Using organizational outreach event analysis to understand political mobilization
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Motivation
Existing studies of political mobilization focus on explaining activist recruitment and organizational outreach by conducting surveys, interviews, and ethnographies. These methods more reliably explain organization intention, rather than actual behavior. Furthermore, such methods are not possible if the organization does not choose to cooperate with scholars.

We offer a new method that facilitates the examination of organizational behavior by highlighting the range, goals, and modalities of outreach efforts. Furthermore we examine political engagement by conservatives, which is understudied in contemporary studies of organizational outreach.

Method
• Gathered the universe of publicly advertised events, including descriptions, date, location, and prominent attendees
• Coded the event descriptions for values communicated, political participation requested, products provided, and values communicated.
• Yielded a dataset of 1700 events occurring between 2011 and 2016.
• Compared patterns in these categories across organizations to discern the goals and strategies towards 3 constituency building groups

Data: Koch-funded constituency organizations
We examined the political outreach strategies of three constituency mobilization organizations created by the ultra-conservative Koch Network.

Organizations
The Libre Initiative
Generation Opportunity
Concerned Veterans for America

Mission
Our mission is to equip the Hispanic community with the tools they need to be prosperous. We are committed to developing a network of Hispanic pro-liberty action organizations across the United States so that our message reaches every corner of the country.
Generation Opportunity: enables young Americans to make a difference in their lives by building a movement that promotes a free society.
To preserve the freedom and prosperity we [veterans] and our families fought and sacrificed to defend.

Event structure
GenOpp & CVA own the majority of their events, while Libre partners with Latino-serving community organizations.

Event location
Event locations demonstrate both an electoral and demographic strategic logic.

Values
The organizations emphasized shared values between the target constituency and conservatism. These values varied by group.

Political requests
Organizations differentiate the intensity of their political requests based on the target constituency's partisanship. CVA, which targets the most conservative group, veterans, emphasizes political participation, while Libre, which targets the least right-aligned group, emphasizes less explicitly political activities and benefits.

Conclusion
• There are efforts on the right to recruit and mobilize non-conservative constituencies.
• Using publicly available organizational documents can provide insight into the political goals and patterns of organizational behavior.
  • This is especially useful if the organization does not welcome scholarly attention.
  • The Koch organizations differentiate their political recruitment strategies to match the target constituency’s alignment with conservatism.
    • This suggests that, unlike parties, allied organizations have long time horizons for seeing political results.
    • Changing policy preferences may begin with exposure and apolitical discussion
    • The event styles and content and qualitatively different, targeting the preferences of the target constituency
    • Partnerships with trusted community organizations may represent a critical strategy for engaging with non-aligned communities.

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