Reclaiming the House of the Representatives from Republicans: Case Study of Districts TX-32 and NJ-3

Norbert Tomaszewski

University of Wroclaw, Poland

iD https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7856-4840

Abstract:

2018 midterm elections in the United States allowed more ethnically and racially diverse candidates to become members of the Congress. The use of social media tools helped them to reach out to their community and get out the vote, which is especially important in Democratic campaign tactics. The article, by focusing on Colin Allred's and Andy Kim's Congressional bids, focuses on how their issue-oriented campaigns helped to mobilize the liberal voters. Furthermore, by analysing the rapidly changing demographics, it tackles the crucial question: do they mean the doom of the Republican Party?

Keywords: political campaign, social media, midterms, endorsement

Theoretical assumptions

Predictions for the 2018 Senate midterm elections looked extremely unfavorable for the Democrats, mostly because of the fact that in the Class 1 (2012-2018) they were defending 26 seats, whereas Republicans were only defending nine of them. Moreover, ten of these seats were in the states that Donald Trump won during the presidential elections in 2016 (compared to only one seat GOP was defending in the state won by Clinton). According to pundits there was a 1 in 5 chance that they would flip both chambers. On the other hand, the election forecasts for the House of Representatives were quite sure that the Democrats would win back the lower chamber of the United States Congress. How was that possible?

Mainly because of the fact that in most of cases, midterm elections tend to reflect the approval ratings of the president in charge. Even though this mechanism is more visible when analysing the second-term midterms of the incumbent president (1938, 1950, 1958, 1966, 1974,

1986, 2006) elections in which the president's party faced large congressional and gubernatorial losses (Kilgore 2015: 3).

In some cases, the party that has its representative in the White House faces significant losses during president's first midterms, with the latest case of Barack Obama in 2010, when the Democrats lost 63 (!) seats in the lower chamber, six Senate seats and also six Governors, or 1994 midterm elections when they lost accordingly 52 and 8 congressional seats and ten Governors (Kilgore 2015: 3). Nonetheless, 1998 and 2002 midterms provided gains for the party in charge of the White House; it is especially important to mention 2002 congressional elections, as the Democrats were unable to run an effective negative campaign, linking George W. Bush to weakening economy. What is more, 9/11 and sniper incidents in Washington D.C, combined with a wide media coverage of the intervention in Afghanistan (and the announcement of similar confrontation in Iraq) dominated the campaign discourse. As Bush campaigned the battleground states during the last two weeks of the campaign, GOP managed to gain 2 seats in the Senate and 6 House seats, much to everyone's surprise (O'Connor & Sabato 2005: 8).

The article, through the analysis of campaigns in TX-32 and NJ-3, tackles the question why the Democrats managed to overturn so many seats in the Lower Chamber and if it was possible because of their more active use of new technologies? As the research presents cases of Colin Allred's and Andy Kim's campaign, it focuses on a new Democratic wave that allowed the representants of various ethnic groups engage in politics and become politicians. Are the millennials more progressive, as they started tackling problems such as white privilege and decided to give back to the society by voting on the candidates that come from the underrepresented societies? Or maybe this is caused by changing demographics, which allow more ethnic minorities to voice their support for candidates, who represent their background?

The methodological approach that was chosen for this particular article focuses on content analysis, especially digital media, as they are publically accessible. By establishing the theoretical frames describing how do the new media affect modern political campaigns, the article first describes the collected data from newspapers and internet websites, in order to later focus on the campaigns themselves by analysing various marketing tools that were chosen by candidates on their social media platforms. It is especially important while describing the image content posted on Instagram and Twitter, which through examination of data samples allows to distinguish various types of content that was created.

The main aim of the research is to examine how the candidates used the social media during the midterms to get out the vote within the Democratic base in order to flip the seats in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, by focusing on two campaign cases, it studies how the Democratic candidates conducted an issue-oriented campaign, by at the same time framing the Republican candidates as Trump-related to mobilize the moderate voters, who despite the POTUS. Finally, by focusing on the demographics, the study attempts to prove how (through changing demographics), ethnically diverse base of Democratic voters is changing the racial makeup of the Lower Chamber.

New media and the new waves of the voter behaviour

Over the years, new technologies have been heavily influencing how the modern political campaigns are led. Especially when focusing on the American politics. According to Fuchs et al. (2012: 3), modern internet has evolved from information-oriented model to user-oriented that focuses on community building. With every new election, candidates and their staffs are given new tools that allow them to increase the amount of people that may receive content from them. But before using Web 2.0 tools, what do the researchers say about the perfect candidates? Weber's concept of a „charismatic leader" relies on the idea that their „virtue" allows them to distinct themselves from ordinary men and women and influence their decisions (Tucker 1968: 731). Furthermore, he argues that not only charisma and public trust are important components that form a good politician, as he predicted that the strategy implemented during the campaign process may be soon the most important factor that determines the winner of the elections (Beetham 2013: 98). This is especially important in 21st century, when climbing up the social ladder is no longer needed to become a recognizable political actor. Nowadays the social skills combined with the use of new media allow the candidate to not only distinct themselves from the party establishment, but also appeal to the voter as an ordinary person that will represent their interests in Congress. Political campaigns can be described from three perspectives: behavioral, functional and rational (Wiszniowski 2000: 97). The behavioral concept relies on the analysis of the voting patterns and personal strategies, whereas the functional focuses on how do the political actors behave and measures the efficiency of political advertisements. Finally, the rational perspective is explained through the research on the decision-making process of the voter. Denton Jr. (2017: 5) further demonstrates the functional model; the campaign content that is created by the candidate and their staff is strictly focusing on getting more votes than the

opponent. In order to win the elections, the candidate needs to become more recognizable through various appearances during the campaign events. They need to remember though that they do not need to earn sympathy of all the people eligible for voting, as only more than 50% of them are enough for them to win. What is more, the candidates need to distinct themselves from their rivals; that is when the communication with the voter starts, as informed about the political program, voter realizes that their goals are different from the rival. Politician has to choose at the very beginning, how would they spread the message to the voter and what tactics would they be using. It all depends on what kind of voting group is the staff targeting, as some of the voters may respect more aggressive approach, while the others may expect more issue-oriented campaign.

Nowadays, the campaign faces the era of internetization, which continues the trends that were set up during the early stages of postmodernization back in the 1990s (Farrell 1996, Wiszniowski 2000: 105). As the telecommunication evolved, it allowed the candidate to get closer to the voter. Average American customer started to get access to the cable TV and internet services, hence started to obtain news from these media. Because of that fact, political marketing specialists were able to target specific voting groups, thanks to the development of information banks and mail subscription. Paid experts could provide the groundworks on different groups of citizens that shared similar cultural or social background and let divide them into electorate segments (Wiszniowski 2000: 110).

The internetization stage, further explained in my forthcoming doctoral dissertation, is defined as a „retreat of the political campaign from the traditional media to Web 2.0". Web 2.0 term, popularized by O'Reilly Media Group back in 2004, is the internet that allows the user to interact with the content. Back in the 1990s, the internet was only used to obtain information; now, the so-called „digital natives" can rate, share, exchange the material, which creates a form of cyber-socializing (Tomaszewski 2018b: 98). Such observation seems plausible when observing how the social media have evolved throughout the beginning of 21st century. As modern campaigning becomes more and more expensive, Web 2.0 tools allow to reach more viewers, while spending less money and time on sharing the campaign message. Political advisors are no longer the only PR experts, social media influencers can also help the candidate to present their image as „cool", especially when talking about targeting young voters, who usually are not that interested in politics. Fans can take active part in the campaign by fundraising, recommending the content to their friends, but also by organising in small groups in order to run campaign rallies in their area.

The Americanization of the political campaigns is not only linked to the professionalization of campaign advertising, but also means that the campaign is perceived as a popularity contest, just like the reality shows. Voters are likely to sympathize with the candidate that is mostly liked. In order to appeal to the potential voter, politician needs to show their more personal side, often by sharing more personal and less campaign-related content on social media. It is definitely easier for celebrity turned politicians, who know how to combine these types of messaging. Additionally, campaigns may use celebrity endorsement in order to mobilize the voters, especially the young ones. The data on this subject is more likely to be obtained when analysing the presidential campaigns, such as the relationship between Barack Obama and Jay-Z during the 2008 campaign or Bernie Sanders and Killer Mike during 2016 presidential primaries (Tomaszewski 2017). The value of the endorser depends on how many specific voting groups they are representing; they role is to transfer the support they are receiving from fans towards the candidate they are supporting (Tomaszewski 2018a: 159). According to Marland and Lalancette (2014) there are two groups of celebrity endorsers: celebrity political endorsement publicists and fundraisers. The first type of celebrity is using their status to gather media attention for the campaign and the endorsement. The second group not only focuses on this issue, but also helps to organize fundraisers, often VIP events during which the money for the campaign is collected (Tomaszewski 2018a: 162).

Having established the theoretical approach, it is crucial to determine: do these mechanisms really work during the midterm elections? Can the results really be influenced by effective use of campaigning tools, or it all depends on the voting patterns and demographics?

Midterm elections have never really been perceived as entertaining. According to some studies, as the modern technology emerged, public polling has created a new model in which campaigning means governing (Blumenthal 1980). Ornstein and Mann (2000) agree with this model, by stating that modern governing does not differ much from campaigning, especially when talking about the presidential governing (Doherty 2007: 750). This means that political actors permanently seek for an approval from the voter: politicians need to focus on the results of opinion polls to keep the majority of the voters happy. It is also worth noting that midterms are not as popular as presidential elections and the lower turnout is, the better result Republicans have. Let's take into consideration the last two midterm elections: from 122.6 million voting in 2008, the number of voters dropped in 2010 to 87 million, accordingly in 2012 122.3 million voted and 81.7 million in 2014 (Kalb 2015).

The Democratic wave that allowed the Congress to be more racially and ethnically diverse, has been on a roll for some time. The 115th Congress that was chosen during the 2016 elections, consisted of 339 White members of House of Representatives, 46 Black members, 33 Hispanic, 10 Asian and three belonging to other ethnic groups. According to Pew Research Center analysis, it started to resemble the diverse population of the United States. As 19% members of the Congress consisted of nonwhites, at that time 38% nonwhite Hispanics and other minorities represented 38% of the population (Bialik & Krogstad 2017). What was important, was the fact that when comparing to the 114th Congress, 115th Congress had a higher number of new members representing ethnically and racially diverse background. For example, 11 of 71 new members of the 114th Congress were an ethnic or racial minority, whereas 20 out of 59 new members of 115th Congress were non-white Hispanics or represented other minorities (Bialik & Krogstad 2017). It is also worth mentioning that the biggest growth has been noted among Hispanics and Asians.

Why is that so important? Mostly because of the fact that this situation has been rapidly evolving due to changing demographics and more racially cautious voting by White Millennials. 116th House of Representatives has even less members that are Non-Hispanic Whites. Currently, the House has five more African American members, one more Hispanic/Latin American member, two more Asian/Pacific Islanders and two more Native American members (Panetta & Lee 2019). Although it is not a part of case study, women were „riding the blue wave", as more than ever won their elections, also representing different ethnic backgrounds as Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar became first Muslim women in Congress (McBain 2018).

As the House of Representatives has been reclaimed by the Democratic Party, I decided to have a brief analysis of two cases, where the Democratic candidates flipped the seats. Colin Allred and Andy Kim are perfect examples of a new wave within the party, as the 116th Congress has more people of color than ever and this is trending upwards as the party supporters, especially millennials and progressives demand to increase the diversity and to allow the marginalised communities to speak up.

TX-32: from NFL to politics

Even though Colin Allred's campaign was not really covered nationwide, its analysis shows some promising patterns that can be helpful for the future campaigning staffs. First of all, it is worth noting that Allred had a very strong party backing. After ending his short NFL career,

Dallas native pursued his lifelong dream to go to law school. As he graduated, Allred became an assistant in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office in Obama's administration. This short biography is crucial to explain his career's development, as he worked there under Julian Castro. Although this may seem as a privileged position to run in the House of Representatives primaries, his two rivals also had a history of working for Obama. Moreover, his runoff rival Lillian Salerno is also from Dallas and is also an attorney. Although he struggled to raise money for the campaign and did not air any TV ads (mostly because media market in Dallas is expensive), he managed to win (Debenedetti & Schneider 2018). Potentially most important power that Allred's image had, was his easiness to appeal to the millennial voters, similar to the one that Beto O'Rourke has. As Salerno attacked him for being inexperienced, he won with her and got the party nomination. It is interesting how from this perspective one can recognize him as a political underdog during the primaries, a person that won the elections against all odds. The data was also predicting that his eventual success would heavily rely on young voter. Even though this was not an outstanding research result, TX-32nd district was placed 38th in 2018 Youth Electoral Significance Index, data-based tool created by The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, ranking the congressional districts that have the biggest potential for the young voters to have impact on the outcome (Circle 2018).

Another factor that allowed the Democrats to think about flipping the seat, were the results of the 2016 presidential elections. Hillary Clinton won the district TX-32 by a two percent margin. This was one of the three Republican-controlled districts in Texas that were won by her with other being 7th District in Houston and San Antonio-to-El Paso 23rd District. Allred's rival, Pete Sessions ran unopposed during the last cycle (Livingston 2018). Many Texans are voting republican, especially in the rural areas, but the moderate Republicans, who live in the suburbs or in urban areas do not like the POTUS. That is why linking the candidate to the president might have been a good tactic. Sessions could be easily framed as a Trump supporter, as he voted for repealing Obamacare. Sessions, who voted for repealing Obamacare, were an easy target. The voters in TX-32 are mostly white and highly educated with the median income of over $66,000 (Barba 2018). However, in this area 19.9% citizens are living below poverty level, which is 8.6% higher than the national average. Taking this into consideration, Allred's main campaign theme was focusing on the healthcare, but his campaign message was also mentioning his upbringing and how he fought obstacles to be where he is right now.

Allred's Facebook posts that were targeting policies supported by Sessions, focused on health insurance and immigration. On the 8th of June his Facebook page posted that Sessions voted to cut funding from the Children's Health Insurance Program (Allred 2018a). As he stated during rallies, in North Texas 330,000 people have preexisting conditions and Sessions wanted to take away the protection plans from them (NDG 2018). This issue-oriented approach to the campaign was supported with all the Web 2.0 tools that Allred had, as he also eagerly shared healthcare-related content on Twitter, with short statements linking to his website and political program. Even though some media labelled Allred as a progressive (mistake that seemed quite common in 2018 as O'Rourke was also perceived by some journalists as such), former NFL player should have been perceived as a centrist. It is worth noting though that this is a result of the Democratic Party slowly leaning left, as the issues his campaign staff was mostly focusing on, such as health policies, gun violence, equal rights, raising the minimum wage and social security (even paid family leave) few years ago would have been met with surprise even within the party. It is interesting how the campaign used the endorsements to reach out to the voters: as TX-32 was never really making any media buzz, the campaign trail lacked any momentum with famous people attending the rallies (as opposed to the Senate campaign). The data shows that most of the endorsements were political, as Allred was supported by the politicians and Democratic organisations. Apart from Obama, whose support for the Democratic candidate was one of the first during last year's midterms (Caldera 2018) and aforementioned Castro (along with his twin-brother), Allred was also endorsed by Kamala Harris. From his Facebook campaign profile, one may have learned that the campaign received the endorsements from Planned Parenthood, Human Rights Campaign and League of Conservation Voters Action Fund. There is one celebrity endorsement that is interesting, as Kelly Rowland (ex-member of Destiny's Child) took part in the Get Out The Vote Phone Bank event on the 5th of November (Allred 2018a).

Allred ran a grassroots campaign. His campaign page posted on the 5th of August, that its campaign staff along with the volunteers has knocked on 75,000 doors at that time (Allred 2018a) During the Congressional campaign, Allred managed to outraise Sessions by a very small margin – even though it is indeed a huge success (over $800,000 more according to the opensecrets.org report) it is the style that matters. Democratic candidate followed the pattern of other underdogs and the huge part of this money were small donations from individual contributors. He was, however, supporter by End Citizens United, a grassroots PAC that ran TV ads in Dallas worth $284,000 that attacked Sessions for taking $2.5 million from corporate PACs. Furthermore, the

organisation spent $148,000 on digital spots aimed at women and independents and $100,000 for direct mail. Candidate's Twitter was mostly used to run ads, as he is not really a political celebrity (although he is described by the media as an "ex-NFL player turned politician"; at the end of April 2019 he has over 21,000 followers on this platform. Pinned at the top of the profile, is the most recognizable campaign ad in which Allred explains how being raised by a single mother that worked two jobs to make ends meet, he was able to become a sportsman and a civil lawyer. By pointing that right now, he wants to share his experience and help others in need, Allred shows that he is not some kind of D.C. supported politician, but an activist that wants to change his surroundings. The clip has over 53,000 views on Twitter and perfectly connects the dots that create his public image. On his profile, Allred shared his campaign-related materials such as pictures from rallies and his political program. In some posts, Allred is positioning Sessions as a hardcore Trump supporter, at the same time targeting the independents; for instance his tweet from the 15th of September is a screenshot of Trump's endorsement for Sessions, posted with a statement that Sessions votes with Trump 98% of the time and addresses the voters, who do not want to be associated with any party that „he cannot be an independent voice for North Texas". It seems like a really good led campaign in social media, but it lacked an X factor that would attract more followers – Allred looks like a wonderful person that smiles with his teeth out on each of the campaign pictures, but we did not really get to see what is he doing in the free time. On the other hand, this may also show some potential voters how far he is committed to his cases. What draws the attention are the family and pet photos that attracted the biggest amount of hearts on his Twitter profile page. Based on the analysis of his Twitter content in March 2018, on average, pictures with his newborn child or wife got around 271 more hearts than the standard posts (Allred 2018c). For example, in March 2018 Allred made 22 tweets, getting 264,5 hearts on average. His family pictures from March 2018 got accordingly 859, 504, 338 and 441 hearts. The next good move that draws the attention is that Allred is clearly a dog person and his staff used this to mobilize the voters in more casual way. A tweet from the 27th of July 2018, shows a golden retriever chilling by the „Colin Allred for Congress" sign, with the message inviting to pick up in Richardson, city located in Dallas and Collin counties, suggesting the $15 donation for this piece of campaign merchandise (Allred 2018c) Another tweet was posted on the National Dog Day, with the picture of Allred's beloved dog Scarlet, telling in a first-person narrative that Colin was there for her when she had cancer and provided her the best healthcare possible, so he would do the same for North Texans (Allred 2018c). It is needed to stress that Sessions has more

Twitter followers than Allred (34.4K) and both Allred's and Sessions's Facebook campaign profiles have around 11,000 followers, but Sessions was building his internet community for years, whereas Allred was rather unknown and it was the campaign that made him famous on the state level.

And what about the Instagram? Beloved millennial social media tool that made Ocasio-Cortez and O'Rourke viral for their livestreams? On the colinallred profile that is followed by over 4,800 Instagram users, similar content can be observed that has been posted on other social media outlets. Content mostly consists of campaign material such as graphics that describe issues that are important for the candidate and pictures from the campaign rallies. There is one attempt at showing Allred's personal side, as on the 14th of April 2018 a picture of him bowling has been posted with a text „Trying out other sports. Results TBD." (Allred 2018b).

NJ-3: Kim Possible

Second case that I would like to focus on, is Andy Kim's Congressional campaign in district NJ-3. Why? Simply because of the similarities he shares with Allred. Not only he unseated the Republican incumbent, but he also presented on an issue-oriented campaign focused on public healthcare. What is more, Kim, as an Asian-American, just like Allred, represents the „new wave" of Democratic representatives in Congress, who belong to ethnic groups that were previously underrepresented. Finally, he also worked for Obama.

As Kim announced his candidacy in June 2017, he made it very clear that he decided to run against Rep. Tom McArthur, mainly because the Republican representative was one of the architects of American Health Care Act. NJ-3 was predicted as a toss-up; the district voted for Obama twice, only to switch to Trump in 2016. There were 12,000 more Democrats living in this constituency than Republicans.

From the very beginning, Kim wanted to position himself as a bipartisan expert who was both Obama's and George W. Bush's advisor. MacArthur's main strength was the money – his net worth is around $53 million and he consistently loaned himself money for the reelection bid (Wildstein 2018). Just like in Allred's case, Kim's ability to attract small donors allowed him to conquer MacArthur – by the end of 2017, he managed to raise around $600,000 with $345,000 coming in the end of 2017. At that time, this grassroots support was not enough as MacArthur's campaign raised over $1.2 million. Not only Republican incumbent was helped by the Super PAC's, but also Trump hosted a fundraiser for him in July 2017, which brought $800,000 (Cronin

2017). Kim pledged to not use support from Super PACs, although he received some funds from other Democratic campaign committees. Still, most of the money was transferred by individual donors, so MacArthur's tactics were to distract voters from the corporate PAC money that he received. Kim's campaign started to attract more and more supporters as during the first quarter of 2018 he managed to raise over $530,000 (Levinsky 2018). It was the summer, when Kim began to outrun MacArthur, as by the end of August 2018 he already had more than $2.5 million with average donation of $34 (Rosenberg 2018b). Once again similar mechanism can be observed – the bigger amount of money the candidate raises from individual small donors, the more media attention he gets as he becomes an underdog to the campaign. It is more likely for the Democrats to play that role and after Obama's, Sanders's and Beto's quite successful bids, the campaign staffs found the way to attract the undecided voters – by appealing to them as anti-establishment personas. At that time, Kim also started trending in public polls: Monmouth University poll was showing the Asian-American candidate winning by one percent with MacArthur (with a 5.7 margin of error).

NJ-3 is overwhelmingly urban with only 3.83% of its territory rural. Once again, the most important part of the campaign was mobilization of the undecided voters. The eastern part of the district in Ocean County preferred MacArthur, whereas the western part of Burlington County preferred Kim. Once again, the best tactic that was available was to show MacArthur's loyalty to Trump, as according to FiveThirtyEight, he supported Trump's stances more than any other member of the House of Representatives from New Jersey (Jackson 2018).

Kim on the other hand, focused on attracting the moderate base, while at the same time flirting with the party progressives: not only he was endorsed by the Congressional Progressive Caucus PAC, but he also pledged to support new leadership in the party, instead of backing Nancy Pelosi (Biryukov 2018). It was August, when Kim received the endorsement from Obama, who posted on Twitter his first group of endorsed candidates. As the campaign, similarly to Allred's, did not attract much media hype that would bring the „cool" factor, there is only one celebrity that publically supported Kim and attended door-to-door events for him. Piper Perabo, Toms River native (Ocean County) took part in the „Get on the Bus Vote Blue" campaign. She also tweeted that she's supporting Kim to flip the House.

In September, Kim started to strengthen his lead in the polls: apart from winning the DCCC poll administered between September 4-5 (Kim won by a two-point margin), he performed very well in NYT Upshot/Siena College poll conducted between 22nd and 26th of

September, in which his lead increased to ten points (SCRI 2018). It is interesting as exactly during that month, the negative campaign funded by the Republican PAC's reached its momentum as three spots have been released by NRCC (National Republican Congressional Committee) that have been heavily criticised in the media. „Meet Andy Kim", „Andy Kim: That Guy" and „D.C. Andy" were supposed to focus on the illegal tax break Kim got from his condo in D.C and the taxes he avoided in New Jersey. The main slogan from the spots was „Andy Kim – NOT one of us", which, when taking into consideration Kim's ethnicity, was so unthoughtful it is amazing. That is not all, as the Republicans have also prepared fliers titled „Something is real fishy about Andy Kim" with „real fishy" and „Andy Kim" written in a „Chop Suey" red-black font that is often associated with Asian food and films. The leaflets, accompanied with the picture of raw fish, may have fired back at MacArthur's results in the September polls (Duhart 2018). Entering September, Kim had around 1,200 volunteers working within the district and still recruiting in Philadelphia and nearer towns, where the Democrats were safe. The rallies were quite informal, as Kim's campaign staff offered free beer and the candidate wanted to show how he is an activist-turned-politician. This form of anti-distinction is helpful as it allows the supporter to see more personal side of their candidate (Rosenberg 2018a).

During July, August and September, Kim raised $2.3 million which was a historical result, as no other candidate ever managed to raise that much funds in NJ-3 district (Insider NJ 2018). According to Kim, 92% of the donations were provided by the small-donor donations. This has secured him a 17th place on a list of Democrats that raised the biggest amount of cash from small donors (Burns et al. 2018). Experts predicted that in order for Kim to win, the white, college-educated suburban moderates would have to show up in sufficient numbers and outnumber less-educated rural white men (Romano 2018). At the end of the campaign, Kim once against stressed how important the healthcare is for him and his supporters: the Concerned Seniors organisation helped prepare 65,000 voter postcard initiative to mobilize senior voters to vote against MacArthur, who helped raise the prices of prescription drugs and voted for cuts to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid (Insider NJ 2018). Joe Biden showed up to canvass for Kim in Golden Dawn Diner in Edgwater Park (Hefler 2018). This shows how important the contest was as he was touring across the most competitive districts. Kim also held a Women's rally, during which he stressed support for health benefits, maternity care and protection for people with pre-existing conditions (Insider NJ 2018). During the campaign trail, Kim often stressed how his personal experience crafted his political views; his father was a Polio survivor

and orphan, who earned a Ph.D. and his mother was a nurse, by observing them he learned that everyone deserves a chance and should be provided with public healthcare.

Kim released a few campaign spots that tackled different subjects, for example the „Situation Room" spot highlighted Kim's willingness for bipartisanship, whereas „Service" explains various ways one can put people first instead of special interest and reminds his work for Obama and George W. Bush, once again to stress that he represented presidents of two different parties. „August" spot shows Kim's son, who was underweight before being born. By showing his personal experience, Kim argues that no family should be put at risk by not being allowed public healthcare and he promises to work with both Democratic and Republican Party to provide such for all citizens. There were, however, a few spots that focused on negative campaigning. The „Booth" spot attacks MacArthur for taking $400,000 from drug and insurance companies. Finally, the most popular spot (apart from the one announcing his candidacy), „Worst of Washington" shows an unfavorable picture of MacArthur with information that he wrote a dangerous healthcare bill that denied protection for people with pre-existing conditions (Kim 2018b).

But what about other digital media? At the end of April 2019, Andy Kim had over 11,000 likes on Facebook. On this platform, Kim posted short clips that combined campaign related material such as spots or videos from rallies with more personal stuff. Such posts tended to receive from 150 to 350 reactions; apart from the posts announcing his candidacy and his win, the most reacted one is a video of his son taking first steps – the video received 838 reacts and it was posted on the 25th of August 2018. The second most reacted video is Kim with his two sons asking for help with door-to-door canvassing in various locations less than 48 hours until the election day and was posted on the 4th of November (Kim 2018a).

On Twitter, Kim has 17,900 followers (30.04.2019). Both on Facebook and Twitter, the content was dominated by the „reason" series, which was prepared by Kim's staff. On 14th of July a first infographic was posted with 115th reason to vote for Andy Kim. From this day, one graphic daily was posted with another different reason to vote for the Democratic candidate with the last one posted the day before general election. Other materials posted on Twitter were reposts from the volunteers and some campaign rally content. Family content was posted on these platforms rarely, that is because Kim's Instagram account focused on this way of appealing to the voter (Kim 2018d).

Andykimnj Instagram account posted for the first time on the 5th of January with a photo album consisting of eight pictures. Album consists of various content, which shows different ways how the campaign should be conducted on social media. Four of the pictures show Kim's sons, three of them are campaign related and the last one is MacArthur's picture with Trump with bottom text that he voted three times to give himself and his donors a tax cut. During the campaign trail, 40 posts were uploaded to this Instagram account and what is interesting is the fact that although all of them were somehow campaign related, Kim's staff focused on presenting more personal side of Andy Kim with most of the pictures presenting his kids. Most of the pictures and videos did not get more than 100 likes and his account started to gather attention at the very end of the campaign, for instance the post from 3rd of November showing Kim doing door-to-door with his kids received over 400 likes. From that moment, his posts have regularly been receiving more than 300 likes (Kim 2018c).

Colin Allred's and Andy Kim's campaign trail and its outcome were quite similar. The race ratings that were released in October 2018 were showing that both of the districts were a Toss-up (only Inside Elections with Nathan Gonzales predicted that NJ-3 is Tilt Democratic). Both of the candidates eventually flipped the seats and helped the Democratic Party to reclaim the majority in the House of Representatives.

What can we learn from these cases? How to conduct a modern mobilization campaign?

Allred won by slightly less than 18,000 votes and a key to winning this district were the suburban votes from the Dallas County, in which Allred got around 20,500 votes more than Pete Sessions. According to Catalist Analytics (2019), there were four factors that allowed the Democratic candidate to win. First of all, the composition of 2018 electorate leaned more Democratic than in 2016, when talking about age and racial diversity. For instance, voters of color increased their vote share by two percentage points. What is more, Allred performed better than Clinton within the middle partisan groups: white voters with college degrees and single white voters. The most interesting discovery is that Allred was able to bring the voters of colour that previously voted for Sessions back to the Democratic camp (Catalist Analytics 2019). Finally, the early voters, who were dominantly younger and more racially diverse than the overall 2018 electorate, allowed Allred to secure an early lead and mobilize the rest of the voters. I would like to add another factor that ensured that Allred will flip the seat – the down-ballot effect of Beto O'Rourke's senatorial bid helped to get out the vote in most urban areas, such as Dallas

County, where O'Rourke won by 240,000 votes (Issenberg 2019). TX-32 is the 12th-most-gerrymandered district in Texas, which was created to favor Republicans, who are living in the suburbs of Dallas. Without the support of Beto volunteers, this bid would be much more difficult (Petersen 2018).

Kim on the other hand won by a smaller margin, as he received only slightly less than 4,000 votes more than MacArthur. Predominantly urban district was (just as predicted) split into Democratic Burlington County and Republican Ocean County. According to Matt Friedman, a liberal non-profit group did a research that stated that the voters in this district would be most hurt by repealing Obamacare. That is why healthcare was a main focus of this campaign. Although it is not as clear as when analysing TX-32 results, Kim was also helped by young, racially diverse voters. But what if there was something else? The third-party candidate, Larry Berlinski managed to receive 3,902 votes and if he did not run, most of these votes would be casted on MacArthur. Why is that? Berlinski is in fact aligned a lot more closely with the Republicans than the Democrats. Can we be sure that his candidacy „Nadered" MacArthur out of his seat? Not necessarily, as the Democrats in the Burlington County have exceeded their historical turnout (Ford 2018).

The statistics of the 116th Congress can't be wrong – for the fifth time in a row, the Congress is most racially and ethnically diverse (Bialik 2019). This is especially visible within new members, who tend to swipe the non-Hispanic white candidates during the primaries. In Nevada, Latinx and Asian-American vote was the main power that allowed the state to have two female U.S. Senators and a female-majority state Supreme Court (Milligan 2018). Hispanic population of New Mexico influenced the election results and as a result, Michelle Lujan Grisham became first Democratic Latina governor.

Unarguably, Allred's and Kim's campaign analysis shows that modern Democratic voters want their Congress to be more ethnically diverse. That is (apart from other significant factors), why they may have won the primaries. The demographics show that their Get Out The Vote campaigns attracted young voters, which is crucial to determine the elections outcome, as usually the older the voter is, the more likely they are to cast a ballot. Both candidates had an issue-related campaign, as they decided to mainly focus on healthcare. Of course, they supported many other important policies, in Allred's case the immigration issue, in Kim's case the transparency, but their main goal was to position themselves as supporters of public healthcare, while attacking their opponents for siding with Trump. Through framing the opponents as the ones working very

closely with POTUS, they decided to activate the Trump card, which plays well with moderates and independent voters, who easily get appalled whenever they see him in the news. Both of the candidates focused on the grassroots campaign, which has lately been effective when combined with the underdog approach, as this allows politician to position themselves as ,,one of many", who decided to run against the establishment. The strategy that helped Obama or Sanders, also helps in Congressional elections, especially within the Democratic Party candidates. Social media played an important role in getting out the vote, as the campaign content could be distributed among the internet users from various platforms. Content had two sides – professional and personal. The rally material played the informational role, while much more reacted material that presented everyday life of the candidate with highlighted family content, allowed the staff to work on candidate's image, by showing him as he is. Candidates did not rely on celebrity endorsers, as they focused on getting the endorsements from high-ranked party officials and organizations. Last year's midterm election showed that the voters are more and more interested in politics and they want to cast the ballot more often, especially the young ones. Is there any better way to combine politics and entertainment than social media? Everyone, who followed the latest elections and their results, should know the right answer to that question.

References:

Allred, C. (2018a). Colin Allred's Facebook fanpage. https://www.facebook.com/ColinAllredTX/ (10/05/2019).

Allred, C. (2018b). Colin Allred's Instagram. https://www.instagram.com/colinallred/?hl=en (10/05/2019).

Allred, C. (2018c). Colin Allred's Twitter account. https://twitter.com/ColinAllredTX (10/05/2019).

Barba, J. (2018). Colin Allred's Fresh Approach Is Winning In Texas. *Millenial Politics*. https://www.countable.us/ articles/8481-colin-allred-s-fresh-approach-winning-texas-jesse-g-barba-millennial-politics (10/05/2019).

Beetham, D. (2013). *The Legitimation of Power (Political Analysis)*. 2[nd.]Edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bialik, K. (2019). For the fifth time in a row, the new Congress is the most racially and ethnically diverse ever. *Pew Research Center*. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/08/for-the-fifth-time-in-a-row-the-new-congress-is-the-most-racially-and-ethnically-diverse-ever/ (10/05/2019).

Bialik, K., & Krogstad, J.M. (2017). 115th Congress sets new high for racial, ethnic diversity. *Pew Research Center*. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/01/24/115th-congress-sets-new-high-for-racial-ethnic-diversity/ (10/05/2019).

Biryukov, N. (2018). Kim won't back Pelosi. *New Jersey Globe*. https://newjerseyglobe.com/congress/kim-wont-back-pelosi/ (10/05/2019).

Burns, A., Shorey, R., & Patel, J. (2018). Small Donors Fuel a Big Democratic Lead in 2018 Fund-Raising. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/10/16/us/politics/campaign-finance-small-donors.html (10/05/2019).

Caldera, C. (2018). Obama's first midterm endorsements include Democrat Colin Allred for Congress. *Dallasnews*. https://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/2018/08/01/obama-backs-democrat-colin-allred-dallass-congressional-district-32-first-endorsements (10/05/2019).

Catalist Analytics (2019). What Happened in the TX-32 Congressional Election?. *Medium*. https://medium.com/@CatalistAnalytics/what-happened-in-the-tx-32-congressional-election-3a292ea8cf44 (10/05/2019).

Circle (2018). *The Center For Information & Research On Civic Learning And Engagement*. https://civicyouth.org (10/05/2019).

Cronin, S. (2017). NJ Politics Digest: MacArthur Cashes In on Trump Connection. *Observer*. https://observer.com/2017/06/nj-politics-digest-macarthur-cashes-in-on-trump-connection/ (10/05/2019).

Debenedetti, G., & Schneider, E. (2018). Top takeaways from the Texas primary. *Politico*. https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/07/takeaways-texas-primary-2018-443992 (10/05/2019).

Denton Jr., R. (2017). *Studies of Communication in the 2016 Presidential Campaign*. New York: Lexington Books.

Doherty, B. (2007). "Elections": The Politics of the Permanent Campaign: Presidential Travel and the Electoral College, 1977-2004. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, *37* (4), 749–73.

Duhart, B. (2018). Racist font used in attack ad against Korean American candidate, Democrats say. *NJ.com*. https://www.nj.com/camden/2018/09/gop_dismisses_claim_of_shameful_racist_attack_in_n.html (10/05/2019).

Ford, A. (2018). NJ election results 2018: Did this candidate give Andy Kim the win? *Usa Today Network*. https://eu.app.com/story/news/politics/elections/2018/11/13/nj-election-results-2018-did-candidate-give-andy-kim-win/1979534002/ (10/05/2019).

Fuchs, Ch., Boersma, K., Albrechtslund, A., & Sandoval, M. (2012). *Introduction: Internet and Surveillance:* In: Ch. Fuchs, K. Boersma, A. Albrechtslund, & M. Sandoval (eds.), *Internet and Surveillance: The Challenges of Web 2.0 and Social Media* (pp. 1-28). New York: Routledge.

Hefler, J. (2018). At Burlington County diner, Joe Biden rallies support for Democratic House candidate Andy Kim. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. https://www.inquirer.com/philly/news/new_jersey/south-jersey-joe-biden-third-district-house-midterms-democrat-andy-kim-tom-macarthur-20181015.html (10/05/2019).

Insider NJ (2018). Andy Kim Launches First Ad Against Health Care Repeal Author. *Insider NJ*. https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/andy-kim-launches-first-ad-health-care-repeal-author/ (10/05/2019).

Issenberg, S. (2019). Here's What Beto Could Unleash on Trump. *Politico Magazine*. https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/02/22/beto-orourke-campaign-strategy-2020-225193 (10/05/2019).

Jackson, H. (2018). Midterm election poll: Tom MacArthur, Andy Kim are in a virtual tie. *Northjersey.com*. https://eu.northjersey.com/story/news/new-jersey/2018/08/14/2018-midterms-macarthur-and-kim-virtually-tied-nj-battleground/976457002/ (10/05/2019).

Kilgore, E. (2015). *Election 2014: Why the Republicans Swept the Midterms*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Kim, A. (2018a). Andy Kim For Congress Facebook fanpage.https://www.facebook.com/AndyKimNJ/ (10/05/2019).

Kim, A. (2018b). Andy Kim For Congress Youtube account. https://www.youtube.com/channel/ UC8MizkUgpluL4Xgr_CAKlfg (10/05/2019).

Kim, A. (2018c). Andykimnj Instagram account. https://www.instagram.com/andykimnj/?hl=en (10/05/2019).

Kim, A. (2018d). AndyKimNJ Twitter account. https://twitter.com/andykimnj?lang=en (10/05/2019).

Levinsky, D. (2018). Tom MacArthur and Andy Kim campaigns battle over pledge to refuse corporate PAC money. *Echo-Pilot*. https://www.echo-pilot.com/news/20180409/tom-macarthur-and-andy-kim-campaigns-battle-over-pledge-to-refuse-corporate-pac-money (10/05/2019).

Livingston, A. (2018). For both parties, the race between U.S. Rep. Pete Sessions and Colin Allred is bigger than one seat. *The Texas Tribune*. https://www.texastribune.org/2018/10/30/colin-allred-pete-sessions-north-texas/ (10/05/2019).

Marland, A., & Lalancette, M. (2014). *Access Hollywood: Celebrity Endorsements in American Politics.* In: J.Lees-Marshment, B.M. Conley, & K. Cosgrove (eds.), *Political Marketing in the United States* (pp. 130–47). New York: Routledge.

McBain, S. (2018). The "blue wave" has left Congress and US politics more diverse than it has ever been. *NewStatesman*. https://www.newstatesman.com/world/north-america/2018/11/blue-wave-has-left-congress-and-us-politics-more-diverse-it-has-ever (10/05/2019).

Milligan, S. (2018). Destiny in the Demographics. *US.News*. https://www.usnews.com/news/the-report/articles/2018-11-16/women-and-minorities-deliver-for-democrats-in-midterm-election (10/05/2019).

NDG (2018). Allred focusing on infrastructure and healthcare in election bid. *North Dallas Gazette*. https://www.blackpressusa.com/allred-focusing-on-infrastructure-and-healthcare-in-election-bid/ (10/05/2019).

O'Connor, K. & Sabato, L. (2005). *Essentials of American Government: Continuity and Change, 2004 Election Update.* New York: Pearson Longman.

Panetta, G. & Lee, S. (2019). This graphic shows how much more divers the House of Representatives is getting. *Business Insider*. https://www.businessinsider.com/changes-in-gender-racial-diversity-between-the-115th-and-116th-house-2018-12?IR=T (10/05/2019).

Petersen, A. H. (2018). Beto Voters In Texas Aren't Heartbroken – They're Ready For The Next Fight. *Buzzfeed News*. https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/annehelenpetersen/beto-orourke-texas-democrats-voter-suppression (10/05/2019).

Romano, A. (2018). New Jersey House race tests the limits of the backlash against Trump (and Pelosi). *Yahoo News*. https://news.yahoo.com/new-jersey-house-race-tests-limits-backlash-trump-pelosi-191142466.html (10/05/2019).

Rosenberg, A. (2018a). Andy Kim's campaign took off in the Mt. Laurel Wegmans. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. https://www.inquirer.com/philly/news/politics/andy-kim-tom-macarthur-midterms-nj-congress-trump-20180827.html (10/05/2019).

Rosenberg, A. (2018b). Tom MacArthur vs. Andy Kim: Will 17,000 door knocks in a weekend and Piper Perabo be the difference in New Jersey's 3d Congressional District?. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. https://www.inquirer.com/philly/news/new_jersey/shore/nj-3-andy-kim-tom-macarthur-election-2018-political-canvassing-volunteers-knock-doors-swing-left-20181022.html (10/05/2019).

SCRI (2018), New Jersey 03: Democrat Kim 49% Republican Incumbent MacArthur 39%. *Siena College Research Institute*. https://scri.siena.edu/2018/10/02/democrat-kim-49-republican-incumbent-macarthur-39/ (10/05/2019).

Tomaszewski, N. (2017). The Overview of the Presidential Primary Campaign of Bernie Sanders: the Analysis of his Political Background and the Influence of Celebrity Endorsement and Social Media on Voters. *Political Preferences*, *14*, 137–56.

Tomaszewski, N. (2018a). Do the celebrity politics really matter for Hispanic voters today? The comparison of Barack Obama's and Donald Trump's presidential campaigns. *Athenaeum. Polish Political Science Studies*, *59*(3), 158–77.

Tomaszewski, N. (2018b). *Sweet Home Alabama? Not Anymore for the Republicans. Quick Guide How to Lose Elections*. In: R. Dudała (ed.), *Fashion Politics. The strategic directions of political marketing* (pp. 84–104). Kielce: Wydawnictwo UJK.

Tucker, R. (1968). The Theory of Charismatic Leadership. *Philosophers and Kings: Studies in Leadership, 97*(3), 731–56.

Wildstein, D. (2018). New Jersey awaits vote count. *New Jersey Globe*. https://newjerseyglobe.com/congress/new-jersey-awaits-vote-count/ (10/05/2019).

Wiszniowski, R. (2000). *Marketing wyborczy. Studium kampanii wyborczych w systemach prezydenckich i semiprezydenckich (Finlandia, Francja, Polska, Stany Zjednoczone)*. Warszawa: PWN.