote. They found Network and Cable TV the most influential information sources with newspaper and the internet a close third and fourth.

Teachers and Voting

Since higher levels of education generally equate to higher levels of voter participation (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980), one would expect that teachers, having

college degrees, would fall into that category. Yet, many pre-service teachers are under

thirty years of age, and youth is an indicator of low voter turnout as well. I have

contacted the California Teachers Association (CTA), Student California Teachers

Association (SCTA), and the American Federation of teachers (AFT) and surprisingly

none of these seemingly political organizations have researched teacher's voting

behaviors. As mentioned earlier, some studies were done but they are dated at best

(Henderson, Czaja, & McGee, 1996; Grossman, 1981; Black, 1977; Larson, 1976).

Although it has been difficult to locate recent studies looking at the motivations and

voting behaviors of teachers, the study by Henderson, Czaja, and McGee (1996) surveyed

Texas teachers in 1983, 1991 and 1996. This study profiling the voting patterns of Texas

State Teacher Association members found that the teachers were neither politically active

in any campaign nor did they necessarily vote for the candidate endorsed by their union.

Texas teachers contributing money, time and/or effort to political campaigns have

declined over that period, and therefore elected representatives and senators have

decreased their contact with teachers (Henderson, Czaja, McGee, 1996). Texas teachers

did respond to measures similar to those that California Governor Arnold

Schwarzenegger proposed. By their votes, the Texas teachers stated that, "Principals

should not be given merit pay based on student performance, and that teachers should not

be evaluated on student academic performance" (Henderson, Czaja, McGee, 1996, p.6).

Politics affects the lives and work of teachers. Not only does it affect their daily

work, but also teachers are in the best position to advocate for just social policies that will

benefit all children and defend their students' rights to a quality public education.

Looking at teacher's voting behaviors and motivations is important because so little

research has been done in this area. We can use that research to develop strategies to convince teachers to become more involved in our democracy by voting. As politicians work to keep themselves in office, they listen to their constituencies and act upon their concerns. Teachers who are politically involved at national and state levels can help influence lawmakers to pass laws that have positive implications for them, their students and positive affects on their daily work.

<div align="center">Federal and California State Legislation</div>

The current federal administration has been very successful in selling the public on the idea that our schools are failing and that a market-led school system rather than more money is the answer to our education problems (Apple, 2001). This market-led model will force schools into compliance and the best schools will flourish while failing schools will be sanctioned, with almost inevitable closure. Any resistance from educators is viewed as protecting their "special interests," not the nation's future.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2002, coined by President George W. Bush as "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB), is an excellent example of such policies. A policy which claims to want to close the achievement gap and truly lift poor and minority students out of their low performing schools is actually punishing them. The negative effects of the No Child Left Behind Act have been well documented (Chamberlin, 2004; Coles, 2001; Karp, 2003a, 2003b; Meier, 2004; Novak 2003). The victims of this ill conceived law are poor and minority students, their teachers, schools and communities. In the never-ending race to raise test scores, students are being left behind. As a result, our society continues to deny the real causes of low achievement and

allows serious educational inequities to remain (Anyon, 2005). Teachers in low performing schools in California must used scripted state-adopted reading and math texts which leave little room for professional judgment. The No Child Left Behind Law has also forced low performing schools to focus most of their time improving reading and math scores leaving visual art, music, science, social studies and even physical education out of the school day.

Teacher's work and working conditions are affected on a daily basis by laws such as the No Child Left Behind Act. In addition to impacting teachers, federal laws also shape students' school experiences. One way that teachers who disagree with how the NCLB Act has been carried out in schools can be heard is by voicing their opinion in federal and state elections. These elections offer teachers the opportunity to help put people in power that see a different pathway to achieving an equitable education for all students.

Teachers face other legislative challenges in the state of California such as the recent effort in November 2005 by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to change the tenure process for teachers, modify the funds that are earmarked for schools based on current tax revenue and not a set amount, and his failed attempt to tie teacher's pay to student performance. Teachers work in an environment dictated by the state and federal government. Politics clearly has an impact on the profession.

Teachers as Role Models

For elementary schools, particularly, but for other educational settings as well, the teacher is the key to improved political education.

> The teacher is the key in at least two important and distinctive senses. One, the teacher is the route to the child's mind. This is to say, it is the adults both within and outside the school that provide structure, shape, and otherwise control the experiences out of which cognitive learning comes. Two, teachers as well as other adults are critical role models for the child and hence possess a kind of influence on children's political development that goes beyond instruction in the narrow sense. (Anderson, Brewer & Snyder, 1977, pp. 68-69)

Teachers are also role models for students of the democratic process. "They transmit the ideals of citizen behavior and teach the skills necessary to meet those requirements" (Grossman, 1981, p.4). They "also model behavior which encourage student participation and response to democratic processes" (Grossman, 1981, p.29). They can influence their students by showing that participating in our democracy is important. Meyer argues that, "[A] teacher really does count in a very influential manner, especially at certain age levels. It is impossible for teachers to interact with students on a daily basis without having some measure of influence" (Meyer, 1990,n.p.). By voting, teachers are modeling what it is to be a democratic citizen. They are not only participating themselves but also helping to foster the next generation of democratic citizens.

Teachers can act as the agent of change in the public education system. Teachers are in an ideal situation to argue for just education policies because they work daily with students. They see what works, what does not, and what is needed for student learning and education equality. Anyon (2005) wrote:

> Educators are in an excellent position to build a constituency for economic and educational change... Teachers and principals have continual access to parents and urban youth. If they are respectful, caring, hardworking educators, trusted by students and parents, they have a unique opportunity to engage residents and youth in political conversations and activity (p.178).

All teachers are in such prime positions as mentors, witnesses and participants in the everyday lives of their students.

Considering the influential role that teachers play in the lives of students, the response of elected representatives to their constituents, the affects of policy on the work of teachers and the possibility of teachers as agents of change within the community, motivating teachers to vote should be a priority for those who care about students and the quality of public education.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Participants

All 2005-2006 credential students at California State University, Monterey Bay were invited to participate in this study. The study included all willing participants who were eligible to vote from these credential programs. Students from each credential program did participate.

Due to the graciousness of Professors Meier, Serna and Harrower who allowed me to come to their classes, I was able to sample 100% (24/24) of the multiple subjects credential students, 48% (16/35) of the single subject credential students and 85% (22/26) of the special education students. Demographic information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1-Participant Demographics

	Voted in all of the last four statewide elections	Voted in some of the last four statewide elections	Voted in none of the last four statewide elections
N	27	29	6
Credential Program			
Multiple Subject Credential	10	10	4
Single Subject Credential	9	5	2
Special Education Credential	8	14	0
Gender			
Female	17	22	5
Male	10	7	1
Age Group			
20-24 years of age	4	14	2
25-29 years of age	7	8	4
30-39 years of age	9	5	0
40-49 years of age	4	0	0
50-64 years of age	3	2	0

	Voted in all of the last four statewide elections	Voted in some of the last four statewide elections	Voted in none of the last four statewide elections
Ethnicity			
White or Caucasian	16	17	2
African American	1	1	0
Latino or Hispanic	5	5	4
Asian American or Pacific Islander	0	3	0
Native American	0	1	0
Other	5	2	0
Political Orientation			
Very liberal	8	5	0
Somewhat liberal	7	11	1
Moderate, lean liberal	2	0	1
Moderate	5	7	2
Moderate, lean conservative	1	2	1
Somewhat conservative	2	1	1
Very conservative	0	2	0
Left blank	2	1	0
Party Affiliation			
Democrat	15	13	0
Republican	1	5	0
Minority Party	7	6	0
Don't Know	2	4	6
Left blank	2	1	0

Research Design

The research design consisted of a survey and interviews. The survey questions

came from a survey conducted by the California Voter Foundation found at calvoter.org

from July 25 – September 22, 2004 (APPENDIX A). This survey was chosen because it

provided the specific information I needed for my research. It also permitted me to

collect data from sixty-two participants allowing me to look at the responses from a

variety of individuals. The interview questions were developed with the assistance of Dr.

Patricia Whang.

Survey Instrument. I contacted the California Voter Foundation at Calvoter.org

requesting permission to use their survey and that permission was granted on October 7,

2005. The original survey was conducted over the phone, so some questions were

reworded for paper and pencil use. Additionally, 24 of the original 106 questions were

deleted, as they were not pertinent to my study. Six additional questions were added with

the help and guidance of Dr. Patricia Whang, resulting in a total of 88 questions. These

questions pertain to the pre-service teacher's opinion on the political nature of teaching

and questions regarding alternative forms of voting. The survey responses were entered

into SPSS for data analysis purposes.

Validity. For the original survey, Calvoter.org commissioned four sets of focus

groups, which involved the assistance of a variety of organizations.

> To prepare for the survey, CVF commissioned four sets of focus groups
> comprised of infrequent Latino, Asian Pacific Islander (API), African
> American and young voters, with assistance from the National Association
> of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund,

the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, the California State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and David Binder Research. Representatives from these organizations also served as a research advisory group throughout the project and provided input on the survey methodology and questions. (California voter participation survey, 2004).

This process should contribute to the face and construct validity of the survey.

Interview Questions. The purpose of the interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of why pre-service teachers have or have not voted, to determine the extent to which they see politics affecting schools, and to learn about what would or has motivated or helped them to vote. The questions for the semi-structured interview were as follows:

1. Why do you want to become a teacher? How long have you wanted to be a teacher, and is there anyone who inspired you?

2. What do you look forward to most when you have your own class?

3. What do you see as the roles and responsibilities that teachers have to students, to parents, to the school, to the community, to society?

4. How do teachers go about fulfilling these obligations?

5. Since teachers work closely with their students, the school and the community, often teachers are in the perfect position to notice things that need attention/improved/changed. What sorts of things do you think teachers might feel are in need of attention/improved/changed?

6. Some of those things you mentioned are issues that can be resolved within the school. How would you go about or contribute to resolving them?

7. Some of those things you mentioned are issues that can be resolved by the government.   What should you do then? How should those be resolved?

8. From your survey you indicated that you have voted in some/none of the last four statewide elections. What were some of the reasons that you sometimes/never voted?

9. Tell me about the upcoming state election this November? What do you know about it; what is on the ballot?

10. How do those issues affect teachers/schools? How do you feel about those issues?

11. If those issues affected you positively/negatively, would that motivate you to vote in this election?

12. What would motivate you to vote?

Procedure

I emailed the directors of each credential program as well as all of the professors of Education who were teaching a course in the Fall of 2005 (APPENDIX C). With permission from Professors Meier, Serna, and Harrower, I visited classes during the Fall 2005 semester during the week of October 10-14. The classes I visited represented one from each credential program. Professor O'Shea passed around a sign-up sheet for anyone who was interested in participating and I then contacted the students via email. I visited the classes and provided the students with a short introduction to this study and all eligible and willing participants completed a voter survey, which took take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. There were students in the single subject class who chose not to participate and a survey was not given to them. The surveys were then separated into those who have voted in all, some, or none of the last four statewide elections. By separating the responses by how often students voted, I was able to pick out five individuals to interview representing nonvoting, voted in some and voted in all of the last

four statewide elections. Interviews were conducted with three of the five participants chosen.

The survey allowed me to identify five individuals that indicated that they were willing to participate in an interview with me regarding their responses and their viewpoints on voting. I contacted a nonvoter, three respondents who voted in some of the last four elections and one who voted in all four. Two one-hour interviews with students voting in some of the last four elections did take place in November 2005 at California State University, Monterey Bay. These interviews were audio taped and transcribed. The participant who voted in all of the last four elections was only able to be interviewed via email. Despite several attempts and requests to interview the nonvoter and the other infrequent voter either in person, over the phone or via email, I was unable to get an interview. Unfortunately, of the six respondents who stated that they had not voted in the last four elections, this respondent was the only one to indicate that he would be interested in being interviewed.

Data Analysis

Surveys were entered into a quantitative data analysis program and interviews were transcribed. I compared the actions and motivations frequent voters have with those of infrequent voters and nonvoting students. By triangulating the qualitative and quantitative data, I hoped to determine what the significant differences were between the voting groups or factors that contributed to regular voting.

Limitations

This study was conducted on one California State University campus, which is a public liberal arts college. Results may not be generalizable to all pre-service teachers voting behaviors and motivations. In addition, the data collected from the interviews may be subject to different interpretation and there may be issue with the representativeness of my interviewee sample.

Chapter Four: Findings

The purpose of this thesis was to identify ways of increasing voter turnout among pre-service teachers. By comparing the data between these groups I hoped to determine what the significant differences were between voters, nonvoters and infrequently voting pre-service teachers. The following is a discussion of the differences in demographics among the voter frequency groups as well as a definition of what constitutes a frequent, infrequent and nonvoter.

Voting Groups

Frequent voters. Twenty-seven participants identified themselves as frequent voters. Frequent voters were identified as having voting in all of the last four statewide elections. They tended to be older, white or Caucasian and leaned liberal with most identifying themselves with the Democratic party.

Infrequent Voters. Twenty-nine participants identified themselves as infrequent voters who have voted in some of the last four statewide elections. The most significant difference between the frequent and infrequent voters is their age. Infrequent voters tended to be younger, or under 30 years of age, then frequent voters. This finding is not surprising when you consider that age is one of the characteristics of infrequent and nonvoters (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). More than half of infrequent voters identified themselves as somewhat or very liberal.

Nonvoters. Nonvoters were respondents that stated that they have not voted in any of the last four statewide elections. All of the nonvoters are under 30 years of age and none of the six identified with any party, Democrat, Republican or minority party.

In addition, more infrequent and frequent voters fell into the category of moderate liberal to very liberal, whereas nonvoters were evenly split, identifying themselves as moderates, moderate lean liberal and moderate lean conservative.

Survey Data Results

With the help of Professors Patricia Whang and Rob Weisskirch I did a factor analysis and was able to identify which questions grouped together. A principal-components factor analysis with a varimax rotation was carried out on the questions that had a similar scale of zero to five. Six factors with eigenvalues equal to one or more were produced by this analysis. These six factor scores were obtained by regression method.

Factor Analysis

Factor 1: Barriers to Voting. Factor loadings for the nineteen items that define the first factor range from .76 to .94 and refer to barriers to voting and include attitudinal, informational and logistical barriers. Participants were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with statements about why some people do not vote. The nineteen items that loaded on this factor are included in Table 2.

Table 2
Factor 1: Barriers to Voting

Item number	Item	Factor loading
39	I'm not comfortable in my polling place	.94
40	The poll workers are unfriendly or unhelpful	.94

Item number	Item	Factor loading
49	Voting is an isolating experience	.92
38	It's too hard to figure out where to vote	.92
41	I don't have access to election information in my preferred language	.92
42	My vote doesn't make a difference	.91
43	The voting equipment is difficult to use	.90
50	The results of elections just don't have any effect on me personally	.89
48	I do not feel that the United States is my home	.88
46	I am just not interested in politics	.88
45	The issues are too confusing	.88
34	It is too hard to get the information necessary to make my voting decision	.85
51	I am too busy with work or my family	.85
35	I don't trust any of the election information available	.84
36	I don't believe that my vote will actually be counted accurately	.84
47	There are just too many things on the ballot	.82
44	Politics are controlled by special interest	.79
33	It is too hard to sift through all the information available to make good decisions on how to vote	.77
37	I don't feel that candidates really speak to me	.76

Factor 2: Sources of Information. Eight items loaded and are included in factor 2.

This factor represents sources of information. They ranged from .56 to .88 and are

represented in Table 3. Voters were asked how influential the following sources of

information were in making their voting decision: either slightly, moderately, very

influential, or not at all influential.

Table 3
Factor 2: Sources of Information

Item number	Item	Factor loading
71	Cable TV news in English	.88
70	Network TV news in English	.87
72	Local newspaper in English	.78
78	Conversations with family	.66
79	Conversations with friends	.60
75	Internet	.56
73	Local Radio news	.57
74	Talk Radio	.51

Factor 3: Active Participation. Factor loadings for the six items that define the

third factor range from .45 to .83 and refer to individual active participation. Participants

were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with statements about voting process.

The six items that loaded for this factor are included in Table 4.

Table 4
Factor 3: Active Participation

Item number	Item	Factor loading
26	Voting is an important part of being a good citizen	.83
32	I believe that my vote makes a difference in the outcome of the election	.83
30	Voting lets you choose who represents you in government	.81
29	I believe that when I vote, my vote will be counted accurately	.78
31	Voting is an important way to voice your opinions on issues that affect your family and your community	.75
22	I like to vote	.45

Factor 4: Misinformation. Three items loaded that ranged from .83 to .87 and are

represented in Table 5. Voters were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with

statements about registering to vote.

Table 5
Factor 4: Misinformation

Item number	Item	Factor loading
56	I don't want to register because it could cause trouble for my family	.87
55	I don't want to register because I don't want to get called for jury duty	.83
54	I don't want to register because I want my information to remain private	.83

Factor 5: Before Voting. This factor included a number of items one does before

voting or in order to vote. Factor loadings for the four items range from .61 to .77.

Participants were asked to choose how easy or difficult or to what extent they agreed or

disagreed with the following statements about the voting process and registering to vote.

The four items that loaded on this factor are included in Table 6.

Table 6
Factor 5: Before Voting

Item number	Item	Factor loading
13	Reading and understanding the voter information pamphlet	.77
12	Getting the information necessary to make your voting decision	.74
52	I know where to find voter registration forms	.64
11	Registering to vote	.61

Factor 6: Political Campaign Information. Seven items loaded and are included

in factor 6. This factor represents political campaign information. They ranged from .45

to .74 and are represented in Table 7. Voters were asked how influential the following

sources of information were in making their voting decision: either slightly, moderately,

very influential, or not at all influential.

Table 7
Factor 6: Political Campaign Information

Item number	Item	Factor loading
68	TV ads from political campaigns	.53
69	Radio ads from political campaigns	.53
65	Mail form a political campaign	.74
67	Volunteer at your door from a political campaign	.69
63	Endorsements from political figures	.67
66	Phone call from a political campaign	.58
64	Endorsement from community groups	.45

Table 8 represents the factor-score means for the three voting groups on the six factors

Table 8
Mean Factor Score for the Three Voting Groups on the Six Factors

	Factor					
Group	Barriers to Voting	Sources of Information	Active Participation	Misinformed Voters	Before Voting	Political Campaign Information
All	.434	-.175	.060	.258	.062	.261
Some	-.280	.383	-.134	-.302	.049	-.243
None	-.600	-1.065	.378	.300	-.516	.003

ANOVA

A one-way ANOVA was done on each factor score to determine whether there were significant differences between the voting groups. There were statistically significant differences between the voting groups on two of the six factors: Barriers to Voting $F(2, 59) = 5.46, p < .01$ and Sources of Information $F(2, 59) = 7.15, p < .001$.

Given the significant differences for the Barriers to Voting and Sources of Information factor scores, four planned contrasts were done comparing the responses between: frequent and infrequent voters versus nonvoters, infrequent versus frequent voters, nonvoters versus infrequent voters and nonvoters versus frequent voters. The data collected from the participants revealed significant differences between the voting groups in both of the variables at the .01 level.

Barriers to Voting. Planned comparison of: nonvoters versus infrequent voters and frequent voters was significant, $t(28.85) = 4.08, p < .001$; infrequent voters versus frequent voters, $t(46.92) = -2.71, p < .01$; frequent voters versus nonvoters, $t(30.93) = -4.33, p < .001$.

Infrequent and nonvoters expressed a more pessimistic attitude about voting and many were less familiar with basic steps to the voting process. The participants I interviewed also expressed similar attitudes towards voting. Interviewee 001 said, "Normally I am rather apathetic about [voting] because I have been so discouraged about voting and voting and voting and never see it go the way I thought the majority voted for it" (personal communication, 2005). Interviewee 021 stated, "I don't really know what to think about [the proposition], so I didn't vote. If I'm not sure and I don't have a strong

feeling, then I won't vote on [the issue] because I don't know" (personal communication, 2005).

Questions grouped in this factor include, "I don't feel that candidates really speak to me," "Politics are controlled by special interests," "I am just not interested in politics," and "I don't believe my vote makes a difference". This sentiment was verified with interviewee 001 who said,

> I feel that at some point in time the common folk lost its power. You know, I understand that they way that we are set up on an electoral system with representatives, an ideal world, it should work. You take a group of people, you have one person that represents that group's voice and they go on so we don't have billions of people in one room to make decisions. Sure, that makes sense, common sense, it doesn't happen though. That one person isn't representing the majority and I don't know how that all went wrong. At least in the world I live in I hear people say, no I don't want you to spend money on that, no I don't want this to happen and yet it still happens. So that tells me then I live in a complete bubble and everyone outside my bubble thinks differently or the votes are just not counting in the way we are told they are and I don't understand the process well enough to tell you where the fault is, but there must be a fault because things are not going the way we want them to (personal communication, 2005).

Similarly, CalVoter.org found that the two most important reasons that infrequent voters do not vote were, "I'm too busy to vote" and, "There are no candidates that I believe in". The CalVoter.org study also found that infrequent voters were unfamiliar with absentee voting with 50 percent stating they had never voted absentee.

Moreover, CalVoter.org found that almost 50 percent of nonvoters said that they had been registered before, but not at their current address with 18 percent saying they thought they were registered through the DMV. Only half of nonvoters friends' vote in most or all elections and 51 percent of nonvoters grew up in families that did not discuss political issues or candidates.

In addition, CalVoter.org found that both infrequent and nonvoters felt that politics are controlled by special interests with 66 and 69 percent respectively agreeing with this statement. Infrequent and nonvoters felt that information comprehension and trustworthiness of election information was a problem.

Sources of Information. Planned comparisons of both infrequent versus frequent voters (t (53.20) = 2.43, p < .05) and nonvoters versus infrequent voters (t (6.12) = -1.61, p < .05) were significant.

In addition to the survey results, during my interviews I heard from one infrequent voter about his perception of information from various news sources. Interviewee 001 felt that the arguments for and against the ballot measures needed to be more neutral. "They need to take self interest out of it and I don't even know if that is possible" (personal communication, 2005). He goes on to say, "If there was any way to find a neutral party that could actually say here's what the proposition means in plain English. This is what happens if it passes and this is what happens if it doesn't pass. Nothing is very simple" (personal communication, 2005). Another comment he made about election information was:

> These commercials drive me nuts. They will present it in over simplified fashions that make it sound like if you don't vote No on this, or vote Yes on that, this horrific thing will happen. It is never that simple. Or they will throw some statistic that has the validity of nothing, it drives me nuts (personal communication, 2005).

He went on to comment on the difficulty in deciphering the propositions that were on the California ballot in 2005. He said:

You have to be a very analytical and very intelligent person to figure out exactly what that proposition is, because it will be like Prop. 17, vote No or else children will die. And then you find the small print ha, ha, vote No and the adults will die. They are very tricky (personal communication, 2005).

The original Calvoter.org survey found that the sources of information that different groups relied on for their election information was also significant for infrequent and nonvoters. Infrequent voters found local newspapers and conversations with family and friends the most helpful in making election decisions. Infrequent and nonvoters both identified Network and Cable TV as the most influential information sources with newspaper and the internet close third and fourth.

Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for the Sources of Information and Barriers to Voting factors to check the reliability of these variables. Table 9 shows their reliability.

Table 9
Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Sources of Information	.884
Barriers to Voting	.982

Chapter Five: Discussion, Implications, and Conclusions

It is important for teachers to vote because they face the implementation and repercussions of many state and national legislation decisions in their classroom everyday. Teachers are in the best position to act as agents of change in their school and communities since they witness the daily activities in schools. They can also act as democratic role models for students because "they model behavior which encourage student participation and response to democratic processes" (Grossman, 1981, p.29).

This study of sixty-two pre-service teachers at California State University, Monterey Bay revealed significant differences between the voting groups. As stated previously, this thesis aimed to identify ways of increasing voter turnout among pre-service teachers. This study did provide insight into how to increase voter turnout among pre-service teachers.

Strategies for Increasing Voter Turnout

Sources of Information. The data results from the interviews and survey showed nonvoters and the infrequent voters I interviewed as having concerns with where they were receiving voting information. Nonvoters found these sources of information to be slightly influential at best. Perhaps we can get some ideas from the interviewee who stated that the ads he saw and heard were confusing and untrustworthy. Interviewee 001 said it would be helpful to have a neutral organization that would clearly, plain English, explain the propositions and the effects of voting or not voting for them. He did mention The League of Women Voters as a source he has used in the past that provided him with "more neutral analysis" of the issues.

Barriers to Voting. Non and infrequent voters were also more pessimistic about voting. Providing clearer, more accessible, trustworthy information to make voting decisions is needed.

Several of the questions that were included in this factor dealt with the voters' impression of their polling place (i.e. poll workers, voting equipment, etc). If instructions on how to vote were clearer and there were adequate staff to help voters when they arrive to vote, perhaps much of their negative impressions of their voting place would decrease. Since many of the nonvoters thought voting was an isolating experience, get-out-the-vote programs might encourage people to go to the polls with a friend. This would alleviate some of their own inhibitions as well as increase voter turnout.

More than half of the infrequent and nonvoters felt that "Politics are controlled by special interests". They were also more likely to agree that, "My vote doesn't make a difference" compared to frequent voters. Interviewee 001 expressed similar concerns as well. Increasing people's sense of political efficacy is important. "People with a sense of political efficacy are more likely to take a more active part in politics than those without this belief" (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993, p.15). One goal should be increasing voter confidence in their participation in elections and convincing them of their influence in the outcome of elections. Providing statistics on elections that were decided by very few votes by citizens may help alleviate this pessimistic attitude.

Similar to one of the CalVoter.org findings, infrequent and nonvoters were more likely to agree that they were too busy to vote. A strategy offered by CalVoter.org was to educate voters on their right to take time off of work to vote.

Action Plan

I will share these results with the Student California Teacher's Association (SCTA) and California Teacher's Association (CTA), in hopes they can better educate and target pre-service and active teachers to participate and vote through their union activities. In the emails that I have written to and received from SCTA, CTA and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), they have all indicated to me that they do not have studies on pre-service or active teachers voting behaviors and motivations.

Almost all teachers that work in California's public schools belong to CTA. CTA has over 340,000 members in California's education system, making CTA and SCTA powerful organizations in the sense that they have access to many teachers. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) wrote, "In politics, organizations have the power of numbers, attentiveness, and singular purpose" (p.32).

The California Teacher's Association sends their members periodic publications throughout the year that include updates about the political activities in California. They report what education legislation has been proposed, sent to the Governor, died in the Senate or Assembly and which were enacted. Prior to elections, CTA sends members their recommendations for those running for political office and propositions. "Through ...organizations, group members get greater encouragement to participate" (Rosestone & Hansen, 1993, p.32). The results from this thesis could be used by these organizations to more effectively target teachers.

Teachers touch the lives of the next generation of citizens. They are also impacted by political decisions that shape their daily work and the environment of the students they

teach. The sole frequent voter (020) I interviewed said this when asked what motivated her to vote in all of the elections:

> I feel it is an honor and my duty as a citizen to vote in each election. I also find it fun. I've noticed that when there is an election, I will take the time to get informed about issues I might not otherwise had time to research, so it is also an educational experience for me. I feel more involved in the community around me when I vote... I'm motivated by being proud to live in a democratic society where my opinion is valued. Also, I understand how expensive elections are, and feel that if it is important enough for the government to pay for the process, the least I can do is show up to give my views. (personal communication, 2005)

I hope the results and suggestions in this thesis will help more teachers and organizations to motivate teachers to show up and vote.

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Appendix A: Modified Calvoter.org Survey

Thank you for taking this survey on voter behaviors. **Please choose one answer for questions 1 through 8.**

1. SOME PEOPLE ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE AND OTHERS AREN'T. ARE YOU CURRENTLY REGISTERED TO VOTE?
Yes_____   No _____

2. SOME PEOPLE VOTE IN EVERY ELECTION, SOME PEOPLE VOTE IN SOME ELECTIONS, AND SOME PEOPLE NEVER VOTE. HAVE YOU VOTED IN NONE, SOME, OR ALL OF THE FOUR MOST RECENT STATEWIDE ELECTIONS?
All _____   Some _____   None _____

3. IN GENERAL, HOW DO YOU THINK THINGS ARE GOING IN CALIFORNIA – ARE THINGS MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, OR ARE THINGS OFF ON THE WRONG TRACK?
Right Direction _____   More Right Than Wrong _____   More Wrong Than Right _____
Wrong Track _____

4. VOTING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO SOME PEOPLE THAN TO OTHERS. IN GENERAL, HOW IMPORTANT IS VOTING TO YOU?
Extremely Important _____   Very Important _____   Moderately Important _____   Not So

Important _____

Not At All Important _____

5. IF YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE, WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON THAT YOU HAVEN'T REGISTERED TO VOTE?
It's Too Hard To Get All The Information I Need To Vote _____
There Are No Candidates That I Believe In _____
There Are No Issues That Affect Me _____
Voting Doesn't Make A Difference _____
I Am Too Busy To Vote _____
I Don't Know How Or Where To Register To Vote _____
Too Many Issues On The Ballot _____
Other (Specify _____) _____
I Am Registered To Vote _____

6. WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON THAT YOU SOMETIMES DON'T VOTE IN ELECTIONS?
It's Too Hard To Get All The Information I Need To Vote _____
There Are No Candidates That I Believe In _____
There Are No Issues That Affect Me _____
Voting Doesn't Make A Difference _____
I Always Vote _____

7. MANY PEOPLE ARGUE THAT INFORMATION ABOUT ELECTIONS IS NOT READILY AVAILABLE, NOT EASY TO UNDERSTAND, AND NOT TRUSTWORTHY. WHICH DO YOU THINK THE GREATEST PROBLEM IS?

Unavailable _____

Hard To Understand _____

Untrustworthy _____

Other (Specify_____) _____

Don't Know _____

8.WHERE DO YOU GET MOST OF YOUR INFORMATION ABOUT THE NEWS AND EVENTS OF THE DAY? PLEASE CHOOSE ONE.

Newspaper _____

Internet _____

Network TV _____

Cable TV _____

Radio _____

Alternative Media _____

Foreign Media _____

Conversations With Friends And Family _____

Questions 9 and 10 ask you to rank your answers.

9. PLEASE RANK IN ORDER OF THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON TO VOTE IN AN ELECTION. 1=BEING THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON, 12= THE LEAST IMPORTANT REASON.

Civic Duty _____

To Support A Particular Candidate _____

Pressure From Family and Friends _____

Something On Ballot Affects My Pocketbook _____

Something On Ballot Affects My Family _____

To Support A Particular Ballot Issue _____

To Oppose A Particular Ballot Issue _____

People Struggled For The Right To Vote _____

Make Your Voice Heard/Express Your Opinion _____

Can't Complain Unless You Vote _____

As Long As People Don't Vote, Government Will Be Controlled By Corporations/Special Interests _____

Other (Specify _____) _____

10. PLEASE RANK IN ORDER OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE THAT WOULD MOTIVATE YOU TO VOTE. <u>1=BEING THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON, 16= THE LEAST IMPORTANT REASON.</u>

Housing _____
Immigration _____
Education / Schools _____
War On Terrorism/National Security _____
Transportation, Roads And Freeways _____
Cost Of Living _____
The Economy _____
The Budget _____
The Environment _____
Health Care _____
Growth, Development And Land Use _____
Crime And Public Safety _____
Taxes _____
Government/ Leadership _____
War On Iraq _____
Other (Specify _____) _____

The following is a list of steps in the voting process. Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with whether you think they are easy or difficult.

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Never Done
11. Registering to Vote	4	3	2	1	0
12. Getting the information necessary to make your voting decision	4	3	2	1	0
13. Reading and understanding the voter information pamphlet	4	3	2	1	0
	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Never Done
14. Getting voter materials in your preferred language	4	3	2	1	0
15. Finding your polling place	4	3	2	1	0
16. Voting at your polling place	4	3	2	1	0
17. Voting by absentee ballot	4	3	2	1	0

The following is a list of statements about the voting process. Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with whether you agree or disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
18. Poll workers are generally polite and helpful	4	3	2	1	0
19. There is no one on the ballot that I want to vote for	4	3	2	1	0
20. My family votes in most or all elections	4	3	2	1	0
21. It is important to stay informed about political issues	4	3	2	1	0
22. I like to vote	4	3	2	1	0
23. I am interested in politics and follow it in the news when I have the chance	4	3	2	1	0
24. My friends vote in most or all elections	4	3	2	1	0
25. I make more of a statement by not voting than I would if I voted	4	3	2	1	0
26. Voting is an important part of being a good citizen	4	3	2	1	0
27. Growing up, my family often discussed political issues and candidates	4	3	2	1	0
28. My friends hardly ever talk about politics	4	3	2	1	0
29. I believe that when I vote, my vote will be counted accurately	4	3	2	1	0
30. Voting lets you choose who represents you in government	4	3	2	1	0
31. Voting is an important way to voice your opinions on issues that affect your family and your community	4	3	2	1	0
32. I believe that my vote makes a difference in the outcome of the election	4	3	2	1	0

Here are some reasons that some people don't vote. Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with whether you agree or disagree. If you have voted in all of the last four elections, please choose I always vote.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	I Always Vote
33. It is too hard to sift through all the information available to make good decisions on how to vote	5	4	3	2	1	0
34. It is too hard to get the information necessary to make my voting decision	5	4	3	2	1	0
35. I don't trust any of the election information available	5	4	3	2	1	0

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	I Always Vote
36. I don't believe that my vote will actually be counted accurately	5	4	3	2	1	0
37. I don't feel that candidates really speak to me	5	4	3	2	1	0
38. It's too hard to figure out where to vote	5	4	3	2	1	0
39. I'm not comfortable in my polling place	5	4	3	2	1	0
40. The poll workers are unfriendly or unhelpful	5	4	3	2	1	0
41. I don't have access to election information in my preferred language	5	4	3	2	1	0
42. My vote doesn't make a difference	5	4	3	2	1	0
43. The voting equipment is difficult to use	5	4	3	2	1	0
44. Politics are controlled by special interests	5	4	3	2	1	0
45. The issues are too confusing	5	4	3	2	1	0
46. I am just not interested in politics	5	4	3	2	1	0
47. There are just too many things on the ballot	5	4	3	2	1	0
48. I do not feel that the United States is my home	5	4	3	2	1	0
49. Voting is an isolating and lonely experience	5	4	3	2	1	0
50. The results of elections just don't have any effect on me personally	5	4	3	2	1	0
51. I am too busy with work or my family	5	4	3	2	1	0

The following is a list of statements about registering to vote. Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with whether you agree or disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52. I know where to find voter registration forms	3	2	1	0
53. I have filled out a voter registration form	3	2	1	0
54. I don't want to register because I want my information to be private	3	2	1	0
55. I don't want to register because I don't want to get called for jury duty	3	2	1	0
56. I don't want to register because it could cause trouble for my family	3	2	1	0
57. I thought I was registered through the DMV	3	2	1	0

58. I move around so frequently that it is difficult to stay registered.	3	2	1	0
59. I have been registered before, but not at my current address.	3	2	1	0

Would you be more likely to vote, less likely to vote, or would it make no difference to you in the following situations? Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with whether you would be more likely or less likely to vote or no difference.

	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	No Difference	Somewhat Less Likely	Much Less Likely
60. If Election Day were a holiday	4	3	2	1	0
61. You could vote by mail	4	3	2	1	0
62. You could vote via computer	4	3	2	1	0

The following is a list of some sources of information people use to help them make their election decision. For each item please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with how influential a source it is in helping you make your election decisions.

	Very Influential	Moderately Influential	Slightly Influential	Not At All Influential	Don't Know
63. Endorsements from public figures	4	3	2	1	0
64. Endorsements from community groups	4	3	2	1	0
65. Mail from a political campaign	4	3	2	1	0
66. Phone call from a political campaign	4	3	2	1	0
67. Volunteer at your door from a political campaign	4	3	2	1	0
68. TV ads from a political campaign	4	3	2	1	0
69. Radio ads from a political campaign	4	3	2	1	0
70. Network TV news in English	4	3	2	1	0
71. Cable TV news in English	4	3	2	1	0
72. Local newspaper in English	4	3	2	1	0
73. Local Radio news	4	3	2	1	0
74. Talk Radio	4	3	2	1	0
75. Internet	4	3	2	1	0
76. Media in a language other than English	4	3	2	1	0
77. Alternative Media	4	3	2	1	0
78. Conversations with family	4	3	2	1	0
79. Conversations with friends	4	3	2	1	0

The following are questions about teaching. Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with whether you agree or disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
80. Teaching is a political profession	3	2	1	0
81. Politics has an impact on schools/schooling	3	2	1	0
82. Politics affects a teacher's daily work	3	2	1	0

The following are some questions about yourself. Please choose only one answer for each question.

83. WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

20-24 _____

25-29 _____

30-39 _____

40-49 _____

50-64 _____

65+ _____

84. I AM IN WHAT CREDENTIAL PROGRAM?

Multiple Subjects _____

Single Subject _____

Special Education _____

85. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ETHNIC GROUPS DESCRIBES YOU?

White Or Caucasian _____

Black Or African American _____

Latino Or Hispanic _____

Asian American Or Pacific Islander _____

Native American _____

Other (Specify: _____) _____

86. DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF LIBERAL, MODERATE OR CONSERVATIVE?

Very Liberal _____

Somewhat Liberal _____

Moderate, Lean Liberal _____

Moderate _____

Moderate, Lean Conservative _____

Somewhat Conservative _____

Very Conservative _____

87. WHICH POLITICAL PARTY DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH?

Democrat _____

Republican _____

Minority Party_____

Don't Know _____

88. PLEASE CHECK FEMALE OR MALE.

Female _____

Male _____

89. If you would be willing to be interviewed regarding information you provided to me from this survey, please print your name and phone number or email address below.

Name_____

Phone/email address _____

THANKYOU VERY MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING!

Source: California Voter Foundation   www.Calvoter.org

Appendix B: Emails to and from Calvoter.org requesting permission to use their survey

September 24, 2005

Dear Calvoter.org,

I am a graduate student in the MA in Education program at California State University, Monterey Bay. I am currently working on my thesis proposal which aims to understand the voting behaviors of pre-service teachers with the ultimate goal of encouraging pre-service teachers to participate more in our political system by voting. I came across your survey a couple of months ago and found many of the questions would be relevant to and useful for my study. I am writing you today to ask for permission to use some of your survey questions in my research. Upon completion, my thesis will be published in the CSU Monterey Bay library where students and others will have access to it. I look forward to hearing from you soon. If you have any questions, please email me or call mE at the email address and phone number above.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Cottle

October 5, 2005

Dear Calvoter.org,

I wrote you a couple of weeks ago regarding the use of your survey. I am graduate student at California State University Monterey Bay in the MA in Education program. For my research I am looking at how to motivate pre-service teachers to vote. I came across your survey last spring and found many of the questions would be useful in my study and am requesting permission to use them. My thesis would be published and on file at the CSU Monterey Bay library. If you would please email me or call me back at the number or email address above I would really appreciate it.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Cottle
Jennifer_cottle@csumb.edu

Octobers 5, 2005

Hi Jennifer,

I apologize for the late reply and that you had to contact us twice; this is an extraordinary time for us and we have only three people on staff.

I'll need to check with our President tomorrow morning, but I don't think this will be a problem. If you don't hear from me by Friday, feel free to call me at (530) 750-7650.

Regards,

Saskia Mills
Executive Director
California Voter Foundation

503 Fourth Street, Ste B
Davis, CA 95616
(530) 750-7650
saskia@calvoter.org

October 7, 2005

Dear Ms. Mills,

Thank you so much for writing back. I was very busy on Friday (as I am sure you were as well) and did not get a chance to call you regarding the use of your survey. Did you have the opportunity to speak with the president? Would you please email me back at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Cottle

October 7, 2005

Hi Jennifer,

Yes, I did talk with our president, and the answer is yes, you may use our survey questions in your thesis. We would just ask that you cite the California Voter Foundation as the source of the survey, and if possible include our URL (www.calvoter.org) in your paper in case anyone reading it would like to refer to the complete survey on our website.

Regards,
Saskia

Appendix C: Email to CSUMB professors requesting permission to visit their class

September 26, 2005

Dear Education Professors,

Hello, my name is Jennifer Cottle and I am a MA in Education student here at CSUMB. Recently, Dr. Arambula-Greenfield forwarded an email to the credential program directors that I wrote to her regarding my research. I was not sure if you had the opportunity to read it or not (I know how busy you all are), so I thought I would write you myself. I am interested in inviting the 2005-2006 multiple and single subject and special education credential students to participate in my study of pre-service teachers voting behaviors. I am looking for professors who would be willing to allow me to visit their class for about 20 minutes during the week of Oct. 10-14. I have a survey that will take about 15 minutes to complete. I was hoping to visit a class that all of the multiple subject students take, one that all of the single subject students take and one that all of the special education students take so I could catch each group of students all at one time (if possible, I am not sure if each program has a core class that everyone in the program attends). My schedule is very flexible that week and can attend any course. If you would be willing and able to allow me to visit during that week in October, please email me at this address or if you have any questions please feel free to call me at 642-9815. Thank you very much and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Cottle

(If I left out any course instructors that you feel may be interested, would you please forward them this email. Thank you very much!)

Advisor
Dr. Patty Whang