

# Andrew Therriault

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## Academic Positions

Vanderbilt University, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, 2011–2012

## Education and Training

New York University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Ph.D., Politics. *Started September, 2006. Graduated September, 2011.*  
M.A., Politics. *Started September, 2006. Graduated September, 2008.*  
B.A., Politics, Creative Writing. *Started September, 1999. Graduated May, 2003.*

Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models Summer Institute  
UC Berkeley, June–July, 2010

## Research Interests

American politics, political methodology, electoral campaigns and institutions, voter behavior, political participation, public opinion

## Dissertation: The Role of Policy Issues in American Elections

*Committee: Jonathan Nagler (NYU), Joshua A. Tucker (NYU), Patrick J. Egan (NYU)*

SYNOPSIS: I explore the choice by candidates of whether and how to discuss particular policy issues and the resulting effects on voters. While most existing theories of issue emphasis strive to explain why competing candidates' issue agendas may differ, I focus on the larger, unanswered question of why these agendas so often overlap. The answer I provide is that when competing candidates discuss the same issues, one or both is calculating that there is more to be gained by improving one's standing on that issue than by trying to change the subject. My analyses provide strong evidence that candidates provide information to educate or mislead voters about their issue positions and qualifications and those of their opponents; persuade voters to change their policy preferences, beyond simply providing partisan cues; and reframe issues to focus voters' attentions on aspects most favorable to the candidate. I then go on to show that candidates employ these strategies to take advantage of opportunities created by their own characteristics and conditions of public opinion. In each case, my findings represent valuable contributions to the study of campaigns and voters, demonstrating strategies and effects long suspected but rarely substantiated with real data. Through the use of original survey and experimental data, hand-coded records of campaign websites, and innovative methods of analysis, I refute the conventional wisdom about how voters evaluate candidates, how these views can be shaped by campaigns, and how candidates choose their issue emphasis strategies. The conclusions I reach ultimately support a more multifaceted view of the determinants and effects of political campaigns than any seen in previous studies.

## **Papers Under Review**

"Whose Issue Is It Anyway? An Alternative Theory of Issue Ownership and Candidate Evaluations" (revise and resubmit at *Public Opinion Quarterly*)

"Cross-Pressure Scores: A New and Improved Measure for an Old Concept", with Joshua A. Tucker and Ted Brader (revise and resubmit at *Political Behavior*)

"The Meaningful Effects Hypothesis: Informing, Persuasion, and Vote Choice in Presidential Campaigns"

"Cross-Pressures and Political Participation", with Joshua A. Tucker and Ted Brader

## **Working Papers**

"Explaining the Paradox of Issue Convergence: A Closer Look at the Content and Strategy of Campaign Messaging"

"The Impact of Negative Advertising on Turnout: Explaining Why It is Sometimes Positive, and Sometimes Not", with Jonathan Nagler and Jan Leighley

## **Conference Presentations and Invited Talks**

"Explaining the Paradox of Issue Convergence: A Closer Look at the Content and Strategy of Campaign Messaging"  
*American Political Science Association, September 2011*

"Cross-Pressures and Political Participation", with Joshua A. Tucker and Ted Brader  
*American Political Science Association, September 2011*  
*Political Networks Conference, June 2011*  
*Midwest Political Science Association, April 2011*

"The Meaningful Effects Hypothesis: Informing, Persuasion, and Vote Choice in the 2000 and 2004 Presidential Campaigns"  
*Society for Political Methodology, July 2011*  
*American Association for Public Opinion Research, May 2011*  
*Midwest Political Science Association, March 2011*  
*American Political Science Association, September 2010*

"Taking Campaign Strategy Online: Using Candidate Websites to Advance the Study of Issue Emphasis"  
*American Political Science Association, September 2010*

"Whose Issue Is It Anyway? Moving Beyond Issue Ownership Toward a Broader Understanding of Campaign Strategy"  
*Midwest Political Science Association, April 2010*

"The Impact of Negative Advertising on Turnout: Explaining Why It is Sometimes Positive, and Sometimes Not", with Jonathan Nagler and Jan Leighley  
*Midwest Political Science Association, April 2010*

"Issue Advantages in Targeted Campaigns: What a Closer Look at Issue Positions Can Reveal About Campaign Strategy"  
*Society for Political Methodology, July 2009*  
*Midwest Political Science Association, April 2009*

“The Cross-Pressured Citizen: Revisiting Social Influence on Voting Behavior”, with Joshua A. Tucker and Ted Brader

*Democratic Politics Colloquium, Center for the Study of Democratic Politics, Princeton, May 2009*  
*Midwest Political Science Association, April 2009*

### **Grants and Awards**

- Seymour Sudman Award, American Association for Public Opinion Research, for best paper submitted by a student in the field of public opinion, 2011
- GSAS Dean’s Dissertation Fellowship, New York University, 2011–2012 (*Declined in favor of post-doctoral position at Vanderbilt*)
- McCracken Fellowship, New York University, 2006–2011
- Bradley Fellowship (Summer), New York University, 2007–2011
- Society for Political Methodology Conference Travel Grant (NSF), 2011
- Political Networks Conference Travel Grant (NSF), 2011
- AAPOR Conference Travel Grant, 2011
- NYU Politics Department Field Research Grant, 2011
- NYU Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Travel Grant, 2010

### **Teaching Interests**

- Political behavior; elections and campaigns; democratic institutions; US politics; quantitative, experimental, and survey research methods

### **Teaching Experience**

- Teaching Assistant, American Politics, New York University, 2008–2009
- Grading Assistant, Congressional Elections Seminar, New York University, 2008–2011
- Grading Assistant, The Election Process, New York University, 2009–2010
- Grading Assistant, Civil Liberties, New York University, 2011
- Grading Assistant, Globalization: Causes and Consequences, New York University, 2011

### **Professional Service**

- Reviewer, *Political Behavior*
- Reviewer, *American Politics Research*
- Conference Proposal Reviewer, American Association for Public Opinion Research

### **Other Research Experience**

- Research Assistant, Prof. Jonathan Nagler, 2007–2011
- Research Assistant, Prof. Joshua A. Tucker, 2008–2009
- Research Assistant, Profs. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith, 2007–2009

### **Additional Experience**

- Book Production Editor, Elsevier Science & Technology Group, 2005–2006
- Textbook Production Coordinator, Pearson Education, 2005
- Field Organizer, 21st Century Democrats, 2004

### **References**

- Prof. Jonathan Nagler, New York University, jonathan.nagler@nyu.edu, 212.992.9676
- Prof. Joshua A. Tucker, New York University, joshua.tucker@nyu.edu, 212.998.7598
- Prof. Patrick J. Egan, New York University, patrick.egan@nyu.edu, 212.992.8078