

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

The Party's Primary: The Influence of the Party Hill Committees in Primary
Elections for the House and Senate

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Political Science

by

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2012

For my parents, who never talked politics at home, but made it clear to me that political participation and involvement was important

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Party's Primary: The Influence of the Party Hill Committees in Primary Elections
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by

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Professor Gary C. Jacobson, Chair

Scholarship on candidate emergence has largely ignored the role of political parties and their ability to affect the decisions of primary candidates. Instead, scholars have focused on the nature and experience of the candidate as well as the political environment as determining factors in the emergence of candidates for political office. In this dissertation I argue that parties are influential in the primary process. Because political parties do not publicize decisions to support or oppose candidates during the primary election, I design a measure of candidate connectedness from publicly available

fundraising data that measures the strength of a party organization's support of a candidate. I validate this measure using actual endorsements by interest groups. Using information about the fundraising networks of Senatorial candidates from 1990 to 2010 and House candidates from 2004 to 2010 I show that candidates who are less connected to the national senatorial campaign committees are less likely to remain a candidate in the primary, even when controlling for overall fundraising numbers. Those that do remain in the race without party support are also less likely to win. While the process may appear undemocratic, I also provide evidence that the targeted influence of parties benefits moderate candidates who are more representative of the district's median voter.

CHAPTER 1

CANDIDATES, PARTIES, AND PRIMARIES

Although he had lost his re-election campaign in 2000 by about 5 percentage points, former Senator Rod Grams (R-Minnesota) saw an opportunity to regain his seat again in 2006. In early 2005 Democratic Senator Mark Dayton's approval ratings had sunk into the low 40s, and many of Dayton's failures as a Senator were clearly visible to the public eye. Time Magazine would rank Dayton one of the five worst senators, dubbing him "The Blunderer" for his erratic behavior and propensity for controversial statements as a member of the Senate (Bacon 2006). Given the unpopularity of Dayton and the relative partisan balance among voters in the state, Grams saw a ripe opportunity to return to the Senate and moved quickly, declaring his candidacy in early February of 2005. Yet, Grams quickly found that the leaders within the party had already moved and were supporting Congressman Mark Kennedy who announced his candidacy a short time after Grams (Black 2005). Only days after Kennedy announced his candidacy, state Republican Party Chair Ron Ebensteiner remarked that "I think we are going to know very shortly who will be the obvious choice" and implied that national party leaders viewed Kennedy as the candidate with the best shot of winning the general election (Hotakainen, Smith, and Sand 2005; Stassen-Berger 2005). When fellow Republican Congressman Gil Gutknecht announced in March of 2005 that he was not going to run for the Senate and instead would seek re-election to the House, he explained that he would not be endorsing Kennedy, stating "I don't really believe in some of the kingmaker stuff that has been going on here in the last three or four weeks." This came as a surprise to many party leaders, including state party chair Ron Ebensteiner who explained, "As I heard it, that was the plan (to endorse Kennedy)," making it clear that party officials had already begun to coordinate on a preferred candidate (Diaz 2005).

It was Ebensteiner who would draw Grams's wrath only a couple of days later. After Ebensteiner commented about Kennedy being the presumptive nominee more than a year before the party convention and primary Grams responded forcefully (Salisbury 2005). "What kind of third world politics does he want to impose on the Republican Party?" remarked Grams when asked about Ebensteiner's comment. "The delegates won't be elected for another year. The convention is 18 or 17 months away, and the [party chair] wants to have a single name on a slate. That's kingmaking. I thought the role of the party...was to encourage all good candidates to run" (Homans 2005; Stassen-Berger and Salisbury 2005). Yet, in spite of his rants, Grams soon found that without party support he had little chance of winning. Just a month after accusing the party of kingmaking, Grams dropped out of the race for Senate, vowed his support of the party nominee, and turned his sights to the race for the House in Minnesota's 8th congressional district leaving Kennedy as the only credible Republican senatorial candidate (Forliti 2005).

Such insider politics are not uncommon in nomination politics. Newspaper coverage of primary races is full of anecdotes of party officials and party leaders, both Republican and Democrat, using their political clout and powers of persuasion to dissuade candidates from running for public office. With abundant resources, both monetary and institutional, the support of the party is valuable to the viability of a candidate. Candidates and those intimately involved in the political process notice the subtle cues indicating that the party has gotten behind a candidate.

On the Democratic side of the Minnesota race in 2006, Mark Dayton ultimately declined to run for re-election. Several prominent Democrats quickly announced their

entrance into the race, among them, Patty Wetterling who had lost to Kennedy in the 6th Congressional District by a small margin in 2004. Seen by many news organizations early on as the front-runner in the primary, Wetterling ultimately dropped out ten months before the primary recognizing that the party had backed one of her opponents, opting instead to secure the party nomination for the 6th district seat. As one local Democratic Party leader explained, “When [Patty Wetterling] went to talk to [party] leaders and other party officials, she found that most of them were already supporting Klobuchar. I think she dropped out because she realized that...without the support of Party leaders she had no chance at winning” (Andrews 2006). Parties are the pipeline to donors, volunteers, campaign strategists, and a wide variety of other resources that can boost a campaign. Without those resources a candidate realizes the chances of winning the nomination are greatly reduced.

A candidate’s decision to continue to compete for the nomination may also affect their chances for future political office. If the candidate chooses to ignore the party’s preferences and continues to seek the nomination, the campaign may alienate the good will of party leaders, lowering the chances for future party support in another race. Because candidates care not just about a single race, but also about their political futures, a candidate may withdraw from the race in the face of party opposition in order to pursue their future political aspirations (Rohde 1979; Canon 1990).

While journalists and political practitioners frequently provide anecdotes detailing the party’s political muscle, the scholars of congressional elections have been more skeptical of the ability of parties to intervene in an institution designed to minimize the influence of party bosses. While party interests controlled nominations prior to the early

20th century through backroom politics, the idea behind the progressive reforms of the early 1900s that changed the nomination process from a caucus and convention system to a primary system was that it was a way to take power away from the party bosses and turn power over to the hands of the people (Key 1949; Ranney 1975). Although it is not clear that the institution of primary elections resulted in the party's immediate loss of control over the nomination process or party influence in Congress (Ware 2002; Hirano et al. 2010), the common view is that in nomination campaigns, candidates struggle to win over the support of the primary electorate.

Studies of candidate emergence and the party nomination process have either ignored the role of the party or argued that parties have a limited influence on the decisions or actions of candidates (APSA 1950; Jacobson and Kernell 1981; Maisel and Stone 1997). Research on a candidate's decision to run for political office has focused on the characteristics and decision-making process of the potential candidate (Milbrath and Goel 1977). Political scientists have explained candidacy decisions using social characteristics (Matthews 1984; Wahlke et al. 1962), and personal ambition (Maestas et al. 2006; Schlesinger 1991, 1966; Lasswell 1930, 1948; Black 1972; Barber 1965; Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 1987; Rohde 1979). In addition, scholars have addressed the role of the political environment in shaping the decision of candidates to run for higher office (Key 1949; Prewitt 1970; Jacobson and Kernell 1981; Maestas et al. 2006).

This is not to say that scholars have not recognized the efforts of parties to influence the nomination process. Scholars have long recognized the efforts of parties to be an active participant in recruiting candidates (Seligman 1961; Herrnson 2005; Maestas, Maisel, and Stone 2005; Kazee and Thornberry 1990) and providing them with

necessary resources (Herrnson 1986; Kolodny and Dulio 2003; Dwyre et al. 2006).

However, one of the major impediments to the scholarly study of party involvement in primaries has been the lack of public information about party support. In the past when parties have become publically involved in the nomination process, they have been subject to public criticism which caused serious divisions within the party. Just as Grams's public outrage at the public statements made by the Chair of the Minnesota Republican Party, other incidents of public involvement on the part of party organizations have invited intraparty and media criticism detrimental to the public face of the party (Herrnson 1986).

As a result, the efforts of parties to clear the field in support of a preferred candidate are largely clandestine. The party's support of a candidate during the primary is not public information. Thus, while in private the party may be channeling supporters and non-monetary resources to its preferred candidate, in public the party remains neutral. Without a clear measure of party support, the bulk of scholarly work has only focused on what parties do to recruit or discourage candidates, rather than the effects of these efforts to choose primary winners or clear the field for its preferred candidate.

Only recently have a small group of scholars begun to argue that parties are more active and effective participants in the nomination process (Cohen et al. 2008; Masket 2011, 2009; Dominguez 2011; Grossmann and Dominguez 2009; Bernstein and Dominguez 2003). These studies have provided evidence to counter the view of party neutrality in primary elections. By showing evidence of party coalescence in gubernatorial and state primaries (Masket 2011, 2009), congressional primaries (Bernstein and Dominguez 2003; Dominguez 2005, 2011), and even presidential

primaries (Cohen et al. 2008), recent work has begun to alter expectations of the effects of party efforts in primary elections.

Because many of these studies focus only on a single race or use methods that are unique to a specific state or election, we are still left with an incomplete understanding of the magnitude of a political party's ability to select its nominee over time, across states, and under different political rules. In addition, previous research has underestimated the effects by ignoring the role of parties in clearing the field prior to the primary date. The party's ability to convince all other candidates to withdraw from the primary provides a complete assurance that the party's favored candidate will win the nomination, while trying to control the primary election outcome leaves the ultimate decision to primary voters. The 2010 primary elections provided ample evidence of the fickle nature of primary election voters in selecting a less electable candidate and jeopardizing a party's chance at a legislative majority. While scholars have long documented the efforts of parties to recruit and dissuade candidates from running in a primary election, the effect of those efforts has been difficult to measure in part because of the lack of quantifiable information about a party's support (Herrnson 1988; Maestas et al. 2005; Kazee and Thornberry 1990; Maisel, Maestas, and Stone 2002).

To address these problems and examine the influence of parties in primary elections prior to the day of the election, this dissertation proceeds in the following way. In chapter 2, I examine more closely the data acquisition problems that have hindered the study of the relationship between political parties and primary candidates. I argue that scholars have not recognized the influential role of parties in primary elections in part because national party organizations act discreetly during primary elections in order to

avoid accusations of tampering with local party affairs. To work around this problem, I use publicly reported campaign finance data. While a political party may not publicly endorse candidates, both Republican and Democratic Party campaign organizations play a role as a facilitator between potential financial contributors and preferred candidates (Herrnson 1988, 1986; Kolodny 1998; Menefee-Libey 2000; Masket 2011). On this basis, I measure the strength of the relationship between a candidate and the party organization using a candidate's fundraising network. To show the relationship between my measure and actual connections between a political group and a candidate, I provide evidence that the strength of a candidate's connection to an interest group increases immediately after the interest group's endorsement, even when controlling for factors such as ideology, partisanship, and fundraising.

After having established a way to measure the party's support of a primary candidate, I proceed in Chapters 3 and 4 to explore the ability of the Senatorial and Congressional Campaign Committees to influence the candidacy decisions of Senate and House candidates respectively. Using the variable I create in the previous chapter I measure the relative connectedness of each candidate in the race to the party campaign organization and explore how the strength of that relationship, relative to other candidates in the race, influences a candidate's decision to stay in the race. With information I gather from local news sources about candidacy withdrawal dates I look at the impact of the relationship between the party and the candidate on decisions of Senate candidates beginning in 1990 and House candidates beginning in 2004 to drop out of their primary race. I find that a candidate's relative strength of connection to the national party has a

significant influence on the likelihood that a Senate or a House candidate remains in the primary race and that this influence increases in over time.

In Chapter 5, I examine the differences in party influence under different primary election rules. While all but a few states mandate the use of a primary as the means for selecting party nominees, the rules governing who can vote in a party's primary and how candidates gain access to the ballot vary greatly from state to state. I show that while parties are able to influence the field of candidates under all primary rules, they are more likely to be concerned with primary systems that may be more beneficial to more extreme candidates.

Lastly, in Chapter 6, I return to the question of why parties are influential and what this power means for the democratic system. I argue that parties are influential in convincing candidates to withdraw from the race because of the correlation between party support and the likelihood of winning the primary. While the nature of party influence in the primary election may be disconcerting, I argue that party influence may be beneficial by lessening the effects of the negative polarizing effects of primaries by benefiting more moderate candidates.

All of these chapters, combined, provide a clearer picture of the party's influential role in primary elections. While parties are no longer nominating candidates through brokered conventions and backroom deals, parties do play a role in the choices presented to primary voters.

CHAPTER 2

MEASURING A PARTY'S IMPLICIT ENDORSEMENT

The traditional narrative on candidates and their campaigns for office suggests that national party organizations have little impact on senatorial and congressional nominations after the implementation of the primary system in the early 1900s. This differs, however, from the narrative of journalists and political practitioners who often refer to party leaders as “kingmakers” in Senate and House nominations (Lopez 2006b; Homans 2005; Stassen-Berger 2006). Although Senate campaign committee officials from both parties describe negative recruitment as “one of their most important and difficult election activities” (Herrnson 1988, p. 54), we have little insight into the influence of party organizations on candidates’ decisions. Only recently have researchers begun to argue that party leadership plays an important role controlling the outcomes of primary elections, whether through endorsements (Cohen et al. 2008; Masket 2009) or other formal and informal mechanisms (Dominguez 2005; Masket 2009, 2011).

Part of the reason scholars of primary elections have struggled to find evidence of party influence during the primary is the lack of quantifiable measures of party support. Political parties must act discreetly in support of candidates to avoid public criticism for intruding in the local democratic process. Although political parties have taken public stances on primary candidates on rare occasions in the past, those stances have prompted media and intraparty criticism (Lopez 2006a; Herrnson 1988). When multiple candidates of the same party compete for the nomination the party must take care to avoid the appearance of meddling so as to not to offend potential general election supporters. As a result, party organizations do not publicly announce their efforts on behalf of non-incumbent candidates in a primary.

Because of the clandestine nature of party activity in primary elections, accounts of party efforts in primary elections have relied on interviews or other historical and anecdotal records (Menefee-Libey 2000; Herrnson 1988). As a result, we know what parties do, but little about the magnitude of their influence.

Recent Efforts to Quantify Party Support

Recently, three major studies have attempted to demonstrate party coordination and influence in primary elections for various offices. In her dissertation Casey Dominguez's (2005) uses a summary measure of a candidate's party support to measure party coalescence around a single candidate in primaries in competitive districts. Marty Cohen and his colleagues create a weighted measure of endorsements received by presidential candidates to demonstrate the coordination of elite endorsers on a final consensus candidate (Cohen et al. 2008). Lastly, Seth Masket uses donor networks coupled with interviews of prominent party and campaign officials to show how parties coordinated efforts in the 2003 California Gubernatorial recall (Masket 2011). While each of these studies uses a creative way of identifying party supported politicians and the influence of parties in primaries, each one of the measures is either incomplete or does not allow for a comparison across different elections.

Kitchen Sink Measure as a Sign of Party Support

While previous research has shown that parties play a significant role in candidate recruitment in non-competitive primary elections (Herrnson 1988; Seligman 1961), Dominguez (2005) finds that political parties are more likely to coalesce around a single candidate in races that are important to the party. Unlike previous work that has focused on candidate quality (Banks and Kiewiet 1989; Jacobson and Kernell 1981), Dominguez

argues that the party actively chooses favorites. Dominguez provides evidence that partisan elites coordinate on a single candidate even when there are multiple candidates with similar backgrounds and credentials. She likewise notes several examples where the party coalesces around less qualified candidates contrary to the expectations of electoral theories based on candidate quality.

Dominguez's measure of party support, however, has several limitations. Rather than look at the specific role of the party organization, she considers more than the just the traditional party organization. As part of her measure, Dominguez uses the percentage of a candidate's donors who are "party loyal" donors, or donors who gave money only to candidates of one party. Dominguez naively treats all "party loyal" donors the same regardless of the target of their donations. For example, while an individual may donate money to many different Republicans, a donation to John Boehner is considered the same as a donation to Ron Paul, in spite of the fact that they represent donations to two different factions within the party with different goals.

Her measure is also limited in its ability to measure party support in non-competitive races. Because national party organizations have limited fiscal resources, a direct investment in a candidacy is not merely an indication of party approval, it is the acknowledgement of a competitive race. Thus, while the national party has an incentive to donate directly to a candidate in a competitive race, they may also support a candidate in a primary in a less competitive district without providing a direct donation.

Endorsements as a Sign of Party Support

In their work on the role of parties in presidential primaries, Cohen and his colleagues argue that party elites play a coordination game with their endorsements to

winnow the field to a single candidate, that being the eventual winner (Cohen et al. 2008). Using a weighted measure of endorsements, the authors show that a presidential candidate's ability to secure endorsements more strongly predicts a candidate's polling numbers in the subsequent quarter than does a candidate's fundraising totals and polling numbers in the previous quarter.

By tracking endorsements they provide a quantifiable and widely applicable measure of party influence. It is a measurement, however, that limits the analysis to individuals who are not actively involved with the party organization. Those who are involved in the party organization are unlikely to endorse until after one candidate has captured the nomination (Herrnson 1988).

The use of endorsements also does not provide insight into the process behind the scenes that is more meaningful for a campaign's viability. The public endorsement of a candidate can either be the pinnacle in a series of supportive actions, or merely a token sign of support void of any other meaning (Cizzilla 2010a). While endorsements measure public support, they do not quantify the non-public forms of support, such as the sharing of donor lists and staffing resources, as well as volunteer and voter mobilization efforts that are much more important to a campaign than the formal endorsement and press conference that accompanies it. While endorsements measure public support, they do not measure the support that really matters in a campaign.

Coordination of Donations as a Measure of Party Support

In examining the 2003 California gubernatorial recall election, Masket (2011) settles on donor behavior as the party's mechanism for winnowing the field of candidates. In the California gubernatorial election in 2002 and the recall election of 2003, he finds

that donors played a key role in helping to narrow the field. Masket argues that while donors were not well coordinated in 2002, the coordination they exhibited in 2003 helped quickly narrow the Republican field and focus the support of the party on Arnold Schwarzenegger. The conclusions he draws about the connection between the party support and donor support rely upon the interviews that Masket conducted with party officials. Outside of those interviews the methods do not link campaign donors to the party. Thus while the qualitative evidence shows that the party clearly supported Schwarzenegger over other reputable candidates such as Peter Ueberoth, Bill Simon, and Tom McClintock, Masket's work is limited only to California and does not provide any way to examine the effect of party support on a national level.

A Party's Fundraising Network and Party Support

This chapter focuses on a new method to measure the party support that activists, journalists, candidates, and other political practitioners commonly recognize as occurring in primary elections, but that outsiders are unable to detect because of the party's public neutrality. To create this measure, I build upon previous research about the key roles of the party in campaign fundraising. While congressional campaign committees can and do give direct donations, their primary role is to connect candidates and donors in what scholars have termed "conduit activities" (Herrnson 1986; Kolodny 1998; Herrnson 1988).

The party connects donors to its preferred candidates in two ways. First, the party encourages its own donors to also donate to its preferred candidates. Talking about the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) Robin Kolodny (1998) explains, "the NRSC does not spend more than the legal amount but provides a critical link for

funneling additional funds to candidates by encouraging these NRSC donors to give money to targeted senatorial candidates” (p. 151). The established relationship between the party and its donors enables the party to push its own donors to preferred candidates.

Second, the party connects donors to candidates by acting as a campaign bundler. A bundler is an individual or organization that collects money on behalf of a candidate. By relying on bundlers, a candidate raises money on the established credibility of the bundler. Because of their longstanding reputation, party organizations are adept at directing hundreds of thousands of dollars to targeted candidates (Hasen 2008; La Raja 2008). Paul Herrnson explains that, “the [party] committee[s] encourage individuals and PACs to make campaign contributions to particular...candidates rather than to the committee itself” (Herrnson 1988, p. 72). Indeed, party organizations have found that directing donors to a particular candidate are just as effective as a direct contribution from the party, but does not invite public criticism (Dominguez 2005, p. 158).

Large donors who are interested in access to elected officials are also attentive to cues from the party. As Herrnson explains, “large individual contributors who are attuned to the politics of campaign finance recognize high levels of national party support to be *de facto* endorsements from these committees” (Herrnson 1988, 69). With their experience, habitual donors are trained to pick up subtle cues that indicate a party’s endorsement.

The Use of Networks to Measure Relationships

Because a party wields its strongest influence by indirect means, scholars need a measure of party support that resembles a network to quantify this more clandestine method of political support. The emerging use of social network analysis provides a way

of measuring the subliminal efforts of national parties in primary elections where previous work has focused entirely on public actions as a measurement of support. The literature on social networks generally defines a social connection as the link or relationship between two individuals. These relationships could be relationships of friendship, acquaintance, common experiences, communication between, joint attendance at events, or other similar types of connections. Some of the most well known network studies have relied upon interviews or questionnaires to establish a set of connections between individuals to form a social network (Rapoport and Horvath 1961; Fararo and Sunshine 1964; Galaskiewicz and Mardsen 1978; Bernhard and Sala 2006; Fowler and Christakis 2008a, 2008b). Other work has focused on the analysis of networks for which there is an easily identifiable amount of objective data which is not subject to opinions of the interviewee. Studies have looked at the impact of networks of co-sponsorship (Fowler and Cho 2010; Fowler 2006), hyperlinks between the websites of interest groups (Hindman, Tsioutsoulis, and Johnson 2003), congressional committee assignments (Porter et al. 2005), staff members of political parties and 527s (Skinner, Masket, and Dulio 2009), and lobbyist donations to members of Congress (Koger and Victor 2009).

Measuring the Party Organization Candidate Relationship

Network analysis provides a way to quantify the support of party organizations. Unlike previous studies that have used a more liberal definition of political parties, I examine only the relationship between candidates and congressional and senatorial campaign committees. While other partisan actors such as state parties, party elites, and affiliated interest groups may have a variety of policy goals, the purpose of the hill committees is to build sustainable legislative majorities (Menefee-Libey 2000).

To quantify the connection between senatorial and congressional campaign committees and their preferred candidates, I create a measure of the strength of the relationship between a candidate and the party organization based on the relationship of that candidate's donors to the senatorial or congressional campaign committees. Figure 2.1 shows a simplified network between the Hill Committee, two campaigns and three donors. In exploring the relationship between parties and candidates, I am interested in the unobserved connection between the Hill Committee and Candidate X. While this connection is not visible, it can be observed in the donations of individuals 1, 2, 3, and 4 to Candidate X and Candidate Y as well as to the Hill Committee.

To create a measure of a candidate's relationship to the party organization using this data construct a measure where each individual donor's strength of connection (s) to the party is calculated as

$$s_j = \sum \frac{p_i}{d_i}$$

where p is the number of donors who gave to a candidate i who also gave to the party's hill committee and d is total number of donors to candidate i . As the total number of donors to a particular candidate increases, it becomes less likely that an individual donation was the result of a direct influence of a national campaign committee.

Candidates who attract many donations from individuals well-connected to the national party organization are more likely to have a stronger link to the national congressional or senatorial campaign committee. The strength of a candidate's connection (c) to the senatorial or congressional campaign committee is the sum of all the connectedness scores of their donors

$$C_k = \sum s_k$$

While this measure assumes that donors to the party's senatorial or congressional campaign committee are individuals who will respond to party signals about preferred candidates, it also accounts for the fact that there are a multitude of donors who do not donate directly to the national campaign committee, but also respond to cues the national party provides about its preferred candidates (Herrnson 1988, 2008). As one democratic official in the 1980s explained, "The [DCCC] has been able to direct its leading candidates to potential givers and send out campaign updates ... on their behalf" (Herrnson 1986, p. 593). Not only do the parties' campaign committees encourage their own donors to give to targeted candidates, they also point these candidates to other potential sources of campaign revenue thus acting as a connection between candidates and donors (Kolodny 1998, p. 151)

While this measure only uses donor behavior as a measure of party support, it is important to recognize that party support is not limited to just fundraising. Just as donors pick up on cues about party support, so too do activists, campaign staff, and volunteers. Candidates and campaigns who have the support of the party can also count on a myriad of other non-financial resources that will be beneficial to winning a primary campaign (Herrnson 1986; Jewell and Morehouse 2001; Maisel et al. 2002). This measure of the connection between candidates and party organizations using campaign fundraising data reveals the presence of an implicit party endorsement and other resources that the party can provide.

Validating the Measure of Party Support

While I cannot verify that this measure is a measure of an endorsement with the use of explicit party endorsements I can construct a similar measure of the strength of the connection between a candidate and an interest group, and look at the changes in that relationship before and after an interest group endorsement. To confirm that there is a relationship between a group's endorsement and this measure I examine the strength of the connection of candidates to Emily's List and the Club for Growth in 2006 and 2010. Both of these interest groups perform many of the same functions as party organizations and link donors to candidates. Just as importantly, both groups also publicly endorse candidates during the primary season.

I begin by looking at a quarter by quarter breakdown of the relationship of a select group of Democratic candidates to Emily's List in 2006, shown in Figure 2.2. Figure 2.2 shows a dramatic increase in the strength of the connection between Emily's List and Amy Klobuchar and Claire McCaskill to Emily's List immediately after Emily's List announced their endorsement of Klobuchar and McCaskill in September of 2005.

Klobuchar and McCaskill's increased strength of connection to Emily's List is not an artifact of an increase in their fundraising. As shown in Figure 2.3, while the fundraising levels of Klobuchar and McCaskill increase slightly, so also do the fundraising levels of other similar Democratic candidates for U.S. Senate.

These findings, however, are not limited to the Senate, nor are they unique to Emily's List. The effect of endorsement on connectedness remains significant even when controlling for other factors that might otherwise increase the number of donors giving to a campaign. Table 2.1 shows a time-series-cross-sectional analysis of House and Senate

candidates' connectedness through fundraising networks to Emily's List and Club for Growth in 2010.

In addition to a variable indicating the presence of an endorsement of the specific group, I also control for the party of the candidate, the type of primary (open seat, with an incumbent, or to challenge an incumbent) that the candidate was in, the candidate's fundraising, and whether the quarter of analysis was after the date of the primary election. While these other factors do have a significant effect on the level of connectedness of the candidate, the strongest predictor of strength of the connection to the interest group is the interest group's endorsement. Although party identification changes the number of adjusted shared donors by as many as 166 donors in the case of Emily's List, the influence of an endorsement on the connectedness to an interest group is at least twice the amount of a change in party identification in every model.

Not a Measure of Candidate Ideology

Although previous research has found that the congressional and senatorial campaign committees are most concerned about winning majorities and not ideological purity (Menefee-Libey 2000; Kolodny 1998), it may be that a large number of the donors they attract are ideological extremists who also donate to other ideologically extreme candidates. Before using this new measure as a proxy for a party endorsement, we must also assure that it is not merely a reflection of candidate ideology. If donors are coordinating on the basis of ideology, the assumption that the party supports candidates on the basis of their general election viability cannot be valid. To confirm that ideological motives are not the driving force behind the coordination this new variable measures I examine the case of the 2006 Republican Senate primary in Tennessee and

also employ quantitative methods to examine party support of incumbent senators in 2010.

Republican Senatorial Primary in Tennessee in 2006

The Senate Republican primary in Tennessee to replace departing Senator Bill Frist had three candidates, Chattanooga Mayor Bob Corker, and U.S. Representatives Van Hilleary and Ed Bryant. Recognizing the competitive nature of the primary, Frist declined to endorse any of them publicly. The media's portrayal of the primary depicted the race as two conservative members of Congress battleing with the more moderate mayor, and in their campaigns both Hilleary and Bryant attempted to paint Corker as too liberal for Tennessee Republicans and themselves as the clear conservative choice (Abdullah 2006). However, during their time in the House, Hilleary and Bryant held substantially different opinions. Using first dimension DW-Nominate scores, a commonly used measure of ideology derived from roll call votes in the House (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006), they had scores of .552 and .458 respectively, indicating that Hilleary was substantially more conservative than Bryant.

As Figure 2.4 depicts, however, despite their ideological differences there was little difference in connectedness of the three candidates to the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC). In fact, the relatively equal support of the most liberal candidate, Corker, and the most conservative, Hilleary, suggests a divide between the factions within the Republican Party, and a clear indication that in this race, the party did not appear to be supporting any one candidate.

Party Support of Incumbent Senators

The case of the 2006 primary in Tennessee also does not appear to be an exception to the rule of party resource allocation. A bi-variate regression of the absolute value of DW-Nominate Scores on the connectedness of Senate incumbents to their respective senatorial campaign committees in 2010 shows that ideology does have an effect on an incumbent's connection to the party organization. However, instead of party organizations targeting extremists, party organizations are actually more likely to support moderate incumbents as is shown in the first model in Table 2.2.

The second model in Table 2.2 shows, however, that the significance of the ideological measure disappears once controls for the perceived closeness of the race, measured by Cook's Political Reports in the first quarter of the election year and the leadership positions that those incumbents held are added to the equation. These models indicate that candidates with more extreme ideologies are not more likely to have a stronger connection to the hill committees as measured by this indicator of party support. Instead the hill committees are organizations that coordinate with donors to support the most viable general election candidate.

Conclusion

Scholars who have looked at understanding the influence of political party organizations in party primaries have had a difficult time in part because of the lack of good indicators of the support a candidate receives from the party during that primary period. The lack of public indicators of party support makes it difficult to identify party-supported candidates and the influence of party support on primary outcomes. While other scholars have attempted to identify party support, they have relied on explicit measures such as party to candidate donations or public endorsements, both of which are

rare. Indeed, these measures miss the vital, yet less visible, aspects of a campaign which include volunteer and donor mobilization on behalf of a candidate and focus instead on the visible actions of the party organization.

The new measure of the strength of the link between candidates and the hill committees presented in this chapter measures the party's coordination of donors on the party-preferred candidate. I show the strong relationship between this measure and the presence of an endorsement by calculating this measure between candidates and interest groups before and after an interest group endorsement. I find that an endorsement by an interest group has a larger effect on the connectedness of a candidate to that interest group through their fundraising network than other factors that might induce other likeminded donors to give to that particular candidate.

I have also shown that ideology does not play an important role in predicting donor coordination through national party organizations. I find that the connectedness of incumbent senators in 2010 to their respective senatorial campaign committee is not the result of the ideological preference of those committees. Instead, in support of previous research on the evolution of congressional and senatorial campaign committees, we find that incumbents have a higher level of connectedness to those committees through their donor networks if they are in a leadership position or if they are facing a competitive challenger (Menefee-Libey 2000; Kolodny 1998).

This measure allows us to identify candidates that have higher levels of support from their party's senatorial and congressional campaign committees. Comparing candidates within a primary election gives us, for the first time, a quantifiable measure of the relative support of a candidate compared to other candidates in that same race. Using

this knowledge of a party's preference for a candidate in a specific race, we can begin to measure the impact of that political party's preferences on the decisions of candidates for federal legislative office.

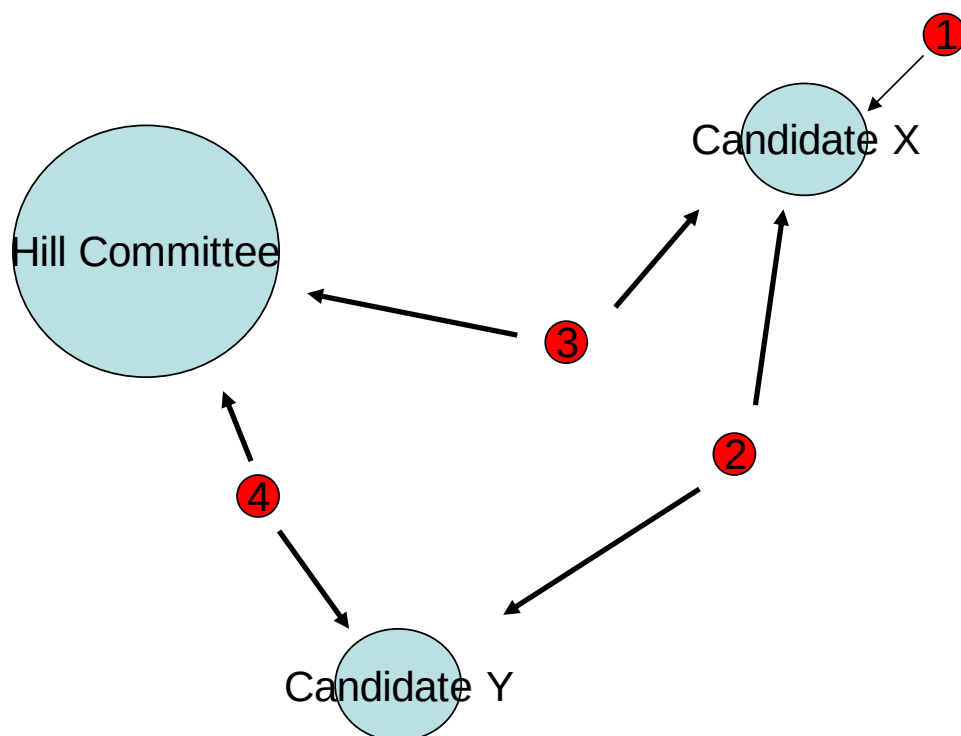


Figure 2.1. Network of Candidate Connectedness to Party Hill Committee
Note: Red Circles are Donors, Blue Circles are Candidate Committees

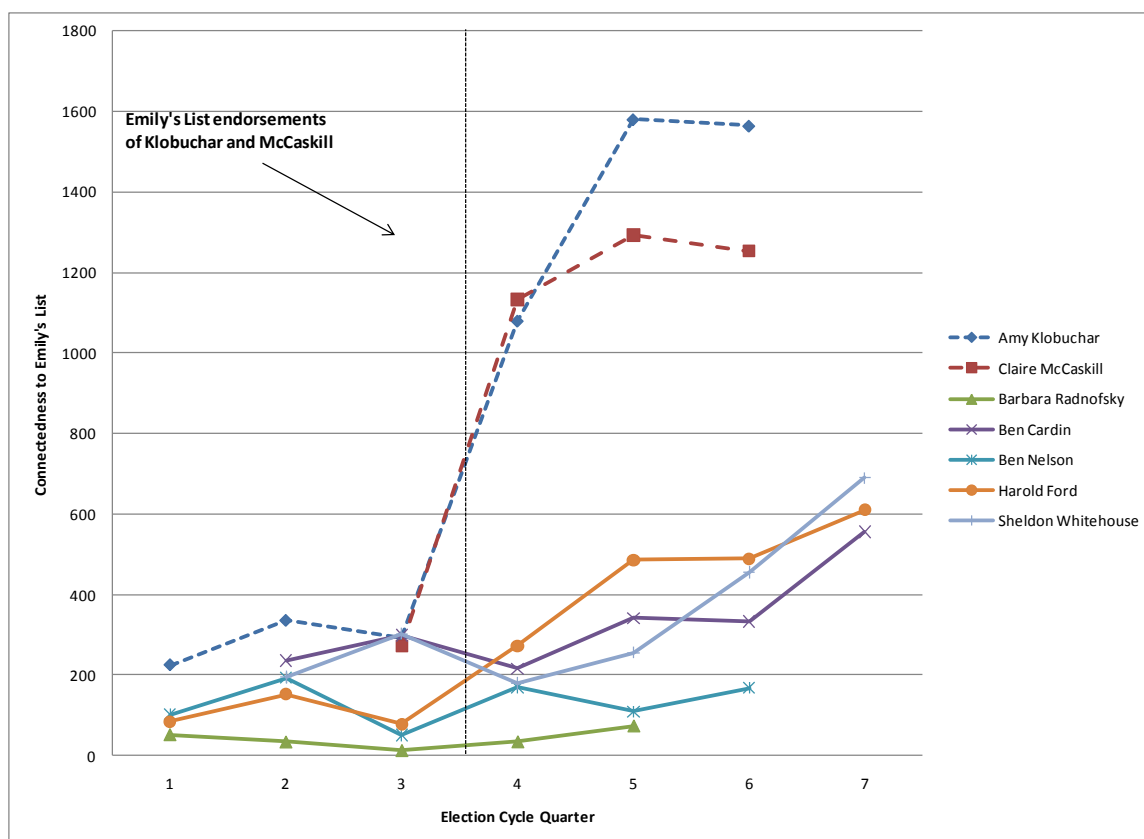


Figure 2.2. Effect of the Emily's List's 2006 Endorsement on Fundraising Connectedness Note: Figure includes only pre-primary or pre-convention quarters

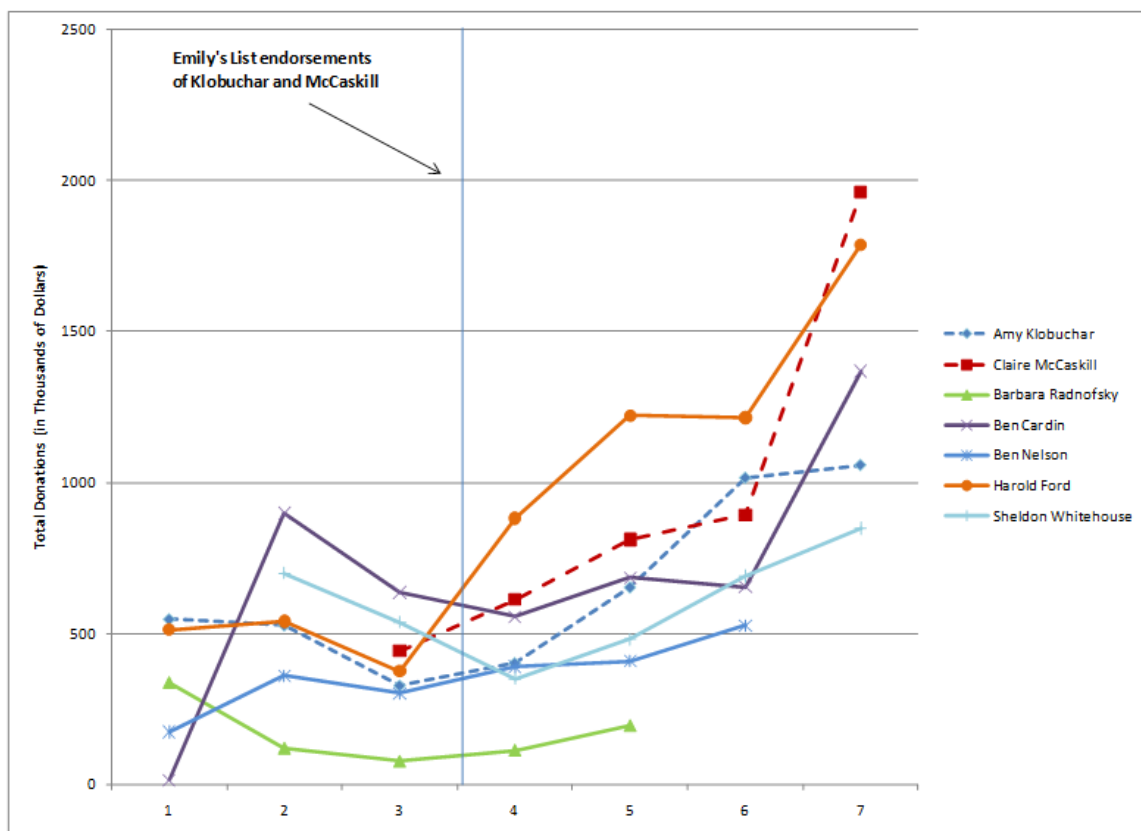


Figure 2.3. Quarterly Fundraising From Individual Donors for 2006 U.S. Senate Candidates

Note: Figure includes only pre-primary or pre-convention quarters

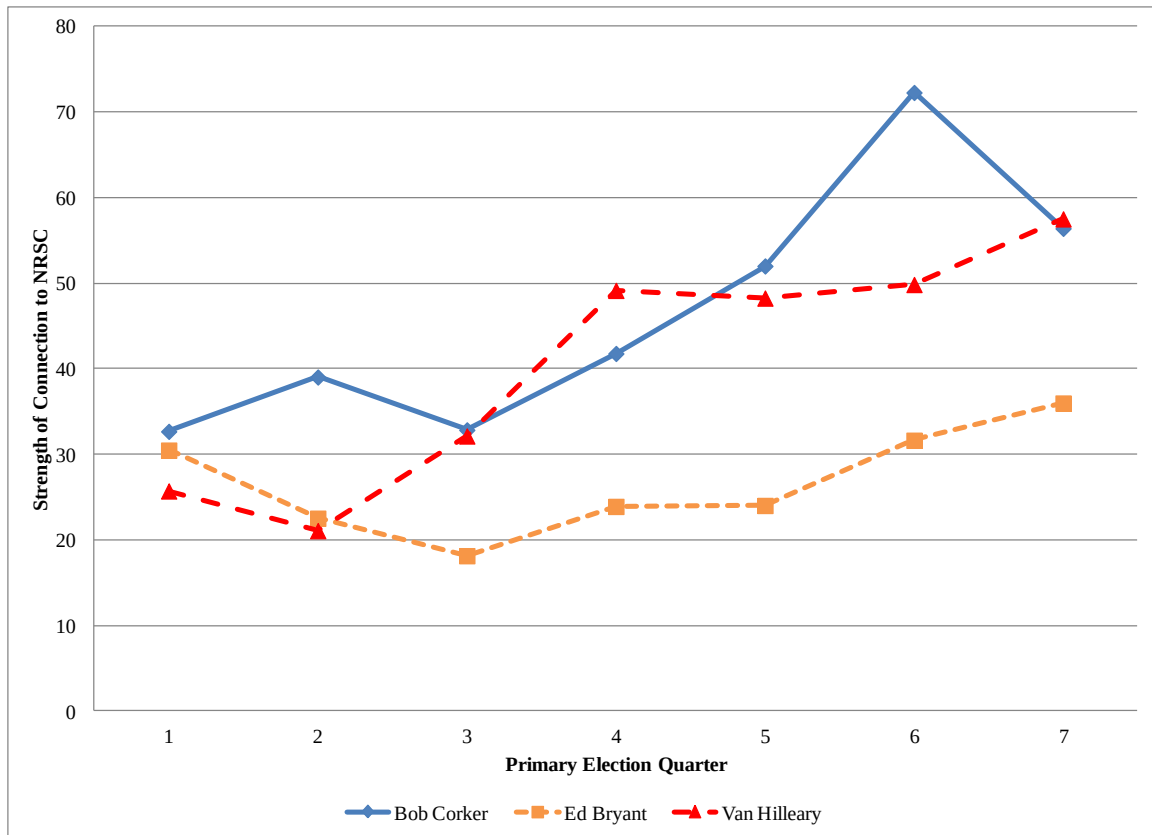


Figure 2.4. Tennessee Republican U.S. Senate Candidates Connection to NRSC during Primary Election in 2006

Table 2.1. Effect of Interest Group Endorsements on Candidate Fundraising Connectedness

	(1) Connectedness to Club for Growth (Senate)	(2) Connectedness to Club for Growth (Senate)	(3) Connectedness to Emily's List (Senate)	(4) Connectedness to Club for Growth (House)	(5) Connectedness to Emily's List (House)
Endorsement	581.734*** (62.504)	536.828*** (62.924)	381.248*** (66.964)	151.096*** (36.024)	147.876*** (28.632)
Democrat		-59.069*** (15.236)	166.733*** (15.407)	-12.699*** (1.836)	25.023*** (2.561)
Open Seat		66.155*** (13.439)	-41.472*** (14.451)	-1.980 (1.710)	4.637*** (1.643)
Challenger Primary		91.886*** (24.693)	-121.424*** (23.770)	0.592 (1.825)	-4.567*** (1.226)
Quarter Fundraising (\$1000s)		0.014*** (0.003)	0.013*** (0.003)	0.033*** (0.004)	0.032*** (0.006)
Post-Primary		41.183*** (8.652)	79.213*** (10.931)	4.592*** (0.906)	8.823*** (2.505)
Constant	41.646*** (8.977)	0.948 (12.548)	28.539*** (3.825)	9.448*** (1.114)	-3.179** (1.609)
Observations	429	429	429	4833	4841
R-squared	0.444	0.510	0.382	0.248	0.390
Number of Panels	68	68	68	747	748
RMSE	187.6	177.1	217.1	28.75	39.27

Panel Corrected Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2.2. Predictors of an Incumbent's Connectedness to the Party Senatorial Campaign Committee in 2010

	(1) Connectedness to Hill Committee	(2) Connectedness to Hill Committee
Abs. 1st Dimension DW-Nominate	-41.657* (21.336)	-22.456 (34.375)
Competitive Election		90.747*** (14.864)
Party Leader		166.543*** (29.119)
Constant	167.019*** (8.923)	104.403*** (14.684)
Observations	150	150
R-squared	0.003	0.368
Number of candid	23	23
RMSE	116.2	93.20

Panel Corrected Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

CHAPTER 3

THE SENATE PARTY'S PRIMARY

The American public has largely considered primary elections a bulwark against the influence of party leaders. And yet, because the party has an interest in ensuring that the best general election candidate emerges from the party's nomination process to give their party the best chance to win a majority of seats in the Senate (Herrnson 1988) the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) and National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) have a large incentive to become involved in primary elections. In addition, party organizations not only have an interest in who wins the primary election, they also are concerned about the process. Parties and candidates worry about the potential negative effects that a divisive primary may have on the eventual nominee.

While scholarly studies are inconclusive about the effect of competitive primaries on general election vote totals (Alvarez, Canon, and Sellers 1995; Bernstein 1977; Born 1981; Piereson and Smith 1975; Miller, Jewell, and Sigelman 1988; Hacker 1965; Lazarus 2005), the media and political practitioners view competitive primary elections as detrimental to the eventual nominee. In their study of primary election competition, Alvarez, Cannon, and Sellers (1995) found over 500 articles referring to competitive primary elections, almost all of which focused on the harmful effects of such primaries on the eventual nominee's general election chances.

The perception of competitive primaries as detrimental to the nominee continues to this day. Many news stories prior to the 2010 midterm election cited the Republican Party's concern about the effect divisive primaries would have on the party's ability to re-take majority control of the House of Representatives (e.g Martin 2010). Party officials and candidates want to avoid nasty and expensive intra-party primary fights that leave the

winning candidate electorally damaged and financially in the hole. Parties prefer candidates to save scarce resources for the general election where winning means holding a legislative seat. Party officials also believe that, “certain candidates must be discouraged from running to allow party members to unite behind and nominate their most electable candidates” (Herrnson 1988, 54). Rather than face a tough primary election, parties would prefer the most electable candidate not face any competition for the nomination, thus remaining politically unscathed through the process.

Up until recently, however, studies of candidate emergence have either ignored the role of the party or argued that parties have a limited influence on the decisions and actions of candidates (APSA 1950; Jacobson and Kernell 1981; Maisel and Stone 1997). The story about U.S. elections since the implementation of the direct primary has always been that they are candidate-centered rather than party-centered. Research on a candidate’s decision to run for political office has focused on the characteristics and decision-making process of the potential candidate (Milbrath and Goel 1977). Political scientists have explained candidacy decisions using explanations that focus on a candidate’s social characteristics (Matthews 1984; Wahlke et al. 1962), and personal ambition (Maestas et al. 2006; Schlesinger 1991, 1966; Lasswell 1930, 1948; Black 1972; Barber 1965; Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 1987; Rohde 1979), as well as the role of the political environment (Key 1949; Prewitt 1970; Jacobson and Kernell 1981; Maestas et al. 2006).

Only recently have scholars begun to question the candidate-centric view of primary election campaigns. New research agendas have focused on the coordination of the support of party elites on candidates in primary elections at different levels of

government (Cohen et al. 2008; Dominguez 2005; Masket 2009, 2011). These studies have begun to show that parties are not passive observers during the primary election, but instead act strategically to coordinate and unite behind favored candidates.

In this chapter I show that a party's strategic coordination influences candidate decisions. I show that the coordination and support of the DSCC and the NRSC has an effect on the likelihood that a candidate will drop out of the race prior to the primary even when controlling for a candidate's total fundraising. While previous work has documented the actions of the Senate hill committees, I show that these actions have an effect. In his book on party campaign activity in the 1980s, Paul Herrnson (1988) reported that officials from both national parties' campaign organizations indicated that dissuading individuals from running for public office was "one of their most important and difficult election activities" (p. 54). Unfortunately Herrnson's analysis of this important party function is primarily anecdotal in nature as he addresses the topic without delving into the effectiveness of national party activities on actual candidacy decisions.

My work here shows the effectiveness of these party actions, and how the party's ability to influence primary candidates has increased since the 1990s. In this chapter I demonstrate that a candidate's connectedness to the national party, relative to other competing candidates in the primary field, influences the decision of a candidate to remain a member of the primary field.

Increased Activity of Political Party Organizations

At the same time that political scientists were trumpeting the decline of political parties in the electorate in the 1970s, political party organizations were increasing in size and influence (Gibson et al. 1985, 1983). Since that time, parties have continued to

increase their staff and operational capacity (Aldrich 2008) and now play a larger role in elections at all levels of government (Aldrich 2008; Herrnson 1989; Montgomery and Nyhan 2010).

Although the DSCC and NRSC in their origins were dependent upon the Democratic and Republican National Committees respectively, the senatorial campaign committees have grown to become independent entities with their own fundraising abilities and organizational goals (Kolodny 1998). The DSCC and NRSC's fundraising totals also show an increased role in party electioneering in the last decade. Figure 3.1 tracks the change in hard money donations received by the party organizations beginning in 2000. Even after including soft money donations, allowable up until 2002, the total amount raised by both parties has increased steadily since 2000. Over time these committees have shifted from their origins as organizations that supported local decisions and cultivated patronage to organizations aimed at maximizing vote totals by developing issues and using marketing-style research to identify potential voters and supporters (Menefee-Libey 2000).

Growing Coordination of Donations

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the NRSC faced a new dilemma, having raised more money than it could legally transfer to candidates. Although their accounts differ slightly in their reporting of the election cycle in which it began, both Robin Kolodny (1998, 151) and Paul Herrnson (1988, 71-73) document that the NRSC began bundling money to candidates as part of the solution to that problem. Rather than raise money for their own financial needs, bundling is a procedure by which an organization gathers a large number of donations on behalf of a candidate. The organization then "bundles"

these checks and gives them to the targeted candidate. In this way the NRSC was able to fund critical election campaigns beyond the normal allowable amount without violating federal election law. What began in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the NRSC, now is common practice for both the NRSC and DSCC (Kolodny 1998; Jacobson 2010; Currinder 2009; Dwyre et al. 2006; Dwyre and Kolodny 2003).

The measure described in the previous chapter provides a way to take advantage of party bundling in order to create a measure of a candidate's party support. Rather than use a strict count of a candidate's shared donors with the party this adjusted measure reflects the fact that the DSCC and NRSC direct potential donors "to give money to targeted senatorial candidates" rather than to the NRSC or DSCC itself (Kolodny 1998, 151).

Consistent with the story of increasing party coordination of monetary resources, Figure 3.2 shows the average strength of the connection between the party and the most connected candidate in every quarter prior to the primary election in 1990, 2002, 2004, and 2010. Over this time period the DSCC and NRSC have become more connected to senatorial candidates through shared donor networks.

Figure 3.3 contains the same analysis presented in Figure 3.2, but removes primaries with an incumbent. Although the overall average strength of connection between parties and the party supported candidate in non-incumbent primaries is lower the difference is not significant. Figure 3.3 also shows that party support of non-incumbents has also increased over the past twenty years. Rather than acting solely as a slush fund for incumbents, the DSCC and NRSC have also increased their support of candidates in all types of primaries (Menefee-Libey 2000).

The DSCC and NRSC are also becoming more involved earlier in the election cycle when there are often multiple candidates competing for the nomination. Table 3.1 shows the the average party support of the party's preferred candidate in the primary from 1990 to 2002 and from 2002 to 2010. While the average level of party support increases steadily from 1990 to 2010 in the quarters immediately prior to the primary election, the increase in party support in the early stages of the campaign, when the primary election is a year to a year and a half away, is exponential. While the average strength of the relationship between the party and the party's favored candidate in a non-incumbent primary race five quarters before the primary election increased by only 6.43 shared donors between 1990 and 2002, it increased by over ten times that amount between 2002 and 2010. Likewise, the average adjusted number of donors the party shared with its preferred candidate a year before the primary was 2.4 donors in 1990, 17.2 donors in 2002, but 108.3 donors by 2010.

Not only have the NRSC and DSCC raised and spent more money over the last few election cycles, they are also building stronger connections to preferred candidates earlier in the primary election. Rather than remaining neutral during the early stages of the primary elections, parties are coordinating support for their preferred candidates early in the primary election cycle.

Clearing the Primary Field

Even as party hill committees have begun to play a larger role in primary elections, we do not understand the magnitude of their influence. In focusing on the outcomes of primary elections scholars have underestimated the influence of the national party organizations by failing to address the important role that parties play in the

recruitment and negative recruitment of candidates (Seligman 1961; Herrnson 1988, 1986; Fox and Lawless 2010; Sanbonmatsu 2002, 2006). Once the final slate is printed on the ballot it becomes more difficult for parties to influence the outcome of the primary. Instead of persuading a handful of individuals behind the scenes to refrain from submitting their name as a candidate for office, the party must influence a large number of potential primary voters, all without drawing attention to the national party's involvement in local affairs.

Prior to the implementation of primary elections, the party's nominee was often nominated in a "smoke-filled back room." While the individuals residing in these rooms no longer have exclusive control over the nomination, they still exert a strong influence on the decisions of candidates to remain in the race for public office. Party officials discourage candidates by offering support for the pursuit for a different public office, or simply making it clear that the party is going to support another candidate (Herrnson 1988, 54-56). Ambitious candidates take these factors into account when considering their current and future political aspirations.

A party's strength comes not in shaping the decisions of potential voters, but in shaping the field of candidates. In the same way the majority party in Congress controls outcomes by controlling what legislation comes to a vote (Cox and McCubbins 2005, 2007), parties control primary election outcomes by controlling the options available to primary voters.

Data Sources and Procedures

To examine the influence of the major parties on the candidacy decisions of primary candidates, I compiled a list of all individuals who declared their candidacy for

United States Senate from the 1990 to 2010 election cycles and filed with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). This list includes candidates who only formed exploratory committees as well as candidates who withdrew their candidacy shortly after announcing their intentions to run for office.

In each primary I recorded the percentage of the vote each candidate received in the primary. If a candidate withdrew from the race before the primary, I noted the date the candidate dropped out of the race as reported by local news sources. For the handful of individuals for which there was no information about the date they dropped out of the race, I entered their drop-out date as a week after the FEC recorded that they received their last monetary contribution.

I also recorded the total contribution amount each candidate received from individuals in each quarter during the primary. Although the dates of donations candidates submit to the FEC are not completely accurate, by compiling information on a quarterly basis, I avoid any problems related with accuracy. Because candidates must file a report with the FEC on a quarterly basis and campaigns use these reports to signal the strength of their candidacy, candidates have an incentive to ensure that quarterly reports of fundraising totals and donor lists are accurate.

For each candidate, I calculate the strength of the relationship to the party's senatorial campaign committee for each quarter. Because the hill committees target assistance to competitive races, instead of using the overall strength of the relationship I calculate the difference between a candidate's relationship to the party and the relationship of the most connected candidate in the primary race. Similarly, because a candidate's fundraising needs also vary by state, I calculate the logged difference

between a candidate's fundraising totals and the leading fundraiser in the primary. Analyzing candidates relative to their competition provides a clearer picture of the influence of the national party on each race.

Because a number of candidates compete each year without regard to their chances of winning (Canon 1993, 1990), I exclude from the analysis candidates who lost in the primary by more than twenty percent of the primary vote. By and large, these candidates are running for the experience and not because they believe they can win. Because their motives for entering the race differ from other candidates, they do not have the same incentive to respond to the party's actions. I also exclude from the analysis individuals who are challenging incumbent politicians. Because they are challenging incumbents, an act of open defiance to the party establishment, these individuals are unlikely to respond to any party action, open or clandestine, to discourage their candidacy (Laffey 2007). The findings reported here, however, do not change substantively if I include these long-shot candidates.

Backing No Losers?

Because political parties have a strong incentive not to back losing candidates which might undermine their credibility with members of the party (Rakove 1975; Schlesinger 1984, 1991), it may be that parties do not support viable general election candidates who do not have a realistic chance of winning the primary. An examination of the type of candidates who drop out of primary races reveals that this is not the case. Instead, the vast majority of candidates who drop out are quality candidates who have held prominent elected positions. A substantial number of these individuals would later go on to hold other important political positions within the party and in elected office.

The list of those who dropped out of Senate primaries over the years includes many individuals who were eventual party nominees for House races in the same year, such as Patty Wetterling of Minnesota in 2006, Duane Sand of South Dakota and Mark Foley of Florida in 2004, or were top of the ticket nominees in other years, such as Brian Dubie of Vermont, Christine Whitman of New Jersey and Tim Michels of Wisconsin. These drop outs are not inexperienced politicians running for office for the mere pleasure of being on the ballot, but experienced politicians with credible chances in the primary who learned that the party had other plans and designs.

Similarly, party support in a primary does not change as the likelihood of primary victory increases. In the 2010 election cycle, the NRSC had clear preferences for Carly Fiorina over Tom Campbell in the California Republican senatorial primary even in the fall of 2009 when Campbell held significant lead in the early polls. Likewise the same is true of the NRSC's support of Mike Castle in Delaware and Jane Norton in Colorado in 2010 over their opponents.

Evidence of Party Influence in Senate Primaries

This data provides a way to examine how a candidate's likelihood of remaining in the primary changes with different levels of party support. Table 3.2 shows the results of a logistic regression predicting the likelihood that a candidate in an open seat or challenger primary election will withdraw from the race. Consistent with Beck, Katz, and Tucker (1998) I include dummy variables for each quarter of the election cycle to correct for the temporal dependence of the model. The model combines the past ten election cycles from 1990 to 2010 and I cluster standard errors by primary election race. The dependent variable is coded as 1 if the individual was a candidate for office during

the entire election cycle quarter and as 0 if the individual dropped out during that quarter. As explanatory variables I include the relative level of party support and the relative logged fundraising of the previous quarter. These two variables are correlated at .45 and have a Variance Inflation Factor of 1.26, well below the normally accepted value of 10 (O'Brien 2007).

It is important to note that the results confirm that fundraising is crucial to a candidate's decision to continue to be a candidate for the nomination. In a time when candidates continue to cite fundraising shortcomings as a reason for dropping out of a race, this analysis confirms that fundraising does have a strong and significant influence on a candidate's decision to stay in a race. Without the monetary resources required to fund advertising, turnout operations, and other campaign functions campaigns, campaigns are ineffective and unlikely to be successful. These results confirm that candidates consider these factors when deciding whether or not to continue to compete for the nomination.

The results also indicate the importance of the strength of a candidate's connection to the national party organizations in the decision to continue to seek the nomination. Figure 3.4 shows the likelihood of a candidate dropping out of the race with different levels of connectedness relative to other candidates in the party's primary. As a candidate's relative connectedness to the national party goes from -200 to zero, a change of roughly two standard deviations in party support and the equivalent of going from having 200 fewer party donors than the leading candidate to having the most party donors of any candidate in the race, the likelihood that a candidate drops out of the race decreases from 10.8% to 4.7%. When making decisions about their candidacy,

candidates care not only about the quantity of money raised each quarter but also the level of support they are receiving from the party organization. Without being able to secure party support and the resources that accompany it, candidates recognize that they will struggle to compete with candidates who do have access to party resources. The influence of party support indicates that candidates take into consideration the support of the national senatorial campaign committees in determining the viability of their campaigns.

Candidates who see party support begin to coalesce around another candidate realize that, while publicly the party will remain neutral, in private the party is channeling resources and support to another candidate. National party organizations shape the field of candidates by ignoring the candidacies they do not want in the primary field. Ambitious and strategic politicians pick up on these cues and use them in their decisions to pursue a particular office.

Evidence of Increasing Party Influence

The results displayed in Table 3.3 show the year by year coefficients of the same logit model. While a party's influence varies from year to year, beginning in 2004 the relative national party support of a candidate begins to have a consistent and significant effect on that candidate's decision to remain in the race every election cycle. The strength of the effect of a candidate's relative connection to the party on the decision to drop out of the primary race also increases from 1990 to 2010. Figure 3.5 displays the change in the probability that a candidate will remain in the race as the candidate's relative connection to the party decreases from the mean to two standard variations below the mean while holding relative fundraising constant at its mean value. As party support

of a candidate increases relative to other candidates in the primary, that candidate becomes less likely to drop out of the primary election race. The ability of the national party to discourage candidates from continuing to compete has grown significantly since 1990.

Democrats

Although the DSCC and NRSC have similar goals, there are significant variations in their methods and procedures (Herrnson 1988, Kolodny 1998, Menefee-Libby 2004). Examining differences between parties provides evidence of the practical effect of such differences. Unfortunately, the nature of the data prevents an examination of each year individually because of problems with serial correlation in some years with few observations. Instead Table 3.4 presents a logit regression predicting the likelihood of a Democratic candidate remaining in the race using that candidate's relative fundraising deficit and relative connectedness to the DSCC in the previous quarter during 1990-2002 and 2004-2010. I choose 2004 because it marks a change in campaign finance rules and provides a picture of party influence under two different regulatory regimes.

This analysis suggests that even in the 1990s, the DSCC influenced the candidacy decisions of Democratic candidates. Even when controlling for the amount of money a candidate raised, candidates took into consideration their party support relative to other candidates in the race when deciding whether to stay in the race throughout the period of analysis. The influence of the DSCC has increased since the implementation of new campaign finance rules. As shown in Figure 3.6, while a two standard deviation decrease in the relative fundraising connectedness reduces the probability that an individual remains in the race only 2.2 percent between 1990 and 2002, a similar decrease in

connectedness reduced a candidate's likelihood of staying in the race by almost 8 percent between 2004 and 2010.

Republicans

Table 3.5 presents the same logit regression as Table 3.4, but for Republicans. Similar to the results for Democrats, we find a significant effect of party support between the years of 2004 and 2010. Unlike Democratic candidates, a Republican candidate's relative connection to the NRSC does not have a significant impact on the decision of a candidate to stay in a primary race between 1990 and 2002.

As with the DSCC, the level of influence of the NRSC on the candidacy decisions of Republican primary candidates has also increased in the past 20 years. Figure 3.7 provides the probability that a candidate will drop out of the race if that candidate's level of fundraising is held constant at the mean while the level of relative connectedness is increased from two standard deviations to being the party supported candidate. Between 1990 and 2002, an decrease of two standard deviations in the relative level of connectedness of a candidate and the most connected candidate in the race had essentially no effect on likelihood of that candidate would remain in the primary race. By 2010, a candidate with a relative connectedness level of two standard deviations below the mean was almost 4% percent more likely to drop out of the race.

Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter has provided evidence that the decision calculus of candidates is not merely the sum of a candidate's political ambitions and fundraising abilities. While the party cannot involuntarily remove candidates from a primary, strategic candidates are susceptible to the persuasion of party officials. I have shown that candidates for the U.S.

Senate weigh the relative support they receive from the senatorial campaign committees in their decisions to continue competing in an election or to suspend their campaign.

This new evidence shows that the DSCC and NRSC play an important role in the outcomes of Senate primaries and that they have magnified that influence more in recent election cycles. Those who fail to receive party support quickly realize that, while publically the party will remain neutral, in private the party is supporting an opponent. The NRSC and DSCC clear the field by directing the party's resources towards the party's preferred candidate and ignoring those candidates they do not want in the primary field. Aware of their political surroundings, candidates who find themselves without party support will be more likely to drop out of the primary race.

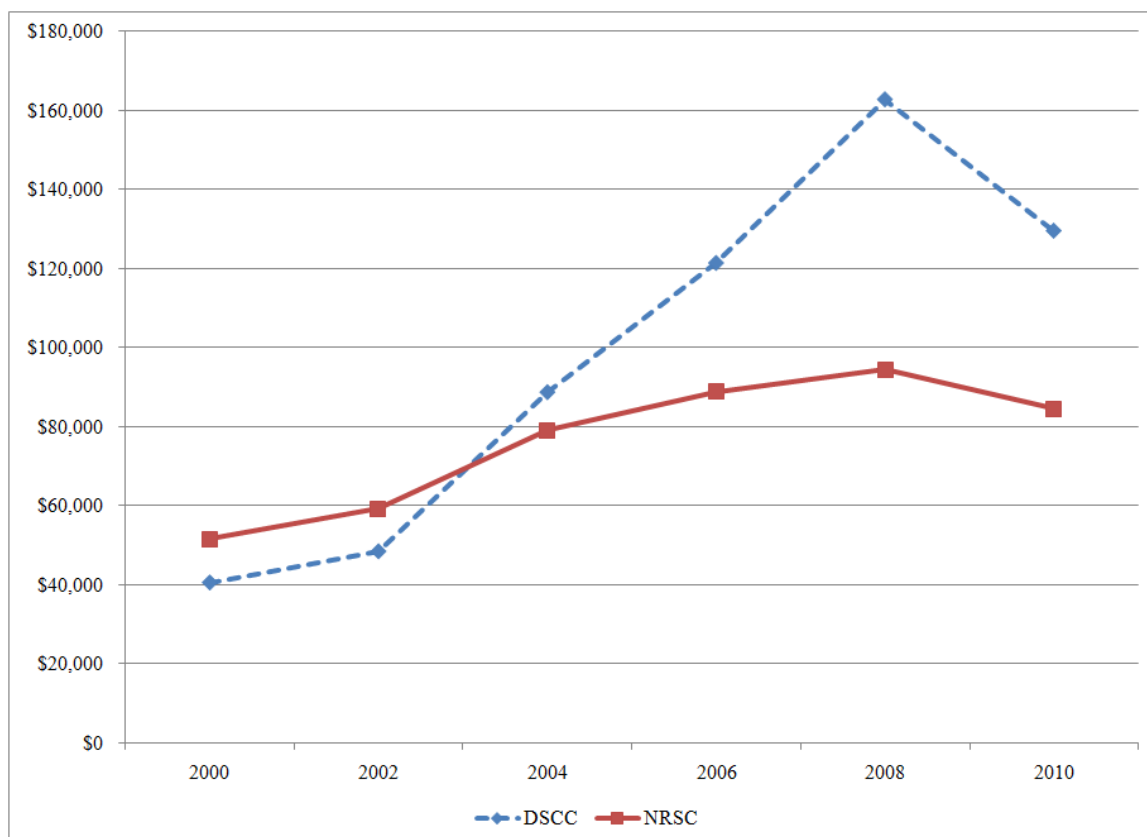


Figure 3.1. Hard Money Donations to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee
Source: OpenSecrets.org

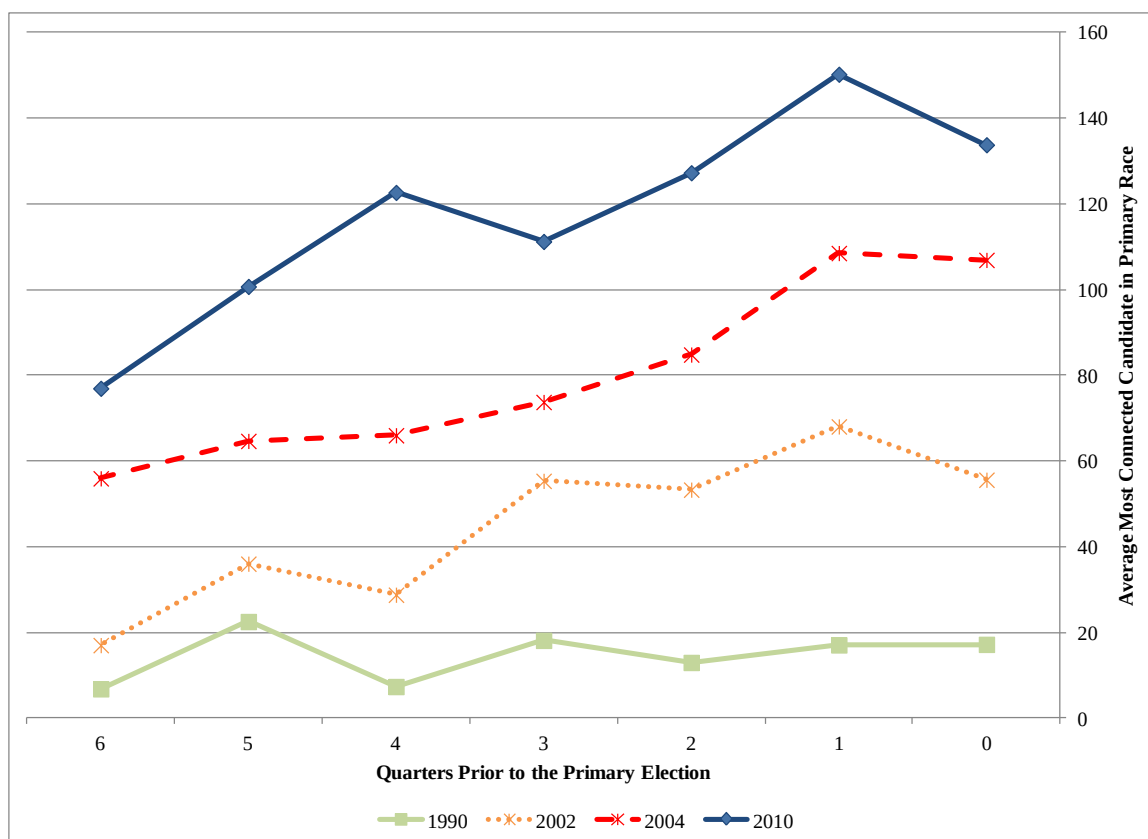


Figure 3.2. Average Strength of Connection to Party Hill Committee of Most Connected Senate Candidate in Primary Election

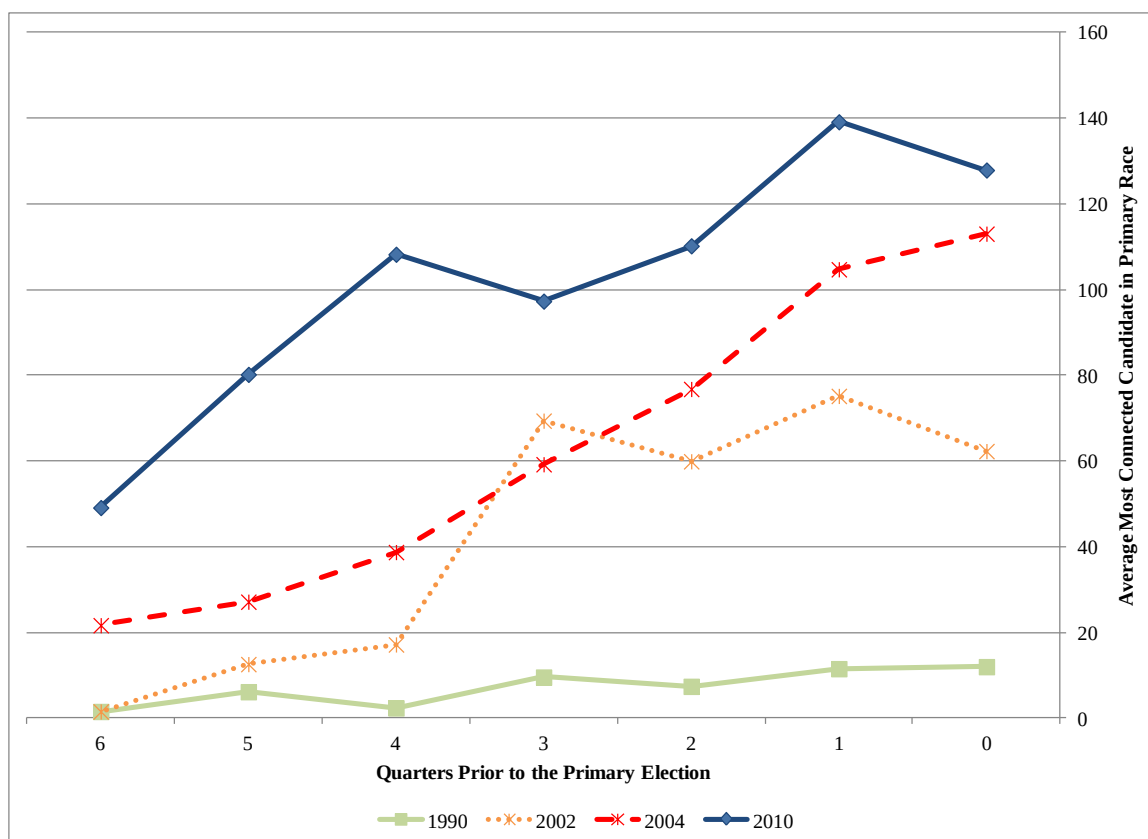


Figure 3.3. Average Strength of Connection to Party Hill Committee of Most Connected Senate Candidate in Non-Incumbent Primary Election

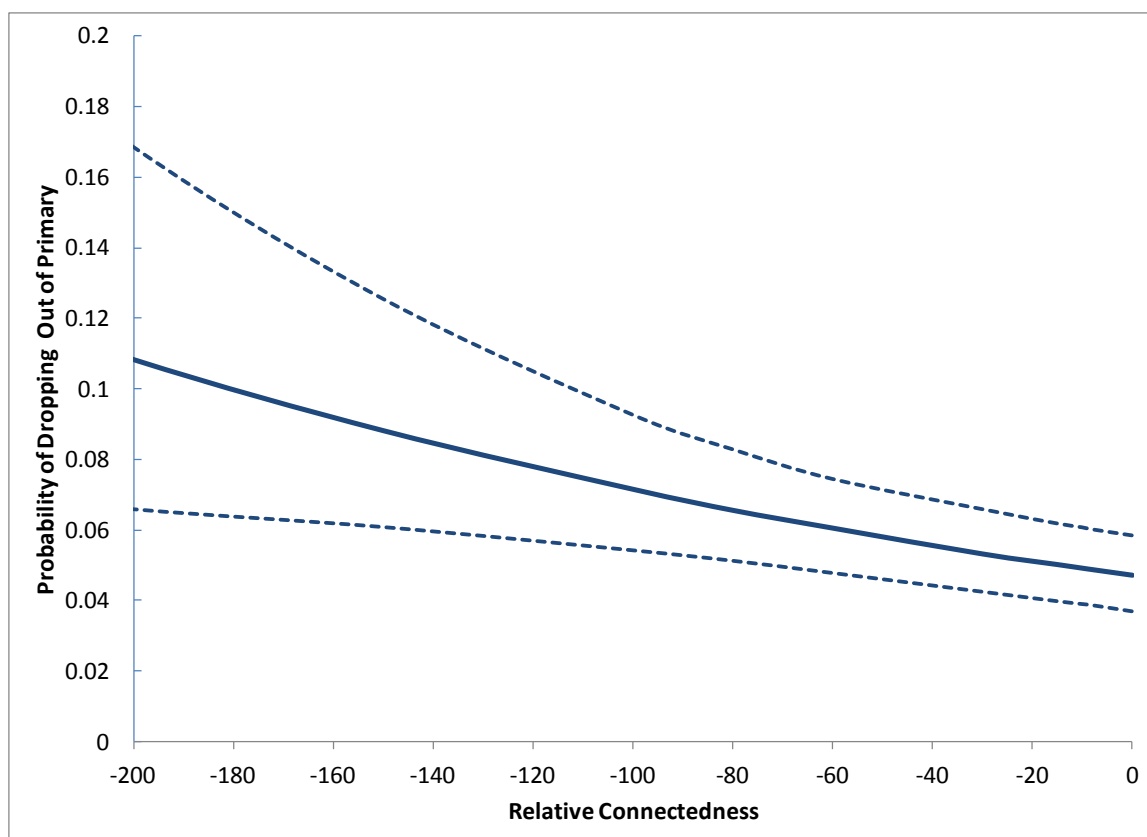


Figure 3.4. Change in the Likelihood of Senate Candidate Dropping Out of a Primary Race

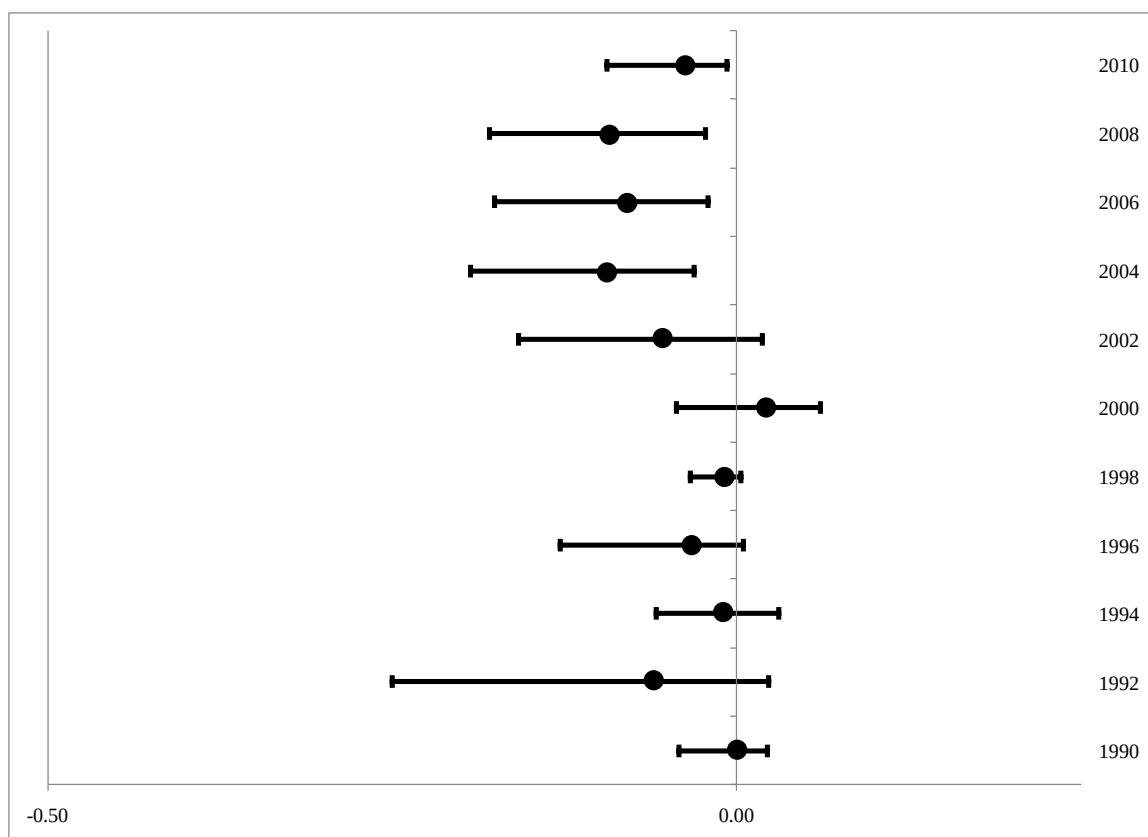


Figure 3.5. Change in Likelihood of Senate Candidate Dropping Out of a Non-Incumbent Primary Election Race, Year by Year Results

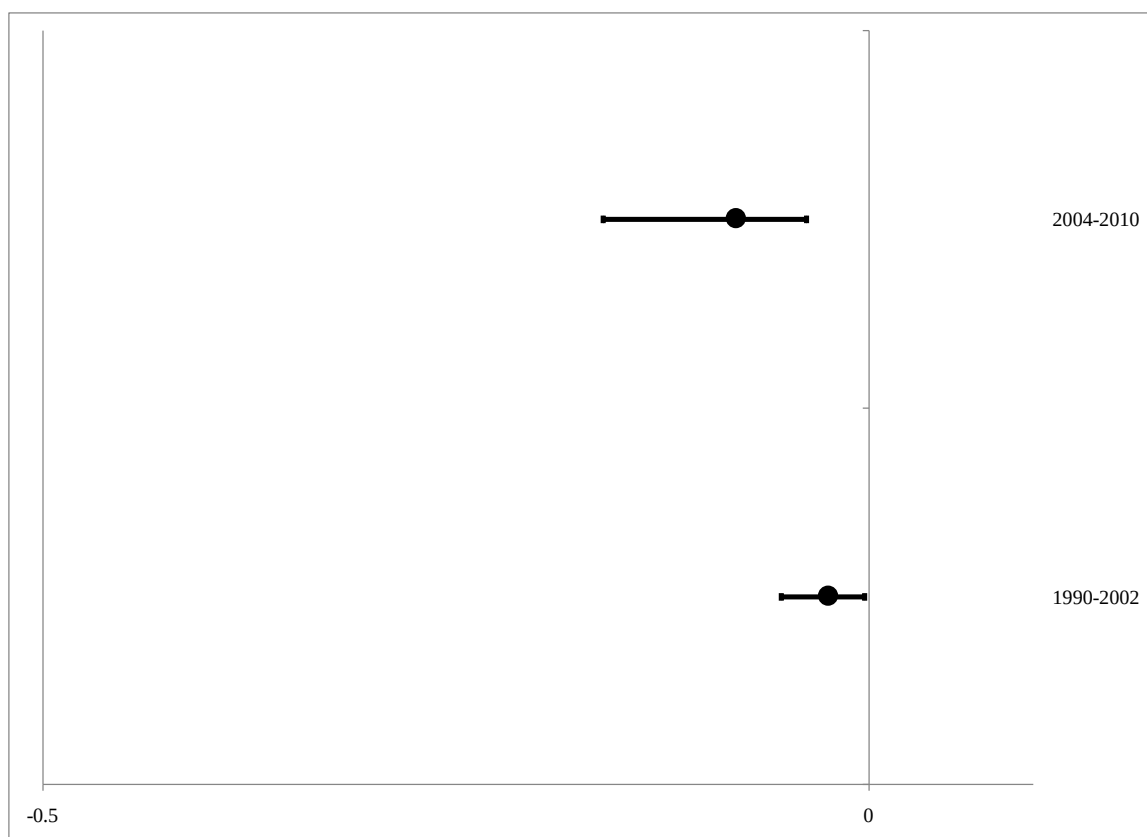


Figure 3.6. Change in Likelihood of Senate Candidate Dropping Out of a Non-Incumbent Democratic Primary Election Race

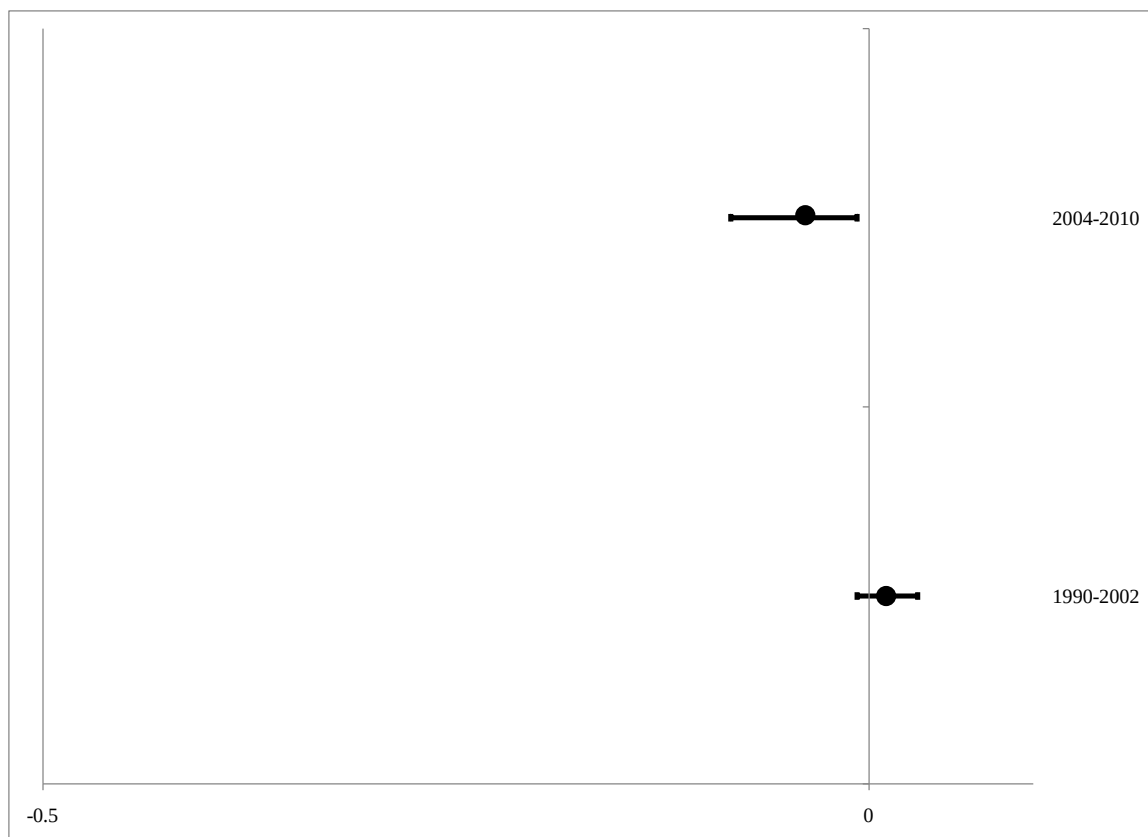


Figure 3.7 Change in Likelihood of Senate Candidate Dropping Out of a Non-Incumbent Republican Primary Election Race

Table 3.1. Change in Average Connectedness of Most Connected Senate Candidate in Primary Race by Quarter

Quarters Prior to Primary Election	1990-2002	2002-2010
0	50.29	65.57
1	63.63	63.96
2	52.50	50.27
3	59.82	27.88
4	14.81	91.03
5	6.44	67.59
6	0.01	47.57

Table 3.2. Likelihood of Remaining in a Non-Incumbent Senate Primary Election Race

	(1) Competing in Primary
Relative Connectedness	0.004*** (0.001)
Relative Fundraising	0.491*** (0.049)
Constant	3.604*** (0.226)
Observations	2,160
Pseudo R-Squared	0.199
Log-likelihood	-484.5
Clustered Robust standard errors in parentheses	
Quarter dummy variables not included in results	
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1	

Table 3.3. Likelihood of Remaining in the Primary Election Race, Year by Year Results

	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Relative Connectedness	-0.127 (0.115)	0.028 (0.025)	0.005 (0.011)	0.012 (0.009)	0.023 (0.031)	-0.005 (0.005)	0.023 (0.015)	0.013*** (0.004)	0.008*** (0.001)	0.007*** (0.001)	0.006*** (0.002)
Relative Fundraising	1.869*** (0.613)	0.915*** (0.235)	0.552*** (0.138)	0.548*** (0.211)	0.598*** (0.167)	0.412*** (0.155)	0.222 (0.202)	0.334* (0.177)	0.670*** (0.249)	0.254** (0.123)	0.606*** (0.159)
Constant	21.153*** (0.689)	5.271*** (1.217)	3.655*** (0.636)	4.113*** (0.779)	4.081*** (0.720)	2.835*** (0.537)	3.157*** (1.186)	3.124*** (0.716)	3.819*** (0.610)	19.319*** (0.544)	3.924*** (0.617)
Observations	104	178	225	150	145	209	116	179	198	138	206
Pseudo R-Squared	0.255	0.310	0.203	0.225	0.254	0.0914	0.107	0.185	0.311	0.265	0.391
Log-Likelihood	-12.64	-35.52	-62.57	-36.05	-20.92	-55.73	-28.25	-54.33	-36.59	-34.86	-52.05

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarterly dummy variables not included

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3.4. Likelihood of Remaining in the Democratic Non-Incumbent Senate Primary Election Race

	(1) 1990-2002	(2) 2004-2010
Relative Connectedness	0.014** (0.006)	0.008*** (0.001)
Relative Fundraising	0.342*** (0.102)	0.431*** (0.150)
Constant	5.072*** (0.815)	3.809*** (0.471)
Observations	657	390
Pseudo R-Squared	0.145	0.287
Log-likelihood	-121.7	-78.88

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarterly dummy variables not included

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3.5. Likelihood of Remaining in the Republican Non-Incumbent Senate Primary Election Race

	(1) 1990-2002	(2) 2004-2010
Relative Connectedness	-0.004 (0.003)	0.004*** (0.001)
Relative Fundraising	0.678*** (0.082)	0.477*** (0.101)
Constant	3.163*** (0.329)	3.366*** (0.456)
Observations	626	458
Pseudo R-Squared	0.231	0.225
Log-likelihood	-143.2	-122.4

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarterly dummy variables not included

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

CHAPTER 4

THE HOUSE PARTY'S PRIMARY

Similar to their Senate counterparts, the goal of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) and the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) is to secure and strengthen majorities in the House of Representatives for their party. Speaking about the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) role in recruiting and supporting candidates, former DCCC executive director William Sweeney explained, “Our only interest was in Roll Call One [the party line vote for Speaker of the House that opens each Congress]. What happened in the House after that was somebody else’s responsibility” (Menefee-Libey 2000, p. 131). The DCCC and NRCC are also exclusively focused on supporting and electing party members to the House of Representatives regardless of their political ideology (Kolodny 1998).

One notable difference between the congressional and senatorial campaign committees, however, is that while the senatorial campaign committees distribute resources among, at most, 34 electoral races across the country, the congressional campaign committees are responsible for 435 different congressional districts each election cycle. Thus, while the DSCC and NRSC have the resources to become involved in some way with all electoral races for the Senate, the DCCC and NRCC cannot dedicate large resources to safe or unwinnable seats. Instead they must identify and focus on competitive seats in order to maximize their chances of winning a majority of House seats. Campaigns in competitive districts are more likely to receive assistance from the party’s congressional campaign committee in areas of fundraising, media advertising, and issue development (Herrnson 1986; Cantor, Ryan, and McCarthy 2010).

Aside from the differences in the number of races that the congressional campaign committees must deal with, the role that the DCCC and NRCC play in general elections

does not differ greatly from the role of their Senate counterparts. Just as past research has found little evidence of senatorial campaign committee influence in discouraging potential candidates, scholars have argued that congressional campaign committees are even more limited in their influence. At the same time that Kolodny argues that congressional campaign committees have become more involved in candidate recruitment during the last couple of decades she also states that these committees do not make pre-primary endorsements and make no promises of support to candidates until after the primary (Kolodny 1998, 147). Similarly, at the same time that he highlights the importance of negative recruitment in Senate primary campaigns, Herrnson's study of the hill committees in the 1980s suggests that congressional campaign officials rarely discouraged candidates from running in a House primary (Herrnson 1988, 54).

More recent accounts, however, suggest that this is no longer the case. Instead, reports from journalists and other political practitioners indicate that the DCCC and NRCC are active in both recruiting and discouraging potential candidates in their bids for public office (Gardner 2010; Cizzilla 2010b; Blake 2010; Abeytia 2011; Kraushaar 2010)

In this chapter I show that the DCCC and the NRCC have become more influential in primary elections in recent election cycles. I also show that, like the DSCC and NRSC, the congressional campaign committees clear the field for a preferred primary candidate. While primaries may have previously discouraged parties from becoming involved in the nomination process, this chapter shows that parties have become more adept at convincing non-party preferred candidates to drop out prior to the primary.

Increased Activity of Political Party Organizations

Like the senatorial campaign committees, the congressional campaign committees originated as subsidiaries of the party national committees but have become independent organizations with strong capabilities to raise and spend money (Kolodny 1998; Menefee-Libey 2000). Just as the activity and role of senatorial campaign committees have increased in the past decade, so too has the electioneering capacity of the DCCC and NRCC. Figure 4.1 shows the hard money donations to the DCCC and NRCC. What is most notable about this figure is the sheer volume of money that both the DCCC and NRCC raise. Even in 2008, a year widely considered poor for Republican chances to regain majority status in the House of Representatives, the NRCC raised over \$118 million dollars while the DCCC raised almost \$180 million. In almost every year the amount of money raised by these organizations dwarfs the volume of money raised by any other organization with the exception of the national committees and in some years even surpasses the fundraising of those political entities.

Not only are both the DCCC and the NRCC major fundraisers in each electoral cycle, they play an important role in supporting candidates by connecting candidates to donors and providing support in areas such as media relations and grassroots organizing. For example, under the NRCC's Young Guns program, the NRCC highlights and encourages donors to give to candidates who have met different levels of fundraising and campaign organizational goals. Once candidates have enrolled in the program and have met the established organizational and fundraising benchmarks, the party provides additional campaign infrastructure and fundraising support that may otherwise be difficult for non-incumbents to obtain (Isenstadt 2010; Cantor et al. 2010). Although the program does not constitute a "party endorsement" and multiple candidates running in the

same primary can qualify, the reality is that party support of one candidate through the program discourages others from seeking party support (Iverson-Long 2010; Berman 2010).

The measure of the strength of the connection between the party and a candidate described in Chapter 2 provides insight into how this relationship has changed in the last 4 election cycles. Figure 4.2 shows the average connectedness of the most connected primary election candidate in a given race in every quarter prior to the primary election in 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010. Most notable is the increase in connectedness that occurs after 2004. While the average most connected candidate shared about 13 donors with the DCCC or NRCC in 2004, that number had grown to about 23 donors by 2010.

Not only are the congressional hill committees becoming more involved overall but, like their Senate counterparts, they are also becoming more involved in the beginnings of the election cycle; identifying preferred candidates and funneling donor support to those candidates early in the campaign cycle. While there is little difference in the tail end of the primary season between 2006 and 2010, the hill committees are substantially more connected to candidates five and six quarters prior to the primary election in 2010 than they are in 2006.

This trend also holds for non-incumbent primaries in competitive districts that Cook's Political Report classified as competitive in January of the election year as shown in Figure 4.3. The party's congressional campaign committee is on average much more connected to primary election candidates in these races with the exception of very early in the election cycle. Party support for candidates in competitive districts has increased since 2004 in just about every quarter prior to the primary election, but most notably in

the period of time about a year before the primary election. Even in 2010, the election year following an economic recession and a year where non-incumbent candidates attempted to distance themselves from the party in fear of being labeled as a “Washington insider,” the average strength of connection to the party of the most well-connected candidate in the race was stronger than in 2004 in every quarter with the exception of one. Like the DSCC and NRSC, the DCCC and NRCC have become more involved in identifying and supporting preferred candidates early in the primary election season.

Clearing the Primary Field

Although congressional campaign committees have become more involved in the process, scholars have not examined the influence of party organizations on the decisions of candidates. As before, I use the data explained in Chapter 2 to examine the ability of national party organizations to clear the field of competitors for their preferred candidates.

Even though both the Senate and the House hill committees have similar responsibilities and goals, their jobs are distinct. Congressional campaign committees must deal with much lower level information environments than senatorial campaign committees. While statewide races often generate substantial media coverage, races for local congressional districts are often overshadowed by other news. Thus the ability of the party to gather information about preferred candidates, or for non-preferred candidates to pick up on party cues may be limited. As a former congressional primary candidate himself, political scientist L. Sandy Maisel wrote,

“when I reviewed my campaign shortly after its conclusion, I was amazed by how little I knew when I decided to run. I did not know who my opponents would be; I did not know how I was perceived through the district, by the political leaders

or by those at the grassroots; I did not know how much money I could raise, nor what others could spend against me; I did not know in a precise way what [the incumbent's] weaknesses were. The list could be expanded" (Maisel 1982, pp. 19).

While the flow of information has improved drastically with the advent of political blogs and internet media since the 1980s, many of the same principles are still true. Candidates may be able to gauge their own support, but they are often unable to determine the strength or origins of the support for their opponent, especially if there is outside coordination coming from the national party.

In addition, many congressional districts are not competitive and as such the party does not to play an active role in the nomination process. In her study of 180 congressional nominations in 2002, Dominguez (2005) noted that the party was more likely to congeal around a preferred candidate in competitive districts. In districts that were non-competitive, however, the party was less likely to unify prior to the date of the primary. As a result the party coordination of funds in a non-competitive district would not necessarily be accompanied with the verbal and auxiliary pressures that the party would put on non-preferred candidates in more competitive districts. Because the outcome of the primary election is less likely to have an effect on the general election outcome in non-competitive district, the party has less of an incentive to use its valuable resources to push out undesirable primary candidates.

Data Sources and Procedures

As with my examination of Senate primaries, in order to examine the influence of the major parties on the candidacy decisions of congressional primary candidates, I compiled a list of all individuals who declared their candidacy for the United States

House of Representatives from 2004 to 2010 and filed with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). As before, this list includes candidates who only formed exploratory committees as well as candidates who dropped out shortly after declaring their candidacy. The list includes a total of 4,747 candidates and Table 4.1 shows the distribution of these candidates across the different types of congressional primaries.

I also collected information about the perceived closeness of each congressional general election. Cook's Political Report is a non-partisan political newsletter founded in 1984. For the election cycles of 2004-2010 and other cycles they published race ratings on a biweekly basis. In the newsletter the authors identify the congressional races that they view as being competitive or having the potential to become competitive. I classified races as being competitive if they appeared on the list in the first report of the election year. Over the four election cycles Cook's Political Report rated just over 25% of the 1,361 non-incumbent primary races as being competitive general election races.

As with the Senate, I also recorded the percentage of the vote each candidate received in the primary. If a candidate withdrew from the race before the primary, I noted the date the candidate dropped out of the race as reported by local news sources. For candidates where there was no news coverage of their withdrawal from the race, I entered their drop-out date as a week after the last received donation recorded by the FEC.

For each candidate, I calculated the strength of the connection to the congressional campaign committee of the candidate's party for each quarter. Because the party campaign committees target assistance to competitive races and the financial means necessary to remain competitive vary greatly by congressional district, instead of using

the overall strength of the connection, I calculate the difference between a candidate's strength of connection and the most connected candidate in the primary.

Similarly, because a candidate's fundraising needs also vary by state, I calculate the logged difference between a candidate's fundraising totals and the leading fundraiser in the primary for each quarter in the election cycle before the primary. Analyzing candidates relative to their competition provides a clearer picture of the influence of the national party on each race.

As before, because a number of candidates compete each year without regard to their chances of winning (Canon 1993, 1990), I have excluded from the analysis candidates who lost in the primary by more than twenty percent of the primary vote. By and large, these are candidates who are in the race for the experience of being a part of the election, not because they believe they have a good chance of winning. Because their motives for entering the race differ from other candidates, they are not likely to be as responsive to party incentives. Similarly, I exclude from the analysis individuals who are challenging incumbent politicians. Because they are challenging incumbents, an act of open defiance to the party establishment, these individuals are unlikely to be swayed by any action, open or clandestine, by the national party to discourage their candidacy (Laffey 2007).

Party Influence in Congressional Primaries

Table 4.2 presents the results from the logit regression predicting the likelihood that a primary candidate will remain in the race given the candidate's relative fundraising and strength of connection to the party's congressional campaign committee in the previous quarter for all election years from 2004-2010. As before, consistent with Beck,

Katz, and Tucker (1998) I include dummy variables for each quarter of the election cycle to correct for the auto-correlation of the model. I also cluster standard errors by the primary election race.

The model shows strong support for the expectation that congressional campaign committees influence the decisions of candidates to remain in the race. As a candidate's relative connection to the national party increases, candidates become less likely to drop out of the race in the subsequent quarter.

To understand the magnitude of these effects Figure 4.4 shows the probability of a candidate dropping out of the primary election race for different levels of relative connectedness. As a candidate's relative party connectedness goes from -100 to 0, the probability of that candidate dropping out of the race decreases from 6.5% to 4.3%. On the face this may seem like only a small amount, but this is across all races, including ones where the party has a preferred candidate but exerts no additional effort to convince the candidate to drop out.

The effect is also smaller than real party influence. Because the party connects donors to candidates, a campaign's fundraising totals are correlated with the strength of its connection to the national party. In addition to connecting the candidate with the national party, these donors also provide important resources that enable a candidate to compete. As expected, the ability of candidates to raise money also plays a significant factor in a candidate's decision to remain in the primary election race. As the gap between candidates and the most prolific fundraiser in the primary race increases, candidates are more likely to withdraw from the primary election. Lastly, the data only provides for observations for those candidates who decided to run and does not include

candidate that the party convinced not run at all, thus clearing the field before it began to form.

Changes in Influence in Recent Years

Insider accounts of the actions of political parties have suggested that increased party influence in primaries on the congressional level is a recent phenomenon. In recent years congressional campaign committees have shifted from incumbent defense to active recruitment in winnable districts (Herrnson 1989; Cantor et al. 2010; Herrnson 2009; Biersack, Herrnson, and Wilcox 1993). Both the DCCC and NRCC have increased their focus on the recruitment of competitive candidates to challenge vulnerable incumbents in recent elections and have worked to consolidate support behind one candidate (Dominguez 2005).

In Table 4.3 I show the results from separate logit regressions for each election cycle. These results show that while the effect of a candidate's fundraising ability is consistently significant over the four elections, the influence of a candidate's connectedness to the national party is only significant in the two most recent election cycles.

Figure 4.5 shows the marginal change in the likelihood that a candidate will drop out of the primary election race as the relative connection to the party increases by two standard deviations. While there is no effect in the 2004 and 2006 congressional elections we see an increase in the effect of party connectedness beginning in the 2008 election. Even with the anti-establishment sentiment in the 2010 elections, the result is just as strong. In both 2008 and 2010 we see significant evidence that a candidate's party connection is relevant to the candidate's decision to remain in the race.

Differences in Republican and Democratic Party Influence

While the Democratic and Republican congressional campaign committees have evolved out of their party national committees in much the same way, they are still different political entities. Each party's congressional campaign committee has distinct organizational problems and approaches their responsibilities differently (Kolodny 1998; Menefee-Libey 2000). Majority status in the House caused the NRCC to spend more time and resources defending vulnerable incumbents rather than trying to expand the candidate pool in democratic controlled districts. In their book about the formation of the NRCC's new recruitment program, Eric Cantor, Paul Ryan, and Kevin McCarthy talk specifically about how their new program was a programmatic shift in the election policy of the NRCC. Cantor and his colleagues argue that because of the poor election cycle in 2006 and the fact that Republicans had been in power for 12 years the NRCC had become an organization focused on defending incumbents (Cantor et al. 2010). While the program existed informally in 2008, 2010 was the first election cycle where the NRCC fully adopted the Young Guns recruitment program to coordinate party efforts on behalf of promising candidates seeking to challenge vulnerable incumbents and competing for open congressional seats.

The DCCC and NRCC also differed in the past in the way they connected donors and candidates. While both parties have long compiled lists of PACs and high dollar donors and made those lists available to preferred candidates, the DCCC and NRCC have used different procedures to introduce donors to candidates. Herrnson, writing in the 1980s, notes that Democrats relied less than Republicans did upon small personal interactions between the party's strongest non-incumbent candidates and access seeking

donors and more upon large luncheons and other gatherings where the party provides a space for interaction between candidates and potential donors (Herrnson 1988, 71-73). While both the DCCC and NRCC work to connect their preferred candidates with fundraising sources, in the past they have differed slightly in the means by which they work to accomplish that goal.

The next set of models examines the differences by party in the effects of a candidate's relationship to the party on a candidate's decision to stay in the primary race. Table 4.4 contains a logit regression that examines the effect of a candidate's relative connectedness to the national party on the likelihood that the candidate will withdraw in the subsequent quarter. This time, however, the results are divided by party.

The effect of a Democratic candidate's connection to the national party is consistent with previous findings. Figure 4.6 shows the predicted probability that a Democratic candidate will remain in a primary race as the connection to the party increases. As the relative connection to the national party increases from -100 to being the most connected candidate in the race, the likelihood that the candidate withdraws from the race decreases by about three percentage points.

The same, however, is not true, for Republican candidates. As the results in Table 4.4 show, while a candidate's ability to raise money from individual donors does play a role in a Republican candidate's decision to remain in the primary, the relative strength of the connection between the candidate and the NRCC does not. The reason for this is not clear, however it may be the result of the electoral time period. In 2006 and 2008 Republicans faced an antagonistic electorate frustrated with the seemingly never-ending struggle in Iraq and a declining economy under an unpopular Republican president. As a

result, in many races candidates distanced themselves from the party to avoid the negative stigma associated with the Republican brand. Similarly, with an unfavorable political climate, many quality candidates decided not to run for the party nomination in districts that in other years would be competitive (Jacobson and Kernell 1981; Maestas et al. 2006; Maisel and Stone 1997; Brown 2008). As such, the party was unable to exert influence on candidates because there were fewer candidates competing for the nomination (Maestas et al. 2006; Lazarus 2005; Stone and Maisel 2003).

The separation of the Republican results on a year by year basis provides a better insight into how the party works in years that are more favorable to the Republican Party. Table 4.5 shows the effects of a candidate's connectedness to the NRCC's on the decision of candidates to remain in the race by year. Unlike previous models, I also include variables indicating the perceived competitiveness of the general election in that district and interact these terms with the effects of fundraising and party connectedness on the likelihood of a candidate dropping out of the race. For 2008 I do not include the interaction between the relative connectedness scores and the competitive district dummy variable because their almost perfect correlation with the uninteracted relative connectedness score causes problems of multi-collinearity.

While the models of the effects of party support in 2004, 2006, and 2008 show no effects of the strength of party support on a Republican candidate's likelihood to remain in the race, the model for 2010 shows that the strength of a candidate's connection to the congressional campaign committee did have a substantial effect on the decisions of candidates in competitive districts. The size of these effects is shown in Figure 4.7. While the effect of increasing relative party support has no effect on Republican

candidates in non-competitive districts in 2010, there is roughly a two percentage point decrease in the likelihood that a Republican candidate will drop out in competitive districts as the candidate's relative party support increases from -100 to the party preferred candidate in the race.

Part of the reason for the lack of influence of the Republican Party over the course of the studied period may also be related to previous findings on the likelihood of competitive primary elections. In his study of competitive primary elections Schantz (1980) finds that in years following major party losses, more candidates are willing to challenge sitting incumbents. As this shows, because of major party losses, candidates are less likely to listen to and trust the party organization following a poor electoral cycle for the party. Thus, while parties may coordinate on preferred candidates, non-preferred candidates are less likely to put as much weight on the party's preferences given the recent poor performance in the previous election cycle.

Discussion

The findings I have shown here support those in the previous chapter. As is the case with Senate primaries, I find evidence that the national party is effective at clearing the field for its favored candidate. Even when controlling for a candidate's fundraising totals, I find that candidates who are raising that money from sources that are not well connected to the national party are more likely to drop out of the race than are candidates who are raising the same amount of money from party connected sources. While the outside observer may not be able to tell a difference, candidates are intimately aware of the financial resources, volunteers, and outside support that is essential to winning the nomination. When candidates realize that the party will not support their candidacy they

are more inclined to drop out of the race rather than deal with an uphill battle for the nomination and their political career.

I have also shown that party support matters more in races that the party views as competitive. For Republicans in 2010 there are differences in the effect of connectedness in competitive races and non-competitive races. Because of the large number of races for the U.S. House, many of which pit hopeless challengers against entrenched incumbents, the national party may not become actively involved in supporting its favored candidate as the benefits of one candidate over another are small. In either case, the party realizes that the chances of winning that seat are not large and the benefits of the party's preferred candidate becoming the nominee without facing a competitive primary are not worth the time and effort necessary to clear the primary field. Thus, while there may be a party favored candidate to whom the party directs donors, they are not actively pressuring the other candidates to exit the race.

In reality the party's influence comes not only through its ability to coordinate donors, but through a myriad of other processes as well. When a party tries to get a candidate out of the primary election they are going to do more than just coordinate donors. Parties may try to persuade candidates by providing other incentives. In non-competitive races, the party may coordinate donors on the preferred candidate without expending other resources to convince unwanted candidates to drop out of a race that it views as a safe seat or unwinnable. Congressional party organizations recognize that they have limited resources that prevent them from becoming involved in all 435 districts every election cycle and, as a result, must choose wisely the districts where they become

involved. Where they do become involved, however, it is clear that they are influential in getting candidates to withdraw to clear the field for the party's preferred candidate.

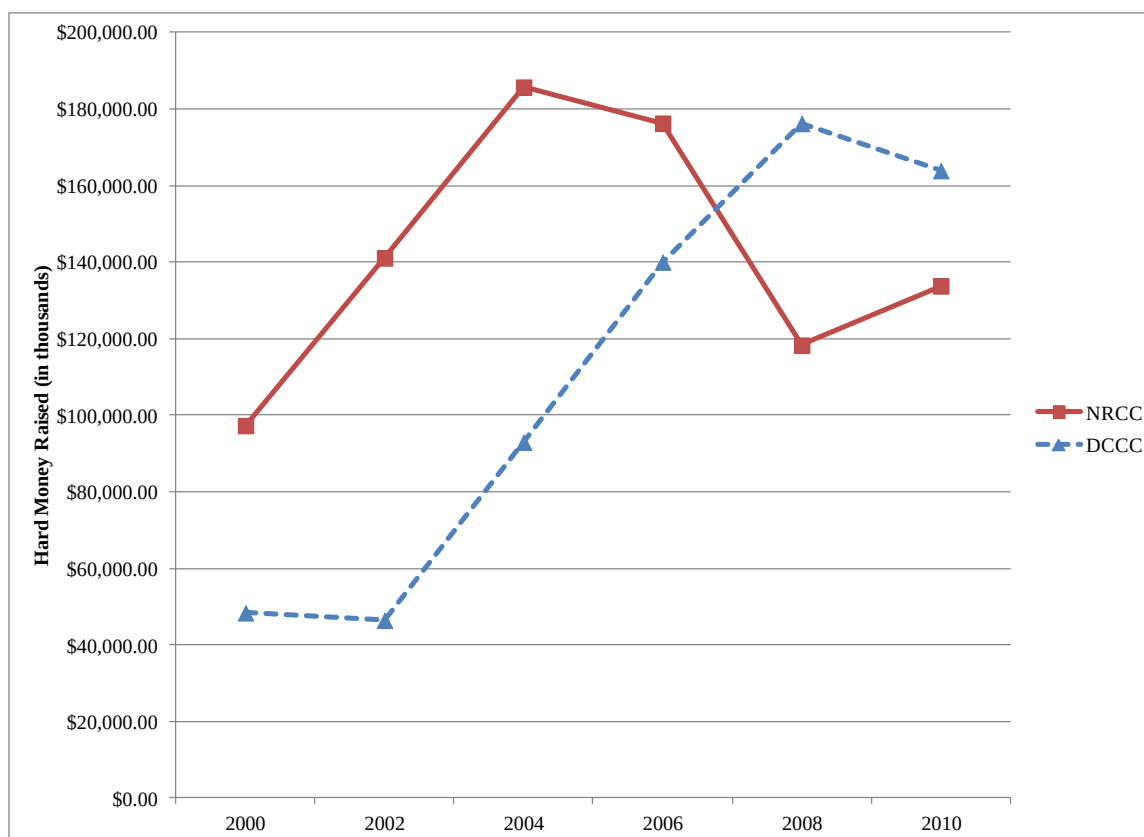


Figure 4.1. Hard Money Donations to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the National Republican Congressional Committee. Source: OpenSecrets.org

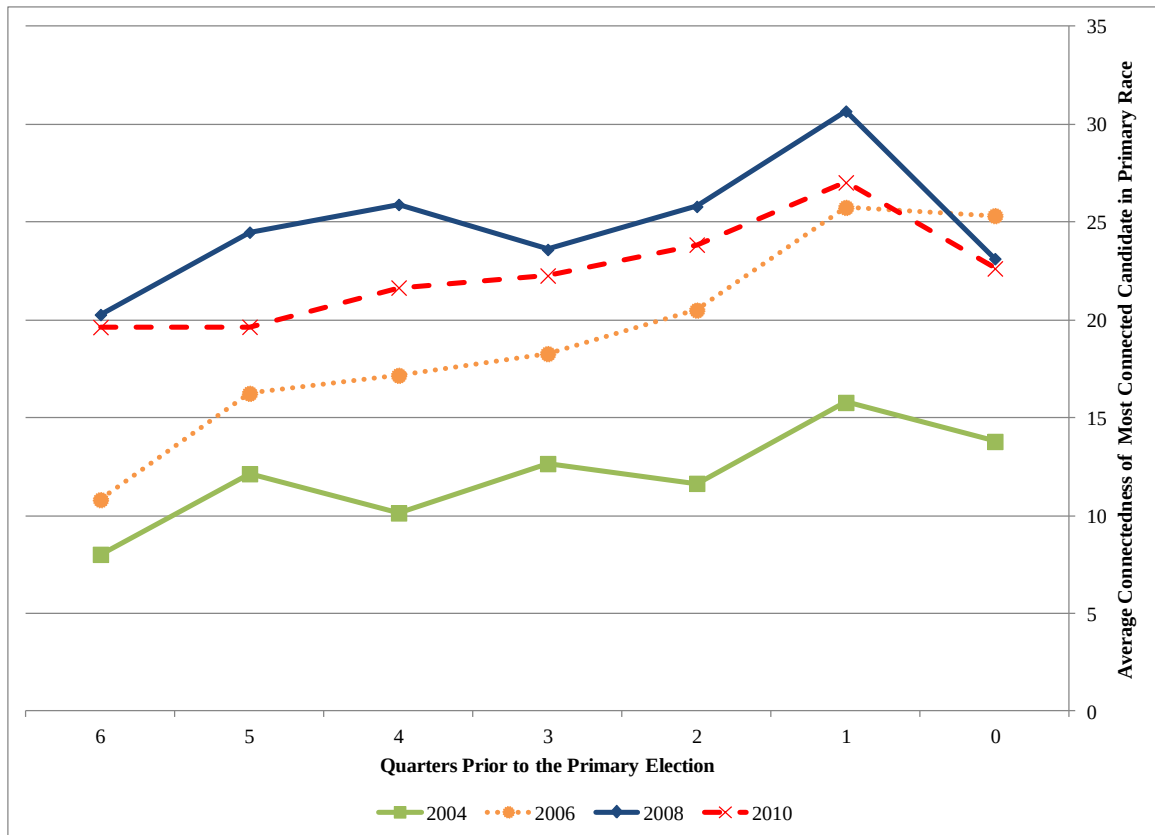


Figure 4.2. Average Strength of Connection to Party Hill Committee of Most Connected Candidate in a House Primary Election

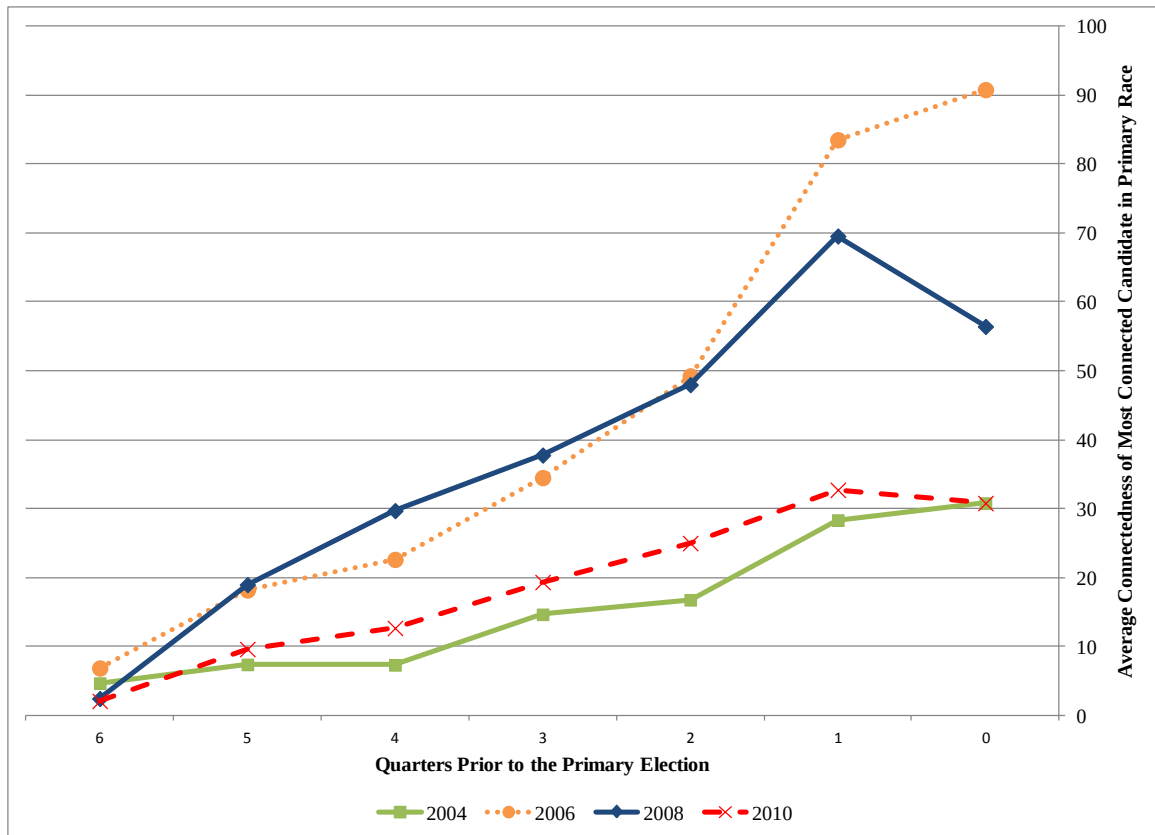


Figure 4.3. Average Strength of Connection to Party Hill Committee of Most Connected Candidate in a Non-Incumbent House Primary Election in Competitive Districts

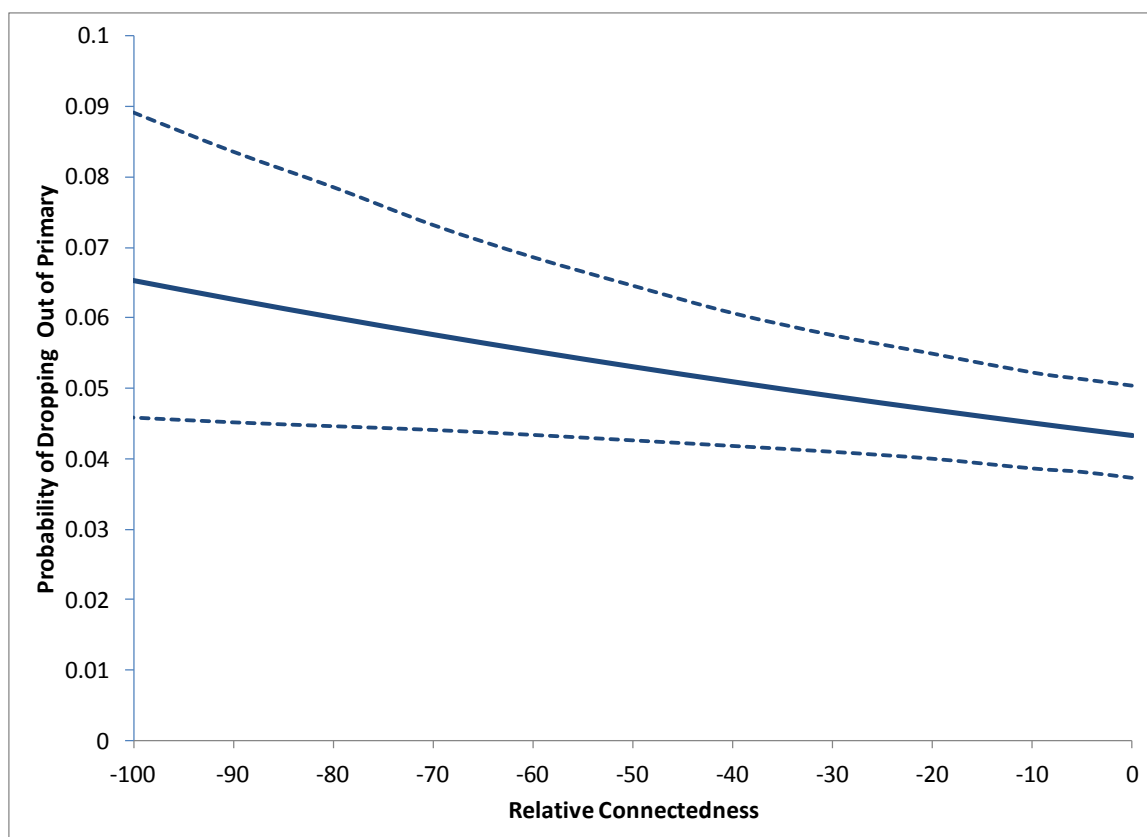


Figure 4.4. Change in the Likelihood of a Candidate Dropping Out of a Non-Incumbent House Primary Race

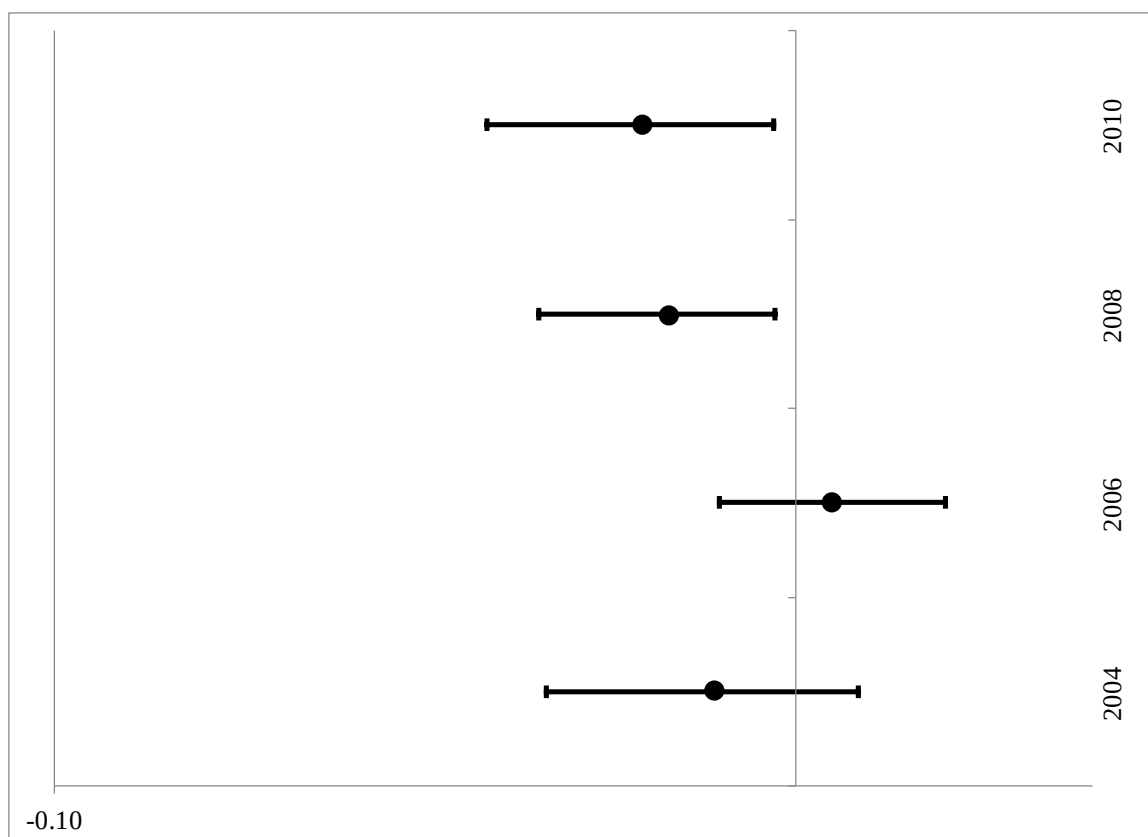


Figure 4.5. Change in the Likelihood of Candidate Dropping out of Non-Incumbent House Primary Election, Year by Year Results

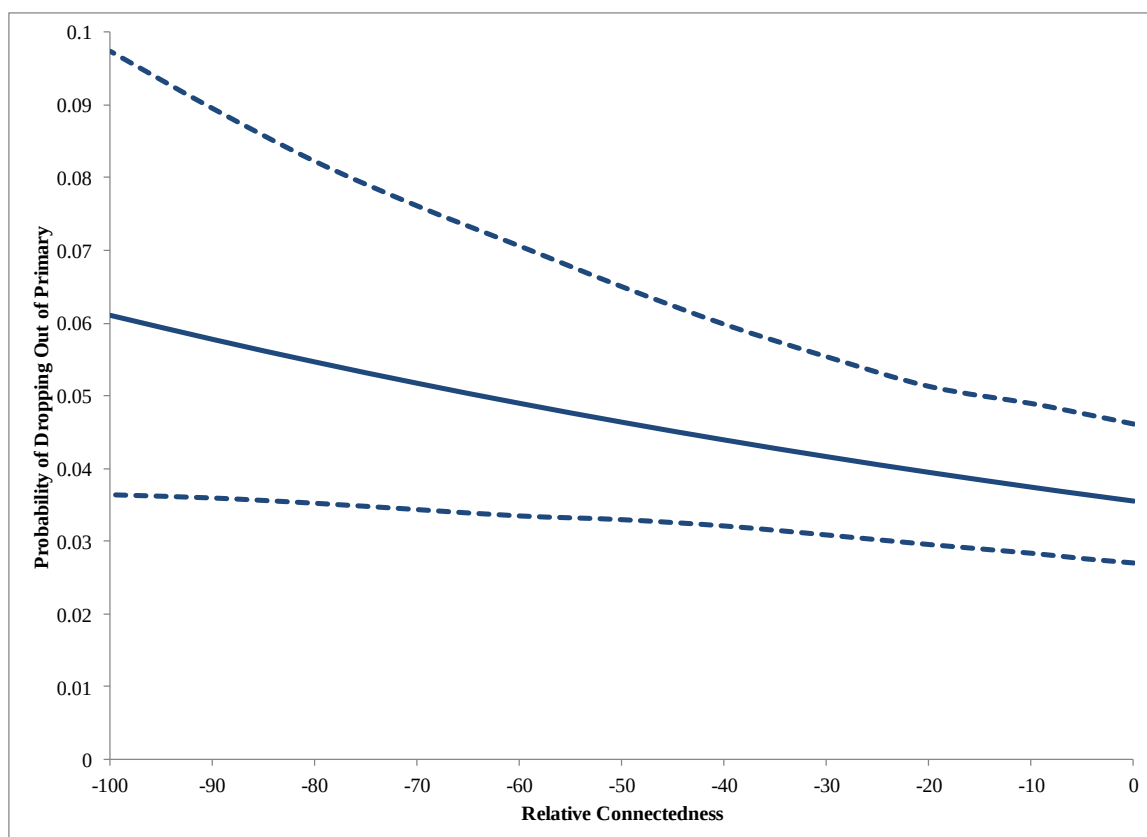


Figure 4.6. Change in the Likelihood of Candidate Dropping Out of a Non-Incumbent Democratic House Primary

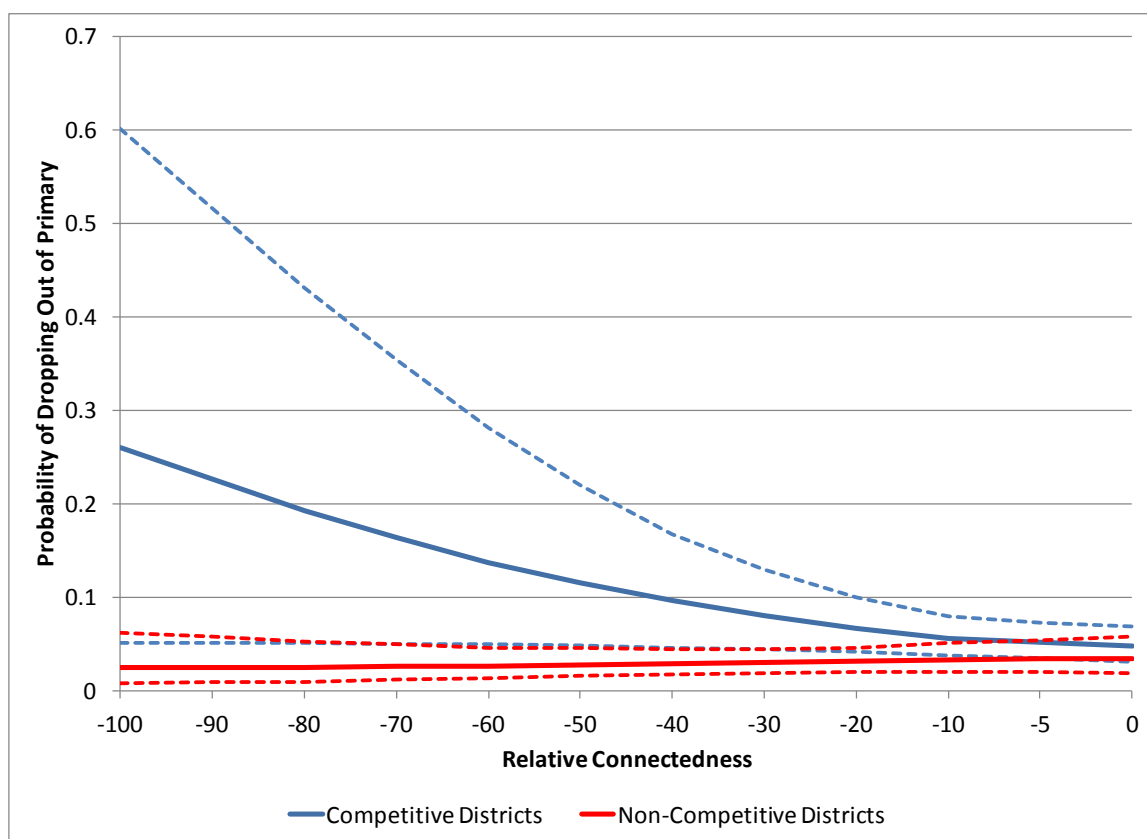


Figure 4.7 Change in Likelihood of a Candidate Dropping out of a Non-Incumbent House Republican Primary in 2010

Table 4.1. Distribution of House Primary Candidates by Primary Race Type

Incumbent Primary Candidates	1937
<i>Challengers</i>	395
<i>Incumbents</i>	1542
Open Seat Primary Candidates	47
<i>Competitive Districts</i>	26
<i>Non-Competitive Districts</i>	21
Challenger Primary Candidates	2763
<i>Competitive Districts</i>	958
<i>Non-Competitive Districts</i>	1805
Total Candidates	4747

Table 4.2. Likelihood of Remaining in a Non-Incumbent Primary Election Race for U.S House

	(1) Competing in Primary
Relative Connectedness	0.005** (0.002)
Relative Fundraising	0.632*** (0.047)
Constant	3.226*** (0.272)
Observations	4,432
Pseudo R-squared	0.177
Log-Likelihood	-826.0

Clustered standard errors in parentheses

Quarterly dummy variables not included

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4.3. Likelihood of Remaining in Non-Incumbent House Primary Election, Year by Year Results

	(4) 2004	(3) 2006	(2) 2008	(1) 2010
Relative Connectedness	0.003 (0.004)	-0.003 (0.004)	0.006** (0.003)	0.019** (0.008)
Relative Fundraising	0.616*** (0.126)	0.833*** (0.101)	0.749*** (0.098)	0.434*** (0.082)
Constant	2.730** (1.134)	4.531*** (0.890)	3.775*** (0.555)	3.620*** (0.503)
Observations	815	1,086	1,005	1,477
Pseudo R-squared	0.164	0.246	0.205	0.152
Log-Likelihood	-161.7	-197.7	-195.6	-251.6

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarterly dummy variables not included

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4.4. Likelihood of Remaining in a Non-Incumbent House Primary Election Race by Party, 2004-2010

	(1) Democrats	(2) Republicans
Relative Connectedness	0.005** (0.002)	0.003 (0.004)
Relative Fundraising	0.669*** (0.077)	0.613*** (0.060)
Constant	3.848*** (1.042)	3.414*** (0.352)
Observations	1,992	2,440
Pseudo R-Squared	0.212	0.152
Log-Likelihood	-374.4	-447.3

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarterly dummy variables not included

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4.5. Likelihood of Remaining in Republican House Primary Election, Year by Year Results

	(1) 2004	(2) 2006	(3) 2008	(4) 2010
Relative Connectedness	0.003 (0.005)	-0.007 (0.010)	0.006 (0.016)	-0.005 (0.008)
Relative Fundraising	0.568*** (0.147)	0.588** (0.295)	0.567** (0.271)	0.469** (0.212)
Competitive District (CD)	0.298 (0.502)	-0.313 (0.688)	0.521 (0.734)	-0.132 (0.389)
Relative Connectedness x CD	0.006 (0.018)	0.015 (0.014)		0.023* (0.014)
Relative Fundraising x CD	0.237 (0.341)	0.146 (0.342)	0.282 (0.332)	0.017 (0.242)
Constant	2.031* (1.126)	4.846*** (0.700)	3.988*** (1.234)	4.219*** (0.700)
Observations	478	399	459	1,104
Pseudo R-Squared	0.176	0.212	0.202	0.173
Log-Likelihood	-92.41	-64.81	-88.46	-183.3

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarterly dummy variables not included

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

CHAPTER 5

PRIMARY RULES AND PARTY INFLUENCE

In recent years, legislatures in several states have enacted legislation reforming primary election rules in an attempt to limit party influence and encourage the nomination of more moderate candidates. While California's Proposition 14, enacted in 2010, is the most notable in eliminating party primaries in favor of a primary ballot that lists all candidates for office, 2010 also saw Louisiana return to its non-partisan primary after an electoral cycle experiment with partisan primaries. In these cases, the major parties in both states opposed such a move (Anderson 2010; Schelen and Pruner 2010). In other states, the decision about who is eligible to participate in the primary is left to parties and several political parties have recently made changes either to open their primary to independents or to restrict the primary to party voters.

Yet, recent studies of the ideology of elected officials and the electoral rules governing the primary have found no effect or minimal effect of the type of primary system on the ideology of the elected officials and their willingness to support party legislation (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006; McGhee et al. 2010; McGhee 2010). At the same time, studies using older data have found a strong correlation between ideology and election type (Gerber and Morton 1998; Kanthak and Morton 2001). None of the more recent studies, however, have replicated the results from older studies to disprove their findings. In this chapter I use the findings about the influence of parties in primary elections from previous chapters along with an analysis of party influence across primary type to explain why the effect of primary rules on the ideology of the nominee may have changed over time.

I find evidence that parties play a larger role in shaping the field in primaries that benefit more extreme candidates. While the electoral institutional structure may be setup

to favor ideological candidates of a specific type, the party's involvement in the process appears to discourage more ideologically extreme candidates from competing in the primary.

Electoral Systems

Although states began implementing primaries in the early 1900s, there is a lack of uniformity across states in regards to who is allowed to vote in a party's primary. Worried that a primary election limited only to registered party voters would increase the power of party bosses, the first primaries in Wisconsin in 1904 were open to all voters regardless of party affiliation. Other states, however, did not adopt the same rules, and there continues to be a wide variation in the primary election rules across states as well as within a state over time. In 2011 lawmakers in six states introduced legislation to open primaries to unaffiliated voters, while legislatures in 13 other states considered legislation to close primaries to all but party registrants (Bowser et al. 2011). The result is a wide variety of rules and regulations that vary extensively by state and even by parties within a state. However, scholarship has traditionally grouped primaries into 5 broad categories.

- 1) **Open Primaries:** These are primaries where all voters are allowed to participate regardless of party affiliation. Many of these states do not have party registration as part of voter registration. Under these primaries, a voter's decision to participate in the primary is not made public. In most cases, voters are given both primary ballots, and then choose which one to return and neither the state, nor the party records information about which ballot the voter returned.

2) Semi-Open Primaries: These are primaries similar to open primaries where all voters are allowed to participate, however, the voter must publically announce his or her decision to participate in the primary and the state or the political party may record that information.

3) Semi-Closed Primaries: These are primaries where party members and unaffiliated or independent voters are allowed to vote in the party's primary. In some states legislation may mandate that a party's primary be open to independents, in others the state gives parties the liberty to decide whether they will have a closed primary or a semi-closed primary. As a result it is not uncommon to see variation between parties within a state. This category also includes some states that allow independents to re-register with a party and vote in that party's primary on the day of the election.

4) Closed Primaries: These are primaries that permit only pre-registered party members to vote in the primary.

5) Non-Partisan Primaries: These primaries have a wide variation in their format and rules. The only shared characteristic across all non-partisan primaries is that the voter may vote for a candidate regardless of party affiliation for each race on the ballot.

Across the types of non-partisan primaries there is also variation in the format to determine the candidates that will appear on the general election ballot. Under blanket primary rules, such as primaries in Alaska (from 1947 to 2000) and in Washington state (from 1936 to 2002), the candidate from each party with the most votes appears on the general election ballot. In top-two primaries, such as those held in Louisiana (from 1975

to 2008 and beginning again in 2012) and in the new primary formats in California and Washington, the top two candidates with the most votes, regardless of party affiliation, advance to the general election ballot. As a result it is not uncommon to see two Democrats or two Republicans facing each other in the general election. In the case of Louisiana, if the candidate with the most votes wins more than 50% of the total vote that candidate is duly elected into office, thereby forgoing the general election.

Expected Outcomes of Different Primaries

Theoretical models suggest that a change from a closed primary system to a more open one will moderate the ideology of the resulting candidate by broadening the eligible electorate (Aldrich 1983; Coleman 1971; Downs 1957). Previous scholarship has argued that deviations from the Downsian model of candidate convergence in the general election are the result of a more extreme group of individuals who control the nomination process (Aldrich 1983; Aranson and Ordeshook 1972; Wright 1989; Cadigan and Janeba 2002; Owen and Grofman 2006). Thus a move to allow more moderate independent voters to participate in the primary should benefit more moderate candidates (Oak 2006).

Open and semi-open primaries, however, are susceptible to “raiding” by opposite party partisans (Hedlund and Watts 1986; Hedlund, Watts, and Hedge 1982). In this situation, members of the opposite party “crossover” to vote in a party’s primary. Depending upon the intentions of those who choose to crossover, these voters could affect the results in a couple of different ways. If they choose to vote sincerely, voting for the candidate for whom they sincerely have a preference, their actions again favor a more moderate candidate (Hedlund, Watts, and Hedge 1982; Salvanto and Wattenberg 2002; Sides, Cohen, and Citrin 2002). However, voters may instead crossover in order to

sabotage the primary process and to buoy the “weakest” candidate in the primary to victory. Because extreme ideological positions may weaken a candidate in the general election, open and semi-open primaries could benefit more extreme candidates (Oak 2006; Chen and Yang 2002). The public nature of the semi-open primary compared to the complete privacy offered under the pure open primary system, however, is enough to shame insincere voters from crossing over in attempts to sabotage the other party’s primary (Kanthak and Morton 2001).

Actual Outcomes of Different Primaries

While their methods and categorization of primary types varied widely, studies using data on the ideology of members of the House of Representatives from the mid 1950s to the early 1990s find that the type of primary does have a significant effect on the ideology of the representative (Brady, Han, and Pope 2007; Kanthak and Morton 2001; Gerber and Morton 1998; Wright and Schaffner 2002). As expected, candidates elected from primaries with more open formats were more likely to be more moderate than those from closed primaries (Kanthak and Morton 2001; Gerber and Morton 1998; Wright and Schaffner 2002). By separating open primaries from semi-open primaries, Kanthak and Morton also find that the private nature of pure open primaries also benefits extreme candidates. Thus semi-open and semi-closed primaries produce more moderate candidates than pure open and pure closed primaries.

However, more recent studies of the effect different primary electoral rules on the ideology of legislators using data from the late 1990s and 2000s from state legislatures and U.S. House of Representatives have found little or no effects (McGhee 2010; McGhee et al. 2010). Primary electoral rules had minimal effect on the relative

extremism of representatives in these studies. In fact, in their study of the effect of primary systems on the ideology of state legislators, McGhee and his coauthors (2010) find that semi-closed primaries actually produce more conservative Republicans, and not the more moderate ones that the literature predicts.

Why such a change?

In previous chapters I have shown that the parties have a significant influence on the decision of candidates to continue to compete for the nomination. Notably, this ability has increased in the past decade, at roughly the same time that scholars have found that primary election rules have little bearing on the ideology of the eventual representative.

A Party to Win Office

The traditional theory views parties as organized efforts to win public office (Downs 1957; Aldrich 1995). Although some recent work has suggested that parties are a conglomeration of more extreme policy interests that come together to support a candidate (Cohen et al. 2008; Bawn et al. 2006; Masket 2009), previous research suggests that party hill committees are not committed to a specific ideology or legislative program. Instead, the main goal of party hill committees is to build sustainable legislative majorities in the House and the Senate (Menefee-Libey 2000; Kolodny 1998; Herrnson 1988). In order to do so, they may have to dissuade candidates who are not electorally viable in the district from running for the party's nomination. Recent evidence suggests that elected officials who benefited from from public funds available to them as candidates and thus avoid coordinating with parties and traditional donors were more likely to be ideologically extreme (Masket and Miller 2012). While ideological

positioning may only be one of many characteristics that the party takes into consideration when trying to identify the strongest general election candidate (Stokes 1963; Adams et al. 2011; Stone and Simas 2010; Mondak 1995; McCurley and Mondak 1995; Fenno 1978), there is significant evidence that ideological extremism relative to the median voter is disadvantageous to candidates trying to win a general election (Downs 1957; Brady et al. 2007; Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan 2002; Bovitz and Carson 2006; Carson et al. 2010; Ansolabehere and Jones 2010; Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger 2007).

Targeted Party Influence

By examining the focus of party influence in primary elections I show how parties are able to shape the ideology of the nominee. Theories of parties as policy-seekers or as office-seekers provide different predictions as to the type of primary in which parties will be most influential as they seek to obtain their goals of either policy or office. Table 5.1 outlines the different expectations that stem from different theories of party influence in competitive districts or state-wide offices and non-competitive districts.

Under all circumstances we would expect parties to be active in all types of primary elections when the district is a competitive district. Office seeking parties realize that, in the case of competitive elections, the ideology of the candidate can affect the likelihood of winning or losing a seat. In these cases the party wants to become involved in order to maximize its chances of winning the seat and, even when the nomination process favors a candidate of the preferred ideology, the party is unwilling to leave the seat to chance. For policy seeking parties, competitive elections offer an opportunity to win a legislative seat and to use that public office to influence policy.

Likewise, parties also have an incentive to become involved in primaries for salient races. Offices on the top of the ballot also often have their effects down ballot as well. Thus, while the party may not have any chance at winning a senate seat, the perception of the nominee may also have an effect on same party candidates down the ballot as well (Chubb 1988; Hogan 2005; Tuckel and Tejera 1983). Organized party interests may also become involved in these higher profile races to send signals to other candidates about acceptable policy positions that will elicit party support in other races (Goldstein 1999; Grossmann and Dominguez 2009).

In non-competitive districts, however, there are two possible courses of action. For policy seeking parties there is no incentive to become involved in non-competitive races. Because ideologically extreme candidates are farther from the district's median preference there is an electoral disadvantage to becoming involved in a non-competitive race. Likewise, given the low probability of winning the seat, there is also a very low probability that a party's efforts would be rewarded by changes on public policy incentive. If parties do become involved in a non-competitive primary and they are policy seeking, we would expect them to be more active in semi-open or semi-closed primaries as those primaries are more likely to produce a moderate candidate unacceptable to the partisan actors that control the access to the nomination (Maskett 2009; McGhee et al. 2010).

In contrast, the office seeking theory of parties predicts that parties will target the exact races in non-competitive elections that policy-seeking parties would avoid. Because the party realizes that any effort to pick their preferred nominee will have only a small impact on the likelihood of the nominee winning we should expect parties to exert

their influence in districts that are less likely to select the type of candidate where parties would have the greatest chance at influencing the general election. If the differences between the ideology of the candidate the party would prefer and the candidate that the primary system would be most likely to nominate are small, the effect of the party's influence on the general election outcome will be limited. However, if the primary system favors a more extreme candidate, the effect of a party intervention on the likelihood of winning the general election is much greater. If parties are office seeking, we should expect parties to focus their efforts at persuading candidates to drop out of pure open and pure closed primaries, while exerting little effort in semi-open and semi-closed primaries.

Party Influence and Primary Type

To examine the effect of party influence in different types of primaries I used data McGhee (2010) had previously collected on primary electoral rules from each state from 1992 to 2008. Because this data referred to primaries for state legislatures, I also doubled checked this information against the data collected by Kanthak and Morton (2001). In cases where they did not agree, I resolved the differences by examining information available from the state government department that oversees elections. I supplemented this information with data on 2010 by looking at the website of each state's governmental department responsible for the administration of elections in the state. I then confirmed this information through a phone call to the department. Data on primary election type for 1990 was gathered from Alexander Bott's (1990) analysis of election laws and practices in the United States.

Because of the differences in some non-partisan primary formats in the procedures which determine who advances to the general election, I have excluded from the analysis states that had top-two primaries. Unlike all other primary formats, these primaries provide an incentive for candidates to compete against members of other parties. Instead of the party's winner advancing to the general election, the top two candidates, regardless of party affiliation advance to the general election. Thus, a candidate can be the second place finisher in his or her party and still be on the general election ballot. In addition, I have also recoded blanket primaries, such as those that existed in Alaska and Washington, as open primaries where voters are allowed to vote in a party's primary without publically announcing they were voting in that primary. In blanket primaries the eligible electorate is the same as open primaries, as is the privacy of an individual's decision to participate. The only difference is that voters can vote in different party primaries for different offices.

The model I use is the same one used in the previous chapters where the dependent variable is a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the candidate remained in the race during the entire quarter. As before, I exclude incumbent primaries and experience seeking candidates from the model. In addition to the relative fundraising and relative connectedness variables included in previous iterations of the model in the previous chapters, I also include variables indicating the rules of the primary in which the candidate was running. The omitted category is a pure closed primary. Because we are interested in the effect of party persuasion and influence under different electoral rules, I also include an interaction of the primary type and a candidate's party connectedness.

House Primaries

Table 5.2 shows the results of the model showing the effects of party connectedness predicting the likelihood of a House candidate remaining in a primary election race. I have divided the model consistent with the findings from previous chapters that party influence in primary elections has increased in recent years.

As with the findings in the previous chapter, I find that the effect of a candidate's relative connection to the national party is significant in more recent elections. In the last two years the national party's influence has had a significant effect on the likelihood of a candidate remaining in a House primary.

More relevant to this analysis, however, is the effect of a candidate's relative connectedness to the party on the candidate's likelihood of remaining in the race in different types of primary elections. Figure 5.1 shows the likelihood of a candidate remaining in the race as a candidate's fundraising deficit increases from -100 to 0 under different electoral rules. While the likelihood of a candidate dropping out of the race decreases dramatically as the relative party connectedness increases from -100 to 0 in a pure open or pure closed primary system, there is essentially no change in the likelihood of a candidate dropping out under a semi-closed and semi-open primary system. While the effect under the semi-open system is not significantly different from the pure closed system, the effect under the semi-closed system is significantly different from the closed primary system.

The variations in the effect of party influence on the candidate's likelihood of dropping out of the race across primary types, however, are different if we separate competitive and non-competitive districts. Table 5.3 reports the results of two models predicting the likelihood of remaining in the race in a competitive district and a non-

competitive district in 2008 and 2010. As before, I use the first report of the election year from Cook's Political Reports to identify competitive districts.

While there are significant differences in the size of the effects of party connection across primary types in non-competitive districts, there are no significant differences across the range of primary types in competitive districts. Figure 5.2 shows the size of that effect in competitive districts while Figure 5.3 shows that effect in non-competitive districts. In non-competitive districts under open or closed voting rules there is an increased likelihood of a candidate dropping out of the race, however, there is essentially no effect of party connectedness in a semi-closed or semi-open primary.

The effect of party influence in competitive primaries, however, is not significantly different across primary type. Although the patterns are similar to those in non-competitive districts, the results are not statistically significant and we cannot reject the possibility that there is no variation across primary type in competitive elections. In a competitive district the party has an incentive to become involved in clearing the field and selecting a nominee regardless of the primary type because of the winnable nature of the district.

Senate Primaries

As with the analysis of primaries in the House, I have divided more recent years from older results consistent with findings in previous chapters that show an increased influence of party efforts in Senate primaries in recent years. Table 5.4 presents the results of the same model showing the effects of party connectedness predicting the likelihood of a Senate candidate remaining in a primary election race.

As before, I find that the effect of the strength of the party connection is strongest in more recent years as parties have begun to play a larger role in the winnowing of the field of Senate candidates. However, like the results from House primaries in competitive districts, I find no difference in the size of the effect under different types of primary rules. Figure 5.2 shows the effects of the strength of the party connection across the different primary systems and while there is an effect of party influence in all of them, there is no significant difference in the magnitude of that effect under different electoral rules between 2004 and 2010.

In Senate primaries there is no difference in the ability of the national party to influence the field of candidates under different types of primary election rules. The party's ability to clear the field for its favored candidates is significant regardless of the type of primary. With the salient nature of all senatorial candidates, the party appears to recognize that the failure to have a quality candidate on the ballot could cause damage both to the chances for the party to win the Senate seat, and also to the party's candidates down the ballot who may suffer from their association with a flawed candidate.

Discussion

The results shown here demonstrate primary rules have little effect on the ability of parties to influence the field of candidates. There is no significant difference in the influence of the relative connectedness of a candidate to the national party on the likelihood that a candidate will withdraw from the race under different electoral rules in competitive or highly salient elections. In cases where the party has an electoral incentive to clear the field for its favored candidate, electoral rules do not act to limit the influence of parties.

There are, however, some key differences in non-competitive House primaries. In these races, where the payoffs for intervening in the primary are minor, I find that parties are more influential in pure open and pure closed primaries than they are in semi-open or semi-closed primaries. Contrary to recent theoretical work on parties, this finding suggests that the House and Senate party hill committees are office seeking rather than policy seeking. Given its limited resources and the large number of races for the U.S. House, the party chooses to exert its influence in areas where it will have the largest impact on electoral outcomes. Whereas pure open and pure closed primary systems are theoretically more beneficial to more extreme candidates that may benefit from either an extreme primary electorate (pure closed systems) or from mischievous party raiding to the benefit of the weaker candidate (pure open systems), I find that parties are more actively involved in weeding out candidates in primaries in non-competitive districts. Knowing that their resources are limited, parties appear to avoid semi-open and semi-closed primaries with the knowledge that they will produce a more moderate candidate, while trying to influence pure closed and pure open primaries to produce more moderate candidates who might improve the party's slim chances of picking up a seat.

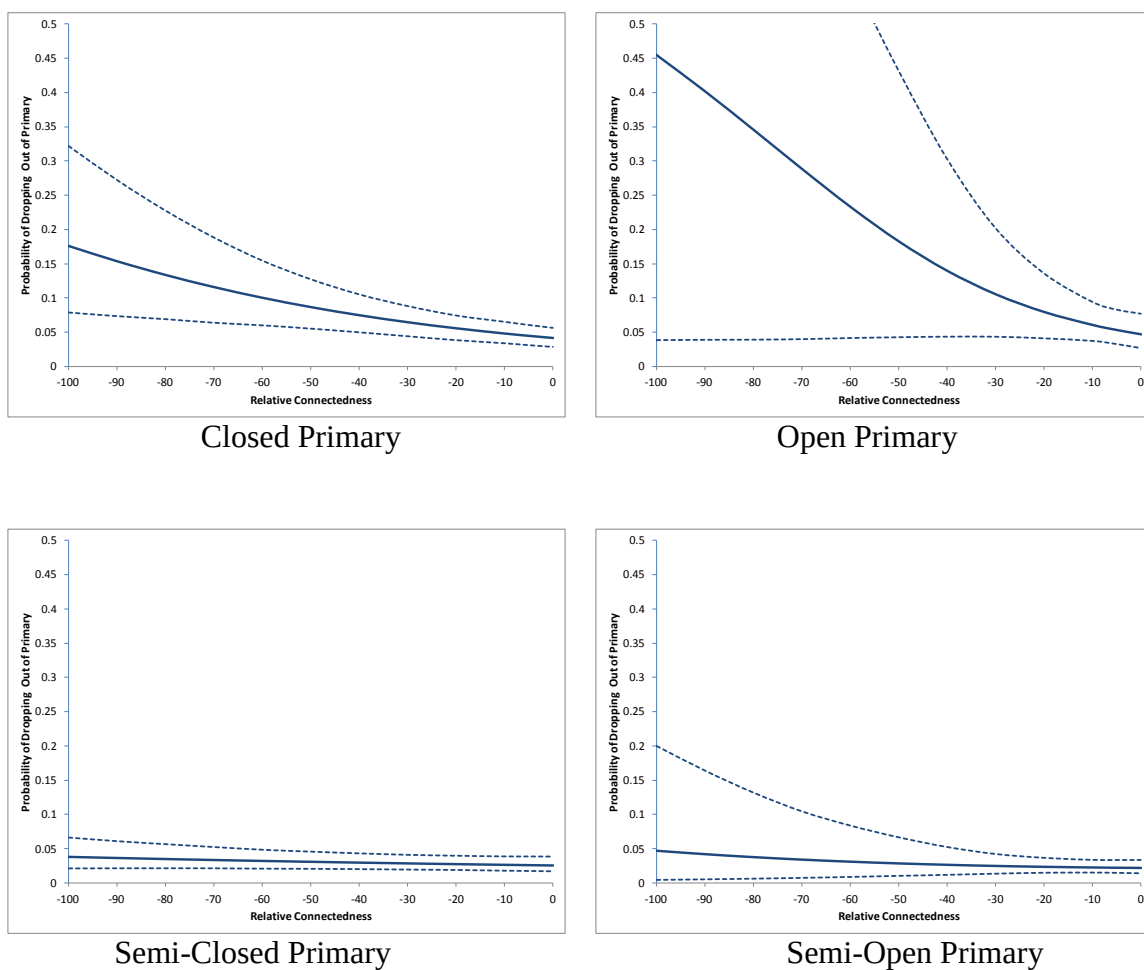


Figure 5.1. Effect of Party Connectedness on the Likelihood of Dropping Out of House Primary under Different Primary Rules

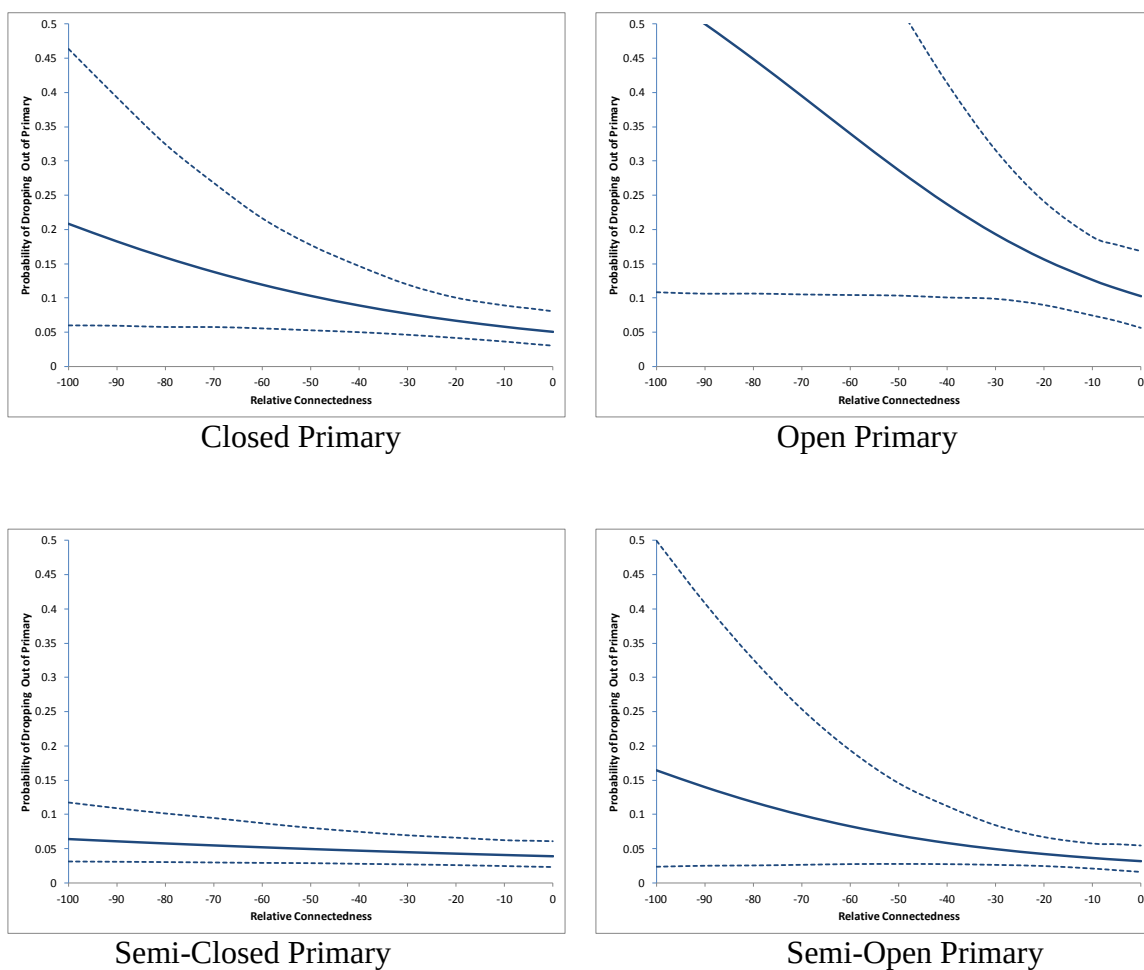


Figure 5.2 Effect of Party Connectedness on the Likelihood of Dropping Out of House Primary in Competitive Districts under Different Primary Rules

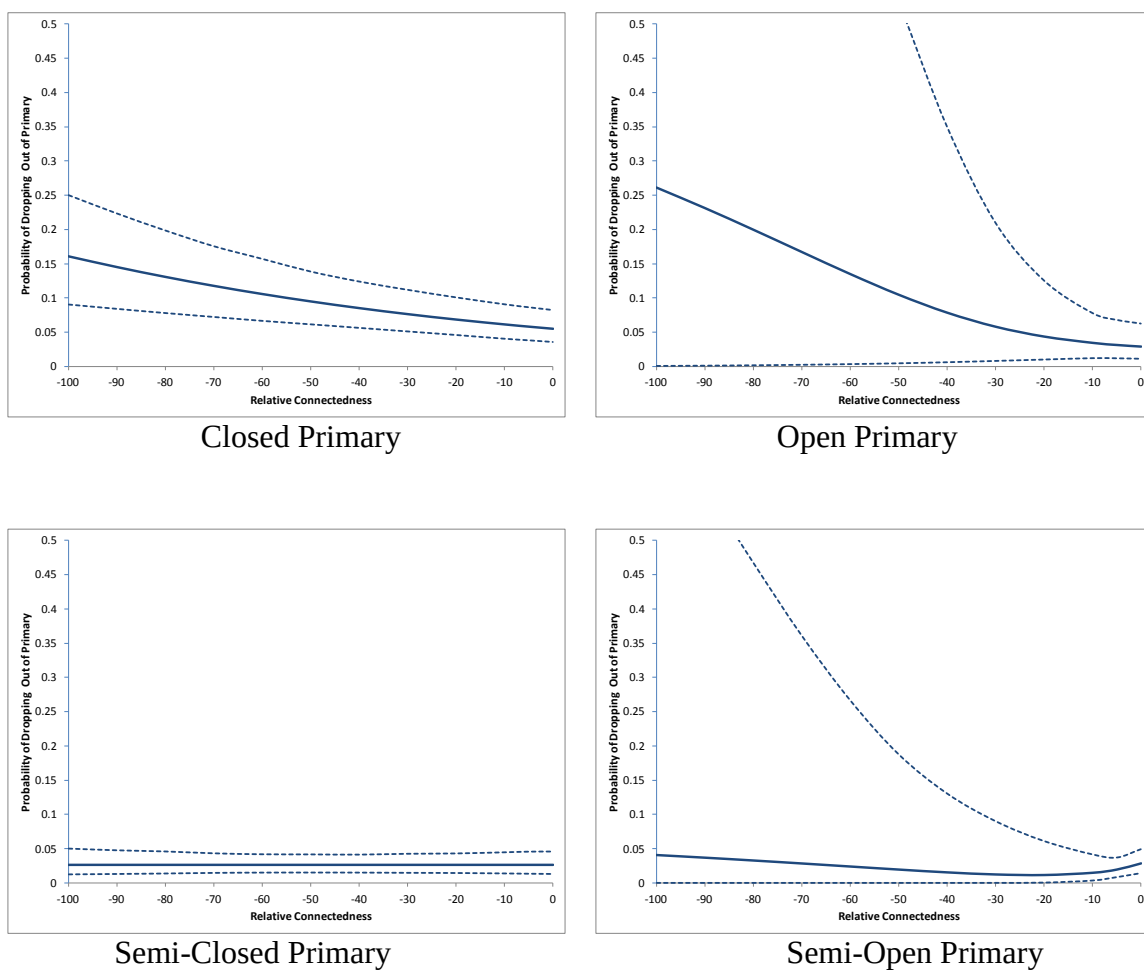


Figure 5.3. Effect of Party Connectedness on the Likelihood of Dropping Out of House Primary in Non-Competitive Districts under Different Primary Rules

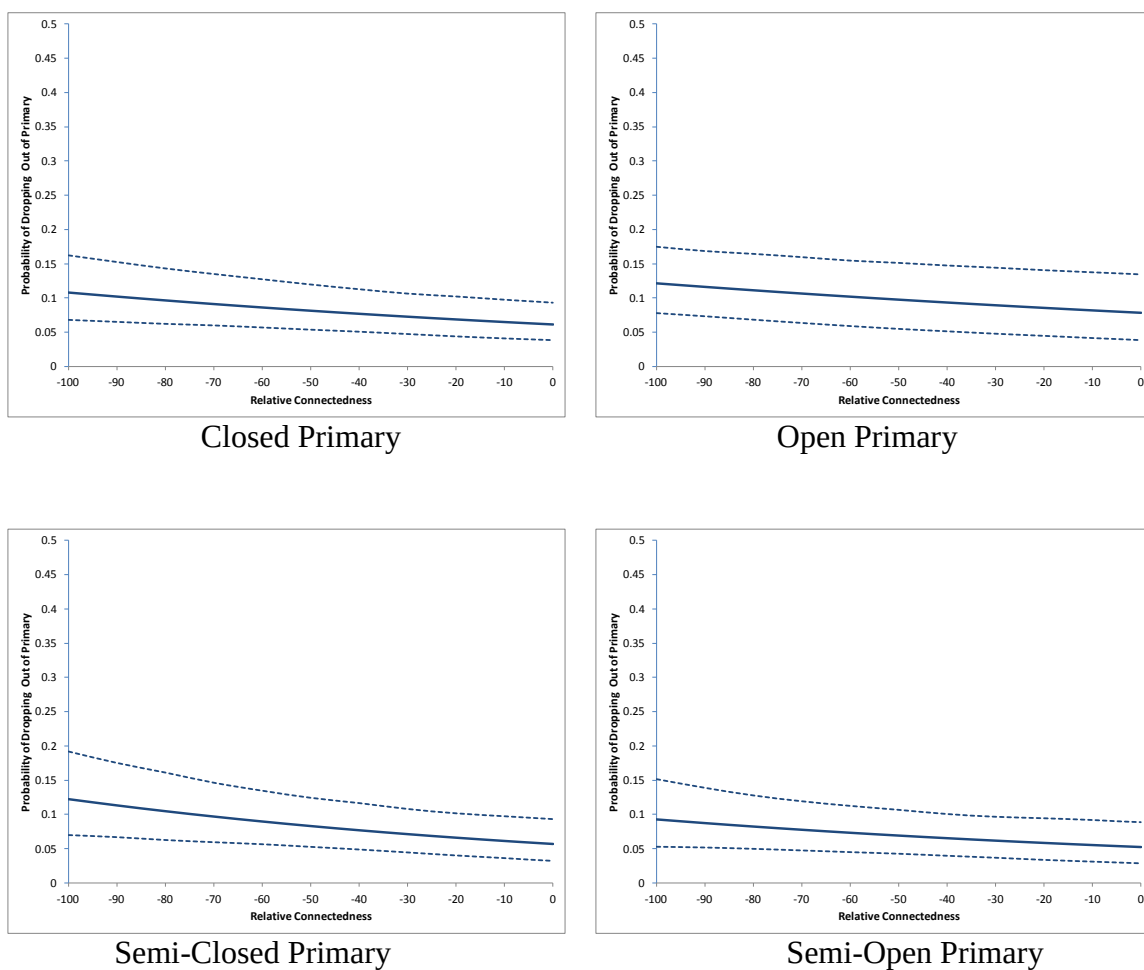


Figure 5.4. Effect of Party Connectedness on the Likelihood of Dropping Out of Senate Primary under Different Primary Rules

Table 5.1. Contrasting Theories of Parties and Party Involvement

Competitive Districts/ Salient Elections		Non-Competitive Districts
Policy-Seeking Parties	Influence in All Primaries	No Influence or only in Semi-Open and Semi-Closed Primaries to Maximize Extreme Candidates
Office-Seeking Parties	Influence in All Primaries	Influence in Pure Open or Pure Closed Primaries to Maximize Opportunity to Win Primary

Table 5.2. Likelihood of Remaining in a Non-Incumbent House Primary Election Race by Primary Election Rule Type

	(1) Competing in Primary (2004-2006)	(2) Competing in Primary (2008-2010)
Relative Connectedness	0.002 (0.004)	0.015*** (0.004)
Relative Fundraising	0.727*** (0.078)	0.590*** (0.063)
Semi-closed Primary	0.203 (0.371)	0.496** (0.252)
Semi-open Primary	-0.195 (0.337)	0.670** (0.283)
Open Primary	-0.550* (0.333)	-0.112 (0.323)
Semi-Closed X Relative Connectedness	0.004 (0.006)	-0.012** (0.005)
Semi-Open X Relative Connectedness	0.001 (0.006)	-0.011 (0.012)
Open X Relative Connectedness	-0.011 (0.008)	0.012 (0.017)
Constant	3.379*** (0.435)	3.266*** (0.389)
Observations	1,901	2,517
Pseudo R-Squared	0.204	0.191
Log Likelihood	-362.9	-439.7

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarter dummy variables not include in results

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5.3. Likelihood of Remaining in a Non-Incumbent House Primary Election Race in Competitive and Non-Competitive Districts by Primary Election Rule Type, 2008-2010

	(1) Competitive Districts	(2) Non-Competitive Districts
Relative Connectedness	-0.015* (0.008)	-0.017*** (0.004)
Relative Fundraising	-0.664*** (0.090)	-0.482*** (0.118)
Semi-closed Primary	0.191 (0.354)	0.806** (0.384)
Semi-open Primary	0.489 (0.414)	0.725* (0.406)
Open Primary	-0.882** (0.399)	0.834 (0.529)
Semi-Closed X Relative Connectedness	0.011 (0.009)	0.016*** (0.006)
Semi-Open X Relative Connectedness	-0.002 (0.015)	0.098 (0.066)
Open X Relative Connectedness	-0.006 (0.018)	-0.012 (0.033)
Constant	3.583*** (0.560)	3.044*** (0.522)
Observations	1,100	1,417
Pseudo R-Squared	0.243	0.138
Log Likelihood	-222.7	-208.8

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarter dummy variables not include in results

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5.4. Likelihood of Remaining in a Non-Incumbent Senate Primary Race by Primary Election Rule Type

	(1) Competing in Primary (1990- 2002)	(2) Competing in Primary (2002- 2010)
Relative Connectedness	-0.002 (0.003)	0.006*** (0.002)
Relative Fundraising	0.541*** (0.061)	0.421*** (0.078)
Semi-closed Primary	-0.113 (0.348)	0.159 (0.406)
Semi-open Primary	0.704* (0.380)	0.345 (0.388)
Open Primary	0.044 (0.351)	-0.241 (0.412)
Semi-Closed X Relative Connectedness	-0.001 (0.012)	0.003 (0.004)
Semi-Open X Relative Connectedness	0.005 (0.011)	-0.001 (0.003)
Open X Relative Connectedness	0.016* (0.009)	0.001 (0.002)
Constant	3.671*** (0.316)	3.528*** (0.391)
Observations	1,312	845
Pseudo R-Squared	0.183	0.242
Log Likelihood	-272.3	-204.1

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Quarter dummy variables not include in results

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

CHAPTER 6

THE ORIGINS OF PARTY POWER IN PRIMARIES AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR DEMOCRACY

The preceding chapters have provided clear evidence of the party's ability to limit the choice of primary voters. While they may not state so publicly, party organizations are often actively involved in and effective at discouraging potential candidates from challenging the party's preferred candidate in a primary. This chapter examines more in depth the reasons why parties are influential in shaping the field of candidates. I examine the effect that parties have on the chances of a candidate winning the nomination and find that party support is strongly correlated with candidate success.

The Nature of Party Power

While parties may not publicly support candidates, party leaders can and do direct volunteers, donors, and campaign staff to assist the campaigns of favored candidates. In some states parties provide voter lists, give informal assistance in relations with the media, and help coordinate grassroots efforts on behalf of a candidate (Herrnson 1986; Cantor et al. 2010; Kazee and Thornberry 1990). While the party may not be able to publicly endorse, the party's actions to buoy the candidacy of its preferred candidates are more beneficial than a formal endorsement and its accompanying press conference.

Candidates are well-aware of the benefit of having access to party resources. As Hal Daub, former mayor of Omaha, explained when he dropped out of the primary to replace outgoing Senator Chuck Hagel in late 2007, "I was in Washington (last) Monday and Tuesday and came away convinced (Mike) Johanns was (the party's) chosen spearcarrier. He will have all the money he needs" (Walton 2007). Although Johanns had not yet announced his candidacy, Daub recognized that the resources that the party would provide would make it difficult for him to compete in the primary.

There is also a strong correlation between a candidate's party support and the likelihood of winning the nomination. Table 6.1 shows the results of a logit model predicting the likelihood of a candidate's primary victory for candidates running for House or the Senate given that the candidate was actively campaigning in the last quarter before the primary election. As before, I include measures of a candidate's fundraising and strength of connection to the party hill committees relative to other candidates in the race. Like previous models I also exclude candidates running in primaries that contained an incumbent and experience seeking candidates. The inclusion of these candidates, however, does not substantially change the results.

The size of the effect of party support on the likelihood that a candidate wins the nomination is substantial. Figures 6.1 and 6.2 display change in the likelihood that a candidate will win the nomination as the candidate's strength of a connection to the party increases from -100 to the most connected candidate in the race while holding relative fundraising constant at its mean.

As a candidate's connection to the party increases relative to other candidates in the race, the likelihood that the candidate will win the nomination increases from roughly 40% to almost 75%, almost doubling the candidate's chances of winning the nomination. Given that candidates are very highly attuned to the political environment (Jacobson and Kernell 1981; Brown 2008) it stands to reason that they also well aware of the political climate within their own party. Those candidates who recognize that they are not the party's preferred choice know that will face a steep uphill battle to win the race.

In addition to the current electoral consequences, candidates who remain in the race in defiance of the party's wishes may also suffer long term consequences to their

political future. Not only does a politician's immediate future depend upon the ability to win the nomination (Zaller 1998), but a losing battle against the party's preferred candidate may also dampen the likelihood of success in future political endeavors. Politicians who disregard the wishes of the party often find that their fellow party members are less willing to support their future campaigns for public office. Candidates who did not heed party wishes may find it more difficult to receive party assistance in raising money and marshalling volunteers in subsequent elections (Weiner 2012).

Implications for Democracy

The finding that parties exercise significant influence over the choices presented to primary voters raises questions about the effectiveness of primary elections at encouraging a representative process. The progressive ideals behind the implementation of the primary system in the early 1900s were that it would eliminate the influence of parties in the nomination process. Progressives argued that the implementation of the direct primary would take away the control that party leaders had over the legislator by giving the power over the nomination process to the primary voter and breaking the link between party leaders and candidates. While scholars do not agree entirely whether this was the rationale behind their implementation (Ware 2002; Ranney 1975), primary elections and the secret ballot did not end electoral manipulation by party bosses (Cox and Kousser 1981). The origins of the idea behind the direct primary stem from the desire of progressives to take away the nomination process from the corrupt hands of party elites and give it to the primary voter.

The public perception of primary elections was also that they entrusted power with the people instead of with party bosses. As Kansas Governor Walter Stubbs explained in 1909,

“The power has been taken out of the hands of those few men who formerly dictated the list of candidates and made the platform...A man to be nominated now must be worth while (sic) and offer something for the good of the state, instead of his chief qualifications being whether or not he can be handled” (Ansolabehere, Hirano, and Snyder, 2004).

While it is not clear that primaries immediately severed the ties between party bosses and candidates (Ware 2002; Hirano et al. 2010), the discourse surrounding the implementation of primary elections implied that the public expected them to check the undue influence of party bosses.

The evidence in this dissertation shows that, in spite of the primary system, parties have become influential in the nomination process the last decade. While primary election voters may still make the ultimate decision through the voting process, party organizations shape the choices available to voters in the ballot booth. Candidates without party support are less likely to remain in the primary election race and, if they choose to remain in the race, have a lower likelihood of winning the nomination.

No longer can candidates win the party’s nomination without seeking the support of the party organizations. Campaigns cannot just appeal to the party electorate. Campaigns recognize that party organizations provide the link to the necessary resources to conduct a competitive campaign. Without party support a candidate faces diminishing chances for a primary victory and becomes more inclined to withdraw from the race to seek other political aspirations.

These findings question the effectiveness of primaries in providing an institutional protection for the democratic system. If the purpose of primary elections is to prevent party elites from controlling the system it is a failure. In the era of rising campaign costs, parties have become an essential link connecting candidates to the resources they need to run competitive campaigns. Although candidates may be able to find those resources elsewhere (Karpowitz et al. 2011), parties are an institutionalized link between candidates and necessary campaign resources (Kolodny 1998; Menefee-Libey 2000; Maisel et al. 2002).

Party Primaries and Polarization

Of equal or greater concern, however, is the effect of party polarization on the political system. While primaries may have eliminated back room political nominations, they also are the source of polarization in the political system (Aldrich 1995; Hirano et al. 2010; Adams and Merrill 2008; Brady et al. 2007). Party polarization makes it more difficult for public officials to respond to public policy demands and leads to more gridlock within Congress (Binder 2003; Sinclair 2011). Increased polarization has also led to a decline in political civility among the general public (Sinclair 2002) and within the walls of Congress (Uslaner 1997). While a theoretical model of elections would predict candidate convergence (Downs 1957), partisan primaries are an influential factor in preventing candidates from representing the median voter of the district (Aldrich 1983, 1995; Adams and Merrill 2008; Crutzen, Castanheira, and Sahuguet 2009). Because candidates must first win the nomination of a major party, candidates must have views compatible with the desires of the party electorate in order to appear on the general

election ballot. Thus, the primary forces candidates to appeal to both the median voter in the primary and the median voter in the general election in order to win office.

While the first four chapters in this dissertation provide evidence of party manipulation of the primary field, the subsequent analysis suggests that the party's role in the primary election process may mitigate the effect of primary systems that would otherwise favor more extreme candidates. In chapter 5, I show that institutional variation across primary systems does not eliminate party influence. Parties influence candidate decisions in open primaries, closed primaries, and all variations in between. When the party has an incentive to become involved in the process, it will become involved and exercise significant influence. However, due to the large number of uncompetitive U.S. House districts, the party does not have sufficient resources to become involved in each one. As such, the party must pick and choose where to expend its energy trying to persuade candidates to drop out of the race. In uncompetitive House districts the party chooses to exercise its influence in pure open and pure closed primaries, primaries where the electoral rules would ordinarily benefit more ideological extremists (Kanthak and Morton 2001). In primaries where the electorate does not give an advantage extremist candidate, namely semi-open and semi-closed primaries, the party is less likely to play an influential role in clearing the field for a preferred candidate. Given their lack of sufficient resources to be required to be influential in all House primaries, the parties focus their efforts in areas where they will have the most influence in ensuring the nomination of electable moderate candidates, and maximize their influence to select the candidates that will provide the best chance at winning the general election.

While parties undoubtedly exercise more influence in primary elections than previously recognized, this influence may not necessarily be detrimental to the system. Rather than increasing polarization among candidates and subsequently public officials, parties work to ensure the nomination of more moderate politicians rather than ideological extremists. Parties act as gate-keepers to ensure that the nominated candidates have ideological positions that are more compatible to the district electorate as a whole. While parties do play a more influential role in the primary election process than perhaps the progressives had envisioned, their role helps moderate the ideology of the nominated candidates rather than encourage extremism.

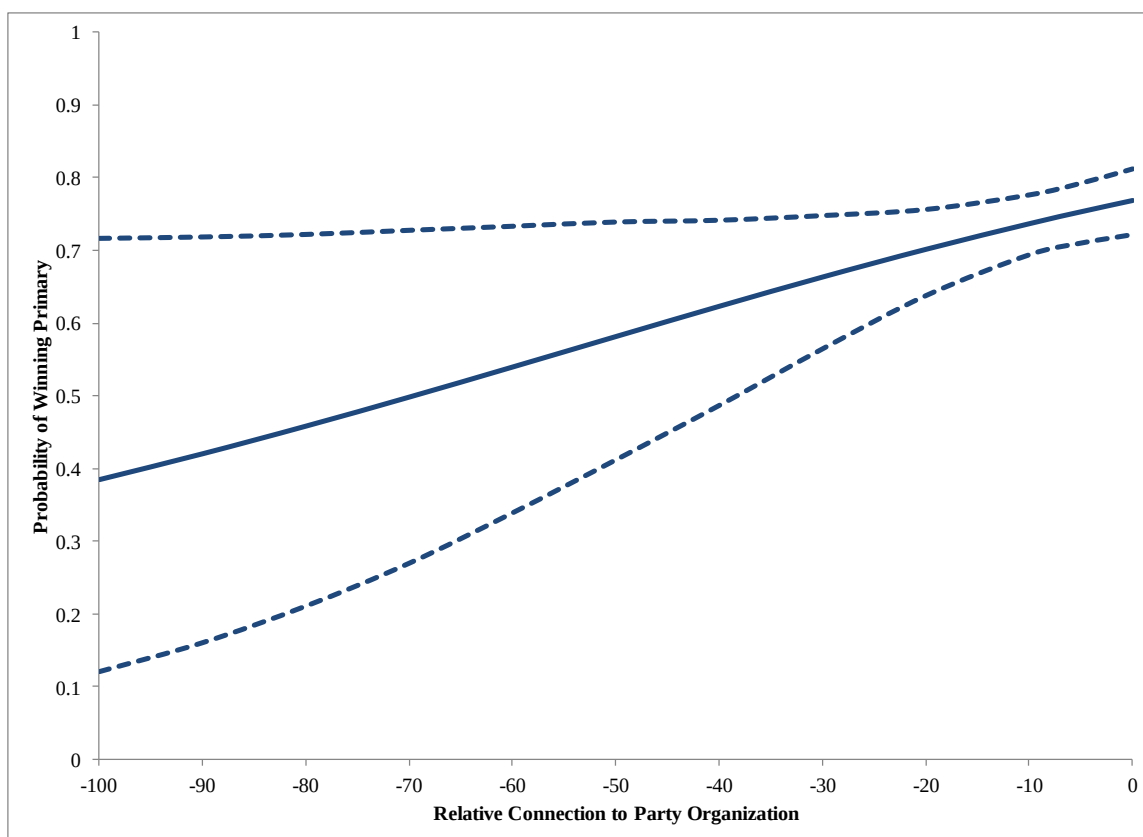


Figure 6.1. Effect of Relative Party Connectedness on the Likelihood of Candidate Winning Senate Primary

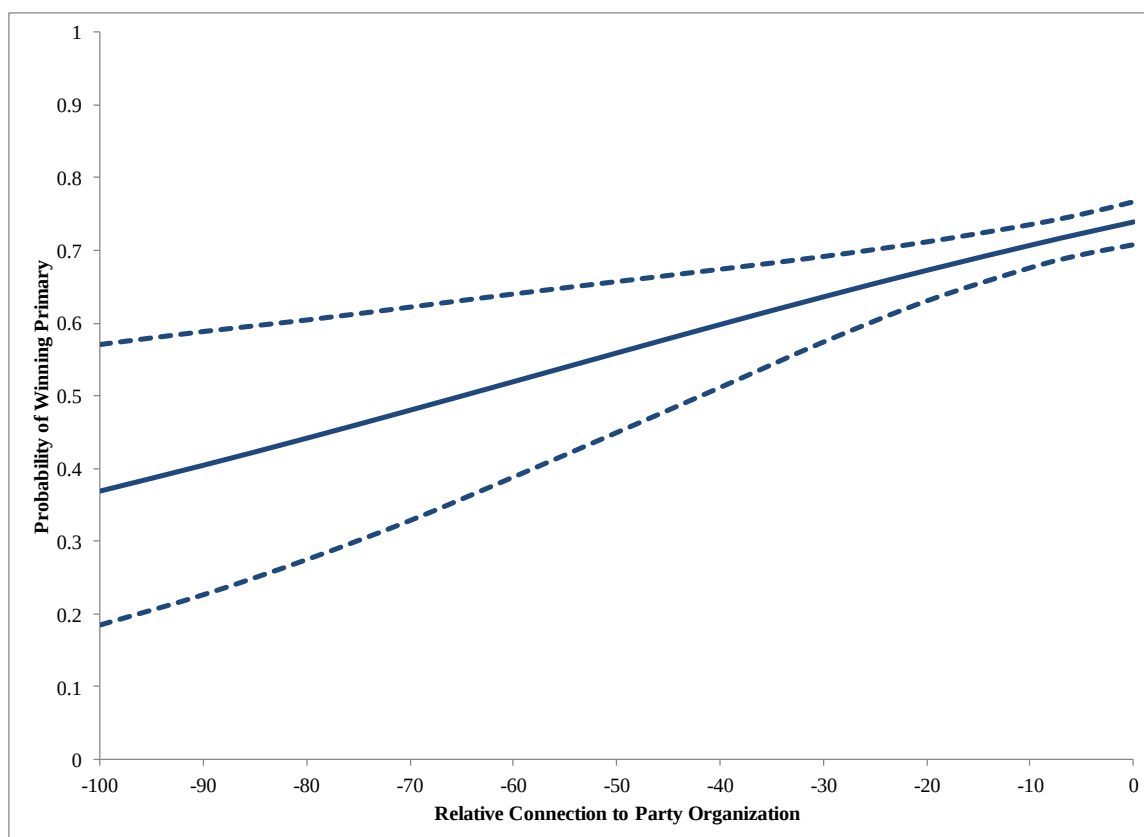


Figure 6.2. Effect of Relative Party Connectedness on the Likelihood of Candidate Winning House Primary

Table 6.1. Likelihood of Party Supported Candidate Winning Non-Incumbent House and Senate Primary Election

	(1) Senate Primary Winner	(1) House Primary Winner
Relative Party Connectedness	0.017** (0.008)	0.016*** (0.005)
Relative Logged Fundraising	0.720*** (0.222)	0.827*** (0.145)
Constant	1.502*** (0.144)	1.348*** (0.088)
Observations	379	1005
Pseudo R-Squared	0.132	0.115
Log-Likelihood	-193.4	-536.7

Clustered robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

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