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**PARTISANSHIP AND CANDIDATE LOYALISM
IN CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATIONS**

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Abstract

Candidate campaign committees have previously been assumed to be composed of two types of activists and professionals: candidate loyalists, and neutral professionals. Using data from a survey of 1996 U.S. House candidates, I show to the contrary that partisans are a major presence in these organizations, particularly in those campaigns that matter most: contested campaigns, and those that send new members to Congress. The data suggest that candidate campaign committees are best understood as party organizations, not party rivals.

Campaigns for office in the United States, especially at the Congressional level, are well known to be dominated by candidate campaign organizations (Agranoff 1976; Maisel 1982; Luntz 1988; Herrnson 1988; Bernstein 1997). Whether this means that those campaigns are properly understood as “candidate centered”, however, is essentially unstudied.¹ The question remains: what is at the heart of CCOs? Are they, essentially, extensions of the candidate, extra arms and legs and technical capacity? Or, are they partisan organizations, using candidacies as means for winning partisan elections?

This paper will explore, and where possible test, the question of whether CCOs are personal or partisan organizations.

Research Design

Major party general election candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives were sent a five-page questionnaire.² Surveys were sent to 818 candidates, and 211 candidates (26%) returned at least partially usable questionnaires. Respondents are a close match to the larger population of House nominees. The partisan breakdown is almost even, with Democrats (108) slightly outnumbering Republicans (103). Incumbents are somewhat underrepresented, comprising 33% of the respondents compared with 44% of the candidates who received surveys; challengers (51%) and open seat candidates (16%) are correspondingly overrepresented. Surveys were sent to every state but Louisiana and returned from forty-three different states; the six unrepresented states have a total of twelve Congressional seats, with West Virginia the largest unrepresented state.

Candidates were asked about their campaign structure: how many staff members were employed, how many volunteers, what committees and other bodies were organized. Following those questions, candidates were given a battery of possible campaign activities (two examples are voter registration and budgeting) and asked whether people in various campaign or party roles performed those activities. They were also asked about the prior experience of these people: whether volunteers, staff, consultants and others associated with the campaign had been involved, for example, in previous campaigns of the candidate, and whether they had experience in party activities. After that, respondents were asked to report how often their campaigns interacted with national, state, and local parties, and with the campaigns of other candidates from their own party. Candidates were offered strict confidentiality.

¹Indeed, with a few exceptions (primarily Maisel 1982 and Bernstein 1997; and see also Sabato 1981; Logan and Kolodny 1997) CCOs themselves have been hardly studied at all.

²Candidates in Louisiana and in several Texas districts were excluded, because they did not hold conventional November elections.

This paper reports on the battery asking about the background and recruitment of CCO activists and professionals. Campaigns were asked about several groups of CCO members and operatives:

- Members of the formal organizations (campaign chair, finance chair, and members of the campaign committee;**
- Two members of the informal organization, or “kitchen cabinet”;**
- The campaign manager, and two other members of the paid staff;**
- Three volunteers;**
- And, the campaign pollster and two other paid consultants.**

The question about these people was: where did they come from? Campaigns were asked to indicate whether people holding these positions had previous ties to the candidate and to the larger party environment.

For candidate involvement, I asked whether the various people associated with the CCO were personal friends or family of the candidate; had been active in a previous campaign of the candidate; were staff of the candidate in public office; or had been recommended by friends or family of the candidate. Those who were reported to score positively on any of those variables can be classified as having a candidate-oriented background.

For Formal Party Organization (FPO) background, I asked whether people involved in the campaign had been active in the local, state, or national party as party officials or staff, or if they had been recommended by local, state, or national party officials or staff. Again, those who were reported to fit into one of those categories can be classified as having FPO-oriented backgrounds.

I also asked whether they had been active in campaigns for other same-party candidates, and whether they had been recommended by consultants. Interpreting this category is more difficult than the previous two groupings; indeed, interpreting this category is the crux of the argument of this paper. For now, I will call this a “SPO-oriented” (for Same Party candidate campaign Organizations) background.

And, to find the limits of partisan attachment, I asked if these people had previously been involved in campaigns or party organization for the “other” political party, or if they had been recommended by someone in the other party. This category is an important counterweight to the “party-oriented” background consisting of same-party, multiple-candidate loyalty. I will refer to these partisan violations as indications of an apartisan background.

Hypotheses

At one level, it is clear that those who have claimed that candidate campaign organizations are candidate-centered have a point. People involved in CCOs, at least for these House campaigns, often have ties to the candidate prior to the current election cycle. However, a closer look at the data reveals further complexity, leading to the conclusion that in important ways, CCOs are best understood as party organizations.

I have discussed elsewhere (Bernstein 1996, 1997) two possible scenarios for parties in the modern era. The first, *apartisan*, model, predicts that campaigns will be organized by, staffed by, and run by two types of people: candidate loyalists and *apartisan* service vendors. The second, *partisan*, model predicts that those campaigns will be primarily organized by, staffed by, and run by partisans. The recruitment of these partisans will not be, at least in most cases, directly attributable to formal party organizations. Instead, their partisan attachments will be discernable by examining one of two things: either their attitudes about partisanship, or their partisan behavior. Here, I look at behavior, not attitudes. That behavior can be observed by examining the career paths of party elites (Bernstein 1996); here, it is observed from the perspective of CCOs, by examining the behavior of those attached to those organizations.

Evidence in favor of the *apartisan* thesis would support the model of CCOs composed of candidate loyalists and *apartisan* service vendors. Therefore, CCOs would include large percentages of CCO members and staff with candidate-oriented backgrounds. For those without such a background, we would expect neutrality: roughly similar experience within the (current) candidate's party and the other party. Candidates are not expected to find all of their assistance from their own loyalists, but when they seek professional help from neutral service providers they are not, in the strictest interpretation of the *apartisan* model, expected to favor one party over the other. They are, above all, independent: they capture a party's line on the ballot, but are not of the party.

Evidence in favor of the *partisan* thesis is, of course, basically the opposite of evidence in favor of the *apartisan* thesis. Strong party networks are expected, according to this model, to encompass CCOs. At the very least, partisan violations should be rare; any evidence of weak party loyalty would weigh heavily against the *partisan* thesis. Candidates would be expected to recruit from beyond their circle of personal loyalists for the bulk of their campaign organization, and when they do so they would be expected to restrict themselves to partisans.

Expectations are more complex for the frequency of candidate loyalists in the *partisan* model. The *partisan* scenario does not preclude CCO involvement by people who would be described here as having candidate-oriented backgrounds. To begin with, candidacies are geographically based. Partisans from a congressional district would naturally support a party's candidate from that district; if the candidate runs again, the *partisan* model would predict continued support from those partisans, which would yield a "candidate-oriented background" in these data. Therefore, it is difficult to determine a precise, testable proposition concerning candidate loyalists and partisanship.

The data can permit two sorts of conclusions to be drawn, and the analysis proceeds accordingly. The first (under "General Findings") is about congressional campaigns in general: are they, for the most part, partisan or personal organizations? However, if the answer to that question is "sometimes" or "usually" or "occasionally," then further analysis (located under "Variation in Partisanship") is necessary to account for the variation in campaigns. What factors contribute to producing CCOs that are party organizations? Personal organizations?

To summarize, then:

Apartisan campaigns will involve large numbers of candidate loyalists, with non-loyalists drawn from bipartisan backgrounds.

Partisan campaigns will rarely involve party violators, and will involve large numbers of partisans.

General Findings

Table 1 reports the average percentage, by CCO component, of people reported to have the four backgrounds described above: candidate-oriented, FPO-oriented, party-oriented, and, for partisan violations, apartisan. For each campaign, I calculated a score by averaging the backgrounds of the people who fall into that category. For example, for paid staff members' FPO background score, if a campaign answered questions about two staff members, one with and one without an FPO background, then that campaign is scored .5 for staff FPO. Table 1 reports the average of these scores across all campaigns that responded for at least one person for a particular category.

Recall that these "backgrounds" take into account two possibilities: prior experience, and recommendations. Individuals score positively for the appropriate background if they either had experience relevant to that background, or if they were recommended for the present campaign by someone relevant to the background. That is, a campaign manager for a Republican candidate who previously worked for the California Republican Party would count as an "FPO-oriented" background, as would a campaign manager for a Democratic candidate who had been recommended by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Partisan Violations

It is immediately evident from this table that any strong interpretation of the apartisan model is inconsistent with the data. This conclusion is drawn from one overwhelming fact: the scarcity of partisan violations.

A quick glance at the table indicates that when candidates turn to those outside their circle of personal loyalists, they are about ten times more likely to turn to someone recruited from the same party as someone from the other party. Even then, the table almost certainly overstates the

level of partisan violation, for a number of reasons.

First, the score for partisan violations encompasses two survey items: recommendations from “someone in the other party,” and prior activity in a campaign or party organization for any other party. The latter item is fairly broad, depending of course on the interpretation of the respondent. Pollsters such as (Democrat) Paul Maslin and (Republican) Frank Luntz, who have been strict partisans with the exception of brief stints with Ross Perot’s third party presidential campaign in 1992, might qualify; an “adult” Republican who walked precincts for Gene McCarthy in 1968 might also qualify. These cases may be more indicative of the permeability of parties than the irrelevance of party. At the very least, interpreting this part of the indicator requires caution. For example, of the thirteen campaign managers with other party experience, all but three also had same party experience, either in FPOs or same-party campaigns or both.

Second, if it is the case that the “recommend” item is the stronger of the two, as I believe it is, then the overall score again overstates the frequency of party violations. Recommendations from the opposite party are, according to these campaigns, practically non-existent, with only two positive answers recorded.³ Virtually all partisan violations involved prior experience.

Third, far more partisan violations are reported in the South than in the rest of the country. The effect is particularly large for consultants; outside of the South (defined here as the states of the confederacy and Oklahoma), campaigns average a score of .06, compared to .08 with the South included. This corresponds to a .16 score for Southern campaigns. Does that mean that parties are comparatively weak in the South? Possibly. Again, interpretation is necessary. It is not surprising that a region that has had many politicians change parties would yield higher scores on this measure. Even a strong partisan model would need to allow for the possibility of partisan realignment. But the subject deserves closer attention.

Regardless of the fine points of interpretation -- as important as they are to establishing just what American political parties are -- what is clear is that partisan violations appear to be rare, and that when candidates for Congress strengthen their campaigns by bringing in outsiders, “outside” is almost exclusively limited to inside their political party. The evidence here, then, strongly weighs against the apartisan thesis.

Partisanship

The partisan hypothesis suggests that CCOs will be largely staffed by, run by, and organized by partisans. Is this the case?

To answer that question, it is necessary to construct definitions for “partisan” and “candidate-

³In both cases, campaigns listed their pollster as an opposite-party recommendation. Both candidates were southern Democrats running, and eventually losing by large margins, in Republican seats.

oriented" activists, staff, consultants, and others involved in campaigns. Table 2 presents the possibilities. "Candidate-oriented" could include all those with previous (that is, prior to the present campaign) ties to the candidate; or, it could include only those with previous ties to the candidate who also have never previously associated with other candidates (of either party) or for an FPO. For "Partisans", the possibilities are those who have previously been involved in the campaign of another candidate from the same party (SPO -- Same Party Candidate Campaign Organizations -- in the table); those who have been previously involved in one of the party's FPOs; or those who have done either of those things.

If the partisan thesis is correct, then the proper construction of "partisan" clearly should be this last category: those who were previously involved in either same-party CCOs or FPOs. That is, the partisan thesis claims that CCOs and FPOs are components of parties, properly understood, and that therefore someone involved in multiple same-party campaigns has been involved in a variety of party organizations. The problem is that if the partisan thesis is wrong, then CCOs are personal, candidate-centered organizations, and involvement in multiple CCOs should not be taken as evidence of partisanship. But if it is correct, then ignoring prior same-party CCO involvement would severely understate partisanship. Furthermore, if there is variation within CCOs (such that some are primarily candidate-centered but others are partisan), then it is impossible from these data to know whether any previous campaign was partisan or not.

Fortunately, it is possible to proceed anyway, without resolving this problem, by moving ahead with multiple measures: FPO-oriented background, SPO-oriented background, and "partisan" background, with the latter combining the first two (that is, someone involved in a campaign will score positive for partisan background if he or she is positive for either FPO or SPO background). The partisan score will overstate partisanship in the event the partisan thesis is incorrect; the FPO score will understate partisanship if the partisan thesis is correct. The SPO score is useful because further evidence for or against the partisan thesis can be discovered by examining whether SPO behavior appears party-like.

Do those who have SPO-oriented backgrounds act like those who have FPO-oriented backgrounds?

The first way to check is to compare the occupance of FPO, SPO, and Candidate backgrounds. Tables 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d present simple correlation matrices for these backgrounds in each of the four campaign components. These tables show the similarity of FPO and SPO backgrounds. FPO and SPO scores covary, while candidate orientation scores have an inverse relationship to both of the (presumed) measures of partisanship. That is, candidates with, say, a paid staff that have previously been involved with or recommended by Formal Party Organizations are also likely to have a paid staff who have been involved in other same-party campaigns; however, they are less likely to have paid staff with a previous association with the present candidate. In addition, and not presented in Table 3, cross-component correlations are also relatively high for FPO and SPO scores. For example, volunteer FPO scores covary with both staff FPO score (correlation coefficient of .32) and staff SPO score (correlation coefficient of .25), but not with

staff candidate-orientation score (correlation coefficient here is $-.01$).

Increasingly, it seems likely that both FPO background and SPO background are indications of partisanship. To the extent that the former is an indication of the partisan nature of FPOs, the latter is as well. The analysis will proceed by retaining the distinction (after all, it is possible that both are indications of partisanship, but that differences remain), but the primary measure used will be the combined partisan score.

Variation in Partisanship

Two things are clear from the findings so far: first, that Candidate Campaign Organizations are often organized by, staffed by, and run by people who are best described as at least partially partisans; and second, that not all of the people involved in CCOs are partisans.

The next piece of the puzzle involves identifying the causes of variation in the rate of partisanship in CCOs. I estimated OLS equations for the effects of several indicators of campaign context on partisanship and on candidate orientation among the CCO components of staff, consultants, volunteers, and formal and informal organization.

Which elements of a candidates' political context may be related to CCO partisanship?

A first possibility is the relationship between the candidates and the seats they are seeking. Candidates may be incumbents; challengers; or contestants for open seats previously held by either the same or the other party (see Table 4).

A second possibility to be tested is party; while there is no reason to expect differences between Democrats and Republicans, it would not be surprising to find such differences.

The next set of variables to test are measures of various components of the surrounding party environment. I tested three: the Party Transformation Study (PTS) measures of local and state party strength developed by Cotter, Gibson, Bibby, and Huckshorn (1984), and the Mayhew (1986) scale of traditional party organization.

Size of campaign components may also be affected by attributes of the candidate or of the campaign. Unfortunately for researchers, separating the effects of these variables statistically may be difficult, if not impossible. Variables such as campaign spending, challenger quality, and the competitiveness of a House district are closely interconnected (Jacobson 1992). For the analysis below, spending will be treated as a function of seat status, candidate quality, and seat competitiveness, and therefore will be excluded. That is, for now I will assume that even though it takes money, for example, to hire a campaign staff, that money is only raised by those who are capable of raising it, and in seats where money is likely to be raised.

Results here can be interpreted in one of two ways. On the one hand, results can be compared to expectations generated by the partisan model. That is, they can be interpreted as further tests of that model. On the other hand, the data can be interpreted descriptively; that is, they can provide guides to where and in what cases the partisan model will be appropriate.

How would we expect partisan and candidate-oriented backgrounds to vary?

Formal Party Organization resources have been repeatedly found to be doled out based on the principle of maximizing seats (Herrnson 1988; Jacobson 1992; Shea 1995; although party resources can also be captured for protecting incumbents). To the extent involvement of those with party backgrounds constitutes the use of a party resource, then, it would be expected that candidates in contested races would have higher rates of partisanship than those in lopsided races. Similarly, among challengers, quality challengers should draw more partisan support than other challengers.⁴

CCOs would also be expected to be more partisan in areas with strong parties. Unfortunately, however, the existing measures of party strength are only measures of FPO strength, and there is no way of knowing whether FPO strength is associated with other forms of party strength. It is certainly possible that one state might have, for example, a strong State Democratic Party (measured in terms of budget, staff size, and activity level) but very weak partisan networks. It is even possible that the formal organization and the informal party network could be rivals, in some circumstances. However, it is probably reasonable to say that the partisan model would predict a positive relationship between these two party components.

For candidate-oriented backgrounds, the expectations are of course different, although not quite symmetrically opposed.⁵ Expectations also differ depending on how candidate orientation is conceived, and therefore coded. The broader view of candidate-oriented backgrounds includes all those involved in campaigns who have been previously involved with the candidate, those who are friends or family of the candidate, or those who were recommended by a friend or family member. We would expect, of course, to find a more frequent incidence of these people in the campaigns

⁴Why parties attempt to maximize seats is not necessarily clear. If we think of parties as individual rational actors with the goal of winning elections, then by definition they will attempt to maximize seats (although even then, not all seats are necessarily created equal). On the other hand, if we consider the case of individual activists and professionals, it is possible that the rewards (such as reputation of electioneering skill) from winning marginal seats draw the talented and ambitious to those races. For now, it is sufficient to note that from the outside, FPOs appear to maximize seats, and we can test whether CCO partisanship follows that pattern.

⁵Recall that, even beyond the possibility that someone may be coded as both candidate and party oriented, other possible orientations may exist: examples include those with an interest group orientation, or those new to politics and who have not been recommended by either party organizations or those with ties to the candidate.

of the most experienced candidates: therefore, we would expect estimated coefficients for incumbency, and possibly for tenure in office, and (for challengers) candidate quality to all be positive. The narrower view of candidate-oriented background omits those who have a partisan background. Because the partisans drop out, the expectation is closer to the opposite of the causes of partisanship; in other words, in addition to higher scores for incumbents, the model would also predict a negative relationship between candidate orientation and the indicators of party strength.

Staff

Table 5 reports the OLS estimates for the effects of political context on CCO staff partisanship. As expected, party resources -- in this case, partisan campaign staff -- pour into those campaigns that are expected to be competitive. The estimated coefficient, .20, indicates that contested campaigns hire more partisan staff than uncontested campaigns; the rate is such that for campaigns employing five staff members, the contested campaign would on average have one more with a partisan background.

No other variable reaches conventional levels of statistical significance in the left-hand column of Table 5. However, omitting Southern campaigns yields more dramatic results. In the remainder of the country (all states but those of the old Confederacy and Oklahoma), party strength appears to exert a powerful influence on staff partisanship. For the indicators of state FPO strength and presence of "traditional party organization," the coefficients indicate a strong effect in the expected direction; that is, strong FPOs correspond with highly partisan CCO staffs. However, local party FPO strength appears to push staff background in the opposite direction, contrary to expectations.

Table 6 gives OLS estimates for the effect of political context on the level of candidate-oriented backgrounds. Incumbency, as expected, is the largest influence on the rate of candidate orientation, moving the measure a third of the way along the scale. That is, for a campaign with three staff members, incumbents would average about one more staff member with a candidate-oriented background than non-incumbents. Furthermore, the effect appears to be centered on incumbency, not spread out among other forms of experience. Both challenger quality and tenure in office among incumbents appear to have no independent effect.

The narrower definition, as expected, more closely parallels the relationships displayed between partisanship and political context. Contested races decrease the incidence of narrowly defined candidate-oriented background, while they had no statistically discernable effect on broadly defined candidate-oriented background (the effect not only failed to reach conventional levels of statistical significance, but also was substantively insignificant). Outside of the South, FPO strength has the opposite effect on this measure than it did on partisan background, with state FPO strength and traditional party organization strength reducing the rate of candidate-oriented

background, and local FPO strength yielding a higher rate.⁶ In other words, the relationship between local FPO strength and CCOs appears, at least on the surface, to be much closer to the traditional understanding of FPOs and CCOs as competitive organizations than the partisan thesis here.

Clearly, the relationship between local FPO strength and partisanship requires further discussion. Also problematic is the situation in the South. Does the absence of expected relationships -- and the high level of partisan violation -- within that region indicate that politics there is apartisan? Or does the well-documented realignment in that region produce so much noise in these particular data that they are not able to document partisanship even if it exists?

While those findings are unexpected, the broad sweep of the evidence is in the expected direction, which once again confirms that CCOs display party-like behavior and in fact appear to be allied with FPOs, at least outside of the South.

Other CCO Components

Congressional campaigns are CCO-based, and those CCOs tend to either staff and consultant operations or candidate and volunteer operations, with competitive candidates and incumbents following the former pattern (Bernstein 1997). Thus it is not clear how important it may be that very high percentages of those involved in CCO formal organizations and kitchen cabinets have ties to the candidate prior to the campaign, or that a much lower but still sizeable percentage of those people have partisan ties as well. Consequently, I will forego an analysis of the variation in those backgrounds. If the people involved simply are not particularly important to campaigns, then it cannot be very important what their backgrounds may be or how they vary. Tables 1 and 2 are sufficient to dispel any question that these CCO components are unaffected by partisan ties.

Consultants, on the other hand, are certainly important players in congressional campaigns. Here, however, there is simply very little variation to explain. To the extent that candidates hire consultants, they generally hire people who work for many campaigns, and therefore they will be coded as partisan here. The key question for consultants was partisan loyalty, and (at least outside of the South) they do in fact maintain that loyalty: at least among this set of respondents,

⁶This is not the first time local FPO strength produced unexpected results. I have previously reported (Bernstein 1997) that strong local FPOs were associated with smaller CCO staff sizes, fewer campaign activities performed by staff and consultants, and fewer activities performed by state and national FPOs. One more piece of evidence can be added. Among non-southern CCOs, an aggregate measure of partisan violations may be linked to high local FPO scores; while the relationship does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, the coefficient is a little larger than its standard error. The aggregate measure was calculated by averaging the violation scores for volunteers, staff, organization, and consultants.

fence-straddlers such as Dick Morris are rare indeed.⁷ Beyond that, little variation exists. The most noticeable source of variation is incumbency: incumbents are far more likely to have a prior connection with their consultants. At the same time, much of what little variation exists in partisanship of consultants is accounted for by the occasional incumbent who, essentially, reports being the only (political) client of a pollster or other consultant.

Unlike those involved in the formal campaign structure, volunteers play key roles in congressional campaigns; unlike consultants, considerable variation exists in the observed partisanship of volunteers.

The causes of volunteer partisanship are roughly parallel to those of staff partisanship, with one important difference: volunteers do not appear to be sensitive to the competitiveness of the race. As with paid staff, the more interesting results appear when campaigns from Southern states are excluded from the analysis.⁸ Once again, in campaigns outside of the south, a major influence on partisanship appears to be the nature of the nearby FPOs, as measured by the Party Transformation Study and Mayhew. Just as was the case for paid staff, volunteers are more likely to be partisan in those states with high Mayhew scores (indicating strong "traditional" parties) and high PTS state scores, indicating strong state FPOs, although neither estimated coefficient reaches conventional levels of statistical significance. And volunteers are less likely to be partisan in those states with high PTS local scores, indicating strong local FPOs. Volunteers, like paid staff, are more likely to have candidate-oriented backgrounds when the candidate is an incumbent, although for volunteers the effect is only about half as large.

Explains the backgrounds of those involved in Candidate Campaign
on, I first turn to a more detailed discussion of the two anomalous
a broader discussion of partisanship and party in Congressional

THE SOUTH

⁷It is quite possible, of course, that respondents here -- usually campaign managers or candidates -- are misinformed about the party loyalty of their consultants (or, for that matter, others involved in the CCO). Since the argument so far has rested on the behavior, and not the attitudes, of candidates and those involved in their campaigns, this is not a serious problem. It may be that consultants (and others) are not as loyal to their parties as they seem to the CCOs, but in that case responses here are strong evidence that partisan violations are so strongly frowned on that the campaigns are unaware of those that occur.

⁸In this case, the equation does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance when estimated over the entire population.

Repeatedly, relationships found in the rest of the nation were found not to exist in the South. Most importantly, even the fundamental dividing line between a partisan and an apartisan system - the presence or absence of partisan violations -- appeared to be far different in the South than in the rest of the nation.

Does this mean that apartisan politics, a possibility essentially dismissed for the nation as a whole, is practiced in that region? No clear answer is apparent. On the one hand, it is possible that the data are merely an artifact of realignment. Any sort of partisan model, no matter how strict the requirement may be set for tests of partisan loyalty, must allow for realignment, and even for the possibility of individual defections. In both of those cases, what happens is change in partisanship, rather than an absence of partisan loyalty. On the other hand, while democratic parties must be at least to some extent permeable, at some point permeability becomes the loss of partisanship entirely. There is at least a possibility that such a loss has happened in the South.

Local Formal Party Organization Strength

Strong local FPOs, as measured by the Party Transformation Study, were found to have a dampening effect on Candidate Campaign Organization partisanship. Other, separate dimensions of surrounding party strength were found, as expected under the partisan model, to contribute to CCO partisanship. Is the local FPO finding an indications that the partisan model may be wrong, at least in this instance?

Two interpretations are possible. The first is straightforward: to the extent that strong local FPOs inhibit the partisanship of CCOs, then CCOs are rivals of parties, and the partisan model is wrong. That is certainly possible.

However, another interpretation is at least equally plausible. To begin with, it is not clear that FPO strength, as studied by the Party Transformation Study, is necessarily the key measure of local party strength. That is, if the partisan model is correct, then formal party organizations are just one component of party, and not necessarily the best indicator of whether parties strong. It is certainly possible that FPO strength and the strength of partisan networks are unrelated.

If that is so, then it is certainly possible that in some cases these different components of the party can be rivals, rather than allies -- but that such rivalries are intraparty fights. In other words, candidates may have to choose between two party options: allowing the local formal party organization to run the campaign along with a much less important, personally loyal CCO; or, recruiting a (partisan) candidate campaign committee. The data cannot discriminate between these two interpretations.

Conclusions

These areas in which candidate campaign organizations seem to be less partisan should not obscure the general finding here -- that, for the most part, in most cases, candidate campaign

organizations appear to be partisan organizations. By this, I mean that they are primarily staffed by, organized by, and run by party people, not candidate loyalists, and because they display party-like behavior. Indeed, because they display party-like behavior by becoming increasingly party-dominated in close elections, the consequences for those first elected to the House are even more stark: they have participated in the most partisan campaigns.

Our elections are called “candidate-centered”, but this research suggests that the fact that candidates are responsible for organizing their own campaigns does not necessarily mean that those campaigns are personally loyal, as opposed to partisan. This helps to explain, possibly, the intense partisanship observed in Congress during the era of “candidate-centered” campaigns, a result that seems incongruous with either collapsed party organizations back home or even the “party in service” described several researchers (see, for example, Aldrich 1995).

More broadly, these findings call into question the efforts of party theorists (see most prominently Schlesinger 1991) to build a model of party based on assumptions about candidates. These theories generally rest on an assumption that candidates themselves can be thought of as individuals. To the extent that candidates, however, are in important ways institutions -- that is, to the extent that candidacies are made up of multiple people, each with a variety of possible political or financial or other goals -- “candidates” will be the product of a variety of compromises and decisions within the candidate campaign organization. And, to the extent that those multiple people have partisan goals, candidates will be partisan.

Table 1. Backgrounds of Campaign Participants, by CCO Component

CCO Component	<u>Background Orientation</u>				n
	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>FPO</u>	<u>SPC</u>	<u>OPC</u>	
<u>Formal and Informal Organization</u>	.88	.41	.39	.04	196
<u>Volunteers</u>	.77	.43	.40	.04	199
<u>Paid Staff</u>	.65	.45	.53	.04	197
<u>Consultants</u>	.51	.62	.72	.08	160

Note: Entries are average (mean) of candidate scores on each item.

Columns are prior experience with:

- C the same Candidate
- FPO Formal (same) Party Organizations
- SPC Same Party Campaigns
- OPC Other Party Campaigns.

Table 2. Partisanship of Campaign Participants, by CCO Component

CCO Component	<u>Background Orientation</u>					n
	<u>C</u>	<u>C/O</u>	<u>FPO</u>	<u>SPC</u>	<u>P</u>	
<u>Formal and Informal Organization</u>	.88	.42	.41	.39	.55	196
<u>Volunteers</u>	.77	.38	.43	.40	.56	199
<u>Paid Staff</u>	.65	.31	.45	.53	.62	197
<u>Consultants</u>	.51	.11	.62	.72	.86	160

Notes: Entries are average (mean) of candidate scores on each item.

Columns are prior experience with:

- C the same Candidate
- C/O Only the same Candidate
- FPO Formal (same) Party Organizations
- SPC Same Party Campaigns
- P Partisan: FPO or Same Party Organizations

Table 3a. Correlations between Candidate, FPO, and SPO Backgrounds:
Formal and Informal Organization

	<u>C</u>	<u>FPO</u>	<u>SPO</u>
<u>C</u>			
<u>FPO</u>	-0.26		
<u>SPO</u>	-0.22	.44	

Notes: n = 196.

Rows and columns are prior experience with:

C the same Candidate
FPO Formal (same) Party Organizations
SPC Same Party Campaigns

Table 3b. Correlations between Candidate, FPO, and SPO Backgrounds:
Volunteers

	<u>C</u>	<u>FPO</u>	<u>SPO</u>
<u>C</u>			
<u>FPO</u>	-.28		
<u>SPO</u>	-.18	.39	

Notes: n = 199.

Rows and columns are prior experience with:

C the same Candidate
FPO Formal (same) Party Organizations
SPC Same Party Campaigns

Table 3c. Correlations between Candidate, FPO, and SPO Backgrounds:
Staff

	<u>C</u>	<u>FPO</u>	<u>SPO</u>
<u>C</u>			
<u>FPO</u>	-0.18		
<u>SPO</u>	-0.36	0.55	

Notes: n = 197.

Rows and columns are prior experience with:

- C** the same Candidate
- FPO** Formal (same) Party Organizations
- SPC** Same Party Campaigns

Table 3d. Correlations between Candidate, FPO, and SPO Backgrounds:
Paid Consultants

	<u>C</u>	<u>FPO</u>	<u>SPO</u>
<u>C</u>			
<u>FPO</u>	.00		
<u>SPO</u>	-.21	.09	

Notes: n = 160.

Rows and columns are prior experience with:

C the same Candidate
FPO Formal (same) Party Organizations
SPC Same Party Campaigns

Table 4. Definitions of Candidate and Political Context Variables

Seat Status:

Incumbent: 1 for incumbents, 0 for others.

Tenure: Years in office for incumbents; 0 for others

Party: 1 for GOP, 0 for Democrats.

South: 1 from the states of the old Confederacy and Oklahoma, 0 for others.

Mayhew Score: Mayhew measure of "Traditional Party Organization". Range rescaled to 0 to 1, with 1 representing presence of traditional party organizations, and 0 their absence.

State Party Strength: Party Transformation Study measure of state party strength. Range is 0 (low) to 1 (high).

Local Party Strength: Party Transformation Study measure of local (county) party strength. Range rescaled to 0 (low) to 1 (high).

Challenger Experience: 1 for challengers and open party candidates with current or past experience in public office, 0 for others.

Competitive Seat: 1 for seats in which incumbent is running and won by no more than twenty points in 1994; open seats in which the margin was no more than 40 points in 1994; and any southern open seat formerly held by a white Democrat. 0 for all others.

Sources: For Mayhew, Mayhew (1986, 196). For State Party, Cotter et al (1984, 28-29). For Local Party, Cotter et al (1984: 52-53). For 1996 electoral and candidate information, sources were various issues of Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports.

**Table 5 Relationships Between Staff Partisanship and Political Context
(OLS regression)**

	<u>National</u>	<u>Non-South</u>
Competitive Seat	.21 (.06)	.21 (.07)
Challenger Experience	.11 (.09)	.10 (.10)
Mayhew score	.13 (.11)	.30 (.12)
State Party Strength (PTS)	.28 (.18)	.44 (.20)
Local Party Strength (PTS)	-.09 (.27)	-.80 (.36)
Seat status: Incumbent	-.12 (.09)	-.08 (.10)
Tenure	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Party	-.08 (.07)	-.07 (.08)
South	.00 (.09)	
Constant	.40 (.16)	.65 (.19)
adj. r ²	.09	.12
s.e.e.	.39	.39
n	180	142

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. The South is the states of the confederacy and Oklahoma. Included in the estimation of the model but not reported here are two seat status variables for Open Seats (Same and Other party incumbent retiring).

Table 6. Relationships Between Staff Candidate-Oriented Backgrounds and Political Context:
 Broad and Narrow Definitions of Candidate Orientation
 (OLS regression)

	<u>Broad</u>	<u>Narrow</u>
Competitive Seat	-.04 (.05)	-.16 (.06)
Challenger Experience	-.04 (.09)	-.09 (.09)
Mayhew score	.02 (.10)	-.10 (.10)
State Party Strength (PTS)	-.18 (.17)	-.17 (.18)
Local Party Strength (PTS)	.18 (.26)	.13 (.26)
Seat status:		
Incumbent	.35 (.08)	.17 (.08)
Tenure	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.01)
Party	.07 (.07)	.07 (.07)
South	.07 (.09)	.01 (.01)
Constant	.49 (.17)	.39 (.17)
adj. r^2	.13	.06
s.e.e.	.38	.39
n	180	180

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Included in the estimation of the model but not reported here are two seat status variables for Open Seats (Same and Other party incumbent retiring), and the time of the primary election.

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