Maps and analysis of November 2007 Mayoral election and ballot measures

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Background

With no strong challenger to Gavin Newsom, this was a relatively lackluster election. Below, I show maps for turnout, a few of the Mayoral candidates, and the ballot measures for the November 2007 election. I show the standard correlations with PVI and perform a couple other analyses when I see something intriguing. Generally, however, there were no real surprises this year, with the possible exception of Question Time (Prop E).

The data for these analyses are from the Preliminary Statement of Vote, but the final totals will differ very little. This report is presented while it is still fresh in voters' minds. Already, San Francisco voters are looking ahead to a very busy 2008 election season.

Turnout

Turnout was low this year, citywide around 36%. Without a top-of-the-ticket race to excite/anger people, many voters simply stayed home. The most talked about actually became transportation measures A and H[1], and ballot measures usually don't in themselves drive high turnout. A citywide turnout map is presented in Map 1.

As usual, Districts 7 and 8 were the high-turnout districts, especially in Diamond Heights, West of Twin Peaks, and the Castro. The small high-turnout part of SOMA was due to absentee ballots, since that seemed instantly anomalous.[2] The rest of the city's turnout fell along predictable lines, like, for example, the low Southeast turnout.

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[1] The Battle For The City's Souullllll…..
[2] Anyone out there know why precinct 3627 has such a high absentee turnout?

**Map 1: 11/07 Turnout**
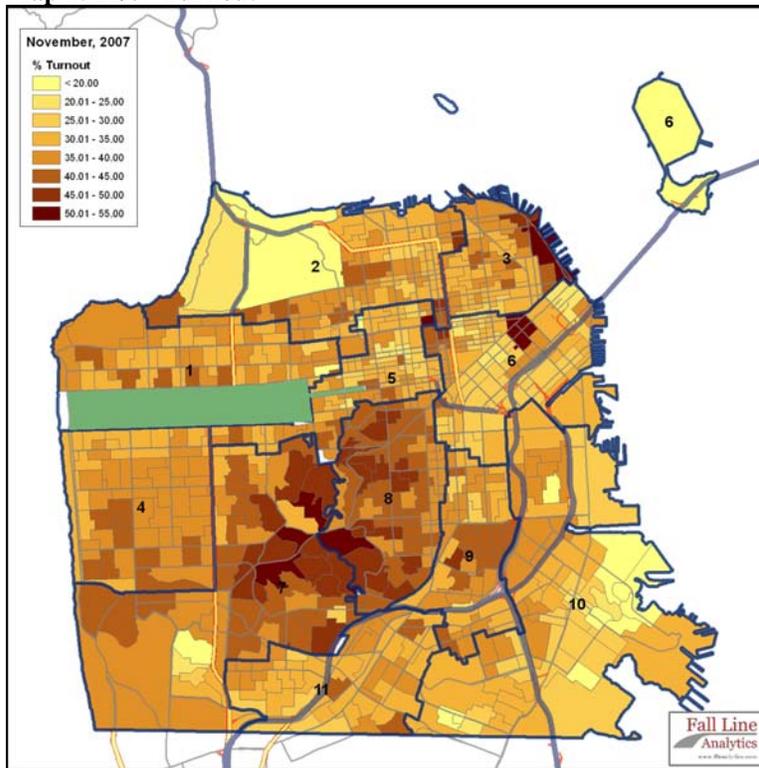
Mayor's race

There isn't much more to add that hasn't already been said. No well-known candidate challenged Mayor Newsom, so he ran, for all intents and purposes, unopposed. There were several lesser-known candidates in the race, from the seemingly serious to the not-so-serious. Most were considered Progressive challengers. There are many theories as to why there wasn't a formidable challenge to Newsom, but suffice to say it would have been difficult to beat him under any circumstances. He remained popular with voters (if not insiders) throughout the whole of his first term (after gay marriage), even through some trying personal times. Effectively, with an absence of a challenge, his high poll numbers transferred directly to the ballot – rare in American politics.[3]

Maps 2, 3, and 4 show the results for Newsom, as well as Quentin Mecke and Harold Hoogasian – second and third place - respectively. Mecke was the Bay Guardian-endorsed Progressive and Hoogasian was the GOP candidate. Newsom received around 74% of the vote, Mecke 6.3%, and Hoogasian 5.9%. I really only show Mecke's and Hoogasian's maps for contrast, which reveal the most liberal and most conservative parts of the city (in case one didn't already know). These three maps are to the same scale.
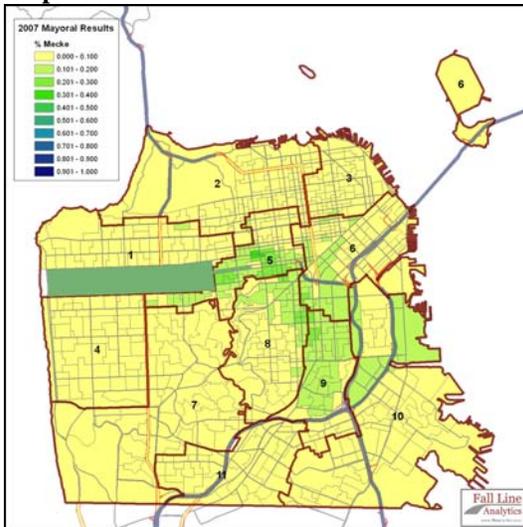
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[3] Ballot image (RCV) data are available for this race, but I don't analyze them here.
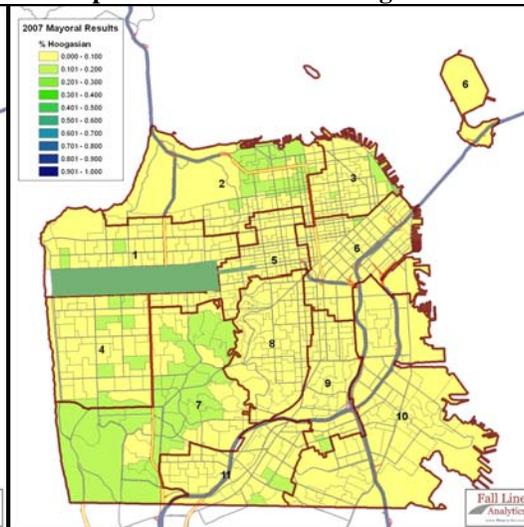
Map 2: 11/07 results for Newsom
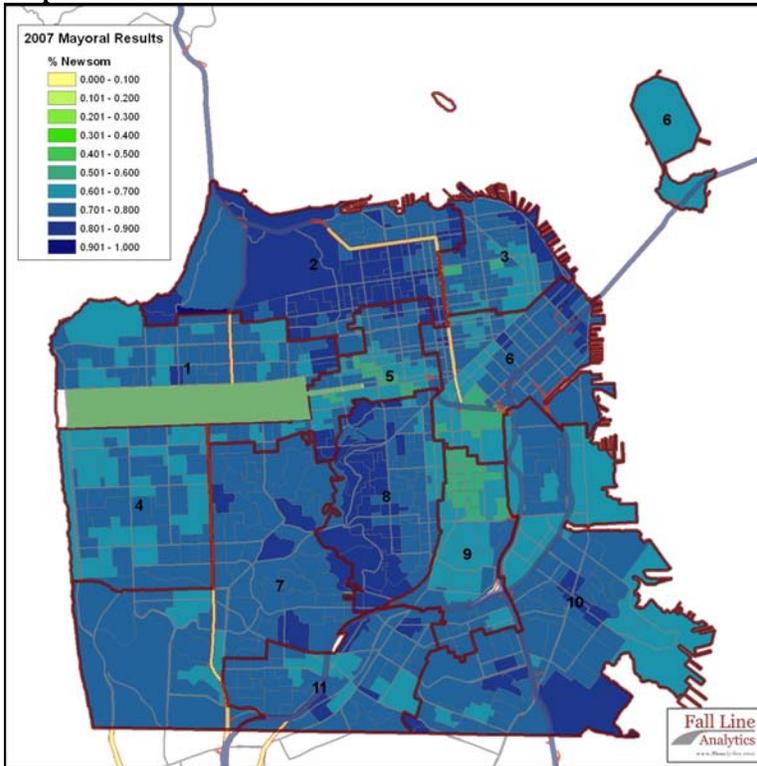
Map 3: 11/07 results for Mecke

Map 4: 11/07 results for Hoogasian

Showing a correlation with Newsom's vote and PVI[4], Newsom had the expected inverse correlation with PVI (Figure 1). However, it's much more scattered than the usual San Francisco vote. This is due to his broad support citywide (for this race). More interestingly, Figure 2 shows the correlation with the vote for Newsom in the December 2003 runoff versus his 2007 vote. With this, it becomes clear where his support lay.

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[4] Remember, low number conservative, high number liberal.

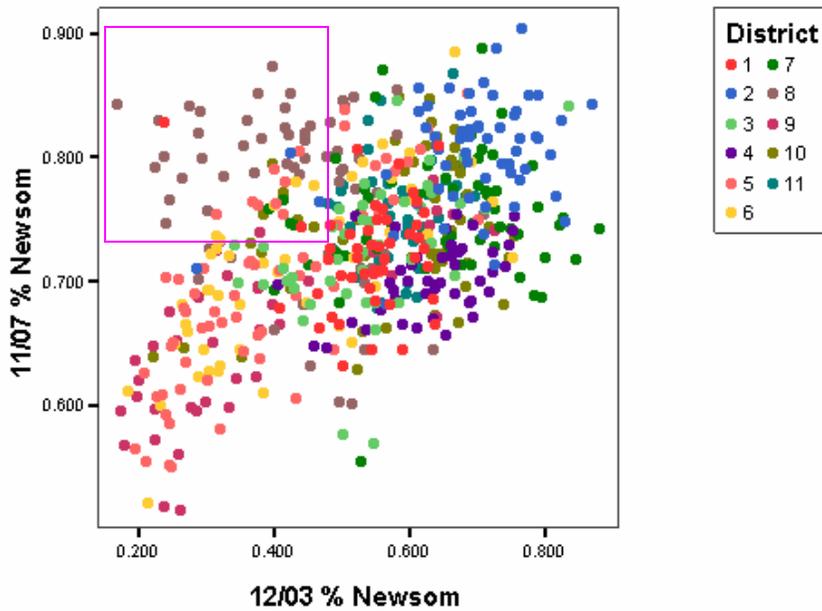**Figure 1: PVI vs. percent vote for Newsom**
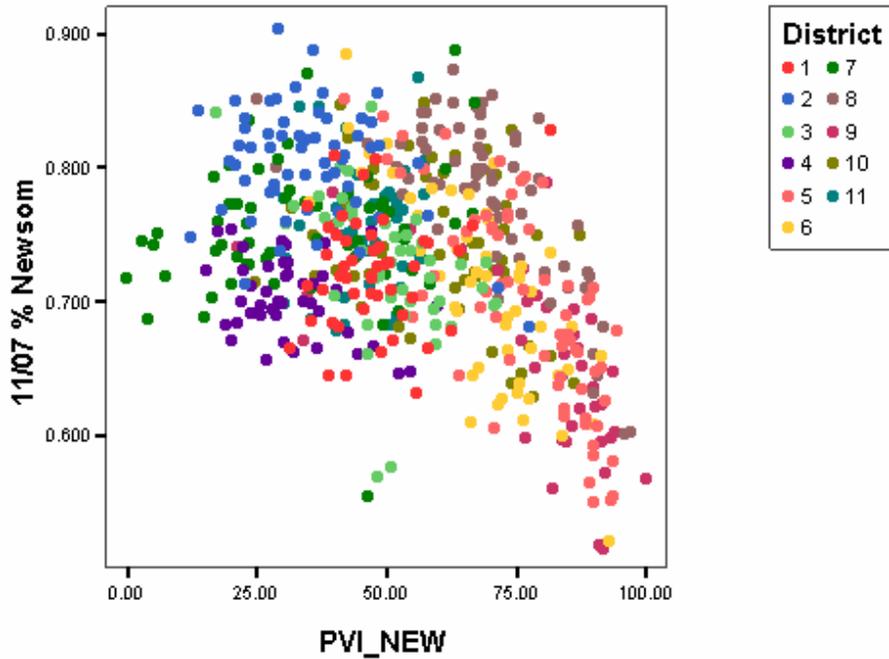
Figure 2: Comparison of the 12/03 vote for Newsom vs. 11/07 vote for Newsom. The box shows precincts that 'changed their tune'.

Looking at Figure 2, it is clear that D8 and even a bit of D5 and D6 voted for Newsom proportionally more than in 12/03. And if there were any doubt as to what population supported Newsom more this time around, Figure 4 shows Newsom 2003 vs. Newsom 2007, but with high-LGBT precincts flagged.

Figure 3: Comparison of the 12/03 vote for Newsom vs. 11/07 vote for Newsom with high-LGBT precincts highlighted
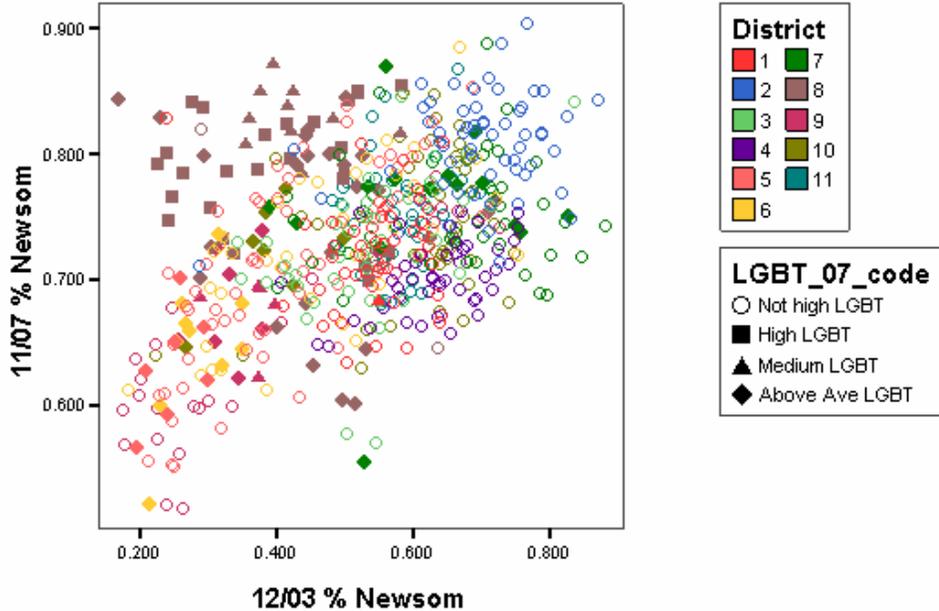
Ballot Measures

The following show all the ballot measure results from 11/07, plus the PVI correlations. I look at a couple of them in more depth, but many of them were straightforward and require little to no analysis. All ballot maps are to the same scale. For reference, Table 1 shows the citywide results for each measure.

**Table 1: citywide results for the ballot measures**

Prop	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
% Yes	56	71	68	74	49	52	55	33	59	62	62

Props A and H – Blood Feud Death Match

Well no, not really, but this was a spirited campaign putting transit reform (Prop A) against a neighborhood parking initiative (Prop H). This became a contentious race, where Prop A was run by a coalition of environmental groups, MUNI reform advocates, and progressive activists. Prop H was mainly supported by neighborhood activists and some downtown interests. There was much talk of compromises between the two camps, and many stories emerged as to how these played out, but at the end of the day, Prop A ran a large campaign and Prop H did not. Some Prop H advocates worked on a 'no on A' campaign, but there was no real 'yes on H' campaign.

Maps 4 and 5 show the results of A and H, respectively with PVI correlations. Figure 3 correlates A to H directly.

Map 5: Percent Yes on Prop A and PVI correlation
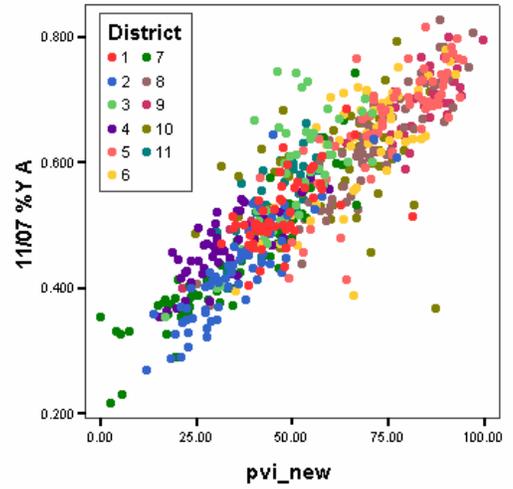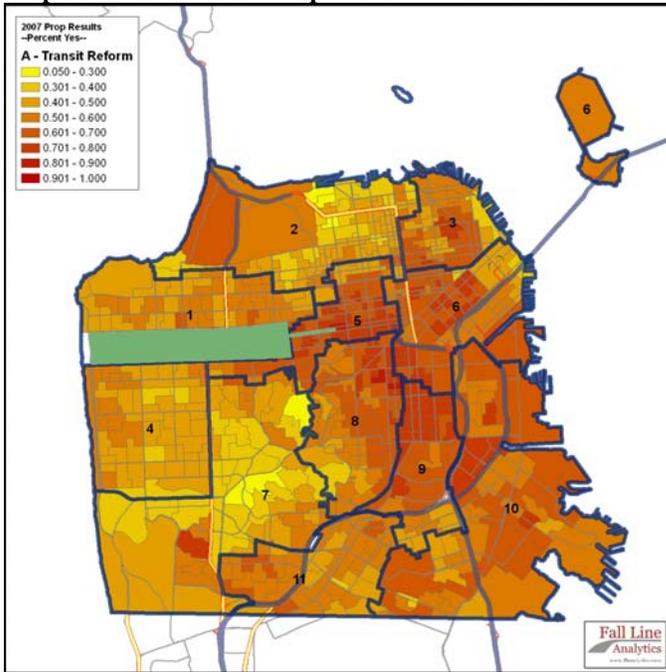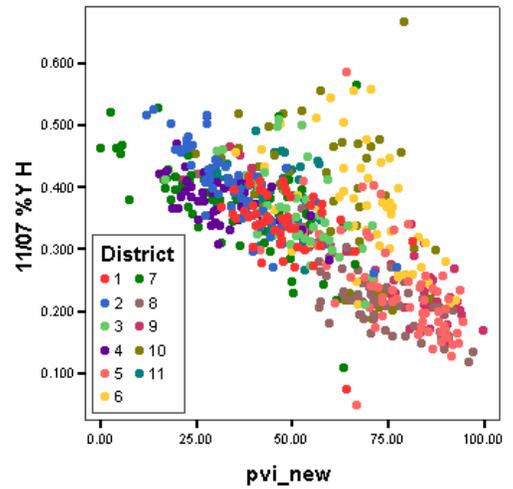

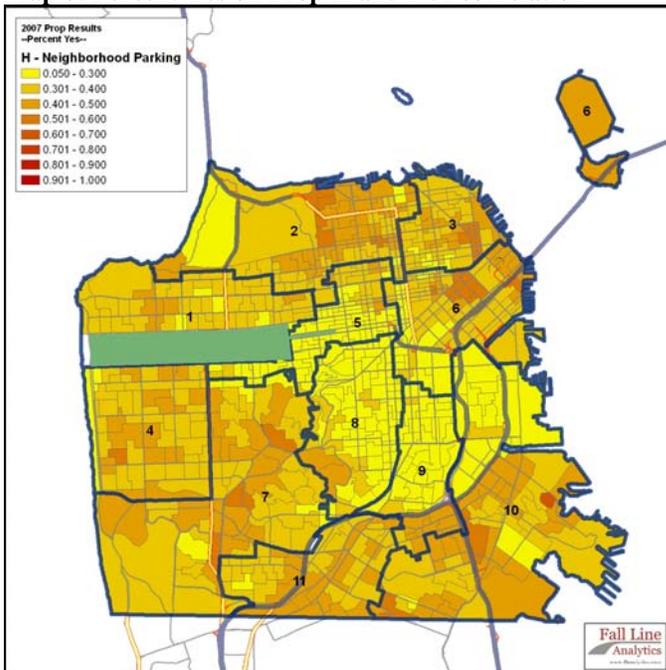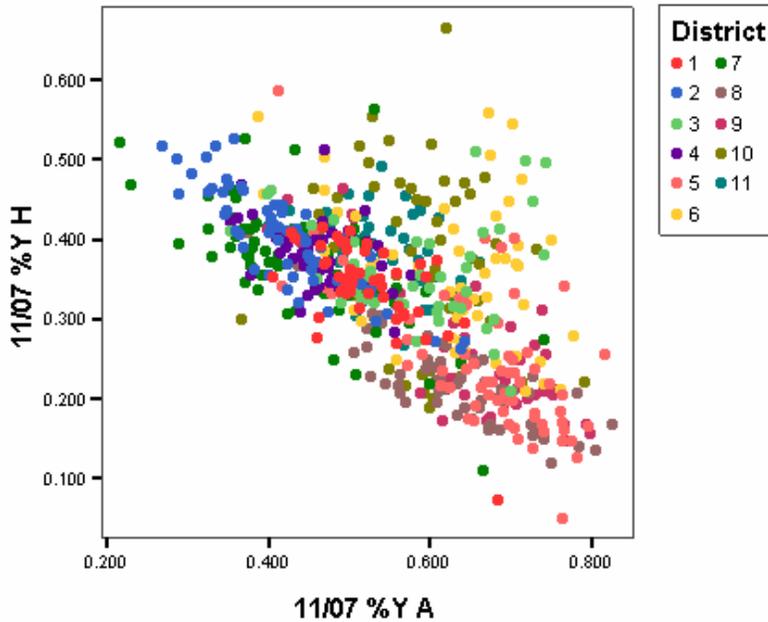**Map 6: Percent Yes on Prop H and PVI correlation**

**Figure 4: Correlation of Yes on Prop A vs. Yes on Prop H**

These measures fell along predictable lines. Prop A correlates to PVI very well while Prop H has a strong inverse correlation. Interestingly, a good portion of D6 and D10 voted more strongly yes on <u>both</u> measures. Perhaps they didn't realize one of the parts of Prop A nullified Prop H, had it passed, and as the results show, it was pretty much an either-or proposition for the voters. I suspect we haven't seen the last of this issue at the ballot box.

Props B, C, and D

These three measures all passed rather easily. Prop B (Map 7) was a good government measure designed to fill vacant Commission seats, Prop C (Map 8) was a response to much of the spate of last-minute ballot measures by requiring a hearing before something can be put on the ballot by the mayor or the Supes, and Prop D (Map 9) was renewing the library preservation fund.
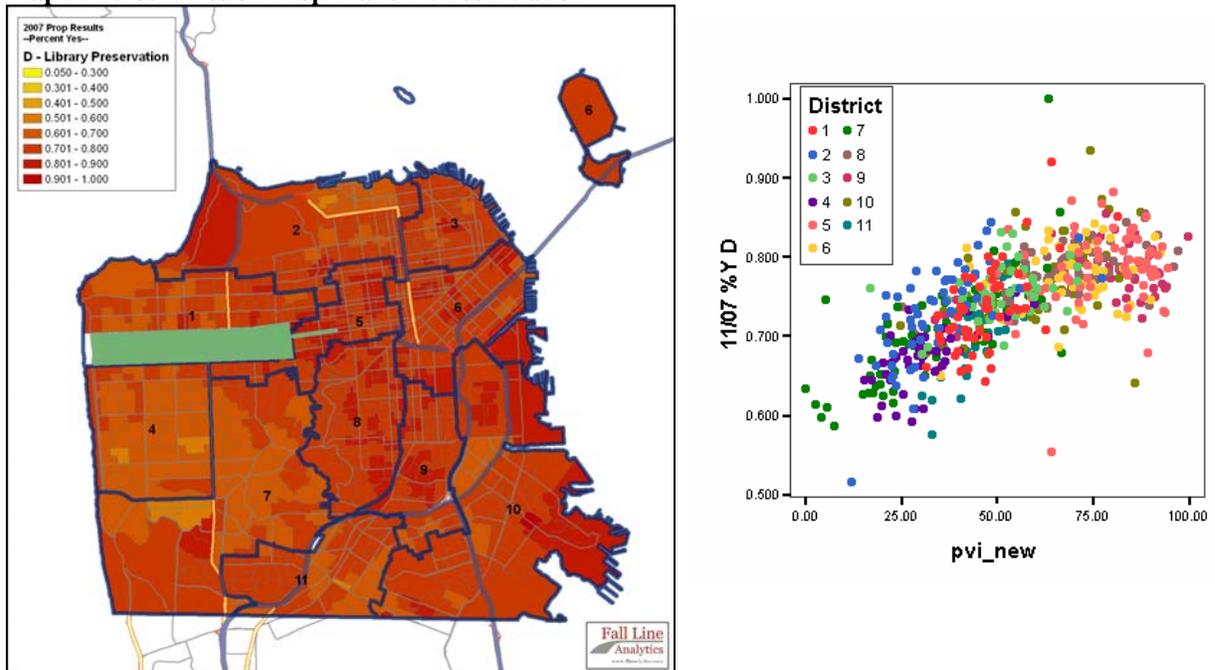
Map 7: Percent Yes on Prop B and PVI correlation
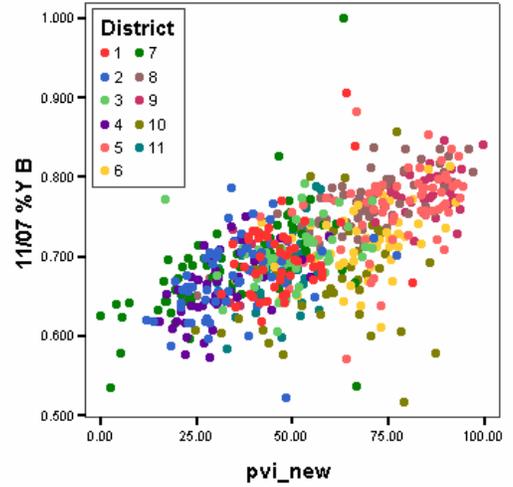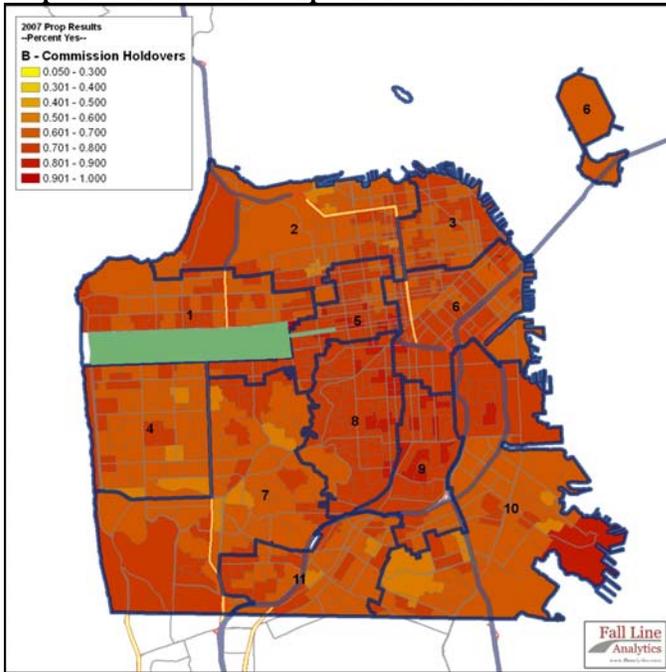
Map 8: Percent Yes on Prop C and PVI correlation
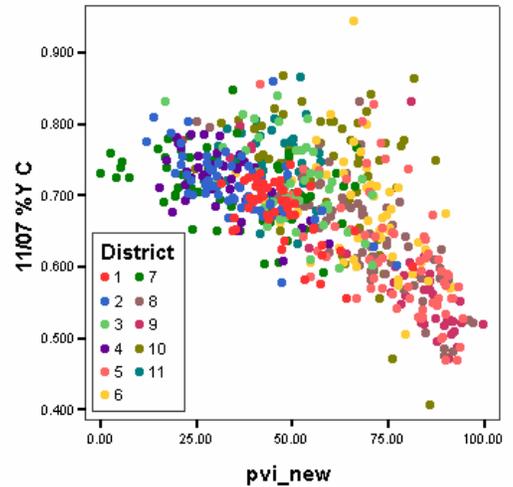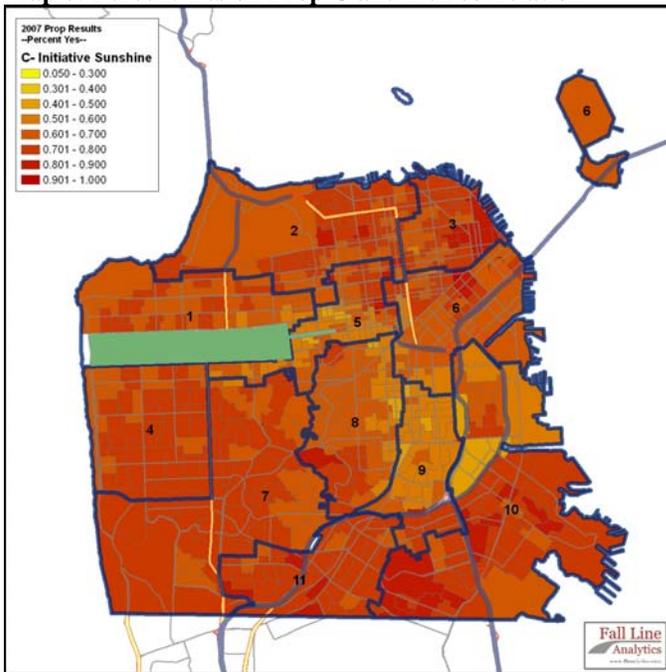
Map 9: Percent Yes on Prop D and PVI correlation

All three of these passed easily, although Election Sunshine had mild opposition in the most progressive parts of the city. To some extent, this was seen by some as a slap to some progressive Supervisors, and therefore this was opposed by the Bay Guardian.

Question Time – The Rematch

This time it "counted", since it was upgraded to an ordinance from a policy declaration in 2006. Question Time passed by 12% in 2006, and it was assumed that this would pass easily in 2007. However, there was a pretty strong campaign against it, which occurred *after* the initial absentee ballots dropped. Thus, even though the absentee potion said no to Question Time only by a few points, so did the rest of the electorate by the same margin. Prop E lost by around 3%.

There was no campaign for Question Time this year, and I surmise that if there had been one, it would have passed, given that the natural state of the electorate was to support it (as seen by the un-campaigned, conservative absentee results). Map 10 is the results map and PVI correlation of Prop E. Figure 5 shows a comparison of Question Time 2006 vs. 2007.

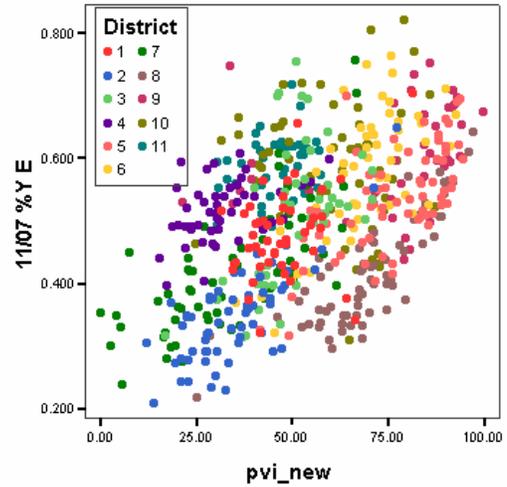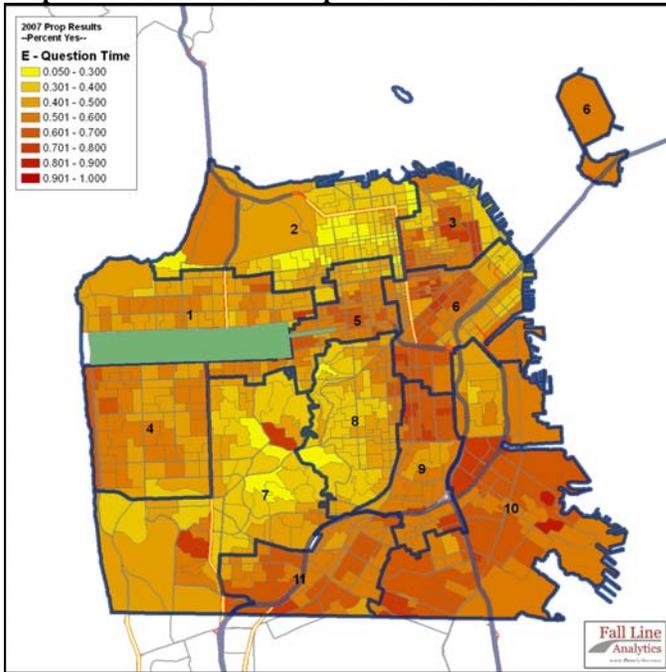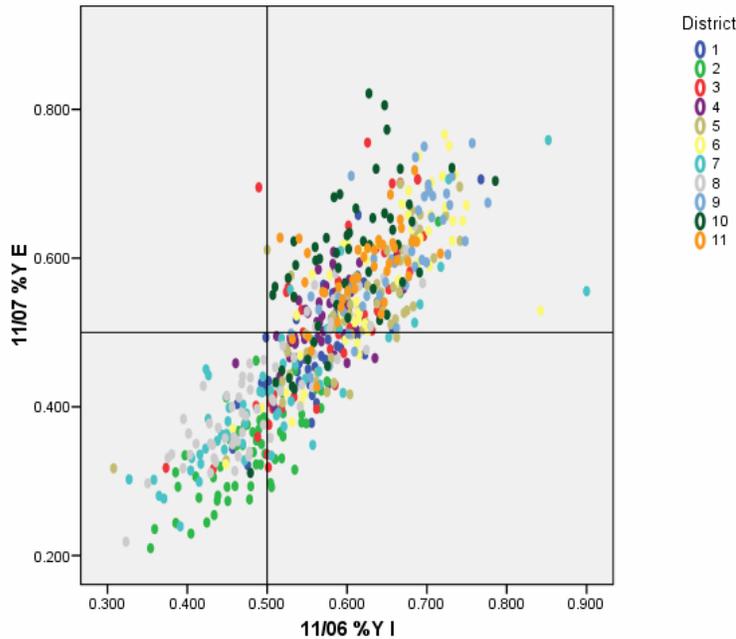**Map 10: Percent Yes on Prop E and PVI correlation**

Figure 5: Question Time 2006 vs. 2007, with the 50% points delineated. The southeast quadrant is where precincts changed their vote from no to yes

Looking at the comparison, much of D1, D4, and parts of D2, D3, and D7 changed their vote from no to yes. But so did parts of liberal Bernal and eastern D8. Mostly though, D8 remained strongly against Question Time (as D8 voted against this in 2006), which can also be seen at possible LGBT support for Newsom. Map 11 shows the precincts that

switched their vote (50% threshold). Much of the switches were on the west part of the city, which were targeted by the No on E campaign.

Map 11: Precincts that switched their Question Time vote from yes in 2006 to no in 2007
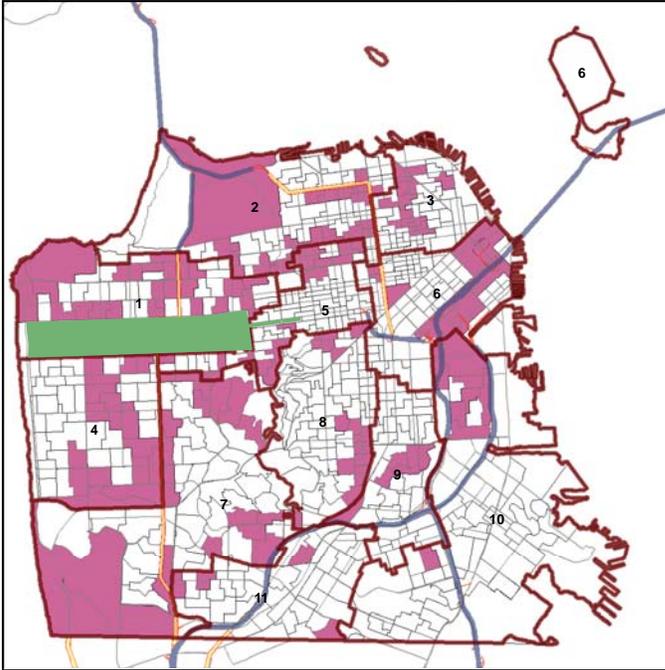

Props F, G, and I

Prop F was a hard-to-follow civil service measure authorizing pension changes for airport officers. It narrowly passed. Prop G sought to establish a matching fund for stables in Golden Gate Park. Prop I establishes a small business assistance center for a year (half a year, actually).

There isn't much to say on Prop F, but I've maintained Prop G was going to pass no matter what. People enjoy the visceral image of a verdant Golden Gate Park and little children riding horses.   Prop I had mild opposition, but most people support "Small Business". Interestingly, Prop I correlates *positively* with PVI, indicating that it got more support with more progressive voters. Both Prop G and Prop I passed somewhat easily, but they didn't engender any strong feeling, with much of city voting within a twenty-point range.

All three of these measures had a decent correlation with PVI, which indicates the power of ideological voting even in relatively mundane ballot measures. Maps 12, 13, and 14 shows the results maps with PVI correlations.
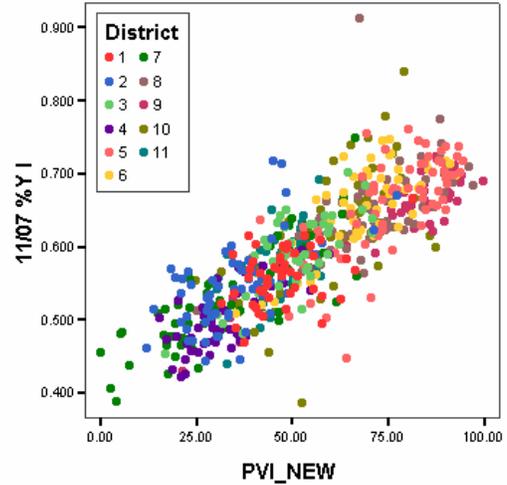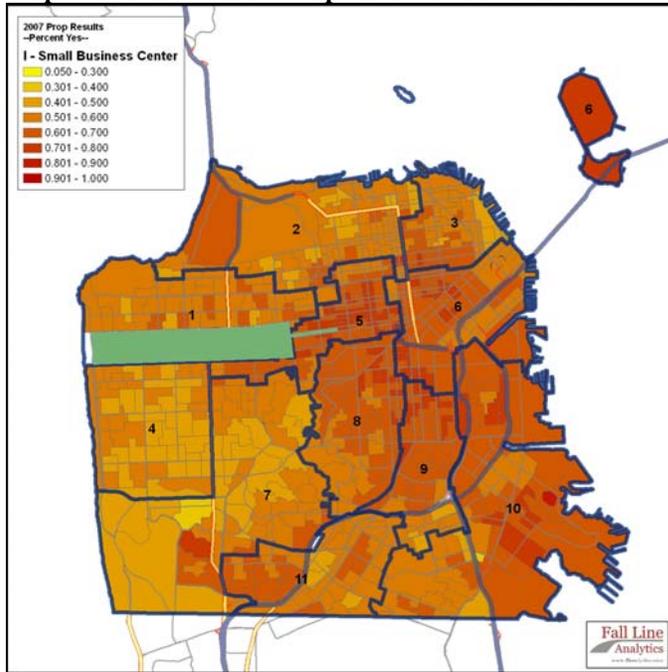
Map 12: Percent Yes on Prop F and PVI correlation
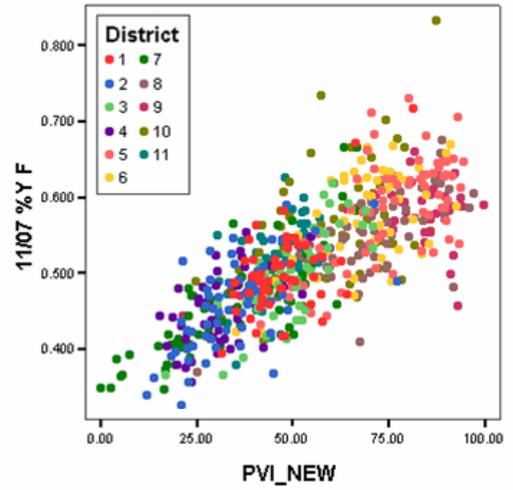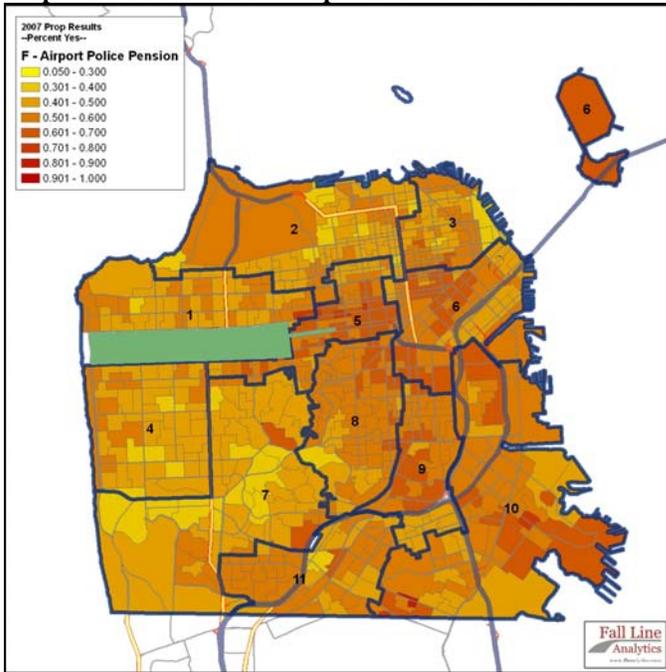
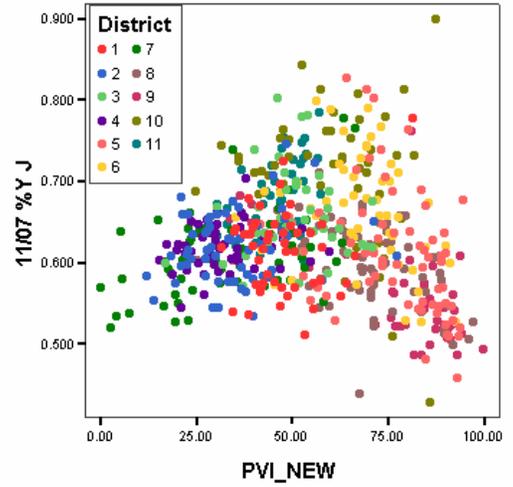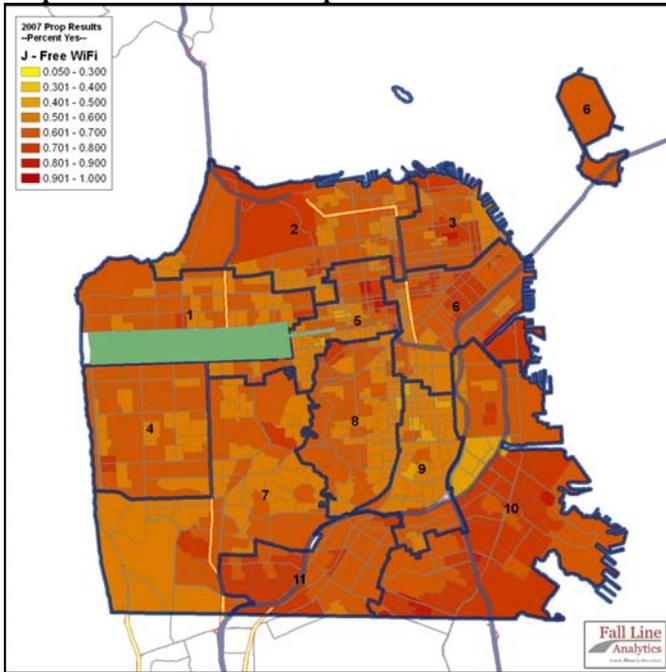**Map 13: Percent Yes on Prop G and PVI correlation**
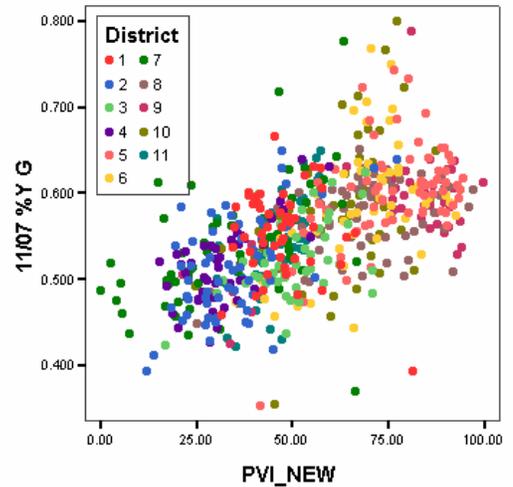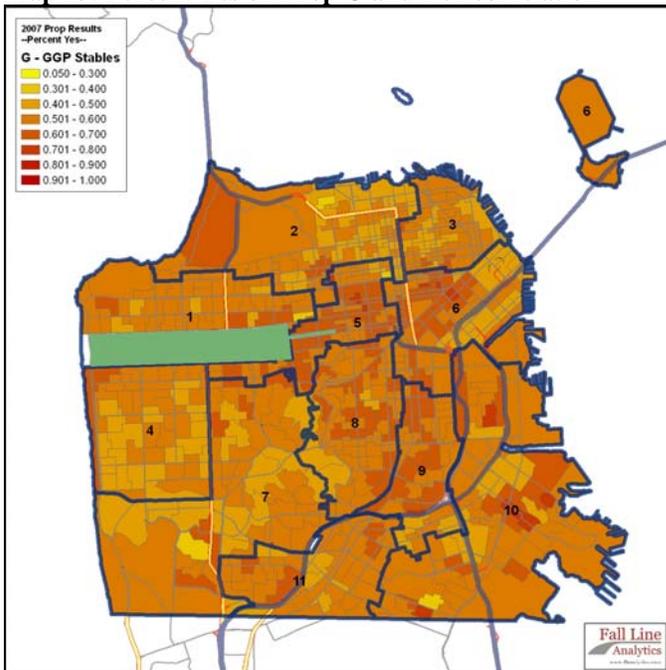
Map 14: Percent Yes on Prop I and PVI correlation

Props J and K

These were both nonbinding policy statements. Prop J asked for support for free Wi-Fi, and Prop K asked about limiting advertising on public spaces. Maps 15 and 16 show the results and correlations for Prop J and Prop K, respectively. Prop J is the only measure this year that did not fall on strongly ideological lines, with the most liberal districts voting less yes than others. Prop J was likely seen as support for the mayor's position there, which was counterbalanced by "free". Notably, D8 voted more strongly no on this, along with D5 and D9. Well, Newsom can't get everything in D8, can he?

Map 15: Percent Yes on Prop J and PVI correlation

Map 16: Percent Yes on Prop K and PVI correlation