Breaking Free:
The Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics

by

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(Under the Direction of Jamie L. Carson)

Abstract

Scholars of American politics have long observed that we live in an era of "candidate-centered" politics. Since around the 1960s, it seems as though candidates have relied less on parties and party organizations to conduct their campaigns and have increasingly built and utilized their own campaign organizations, turning the parties primarily for fundraising purposes. While many point to the electoral reforms of the Progressive Era (*e.g.*, the Australian ballot and the direct primary) as being the catalyst for the decline of parties, those reforms were largely adopted by the states by the 1910s. Thus, there remains a significant lag between the adoption of the supposed cause (Progressive reforms) and the effect (candidate-centered politics). With this project, I seek to explain the rise of candidate-centered politics in U.S. House elections as a function of institutional structures, economic development, and technological innovation. Specifically, the format of ballot used in a given district is found not only to have direct effects on the degree of candidate centeredness, but the format also structures the effects of other variables. Rising incomes and the related rise in campaign spending also appear to have driven candidate centeredness, though these effects are largely limited to those districts using one particular ballot format. Finally, television is found not to be the great liberator of candidates some scholars have argued; rather, its effects are

limited and indirect. I demonstrate that elections in the U.S. evolved in the context of an electoral environment that was changing on numerous fronts.

INDEX WORDS: Elections, Candidate-centered, Institutions, Economic growth, Television

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Dedication

For my wonderful (and patient) wife, Lauren

Acknowledgments

I imagine writing a dissertation is a lot like having children—you toil through the formative stages wondering whether the outcome will disappoint you and, several years later, the product of your work is evaluated by someone employed by a university. Both processes are also considerably easier with help. The metaphor may not be the most illustrative ever crafted, but it is true that the process of writing a dissertation requires expending considerable time and effort on a product that may not yield the anticipated or desired results. Furthermore, the entire process is impossible without help along the way.

I owe my sanity during this process to my loving wife, Lauren Collens, to whom this dissertation is dedicated. Without her support I am certain I would never have finished, much less found a job. I am also immensely grateful to have had an advisor whose encouragement and (at times) nagging helped me produce this dissertation. It was in Jamie Carson's POLS 8180 class in Fall of 2009 that I first developed the idea to study candidate-centered politics and I am certain I would not have been able to complete this tremendous project without his assistance and guidance (and his data). I must also thank the members of my committee, Ryan Bakker, Keith T. Poole, and Michael H. Crespin for their guidance both inside the classroom environment and outside.

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Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Introduction

In April of 1890, the editorial staff of *The Nation* wrote about the Democratic tide sweeping through local elections across the country, citing several recent newspaper stories about this trend. First, the hyper partisan (Republican) Philadelphia *Press* contended that "'local questions are always uppermost in these elections, and this fact was true to an unusual degree in the municipal and township contests of this year.'" In response, the Indianapolis *News* argued, "'Local questions and candidates were given special consideration, but the general result is due to the prevailing dissatisfaction of the people in Indiana, just as in other States, over a condition of things for which the Republican party . . . is believed to be largely responsible'" (Editors 1890, 305–306).

It would be difficult for any observer to concur with the *Press*'s interpretation—local considerations during elections are unlikely to translate into national trends favoring one party. This stands in marked contrast to former Speaker Tip O'Neill's repeated observation during his career in the mid- to late-twentieth century that "all politics is local" (O'Neill and Hymel 1994). The disconnect between these two interpretations of elections demonstrates the shift away from a system in which even the most local of elections were determined by party tides and towards a system in which local factors serve among the primary determinants of electoral outcomes.

We currently live under a system of "candidate-centered" politics—as opposed to the earlier era of party-centered politics; at least, this is what leading political scientists say. While scholars are quick to make this assertion, however, they often fail to back it up with evidence of a systematic shift from an electoral system dominated by partisan politics to a more fragmented system focused on individual candidates. In fact, the small body of literature that *is* explicitly devoted to this question is primarily qualitative in nature, with only summary statistics demonstrating any kind of time trend (see, for example, Wattenberg 1991). Furthermore, this small body of literature only discusses *that* the phenomenon occurred, arguing largely that the shift occurred throughout the 1960s—there does not appear to be any systematic examination of the *causes* of the rise of candidate-centered politics in the United States. The overall aim of this project is twofold: First, I seek to demonstrate empirically that recent campaigns and elections (i.e., those since roughly the 1960s) differ from earlier elections on a key dimension—that of the role of the party versus the role of the individual candidate in the campaign and election itself. Second, I hope to uncover the causes of this momentous shift in American electoral politics. This project examines potential explanations for the rise of candidate-centered politics (namely, ballot format, the rise of real disposable income and increasing campaign spending, and the advent of television) throughout much of the twentieth century.

While party identification remains a strong predictor of how a citizen will vote, the strategies candidates employ and media coverage of campaigns are candidate-centered in the modern era. Parties, on the other hand, no longer control candidates and their messages—rather, they provide valuable services to candidates. Thus, rather than controlling candidates, parties now largely serve candidates (Aldrich 1995). One of the best illustrations of this concept is the demise of the party machines throughout major U.S. cities. An example would be the Society of St. Tammany (also called "Tammany Hall"), which controlled Democratic nominations and politics in New York City for nearly a century, until the election of Fiorello LaGuardia in 1934 diminished its power. The machine disbanded entirely in the 1960s.

While the demise of political machines certainly exemplifies the shift to candidate-centered politics, it is far from the only major change included in this national movement. The question I seek to examine is *why* party-centered politics gave way to the candidate-centered system observed in more recent decades.

Also of interest for this project is why candidate-centered politics did not emerge decades earlier. As early as 1970, scholars (in particular, Rusk 1970) noticed that the emergence of the Australian ballot changed American political culture. One of the goals of this project is to further explore the role played by such reforms. A few scholars (see, e.g., Ware 2002; Roberts 2008; Carson and Roberts 2013) have claimed that Progressive reforms—including the development of the direct primary and Australian ballot—eventually led to the decline of party organizations and the increasing ability and desire of candidates to appeal directly to the electorate, rather than to the party itself. These key Progressive reforms—passed around the turn of the twentieth century—were largely intended to reduce the influence of party leaders and increase the role of the public in elections. It is somewhat of a puzzle, then, why this system of candidate-centered politics is argued to have emerged decades after these reforms had passed. Certainly, changes in campaign strategy would lag these monumental shifts in the rules, but a half-century (or more) passed between the Progressive reforms and the emergence of candidate-centered politics.[1] One of the primary purposes of this project is to identify the causes of this lag and the factors which either delayed or finally allowed for the emergence of a candidate-centered electoral system.

This introductory chapter begins with a review of the relevant literature on candidate-centered politics and the factors which seem to indicate the presence of a candidate-centered system (for example, the increase in the incumbency advantage, the decline in the use of party money in elections, the primary system replacing the convention system for nomi-

[1]Wattenberg (1998) mentions the Nixon campaign in 1972 as an example of candidate-centered politics, while he has argued elsewhere that the elections of the 1980s marked a "critical threshold in the emergence of the candidate-centered era in American electoral politics" (Wattenberg 1991, p. 1).

nating presidential candidates, etc.). Here I also address candidate-centered politics in the comparative context, as scholars have studied this phenomenon (or its component pieces) throughout the world and under different electoral systems (see, for example, Carey and Shugart 1995; Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina 1987). I then review potential explanations for the timing and causes of the rise of candidate-centered politics in the United States, drawing from the relevant literature in the previous section. I then outline the plan of the dissertation with an eye towards my own theory. Finally, I conclude with some remarks about the importance of the broader project not only for explaining a major electoral phenomenon in the American context, but also for its implications on the future of American politics and electoral systems abroad.

Symptoms and Evidence of Candidate-Centered Politics

While political scientists studying American politics have not explicitly focused much on the rise of candidate-centered politics, there are bodies of literature with implications—direct and indirect—for this important subject. In this section, I review these bodies of literature and how they relate to the development of candidate-centered politics. Observers of American politics, for instance, have examined an increase in the incumbency advantage (see, for example, Mayhew 1974; Fiorina 1977; Cover 1977; Alford and Hibbing 1981; Alford and Brady 1993; Prior 2006), the establishment of a "personal vote" (Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina 1987; Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart 2000; Carson, Engstrom and Roberts 2007, to name a few), the general decline or change in purpose of the two political parties (Wattenberg 1982, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1998; Aldrich and Niemi 1990; Aldrich 1995), and the various effects of the Progressive reforms around the turn of the century (see, for example, Rusk 1970; Ware 2002; Engstrom and Kernell 2005). While the topics discussed in these bodies of literature do not appear at first glance to be connected, I argue they are all indicators of candidate-centered politics. Meanwhile, comparative political scientists have examined the impact of

electoral systems on candidate-centered politics (Carey and Shugart 1995; Grofman 2005), the personal vote (Reed 1994), ballot order effects on ticket-splitting (Darcy and Marsh 1994), pork barrel politics (Lancaster 1986), and intraparty competition (Katz 1980)—all of which, I argue, are indicators of—or factors—included in the broader phenomenon of candidate-centered politics. Comparative scholars have also largely studied a widely perceived trend toward the "personalization" of politics, in which party leaders and individual candidates dominate the political process and are more salient in the minds of voters than the parties they represent (see, for example, Kaase 1994; McAllister 2007; Elmelund-Præstekær and Hopmann 2012).

The Personal Vote

Much of the literature in the comparative and American contexts cites the development and cultivation of a "personal vote"—voter loyalty to the incumbent and the incumbent's relationship with the voters, cultivated through constituency service, resource allocation, and even effective advertising. Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina (1987) focus on the first two aspects of this cultivation of the personal vote, describing how members of Congress have increasingly engaged in constituency service and—more important for this project—"constituents are now more likely to seek personal assistance from their member and more likely to remember some local project, program, or other matter in which their representative has taken the lead" (p. 117). If constituents consider what the member has done for them when casting their ballots, they are less likely to consider party as the dominant cue. Furthermore, members may seek to cultivate this personal vote through a variety of activities, most of which would be undertaken by the candidate himself or his personal or campaign staff, rather than by the party organization. Thus, cultivation of a personal vote requires candidate-centered behavior. As Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina point out, parties in the United States are, and have been, weaker than parties in Great Britain, largely due to the parliamentary system, which necessitates strong legislative parties. This affords members of Congress the ability to engage

more in individual vote-seeking behavior, as there is considerable room for individualism and particularism within Congress (particularly as it relates to the "pork barrel"). Thus, members of the U.S. Congress seek to cultivate a personal vote, often by operating their own reelection campaigns independent of the party organization. This is, by definition, candidate-centered politics—a system in which candidates seek and, ultimately, win election on their own merits either in addition to or independently of the parties' reputations.

In the American context, Fenno (1978) notes that members behave differently in their districts than they do in Washington. This "home style" would seem to be the very definition of personal vote-seeking behavior. Indeed, Carey and Shugart (1995) place Fenno's work in the context of other, comparative works demonstrating a similar phenomenon around the world. The electoral system can affect whether or not members face incentives to behave in a personal vote-seeking manner.

The American Context

In the context of all elections in the United States—both presidential and congressional—researchers have examined numerous phenomena which, I argue, constitute indicators of or factors included in the broader phenomenon of candidate-centered politics. Among the more intriguing findings is the rise in the incumbency advantage for members of Congress. Mayhew (1974) and Tufte (1973) were among the first to recognize that House incumbents' vote shares had increased throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. Various explanations were offered to explain this phenomenon, including: redistricting (Tufte 1973); constituency service (Fiorina 1977); changes in mass electoral behavior (Cover 1977; Ferejohn 1977); the cultivation of a personal vote through direct mailings (Cover and Brumberg 1982); the increased ability of incumbents to overcome non-quality challengers (Cox and Katz 1996); the cultivation of a personal vote in areas where the incumbent is vulnerable (Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart 2000); and the rise of television (Prior 2006). Several of these explanations seem to point to the shift in focus from parties to individual candidates.

As Aldrich and Niemi (1990) point out, the higher margin of victory for incumbents "can be traced to their personal fortunes rather than to party or presidential fortunes" (p. 23). The authors draw from work by Alford and Brady (1993), which points to a "sophomore surge" in the margin of victory for freshmen facing reelection and the "retirement slump" in the margin of victory for candidates of a retiring incumbent's party. If the higher margins of victory can be attributed to party effects, there should be little or no difference in the margin of victory for an incumbent of one party in one election and a candidate of the same party running for the vacated seat in the next. As Alford and Brady (1993) show, however, candidates for open seats typically receive lower vote shares than the previous incumbent of the same party received (called the "retirement slump"). Furthermore, once a candidate wins election to an open seat, his or her margin of victory in the first election as an incumbent typically increases ("sophomore surge"). This implies that candidates have gained votes as a result of cultivating a personal vote—gaining the favor of voters by virtue of being an incumbent or by doing something to earn the vote as an individual, rather than as a representative of a party.[2]

The increase in the incumbency advantage was not the only trend indicating the rise of candidate-centered politics. Aldrich and Niemi (1990) note several other trends that emerged during the 1960s which point to a decline of political parties and a shift to a more candidate-centered system of politics. For one, they note that increasing numbers of voters reported splitting their tickets over the course of the period studied. Furthermore, the authors mention that the effects of presidential coattails decreased in the period from 1956 to 1980, drawing on work by Calvert and Ferejohn (1983) estimating the effect of presidential coattails on House elections. In that article, Calvert and Ferejohn state, "[I]t seems that most members of Congress can, if they will, largely determine their own chances of reelection without reference to forces outside the district" (1983, p. 417). Thus, split-ticket voting increased

[2]It should be noted, however, that both of these measures have been shown to be biased (Gelman and King 1990), but they do still tend to represent a generally increasing incumbency advantage. The implications for this project remain unaffected.

and presidential coattail effects decreased. This is a clear indication of candidate-centered politics. National-level, partisan forces—in this case, the electoral fortunes of a party's presidential nominee—were found to have less impact on House elections over a 24-year period. The authors simply explain that candidates focus on the district, rather than on national partisan forces.

Another trend noted by scholars (including Aldrich and Niemi 1990; Gerber and Green 2000) is the decline in voter turnout in the last half-century. While the trend has been lamented by many political scientists, of particular interest for this project is the potential *reason* for this general decline. Gerber and Green (2000) find that the decline in voter mobilization by party organizations may have led to the decrease in turnout. They argue that personal contacts from party mobilizers were replaced by direct mailings and phone calls from professional campaign staffers, which decreased turnout, as personal contact is a more effective tool for mobilizing voters. Goldstein and Ridout (2002) contest this argument, finding that contact itself did not decline in the period observed, but their study focuses on overall contact, without distinguishing between direct, personal contact and other, more indirect forms of contact—such as direct mailings and phone calls. The shift from direct contact by local party organizations to indirect contact by professional campaign staffers indicates the rise of candidate-centered politics. As candidates began to rely less on local party organizations for mobilizing efforts and started to hire their own campaign staffs to serve those same functions, they began to operate independent of parties at an increasing rate.[3]

Aldrich and Niemi note another interesting trend beginning in the 1960s. They find that "parties were the linkage between issues and voter choices before 1964; since then, presidential elections have become much more candidate-centered" (1990, pp. 16–17). That

[3]McDonald and Popkin (2001) contend that the trend of decreasing voter turnout has been overstated due to an improper denominator—using the voting-age population rather than voting-eligible population. Figure 1 in their article (p. 967) clearly demonstrates a marked decrease in turnout in the late 1960s, however.

is, prior to 1964, voters who based their choices on issue stances cast their ballots based on the positions the *parties* took on those issues, whereas voters after 1964 began to focus on both the parties' positions *and* those of the individual candidates. The authors do not give a reason for why this shift may have taken place. It could have been due to the issue of race, which cleaved the parties and may have forced individuals caring about that issue to choose based on the positions of individual candidates. It may also have been due to the behavior of candidates, who—facing parties weakened by a variety of forces—attempted to cultivate a personal vote to a greater extent than they had previously done.

Wattenberg notes the decline of parties in several works (for example, 1982; 1987; 1990; 1991; 1998), presenting evidence in a variety of arguments that all indicate the decreasing prominence of political parties in American political life. First, he demonstrates the increase in split-ticket voting and the decline in party identifiers. Interestingly, he does not attribute this decline to increased feelings of negativity towards the two major parties—rather, he finds that this change is due to a decline in salience of the parties in public life. This rise in feelings of neutrality towards the parties, according to Wattenberg, is in part due to the public. The public stopped equating candidate stances to party stances—the things the public liked or disliked about candidates played a decreasing role in determining how the public felt about the parties (1998, see pp. 88–89). He also emphasizes the role of the media in decreasing the salience of parties. In some of his early work, Wattenberg examines the effects of the "candidate-centered campaign" and how increased media campaign expenditures both decreased party salience and increased candidate salience (1982). In later work, he found that the media played a role in framing elections as candidates versus candidates, rather than agents of a party squaring off against each other (1998, see pp. 110–111).

Wattenberg's work is not the only work attributing some of these phenomena to the media. Prior (2006) examines the role of television in the increase of the incumbency advantage, arguing that incumbents had access to local television resources largely unavailable to their challengers. Among less-educated voters, this exposure to the incumbent was enough

to sway their votes in favor of the incumbent, so that incumbents began to receive generally more votes in districts with television stations. As television became more ubiquitous, more incumbents received greater vote shares. I outline Prior's argument in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this work.

Television did not benefit incumbents only, however. As Druckman (2003) points out, television images played a role in voter evaluations of the two presidential candidates in the 1960 presidential election between then-Vice President Richard Nixon and Senator John F. Kennedy. Through experimental research, Druckman finds that television can affect debate performance evaluations and can even prime people to think about the personalities of the two candidates when evaluating them. This is evidence that television prompted individuals to think more about candidates than they had previously. The implication may be that voters began to give increased consideration to candidates, at the expense of parties. This seems to be what both Prior (2006) and Druckman (2003) uncover, albeit with different approaches and causal mechanisms at work.

Crotty (1984) points out that the rise of television also affected candidate behavior. Candidates began to hire their own campaign staffers to help market themselves on television and in the news, relying less and less on the party organization to campaign on their behalf. Furthermore, candidates hired pollsters and polling firms to gauge the public's response to the candidate and his or her message. Crotty draws on the example of the 1972 Democratic nomination campaigns, in which both George McGovern—the front-runner—and Hubert Humphrey employed pollsters to gain an edge in the crucial California primary battle. While McGovern eventually won, Humphrey's pollsters revealed that support for McGovern was soft and people were unsure where McGovern stood on some issues. Humphrey used the media—through debates and televised appearances—to hammer McGovern on the issues. While Crotty attributes McGovern's eventual defeat to the weakening of his campaign at the hands of Humphrey and his pollster, it is not likely that McGovern would have defeated Nixon anyway. What is clear, however, is that candidates took the power of television

seriously and began operating campaigns independent of the parties. As Aldrich and Niemi (1990) note, the 1960 Kennedy campaign was among the first to hire pollsters, develop its own national organization, and recognize the potential effects of television in campaigning; this tactic was employed four years later during the Goldwater campaign. Cain (2011) also notes that candidates began to hire consultants to conduct their own campaigns and that this shift was indicative of the move towards candidate-centered politics. Several other authors have noted this same trend towards hiring professional consultants (see, for example, Agranoff 1976; Sabato 1981; Herrnson 2000; Medvic 2001; Dulio 2004; Johnson 2007), a trend which has largely permeated all elections at the federal and statewide levels, as well as many county- and local-level electoral campaigns.

While the research in the American context has demonstrated a variety of trends related to and hinted at potential causes of candidate-centered politics, comparative politics scholars have also examined personal vote-seeking behavior and candidate-centered politics and how electoral systems may play a role in determining whether candidates feel pressure to act in a manner consistent with a candidate-centered political system.

The Comparative Perspective

In comparative literature, Carey and Shugart (1995) offer perhaps the most comprehensive examination of the impact of electoral systems on the value of personal reputation (relative to party reputation). Although their research explicitly deals with the personal vote—as opposed to the presence of candidate-centered politics—I argue that the former is nested within the latter. If voters value personal reputation over—or in addition to—party reputation when casting a ballot, candidates face incentives to cultivate votes independent of their own party. As the authors note throughout the article, intraparty competition, candidate-controlled access to the ballot, and a small number of seats in play within the district all increase the value of the reputation of the individual candidate, relative to the value of the party's reputation. As an example, the authors place the congressional elections in the

United States fairly high among those systems which incentivize personal vote-seeking behavior because they are elections to single-member districts, with primary elections and no vote pooling (either across candidates or across parties). In contrast, the United States's electoral college is ranked relatively low among systems incentivizing personal vote-seeking behavior, because when electors convene, the ballot is predetermined by "party leaders" (at the national convention) and the electors can only cast one vote from among a predetermined party list (rather than choosing individual candidates for president and vice president). I seek to demonstrate with this project that the reforms enacted during the Progressive Era (and later, with changes in ballot format) made the American electoral system more conducive to candidate-centered electoral behavior, for the reasons outlined in Carey and Shugart (1995). Thus, the impact of the electoral system on the cultivation of a personal vote (and, by default, the rise of candidate-centered politics) varies not just across borders, but also across time. As electoral systems are reformed, the incentives for candidates to cultivate a personal vote may increase or decrease, depending on the type of reform enacted.

Other comparative researchers have uncovered a linkage between the electoral system and incentives for candidates to cultivate a personal vote. Reed (1994) examined Japan's single non-transferable vote (SNTV) and Ireland's single transferable vote (STV) systems and found that these systems, when employed in medium-sized districts, produce personal vote-seeking behavior. Meanwhile, Lancaster (1986) finds that smaller district sizes encourage members to engage in pork barrel politics, which Carey and Shugart (1995) argue could be an indicator of personal vote-seeking behavior. The arrangement of the ballot can also influence how voters value personal reputation relative to party reputation. As Darcy and Marsh (1994) note, voters in STV systems with an alphabetized listing of candidates—such as Ireland—are more likely to split the ticket than in similar systems without alphabetized lists, which explicitly devalues parties relative to individual candidates. Katz (1980) notes that certain electoral structures—such as the direct primary, the STV and SNTV systems, and open-list ballots with the option to rank candidates in order of preference—promote

intraparty competition, which in turn should force candidates to cultivate a personal vote to gain an advantage over intraparty rivals. While Katz does not make this latter point, the work by Carey and Shugart (1995) demonstrates that this is a rational behavior for office-seekers who face intraparty competition.

This comparative literature demonstrates the effect of electoral systems on candidate-centered politics. In this project, I argue that the United States is not an exception to these rules. Within the U.S., states and localities may vary with respect to their electoral systems (see, for example, the "top-two" primary currently used in California, Washington, and Louisiana), which would produce different behavior among candidates in one state than would be found in other states. While across-state variation is certainly intriguing, one of the goals of this project is to examine the effects of variation in the American electoral system across states *and* across time on campaigns and elections, with a more specific emphasis on the changing electoral system's effects on the rise of candidate-centered politics. Moreover, research on across-time variation in electoral systems could provide unique insight into the effects of changing electoral systems for those seeking reform in the future, regardless of country.

Comparative scholars have also noted the rise in the "personalization" of politics. McAllister (2007) notes that scholars tend to trace this development to the elections of Margaret Thatcher in the UK in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the U.S. in 1980, but he points to Pierre Trudeau's election as Canadian prime minister in 1968 as the earliest example of the personalization of politics, a trend identified by a marked increase in the salience of individual party leaders and candidates relative to the importance of parties in the public mind. In his review of the literature on the effects of party leaders' favorability ratings, McAllister notes that studies have consistently found that more popular leaders help their parties on election day, but the effect is relatively small. Bean presents evidence that individual performance evaluations affect the vote candidates and parties receive, and that these effects hold "across both national and temporal boundaries, for parliamentary as well as presidential political

systems and for many different individual political leaders, whether they have stronger or weaker images and whether they are incumbents or non-incumbents" (1993, 129).

Interestingly, McAllister (2007) documents the literature linking television to the personalization of politics. "For television," he notes, "political leaders represent convenient visual shortcut to capture and retain the viewer's attention, particularly if the information overlaps with the leader's personality." The link between television and the personalized nature of politics is not without controversy, however, as Elmelund-Præstekær and Hopmann (2012) find in the context of Danish local elections and Hayes (2009) finds in the American context. Both of these scholars contribute to the long and rich history of "minimal effects" findings for mass communications by highlighting the importance of institutional and long-term (*i.e.*, partisan) forces on the vote.

This review of the literature—brief though it is—demonstrates that candidates in the U.S. have acted as though the electoral system is candidate-centered and that the parties lost traction with the public sometime in the mid- to late-twentieth century. Furthermore, research conducted in the comparative context has demonstrated the effect the electoral system can have on personal vote-seeking behavior and candidate-centered politics in general. Finally, research on the effects of television and candidate-run campaigns on candidate behavior and electoral outcomes has demonstrated the potential role of candidate tactics and television in the rise of candidate-centered politics in the United States. With this project, I seek to tie together these seemingly unrelated fields in a unified theory of candidate-centered politics. In the following section, I outline the theory I have developed regarding the causes and timing of the emergence of candidate-centered politics in the United States.

Potential Explanations of Candidate-Centered Politics

The task is then to explain the rise of candidate-centered politics—a phenomenon which, I argue, encompasses numerous trends noted and studied in detail by previous researchers. This

will require a unified theory which incorporates factors deemed important in earlier works on the indicators of candidate-centered politics. The research related to the rise of candidate-centered politics—such as the increase in the incumbency advantage and the general decline of parties—posits a variety of institutional factors, technological innovations (such as television) and changes in the electorate as causes. The theory I advance argues that these factors are potentially complementary—while institutional reforms were certainly necessary for the shift from party-centered to candidate-centered politics, they were far from sufficient, as evidenced by the significant lag between their implementation in the early twentieth century and the eventual rise of candidate-centered politics. In my theory, key institutional changes—in particular, the adoption of the Australian ballot and direct primary—*allowed* voters to start considering individual candidates, but later changes provided the impetus for change at the aggregate level. After the advent of the Progressive reforms aimed at reducing the power and influence of parties in the American electoral system, a feedback loop developed between citizens and candidates—citizens began to evaluate candidates at an increasing rate; candidates adjusted their strategies to maximize their vote share in this new environment and the electorate was given even more of a reason to consider candidates rather than parties when casting their ballots.

For much of the history of modern political science, scholars have generally assumed that the Progressive-era reforms were the results of the efforts of anti-party reformers, who sought to weaken the parties by stripping them of control over the electoral process (see, for example, Merriam and Overacker 1928; Key 1949). In the last few decades, however, researchers have begun to demonstrate that the reforms of the Progressive era were not only supported by parties, but were also—in many cases—championed by them. Reynolds and McCormick (1986) argue that the parties sought to implement the Australian ballot to "outlaw treachery" among lower-level party officials, who often printed their own ballots with nominees not approved by the party leaders. As the authors say, "Two-party politics had been firmly embedded in law, for the first time, and a virtual monopoly over nominations

had been given to the regular Democratic and Republican organizations" (858). Thus, while Progressive reformers also sought the adoption of the Australian ballot, the leaders of the two parties also stood to gain from the adoption of an official, state-run ballot.

Ware (2002) extends this theme to the adoption of the direct primary. After confirming the findings in Reynolds and McCormick (1986)'s work, Ware turns to the adoption of the direct primary, arguing that party leaders—facing a new electoral context with the advent of the Australian ballot and increased state involvement in election administration—chose from among the alternatives to the existing caucus-convention system, settling on the direct primary as the best-known option from reformers' successes in implementing it in various local-level elections. Thus, while previous literature had credited Progressive reformers seeking to "bust" the machines with the adoption of both the Australian ballot and the direct primary, research by Reynolds and McCormick (1986) and Ware (2002) has demonstrated that party leaders clearly played a role.[4]

So, why have scholars (such as Aldrich and Niemi 1990; Wattenberg 1991, 1998) found that parties declined in the middle of the twentieth century? I argue that these reforms did serve to bust the machines and help facilitate the decline of parties as the dominant forces in the electoral process they had once been. While the adoption of these electoral reforms may not be a tale of noble dissenters overthrowing the corrupt party machines, the ultimate effect seems to have been consistent with such an effect.[5] The question is then: Why did it take so long? Clearly, these reforms removed some of the power the parties and party leaders had over the nomination and general elections; Gerring (1998, p. 192) notes that some

[4]See, however, work by Lawrence, Donovan and Bowler (2011), which identifies a clear role for anti-party reformers in the adoption of the direct primary, more in line with the work of Merriam and Overacker (1928).

[5]This is not to say, of course, that parties disappeared entirely; rather, the role of parties in the electoral process—nominations, balloting, and campaigning—decreased relative to the role of candidates. Furthermore, this is not likely a zero-sum game—as parties saw the rise of candidate-centered politics, they appear to have changed focus to more of a service role, providing valuable resources to candidates. Thus, parties may have eventually consolidated power through fundraising and aiding their office-seekers, but not necessarily at the expense of candidates.

presidential candidates for the Democratic Party began to behave in a candidate-centered fashion, but that this phenomenon did not become commonplace for several more decades. However—by most indicators—the decline of parties did not manifest until the middle of the twentieth century, perhaps even as late as the 1960s or 1970s.

The answer may lie in the incentives candidates have to engage in candidate-centered behavior. Upon deciding to adopt an official ballot, states could choose from among several options. The two most prominent were the "office bloc" and "party column" ballots. In the former, candidates were listed by the office for which they were running. In the latter, candidates were listed by party, with candidates of different parties running for the same offices listed on the same row but in different columns. Prior to the adoption of Australian ballot laws, the ballot—frequently called the "party ticket"—was printed by the parties and featured only the candidates from the party. Voters in states adopting the party column ballot would see the candidates organized primarily by party and were even offered—in another section of the ballot—the option to cast a single vote for all candidates of a party (the so-called "straight ticket" option). In the office bloc format, the primary organizing scheme is office, with party affiliation a considerably less salient factor than in the party column ballot. In describing the ballots, the difference seems subtle, but it may nonetheless actually be influential on voters and candidates alike.

Immediately following the adoption of the Australian ballot, voters seem to have split their tickets at a greater rate, but this phenomenon was short-lived, according to Rusk (1970). Rusk argues that this phenomenon is likely to occur following any major institutional reform: "[T]he most crucial effects of any institutional property are visible in the early period of its use and then settle back to more normal differentiations in later years" (p. 1238). I argue that Rusk's conclusion is not entirely accurate—the reversion to a lower rate of ticket splitting coincides with the switch from an office bloc ballot (favored at first by most states adopting the Australian ballot) to a party column ballot (the preference of most states following experiments with the office bloc ballot). Thus, it would seem that the reversion to a lower

level of ticket-splitting is not the result of a natural regression to the mean (as Rusk argues), but rather it is the result of yet another institutional change—one which favors lower levels of ticket splitting. With this quick switch from the office bloc ballot to the party column ballot, there was only a very short period in which candidates may have felt the need to run their campaigns independently of the party and party organization. As candidates were still organized on ballots by party—and, in some cases, voters were given the option of voting the "straight ticket" for one of the parties—there was no obvious incentive to behave as though the system were candidate-centered.

Examining this early period of the Australian ballot's adoption, Wittrock et al. (2008) begin where Katz and Sala (1996) left off and examine the short-term effects of the adoption of the Australian ballot. In particular, they examine committee assignments, floor voting behavior, and the distribution of particularistic spending projects (pork)—all of which are hypothesized to yield more immediate electoral returns than the committee property rights examined by Katz and Sala. They find that these effects are concentrated among districts using the office bloc—rather than the party column—ballot, however. This helps to confirm that Rusk's (1970) observation may be an artifact of the early shift from office bloc to party column ballots.

Continuing the distinction between ballot types, Roberts (2008) demonstrates that around 1950 the number of districts using the office bloc ballot began to exceed the number of districts using the party column ballot; from there, the two formats diverge in popularity. This precedes only slightly what is generally considered to be the rise of candidate-centered politics sometime in the 1960s. Thus we have one potential explanation—that of institutional reform. Clearly, voters casting a ballot using a party column format would consider parties to be highly salient, while those casting ballots of the office bloc format would consider the candidates themselves (and perhaps other indicators, such as incumbency, as Roberts argues) highly salient. In this case, voters treat candidates less as representatives of their party and more as individuals. Thus, candidate-centered behavior is incentivized.

Still, the switch in ballot format does not seem to be sufficient to encourage mass candidate-centered behavior after over a century of candidates acting as agents of their party.[6] Furthermore, candidates had no reason to believe that voters would not still see the party label next to the candidates' names and cast their ballots based on parties. The office bloc format may have been necessary for voters to start considering candidates as individuals—rather than as representatives of the national or local party—but it does not seem likely to be sufficient to encourage a broad change in the behavior of candidates and voters more generally. Other factors are likely to have contributed to the broad phenomenon of candidate-centered politics.

One important contextual factor to consider is money. Real disposable personal income has increased in the post-World War II era, as did the pressures on candidates to raise and spend money (see Udall 1967). Such trends are difficult to ignore when attempting to match them with another phenomenon presumed to have increased during the same time period (candidate-centered politics). The causal mechanism here is fairly clear: Individuals have more money to help fund campaigns. Of course, individuals in the post-war United States have had multiple outlets which would gladly take donations. First are the parties—individuals may give to parties if they are particularly loyal partisans. The parties may then use the funds as they deem fit, either by funneling it to candidates or by using the money to fund their own operations at the organizational level. Another outlet for donors would be an interest group or political action committee. If an individual donor is particularly committed to a specific cause, she may choose to donate to the cause directly. The interest group or PAC may then direct the funds to candidates who are deemed "friendly" to their cause. Finally, individuals may decide to donate their money directly to candidates. If individuals are increasingly contributing to candidate campaigns, this could be both a symptom and a cause

[6]In fact, Roberts (2008) posits a largely intervening role for ballot type. As I do in the chapters that follow, he splits the sample into districts using the office bloc ballot and those using the party column ballot and creates two different models for districts with each ballot type.

of candidate-centered politics. If candidates are more salient in the minds of individuals, they will donate money directly to the candidates. Simultaneously, candidates receiving money from donors directly would lead them to organize their own campaigns, relying comparatively less on the party organization. What I argue here is that the increase in real disposable income—when occurring in districts with office bloc ballots—will lead individuals to donate more money to candidate campaigns. The presence of the office bloc ballot in a district would serve to make candidates more salient than parties. Furthermore, there are likely to be greater income effects in districts with more television exposure for the candidates. Thus, not only are individuals increasingly capable of donating their own money, they are also more likely to give to candidates directly in areas in which these other conditions hold (office bloc ballots and television stations).

While we have data on political donations since the 1970s and the passage of the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) in 1972, data for earlier periods are almost entirely unavailable. A sufficient proxy is real disposable personal income, which provides a measure for untaxed dollars earned per capita. Several other studies (including Claassen 2007; Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder 2003) have noted that higher individual and district income levels correlate with higher likelihoods of donating to political campaigns and higher levels of campaign spending. Furthermore, there is reason to expect that spending will increase the salience of individual characteristics in determining electoral outcomes, a relationship uncovered by Jacobson (1978, 1985, 1990), Green and Krasno (1988, 1990), Gerber (1998), Brians and Wattenberg (1996), and, in the comparative context, by Shin et al. (2005) and Benoit and Marsh (2010). Thus, as district income and campaign spending increase, we can hypothesize that we might see an increase in "candidate-centeredness."

Another factor that may have played a role is the rise of television. As Prior (2006) argues, the rise of television may have contributed to the increase in the incumbency advantage—a phenomenon which I have already argued is linked to the rise of candidate-centered politics. His argument emphasizes the role of local television stations, which tended to give significant

air time to incumbent representatives to fill the required public affairs programming time. Under the equal time provision of the Communications Act of 1934, the airtime given to both candidates for office may have encouraged candidate-centered behavior among both candidates and voters. Voters would have seen (literally) candidates as individuals and would begin to associate policy stances with the candidates rather than with the parties—a trend noted by Aldrich and Niemi (1990). Candidates would see the value in conducting their own campaigns, independent of the parties, and would develop a campaign strategy to maximize their use of this new technology.

Thus, while the adoption of both the Australian ballot and direct primary *allowed* for candidate-centered politics, they did not directly lead to it. The switch to the office bloc form of the Australian ballot and the rise of disposable income and television possibly provided the necessary impetus for the rise of candidate-centered politics. Without the reforms of the Progressive era, candidates would be forced to act as agents of the party, rather than as individual candidates; thus, the reforms were necessary but not sufficient to bring about the rise of candidate-centered politics. Candidates had to be incentivized to behave differently. I argue that the switch to the office bloc ballot and the advent of television may have provided incentives for candidates to seek to cultivate a personal vote.

Other factors may have played a role in encouraging the rise of candidate-centered politics. For instance, the civil rights movement and the fractured base of the Democratic Party may have led some Democrats to present themselves as individuals, rather than as representatives of a party whose platform was unclear. Candidates may have felt the need to differentiate themselves from their copartisans; in an era in which party label was not as strong a signal as it was in other, more polarized eras, candidates needed to explain to voters what exactly they stood for. Such activities would have resembled candidate-centered tactics.

Another factor which may have led to the rise of candidate-centered politics was the decline of party influence in Congress. Following the revolt against Speaker Cannon in 1910, party leaders became less powerful in committee assignments and the legislative process. As

Polsby (1968) notes, the increasing internal complexity and universalistic decision criteria (such as the seniority system for determining committee chairs) helped to "institutionalize" Congress. These same trends de-emphasized parties in government, allowing members of Congress to develop individual records and earn personal achievements, which they could then take back to their districts and emphasize in an election. As Congress became more individualistic, it follows that so, too, congressional elections may have become more individualistic and less focused on parties.

Of course, the advent of candidate-centered politics may not have been uniform across races, much less across offices. As Aldrich and Niemi (1990) note, Kennedy used television to his advantage in the 1960 presidential debates, but he also created a national campaign organization long before many other office seekers were considering this tactic. Furthermore, he sought something akin to a "personal vote" by seeking to win state primaries before these primaries were consequential. Due to the higher profile and greater fundraising of presidential elections, therefore, I argue that presidential candidates would be more likely to adopt the candidate-centered approach. As the "face" of the party, it is difficult to differentiate between presidential candidates acting as agents of the party versus acting as individual candidates, but it would appear that Kennedy began a trend toward using the independent campaign organization (that is, not controlled by the party) to win primaries and affect the outcome of the general election. This strategy forced the Democratic Party's hand with the McGovern-Fraser Commission's recommendations for the 1972 Democratic nomination. Thus, the candidates (starting with John Kennedy and continuing through Eugene McCarthy in 1968) campaigned independently of the parties and the parties then adapted to remain relevant by reforming the nomination system.

At the congressional level, candidates may not have had the funds or the visibility to conduct their own campaigns until much later.[7] While candidates in denser urban areas

[7]Kolodny (1998) notes that congressional campaign committees have existed for over a century, but that sometime in the 1970s—and largely due to campaign finance reform—these committees became major sources of funds for candidates. This conflicts with the argument

would likely have had greater media exposure and higher name recognition (thus giving them the ability to cultivate a personal vote), candidates from rural districts may have faced a different environment. Furthermore, in some districts, the only competitive election was the primary. In the "Solid South," for instance, the general election was typically a mere hurdle for the Democratic candidate. In such cases, we should expect that candidates for the general election would be dominated by the party and that these candidates would present themselves to the electorate as representatives of the party, rather than as individuals. Winning the primary may have entailed brandishing one's record as a party loyalist, especially in districts where machines dominated, such as in Kansas City (the Pendergast machine) and Chicago (Cook County Democratic Organization). Thus, it is clear that the advent of candidate-centered politics would have been conditioned on multiple factors at the congressional level.

Focusing on elections to the U.S. House over time to uncover the timing and causes of candidate-centered politics provides numerous advantages. First, the greater number of races, greater frequency of elections, and smaller scale of elections all provide useful variation on important dimensions, thus providing greater leverage on the questions of interest. Second, if we assume that campaign tactics originate in electoral campaigns for higher office (such as presidential campaigns) and "trickle down" to lower-level campaigns, it is likely that the transition to a candidate-centered electoral system manifested itself later in lower-level elections; examining House races can thus provide an examination of when such a system fully took form across elections to federal office. Finally, while presidential and Senate races often feature only the highest quality candidates, there is substantial variation across congressional districts in any given year in the degree to which candidates are of high "quality." This allows us to examine and clarify the effects of candidate quality, a factor typically found

set forth by Herrnson (1988) that these committees emerged as a major shift in the role of the national party organizations, but both agree that in the 1970s, congressional campaign committees began to serve a vital role for its members. This further indicates the changing nature of party-candidate relations; whereas the party used to dominate, now the party organization served the candidates by providing necessary resources.

to play a significant role in the nature of congressional elections (see, for example, Carson and Roberts 2011; Jacobson 2013).

The Plan of this Dissertation

In the chapters that follow, I provide a clear theory of the rise of candidate-centered politics which integrates the roles of institutional reforms, income and campaign spending, and television. Submitting this theory to rigorous testing yields results that are largely supportive of my theory. I then conclude with a discussion of the importance of these results for the fields of American institutions and elections as well as normative theory and comparative politics.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the importance of ballot format for the rise of candidate-centered politics, in part following the work of Carson and Roberts (2013). I describe the rise of Australian ballot laws in the late nineteenth century and discuss trends in ballot format following these initial adoption laws. Importantly, I also derive and describe my measurement of "candidate centeredness"—a measure derived from work by Jacobson (1987)—and discuss its benefits and drawbacks. I test for direct effects of ballot format on candidate centeredness, as well as the indirect effects of ballot format on the role of candidate-specific traits on electoral outcomes. The findings support the theory, which posits a largely indirect (but crucial) role for ballot format in the development of a candidate-centered electoral system.

In Chapter 3, I turn my attention to the roles of income and campaign spending. I explore the literature on campaign spending and candidate centeredness. I then turn my attention to rise of disposable income and discuss how this phenomenon translates into a larger pool of campaign money for candidates, providing a useful method of studying campaign finance in an era without any comprehensive campaign finance data. I then describe my own theory for the role of money in the rise of candidate-centered politics, testing the theory with data spanning from 1930 to 1980. The results provide an important glance at the centrality of

ballot format to many of the observations made by political scientists about the role of money in congressional campaigns.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the role of television in the rise of a candidate-centered electoral system. I discuss the truly meteoric rise of television in the 1950s and why television might contribute to candidate-centered politics. I then discuss the even larger body of research attributing minimal or limited effects to the role of television in reshaping our electoral system. I then fit television into my theory of candidate centeredness, deriving expectations from more recent work on the role of television. After testing for television's effects through multiple specifications, I find support for my theory that television's role is minimal at best, which should lead scholars to question work ascribing too great a role to television in the changing landscape of American electoral politics in the mid- to late-twentieth century.

In Chapter 5, I provide a general discussion of my theory and findings, piecing everything back together and extracting some "big picture" conclusions. I then discuss the implications of these findings for research in the fields of American elections, normative theory, and comparative politics. I finish with an eye towards avenues for future research on the causes and consequences of candidate-centered politics, both in the U.S. and abroad.

Chapter 2

Ballot Reform and Congressional Elections

In 1891, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed a bill to adopt the Australian ballot for all statewide and national elections. The House passed the original version of the bill proposed by a variety of reform-minded organizations, including the Civil Service Reform Association, the Citizens' Municipal League, and the Pennsylvania Ballot Reform Association, who organized in response to calls for reforms to dismantle what was then seen as widespread political corruption. The original form of the bill passed the state House with a wide margin and went to the state Senate's Committee on Elections with little fanfare. Less than a month later, however, the Senate reported the bill "with such vital changes as to render its operation dangerous to the freedom and purity of elections, if not flatly unconstitutional" (Binney 1892, p. 752). After a firestorm of public criticism, the committee re-reported the bill nearly two weeks later with several objectionable changes, but distinctly more favorable to the parties than the House's version. This version of the bill passed with only minor amendments and was signed into law shortly thereafter. The key difference between the two chambers was the domination of the state Senate by Republican machine "lackeys."

The two different versions both implemented a variation of the Australian ballot already in use in other states. The House's version followed the format used in Massachusetts. Massachusetts's method—dubbed the "office bloc" format—was widespread and generally accepted as the better format by reformers. In some other states, however, a different format was beginning to appear. This format would place candidates' names under their party labels (and often their party emblems) and often included a place for the voter to mark to ensure a vote for a straight party ticket—in this way, voters would need only make one mark to complete the ballot. This format—dubbed the "Indiana" or "party column" ballot—was often decried by reformers as too favorable to parties. Owing to the Republicans' use of the eagle as their emblem and the Democrats' use of the rooster as theirs, one observer highlighted the difference between the two formats as follows: "By the Massachusetts ballot citizens vote for certain men for certain offices; by the Indiana ballot they vote for eagles and roosters—mere party signs" (Woodburn 1914, p. 352).[1] While states such as Indiana had already adopted a pure "party column" format, Pennsylvania's state Senate chose a method even less favorable to independent and minority party candidates, as discussed below.[2]

In a sense, then, parties worked to ensure that the ballot reforms that ultimately passed were not merely the least unfriendly option to their interests; parties actively worked to advance their interests through the reform process. In this chapter, I argue that the legacy of partisan involvement in the reform process led to a bias which favored parties for decades following the initial adoption of Australian ballot laws. Once the party column ballot format—favored by parties in the earliest days of the Australian ballot reform movement—began to fall out of favor, the impact of parties on electoral outcomes decreased. Furthermore, as I demonstrate in later chapters, ballot format largely helps to determine the effects of other

[1]Indiana actually used the party column ballot with the eagle and rooster emblems recently as 2002, despite the existence of the more widely-known elephant and donkey symbols. While the state still uses these party emblems and allows for straight ticket voting, the arrangement of candidates now follows the office block format.

[2]See Figures 2.2 and 2.3 for examples of these two formats.

potential causes of candidate-centered politics. The importance of ballot reform, then, is difficult to overstate.

This importance is not readily apparent, however, largely because of the long lag time between the initial adoption of Australian ballot laws and the rise of candidate-centered elections. By 1910, all states except Georgia, New Jersey, and the Carolinas had adopted some form of the Australian ballot. Political scientists and historians have typically identified the 1960s as the period during which candidate-centered political emerged. Despite this, scholars who point to Progressive reforms as the cause of the transition to a candidate-centered electoral system (including, among others, Ware 2002; Roberts 2008; Carson and Roberts 2013) are not entirely mistaken. At first glance, this lag time appears to refute the theory that ballot and primary reform played a role in the rise of candidate-centered politics. As I shall argue in this chapter, though, it was largely the format of the ballot that helped usher in the new, candidate-centered, era of American elections. This helps explain the lag between the initial adoption of Progressive reforms and the rise of candidate-centered politics.

This chapter traces the initial adoption of Australian ballots laws throughout the country with an eye towards the role played by parties in the development of the laws. I then turn my attention to the impact of the differing formats of the ballots on the relationship between candidate traits and electoral outcomes, operating under the assumption that, in a candidate-centered system, candidate traits matter more for vote totals than they would under a party-centered system. In the subsequent section, I describe the measure I shall use in the remainder of the project to measure what I call "candidate-centeredness"—a measure derived from existing work by Jacobson (1987)—and demonstrate the validity of the measure. I conclude with a full analysis of the direct effects of ballot type on the degree to which a given House district is candidate-centered.

The Adoption of Australian Ballot Laws

First proposed by Francis S. Dutton in 1851, the secret ballot was adopted in South Australia as the Elections Act of 1857–58. In future laws passed in 1862, 1876, and 1887, the ballot was extended to cover all of Australia. Australia's mother country took quick notice, as Great Britain's elections were rife with voter intimidation, riots, and corruption. In 1869, a committee was appointed to consider electoral reforms and ultimately culminated in the Ballot Act of 1872, which adapted the South Australian secret ballot for British parliamentary elections. This act was extended to cover other elections in 1873, 1875, 1884, and 1888. The original law was set to expire at the end of 1880 but was extended each year through 1888. From there it was adopted by Canada (in 1874), Belgium (in 1877 and 1878), Italy (in 1882), Norway (in 1884), and several ballot laws with provisions borrowed from the Australian and English systems were adopted in Austria, France, Hungary, and Greece (Wigmore 1889*a*, pp. 2–22).

The first government in the U.S. to adopt Australian ballot reform was Louisville, KY, which adopted the Australian system for its own municipal elections in 1888. Shortly thereafter, the legislatures of New York and Massachusetts passed bills calling for the adoption of the Australian ballot, though Governor Hill of New York vetoed the initial bill (Wigmore 1889*a*, pp. 22–25). In 1889, seven more states followed suit. In 1890, six more states adopted some form of the secret ballot. In 1891, an additional *seventeen* states adopted the secret ballot. This tidal wave of reform continued such that, by 1896, only four states had no secret-ballot provisions and, by the end of 1910, Georgia and South Carolina were the lone holdouts (Ludington 1911).

The debate over the Pennsylvania law illustrates the types of debates that often ensued. The bill's original version—proposed in 1889 by a representative from Delaware County—largely adopted the language of the bill passed in Massachusetts in 1888. According to the original formulation, all parties who polled at least three percent in the previous election would be eligible to appear on the ballot, with individual nominees chosen and certified

by party leaders. Other nominees would require, at most, 1000 signatures to file their nomination papers, though this figure would be far less for any offices not elected by the whole state. The original version of the bill also provided for the original Australian arrangement (as well as that used in numerous other states, including Massachusetts) of candidates' names on the ballot—candidate names would be arranged in alphabetical order under the offices for which they were nominated. In this way, a voter would need to make as many marks as there were offices on the ballot in order to complete the ballot. Under this system, as Binney notes, "There is no inducement to vote for one man rather than another to save trouble, nor any risk of voting for any man without being aware of it" (1892, p. 761). Additional sections of the original bill provided for methods of counting ballots and assistance for handicapped voters.

The final version of the bill altered the original proposal's provisions related to nominations, ballot format, counting methods, and assistance for handicapped voters. Under the provisions of the final version, candidates for statewide office must receive the signatures of one half of one percent of the largest number of votes cast in the previous statewide election. For non-statewide races, candidates would need to receive three percent of the largest number of votes cast in that area of the state in the last election. In practical terms, this resulted in some very odd figures: For a candidate for statewide office to appear on the ballot in 1892, he would need about 2080 certified signatures from qualified voters, while a candidate for office in Philadelphia County (whose politics were dominated by the Republican machine in that city) would need roughly 3100. In the modern era, these numbers are not particularly difficult to achieve, but in the late nineteenth century these were seen as insurmountable obstacles to candidates not from the two major parties.

Furthermore, in the final version of the bill, the majority party would have all of its candidates listed under its party emblem, with minority parties given later columns. Independent candidates, however, would be listed not in a separate "Independent" column, but in the traditional Australian/Massachusetts format. While some observers believed this

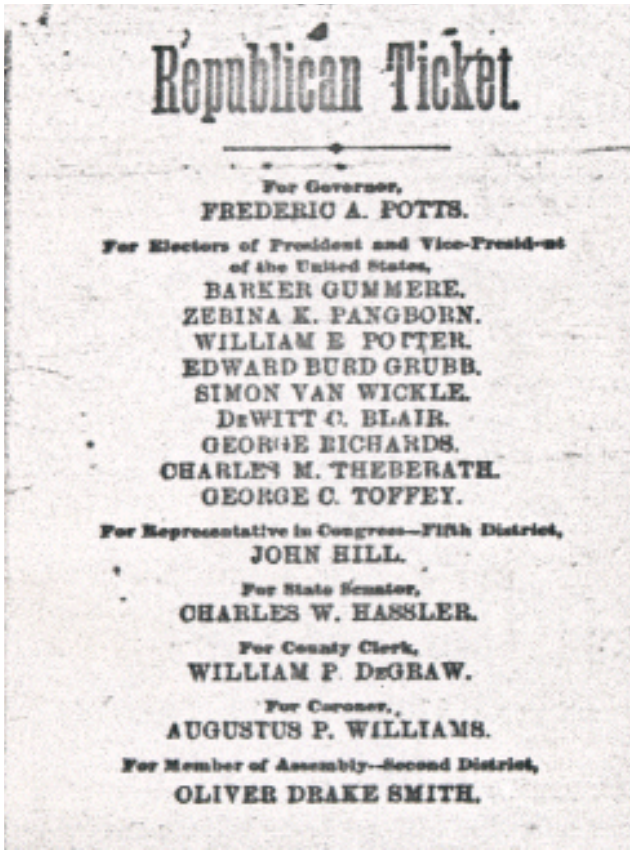
to be a hybrid of the Massachusetts and Indiana ballots (and therefore placed somewhere between those two ballots in terms of reform), the ballot was, in fact, far more favorable to parties than the even the Indiana ballots. In order for a voter to split his ticket, he could not mark the straight ticket option at all and must instead make a mark next to the name of each of his preferred individual candidates. The placement of independent candidates in a different format on a different part of the ballot meant that many voters were unaware of these candidates and simply chose either the straight ticket or split their tickets among the various partisan nominees.

The debate over the Pennsylvania Australian ballot law highlights the role of antiparty reformers and party operatives—both largely accepted the need for reform, but the formats each side preferred would have advanced the interests of two distinct groups. The party column format largely helped the parties prevent "treason" by rogue candidates, who printed their own tickets and stole votes from the party's preferred nominees (Reynolds and McCormick 1986). The office bloc format helped reformers, third parties, and independent candidates, who would benefit from equal placement on the ballot with the two major parties.

The development of Pennsylvania's first Australian ballot law illustrates the role parties and party leaders played in shaping reform in such a way as to benefit them the most. By restricting ballot access to third parties and independents and moving independent candidates to a considerably less visible position on the ballot, Pennsylvania's party leaders were able to hand reformers a victory in the form of official, secret ballots, but the final version was far from the antiparty version originally introduced. Reformers generally recognized the parties' usurpation of the reform process to pursue their own goals. Wigmore (1891) dubbed the Pennsylvania reform—and other reforms, such as those in New York, that had been dominated by parties—"bogus" ballot reform.

Evans (1917) traces the development of ballot laws in the United States. Similar to the records uncovered by Bensel (2003, 2004), Evans finds that ballots prior to the adoption of Australian ballot laws were largely printed by parties and were easily distinguishable so

that party operatives might be able to verify that those who were persuaded (or, as often happened, bribed) to vote for their party followed through with their promise. In this way, voters were accountable to parties and loyal partisan voters could be rewarded with money, whiskey, food, or even jobs. Evans notes that, by 1881, fifteen states had adopted laws requiring the printing of ballots on plain white paper, but parties often circumvented these laws by using different shades of white (pp. 6–8). An example of the party ticket can be found in Figure 2.1 below.


Republican Ticket

For Governor,
FREDERIC A. POTTS.

For Electors of President and Vice-President of the United States,
BARKER GUMMERE.
ZEBINA K. PANGBORN.
WILLIAM E. POTTER.
EDWARD BURD GRUBB.
SIMON VAN WICKLE.
DEWITT C. BLAIR.
GEORGE RICHARDS.
CHARLES M. THEBERATH.
GEORGE C. TOFFEY.

For Representative in Congress—Fifth District,
JOHN HILL.

For State Senator,
CHARLES W. HASSLER.

For County Clerk,
WILLIAM P. DEGRAW.

For Coroner,
AUGUSTUS P. WILLIAMS.

For Member of Assembly—Second District,
OLIVER DRAKE SMITH.

Figure 2.1: New Jersey Republican ballot (Party ticket), 1880

These "party ticket" ballots contained only the names of the party's nominees and, as such, discouraged split-ticket voting. As Carson and Roberts (2013) note, however, split-ticket voting was neither impossible nor exceedingly rare during the pre-Australian ballot period. Many voters would use "pasters"—slips of paper with candidates' names to be

adhered to the regular party ballot—in an effort to split their tickets. Parties often responded by covering the ballots in an oily substance so as to prevent the adhesion of the pasters.

Another problem with the party ticket system was the potential for "bolters"—candidates who failed to secure the official party nomination and either fused with the opposition, printed pasters, or created their own ticket. This was especially common in districts with little or no partisan competition—if the convention's choice for the party's nominee was virtually guaranteed election, the only outlet a candidate not nominated at the convention might have would be to print his own ticket with his name inserted in place of the official nominee's. Reynolds and McCormick (1986) argue that the prevalence of this occurrence led party operatives to seek a way to prevent these rogue tickets. The Australian ballot provided them with such an opportunity.

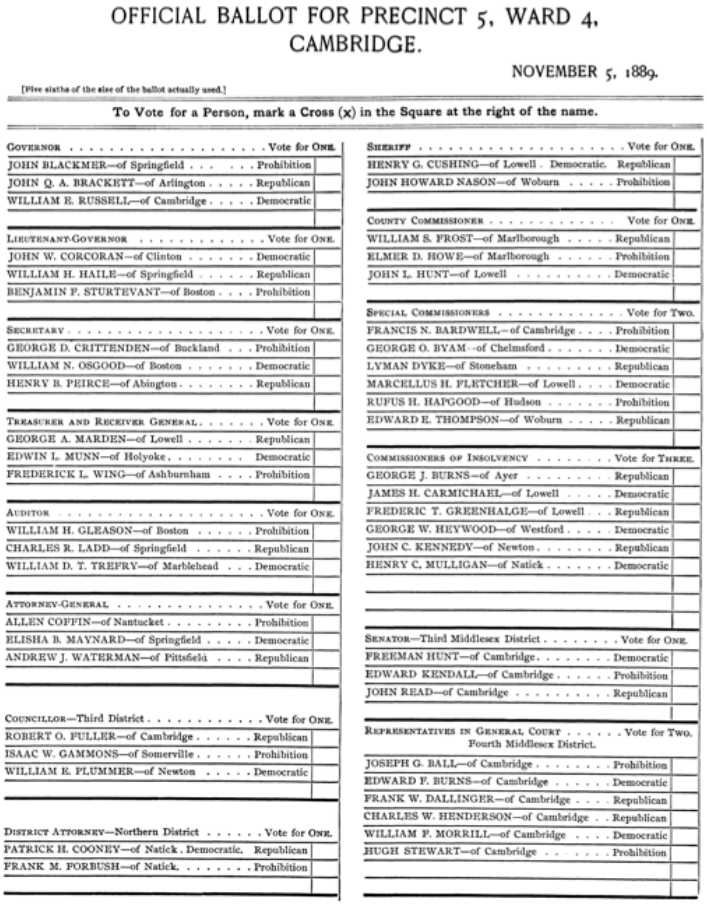
In sum, as Reynolds and McCormick note, "Far from a closed system, with the range of choice limited to one or another party slate, the nineteenth-century electoral environment offered numerous opportunities for local partisans, maverick candidates, and independent voters to confound the regular party organizations" (1986, p. 847). Thus, while activists and reformers clearly had their own goals in mind when seeking reforms to state ballot laws, their efforts were not always met by anti-reform parties. Rather, party leaders were willing conspirators, albeit with their own preferred outcomes. This assertion is far from controversial—several scholars, both contemporary to the reforms and of the modern era, have demonstrated that parties benefited from many of the Australian ballot laws passed (see, for example, Wigmore 1891; Binney 1892; Deming 1906; Woodburn 1914; Woodruff 1916; Ware 2000, 2002; Walker 2005).

It should be noted, however, that pro-reform activists were not all alike in the motivation for their support for reform. Wigmore outlines the various reasons activists in each state might be working towards adoption of the secret ballot: supporters of Henry George's "single-tax" movement and labor unions sought the secret ballot to help prevent state leaders from interfering with their goals; Southerners sought both to disenfranchise the "illiterate negro"

and to relieve black voters from potential intimidation preventing them from voting for the Democratic party; ballot reform as a reaction against general political corruption in the North and East and as part of a broader set of reforms, including corrupt-practices acts; in some other states activists sought ballot reform to prevent ballot-box stuffing and false returns; supporters who sought to overthrow urban political machines; and "among thoughtful men everywhere a desire to see elections free from even the most subtle intimidating influences" (1889*b*, p. 165).

As Ludington (1911) documents, the spread of secret ballot laws in the United States was rapid and extensive. However, he also highlights the distinct forms of the ballot adopted by each state. While Louisville and Massachusetts merely adapted the Australian rules to their own governments, in 1889 Indiana crafted a new type of secret ballot. As seen in Figure 2.2—reprinted from Dana (1892)—the Massachusetts ballot placed all eligible candidates on the same ballot, which was printed by the state and organized candidates' names by office type. This was the same style adopted in Australia and Great Britain and was seen by party reformers as the ideal ballot format.

Figure 2.3 demonstrates a later version of that adopted by Indiana in 1889. The candidates' names were to be organized in columns, with each column containing only the candidates of a given party. In most cases, a party emblem would be placed atop each column and a space made available to mark a straight ticket, enabling the voter to make a single mark and vote for the entire party slate. In this case, the voter would mark an "X" in the circle containing the emblem. This format—called the "party column" or Indiana format—was used by more than half of all states that had adopted secret ballot laws by 1910 (Ludington 1911; Rusk 1970).



OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR PRECINCT 5, WARD 4,
CAMBRIDGE.

NOVEMBER 5, 1889.

[Five sixths of the size of the ballot actually used.]

To Vote for a Person, mark a Cross (X) in the Square at the right of the name.

GOVERNOR . . . . . Vote for ONE.
JOHN BLACKMER—of Springfield . . . . . Prohibition
JOHN Q. A. BRACKETT—of Arlington . . . . . Republican
WILLIAM E. RUSSELL—of Cambridge . . . . . Democratic

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR . . . . . Vote for ONE.
JOHN W. CORCORAN—of Clinton . . . . . Democratic
WILLIAM H. HAILE—of Springfield . . . . . Republican
BENJAMIN F. STURTEVANT—of Boston . . . . Prohibition

SECRETARY . . . . . Vote for ONE.
GEORGE D. CRITTENDEN—of Buckland . . . Prohibition
WILLIAM N. OSGOOD—of Boston . . . . . Democratic
HENRY B. PEIRCE—of Abington . . . . . Republican

TREASURER AND RECEIVER GENERAL . . . . . Vote for ONE.
GEORGE A. MARDEN—of Lowell . . . . . Republican
EDWIN L. MUNN—of Holyoke . . . . . Democratic
FREDERICK L. WING—of Ashburnham . . . . Prohibition

AUDITOR . . . . . Vote for ONE.
WILLIAM H. GLEASON—of Boston . . . . . Prohibition
CHARLES R. LADD—of Springfield . . . . . Republican
WILLIAM D. T. TREFRY—of Marblehead . . . Democratic

ATTORNEY-GENERAL . . . . . Vote for ONE.
ALLEN COFFIN—of Nantucket . . . . . Prohibition
ELISHA B. MAYNARD—of Springfield . . . . . Democratic
ANDREW J. WATERMAN—of Pittsfield . . . . Republican

COUNCILLOR—Third District . . . . . Vote for ONE.
ROBERT O. FULLER—of Cambridge . . . . . Republican
ISAAC W. GAMMONS—of Somerville . . . . . Prohibition
WILLIAM E. PLUMMER—of Newton . . . . . Democratic

DISTRICT ATTORNEY—Northern District . . . . . Vote for ONE.
PATRICK H. COONEY—of Natick . Democratic. Republican
FRANK M. FORBUSH—of Natick. . . . . Prohibition

SHERIFF . . . . . Vote for ONE.
HENRY G. CUSHING—of Lowell . Democratic. Republican
JOHN HOWARD NASON—of Woburn . . . . . Prohibition

COUNTY COMMISSIONER . . . . . Vote for ONE.
WILLIAM S. FROST—of Marlborough . . . . . Republican
ELMER D. HOWE—of Marlborough . . . . . Prohibition
JOHN L. HUNT—of Lowell . . . . . Democratic

SPECIAL COMMISSIONERS . . . . . Vote for TWO.
FRANCIS N. BARDWELL—of Cambridge . . . . Prohibition
GEORGE O. BYAM—of Chelmsford . . . . . Democratic
LYMAN DYKE—of Stoneham . . . . . Republican
MARCELLUS H. FLETCHER—of Lowell . . . . Democratic
RUFUS H. HAPGOOD—of Hudson . . . . . Prohibition
EDWARD E. THOMPSON—of Woburn . . . . . Republican

COMMISSIONERS OF INSOLVENCY . . . . . Vote for THREE.
GEORGE J. BURNS—of Ayer . . . . . Republican
JAMES H. CARMICHAEL—of Lowell . . . . . Democratic
FREDERIC T. GREENHALGE—of Lowell . . . Republican
GEORGE W. HEYWOOD—of Westford . . . . Democratic
JOHN C. KENNEDY—of Newton . . . . . Republican
HENRY C. MULLIGAN—of Natick . . . . . Democratic

SENATOR—Third Middlesex District . . . . . Vote for ONE.
FREEMAN HUNT—of Cambridge . . . . . Democratic
EDWARD KENDALL—of Cambridge . . . . . Prohibition
JOHN READ—of Cambridge . . . . . Republican

REPRESENTATIVES IN GENERAL COURT . . . . . Vote for TWO.
Fourth Middlesex District.
JOSEPH G. BALL—of Cambridge . . . . . Prohibition
EDWARD F. BURNS—of Cambridge . . . . . Democratic
FRANK W. DALLINGER—of Cambridge . . . Republican
CHARLES W. HENDERSON—of Cambridge . . Republican
WILLIAM F. MORRILL—of Cambridge . . . . Democratic
HUGH STEWART—of Cambridge . . . . . Prohibition

Figure 2.2: Massachusetts Ballot, 1889

Trends in Ballot Reform, 1900–1980

Interestingly, while many states initially adopted the Massachusetts format, several quickly switched to the more party-friendly Indiana format. States such as Kentucky, Wisconsin, Alabama, Rhode Island, Vermont, South Dakota, New Hampshire, and Wyoming (among others) all adopted the office bloc format in the late 1880s or early 1890s and, within 15 years, had switched to the party column ballot (Ludington 1911). Rusk (1970) uses this pattern to explain the odd trend of sudden and drastic increases in ticket-splitting that emerged immediately after adoption of Australian ballot laws, followed by a slight decrease in ticket-splitting. As the majority of states adopting official ballots in the earliest days of

SAMPLE STATE BALLOT

Republican Ticket

For United States Senator
HOMER E. CAPEHART

For Governor
HAROLD W. HANDLEY

For Lieutenant Governor
CRAWFORD F. PARKER

For Secretary of State
FRANK A. LENNING

For Auditor of State
ROY T. COMBS

For Treasurer of State
ADOLPH L. FOSSLER

For Attorney General
EDWIN K. STEERS

For Superintendent of Public Instruction
WILBUR YOUNG

For Reporter of Supreme and Appellate Courts
VIRGINIA B. CAYLOR

For Judge of Supreme Court First District
NORMAN F. ARTERBURN

For Judge of Supreme Court Third District
ARCHIE N. BOBBITT

For Judge of Supreme Court Fifth District
FREDERICK LANDIS

For Judge of Appellate Court First District
JAMES C. COOPER

For Judge of Appellate Court Second District
DEWEY KELLEY

Democratic Ticket

For United States Senator
CLAUDE R. WICKARD

For Governor
RALPH TUCKER

For Lieutenant Governor
BARTEL J. ANDISTRA

For Secretary of State
THOMAS L. LEMON

For Auditor of State
JOE HOGSDON

For Treasurer of State
ALBERT STEINWEDEL

For Attorney General
WILLIAM H. WOLF

For Superintendent of Public Instruction
EARL M. UTTERBACK

For Reporter of Supreme and Appellate Courts
DOLORES ELSNER JOHNSON

For Judge of Supreme Court First District
WARREN W. MARTIN, SR.

For Judge of Supreme Court Third District
PATRICK J. BARTON

For Judge of Supreme Court Fifth District
LLOYD C. WAMPLER

For Judge of Appellate Court First District
WAYNE COMBS

For Judge of Appellate Court Second District
SEVERIN M. SCHURGER

Prohibition Ticket

For United States Senator
CARL W. THOMPSON

For Governor
J. RALSTON MILLER

For Lieutenant Governor
RAYMOND M. MORRIS

For Secretary of State
JOSEPHINE LOUGH

For Auditor of State
WILLIAM W. GESCH

For Treasurer of State
HORACE N. SMITH

For Attorney General
GEORGE N. RANCK

For Superintendent of Public Instruction
ALISON E. WRENTMORE

For Reporter of Supreme and Appellate Courts
LOIS GILBERT KRANDELL

For Judge of Supreme Court First District
ZOE M. WYATT

Socialist Labor Ticket

For United States Senator
GORDON A. LONG

For Governor
MERLE L. WILLIAMS

For Lieutenant Governor
CHARLEY LYNCH

For Secretary of State
JOHN M. MORRIS

For Auditor of State
LAWRENCE J. O'BRYANT

For Treasurer of State
HERMAN A. KRONEWITTER

For Attorney General
VIVIENNE C. WILLIAMS

For Superintendent of Public Instruction
GEORGE MAGDICH

For Reporter of Supreme and Appellate Courts
WILLIAM H. MILLER

Figure 2.3: Indiana Ballot (Party column), 1956

reform chose the Massachusetts format, we should expect a greater degree of ticket-splitting. However, as more states opted instead for the Indiana format, the drastic increase in ticket-splitting was mitigated to an extent.

Indeed, by 1910, 43 states had adopted some form of the official ballot, with three adopting a compromise ballot of sorts. Of the 43 states adopting the official ballot, 28 had a pure Indiana ballot, with a straight-ticket option. Only ten had the pure Massachusetts ballot, with no straight ticket options (Ludington 1911). The dominance of the party column format continued through 1942, as Albright (1942) demonstrates. By 1942, 27 states had party

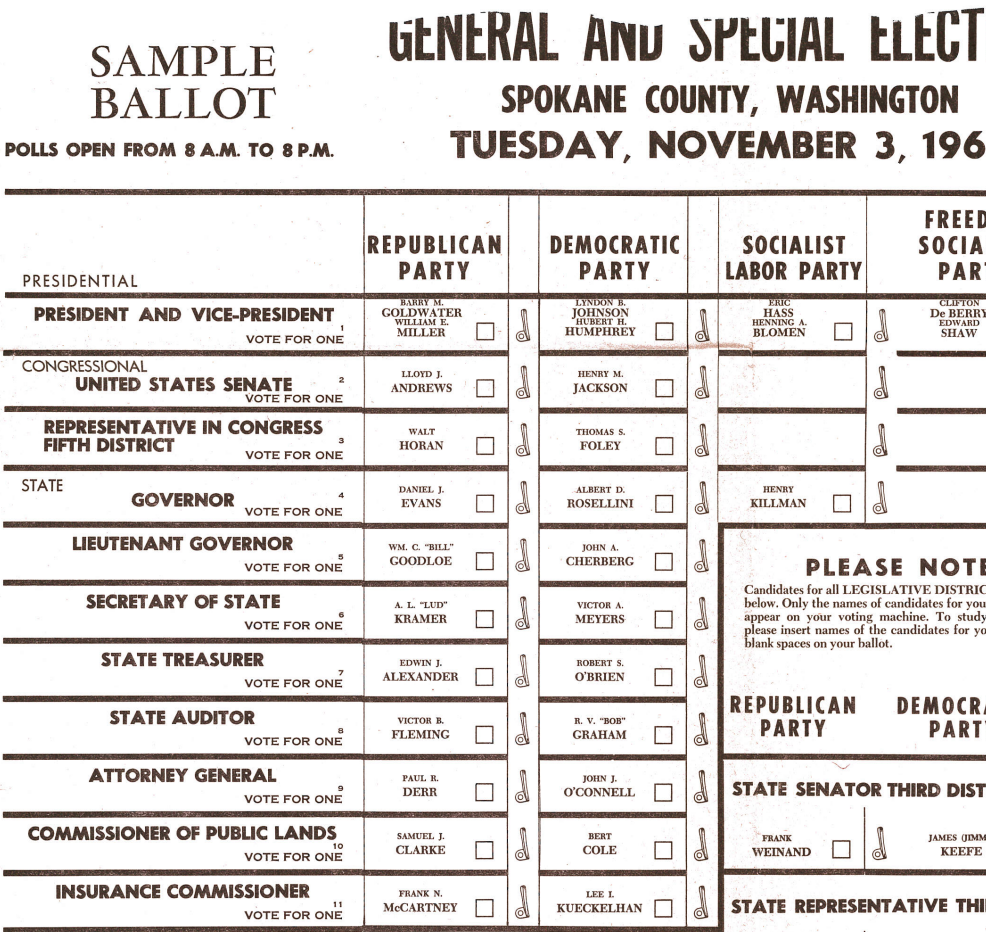
column ballots with straight ticket options, while only sixteen had office bloc ballots with no straight ticket options.

Interestingly, by 1963, 27 states still had the Indiana ballot (with straight ticket options) and seventeen had the Massachusetts format (with no straight ticket options). The remaining states had some mixture of the two.[3] While this would seem to contradict work by Roberts (2008, 2009)—who argues that the 1960s saw a shift away from the party column ballot and towards the office bloc ballot—this is not entirely the case. While states did not necessarily change their ballot laws, the pattern of reapportionment during the 1950s and 1960s saw increasing numbers of seats allocated to states with office bloc ballots and decreasing numbers of seats allocated to states with party column ballots. For example, California (an office bloc state) gained a total of 20 seats between 1950 and 1975, while party column states such as Illinois and Wisconsin lost seats during the same period.

To gather data on ballot format in the period from 1900 to 1980, I relied on a variety of sources. For the period from 1900 to 1910, Ludington (1911) provided full information for all states. Similarly, data up to 1942 are largely available from Engstrom and Kernell (2005) and Albright (1942). *The Book of the States* contains full ballot data up through the mid-1950s and the June 7, 1963 issue of CQ's *Weekly Report* contained information on ballot data at that time.

Data from the intervening and succeeding years were immensely difficult to uncover. Extensive searches of state statutory archives yielded several years' worth of ballot format data for states. I was successful in filling in many more years' worth of data by combing through newspaper archives for sample ballots. I was also able to retrieve data in some instances by contacting officials from various state archives and historical societies. Many of these individuals were unable to assist me without a substantial research fee, but a few were able to find archived ballots and scan them for me at no cost.

[3]These figures are from the *CQ Weekly Report* for the week ending June 7, 1963, p. 916.



SAMPLE
BALLOT

POLLS OPEN FROM 8 A.M. TO 8 P.M.

GENERAL AND SPECIAL ELECT
SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 196

	REPUBLICAN PARTY	DEMOCRATIC PARTY	SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY	FREED SOCIA PAR
PRESIDENTIAL PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT 1 VOTE FOR ONE	BARRY M. GOLDWATER WILLIAM E. MILLER	LYNDON B. JOHNSON HUBERT H. HUMPHREY	ERIC HASS HENNING A. BLOMEN	CLIFTON De BERRY EDWARD SHAW
CONGRESSIONAL UNITED STATES SENATE 2 VOTE FOR ONE	LLOYD J. ANDREWS	HENRY M. JACKSON		
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FIFTH DISTRICT 3 VOTE FOR ONE	WALT HORAN	THOMAS S. FOLEY		
STATE GOVERNOR 4 VOTE FOR ONE	DANIEL J. EVANS	ALBERT D. ROSELLINI	HENRY KILLMAN	
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR 5 VOTE FOR ONE	WM. C. "BILL" GOODLOE	JOHN A. CHERBERG		
SECRETARY OF STATE 6 VOTE FOR ONE	A. L. "LUD" KRAMER	VICTOR A. MEYERS		
STATE TREASURER 7 VOTE FOR ONE	EDWIN J. ALEXANDER	ROBERT S. O'BRIEN		
STATE AUDITOR 8 VOTE FOR ONE	VICTOR B. FLEMING	R. V. "BOB" GRAHAM		
ATTORNEY GENERAL 9 VOTE FOR ONE	PAUL R. DERR	JOHN J. O'CONNELL		
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS 10 VOTE FOR ONE	SAMUEL J. CLARKE	BERT COLE	FRANK WEINAND	JAMES (JIMM KEEFE
INSURANCE COMMISSIONER 11 VOTE FOR ONE	FRANK N. McCARTNEY	LEE I. KUECKELHAN		

PLEASE NOTE
Candidates for all LEGISLATIVE DISTRIC
below. Only the names of candidates for you
appear on your voting machine. To study
please insert names of the candidates for yo
blank spaces on your ballot.

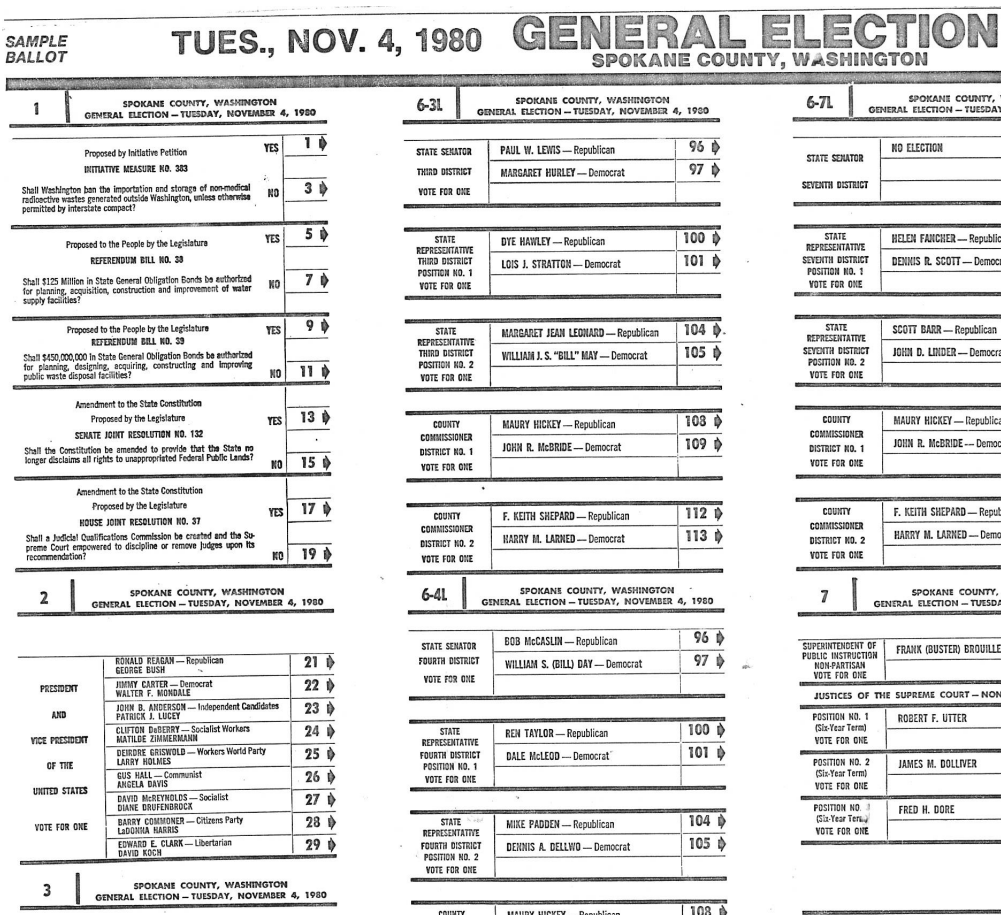
REPUBLICAN PARTY | DEMOCR PART

STATE SENATOR THIRD DIST

STATE REPRESENTATIVE THI

Figure 2.4: Washington State Ballot (Party column), 1964

One such outfit was the Eastern Region Branch of the Washington State Archives, who provided the ballots displayed in Figures 2.4 and 2.5. These demonstrate versions of the Indiana ballot (used in 1964) and Massachusetts ballot (used in 1980) in the state of Washington. As my own research demonstrated, several states did, in fact, shift from the party column ballot to the office bloc ballot by 1980, including Maine, Ohio, Mississippi, and Illinois. Roberts (2009) demonstrates in his Figure 4 that the shift towards the office bloc ballot continued in drastic form in the 1990s. As of today, only a small handful of states still use the party column ballot.


SAMPLE BALLOT

TUES., NOV. 4, 1980 GENERAL ELECTION

SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

1 SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON GENERAL ELECTION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

Proposed by Initiative Petition — YES 1
INITIATIVE MEASURE NO. 383
Shall Washington ban the importation and storage of non-medical radioactive wastes generated outside Washington, unless otherwise permitted by interstate compact? — NO 3

Proposed to the People by the Legislature — YES 5
REFERENDUM BILL NO. 39
Shall $125 Million in State General Obligation Bonds be authorized for planning, acquisition, construction and improvement of water supply facilities? — NO 7

Proposed to the People by the Legislature — YES 9
REFERENDUM BILL NO. 39
Shall $450,000,000 in State General Obligation Bonds be authorized for planning, designing, acquiring, constructing and improving public waste disposal facilities? — NO 11

Amendment to the State Constitution
Proposed by the Legislature — YES 13
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 132
Shall the Constitution be amended to provide that the State no longer disclaims all rights to unappropriated Federal Public Lands? — NO 15

Amendment to the State Constitution
Proposed by the Legislature — YES 17
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 37
Shall a Judicial Qualifications Commission be created and the Supreme Court empowered to discipline or remove judges upon its recommendation? — NO 19

2 SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON GENERAL ELECTION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES — VOTE FOR ONE

RONALD REAGAN — Republican GEORGE BUSH		21
JIMMY CARTER — Democrat WALTER F. MONDALE		22
JOHN B. ANDERSON — Independent Candidates PATRICK J. LUCEY		23
CLIFTON DeBERRY — Socialist Workers MATILDE ZIMMERMANN		24
DEIRDRE GRISWOLD — Workers World Party LARRY HOLMES		25
GUS HALL — Communist ANGELA DAVIS		26
DAVID McREYNOLDS — Socialist DIANE DRUFENBROCK		27
BARRY COMMONER — Citizens Party LaDONNA HARRIS		28
EDWARD E. CLARK — Libertarian DAVID KOCH		29

3 SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON GENERAL ELECTION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

6-31 SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON GENERAL ELECTION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

STATE SENATOR THIRD DISTRICT VOTE FOR ONE	PAUL W. LEWIS — Republican	96
	MARGARET HURLEY — Democrat	97
STATE REPRESENTATIVE THIRD DISTRICT POSITION NO. 1 VOTE FOR ONE	DYE HAWLEY — Republican	100
	LOIS J. STRATTON — Democrat	101
STATE REPRESENTATIVE THIRD DISTRICT POSITION NO. 2 VOTE FOR ONE	MARGARET JEAN LEONARD — Republican	104
	WILLIAM J. S. "BILL" MAY — Democrat	105
COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT NO. 1 VOTE FOR ONE	MAURY HICKEY — Republican	108
	JOHN R. McBRIDE — Democrat	109
COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT NO. 2 VOTE FOR ONE	F. KEITH SHEPARD — Republican	112
	HARRY M. LARNED — Democrat	113

6-41 SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON GENERAL ELECTION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

STATE SENATOR FOURTH DISTRICT VOTE FOR ONE	BOB McCASLIN — Republican	96
	WILLIAM S. (BILL) DAY — Democrat	97
STATE REPRESENTATIVE FOURTH DISTRICT POSITION NO. 1 VOTE FOR ONE	REN TAYLOR — Republican	100
	DALE McLEOD — Democrat	101
STATE REPRESENTATIVE FOURTH DISTRICT POSITION NO. 2 VOTE FOR ONE	MIKE PADDEN — Republican	104
	DENNIS A. DELLWO — Democrat	105
COUNTY	MAURY HICKEY — Republican	108

6-71 SPOKANE COUNTY, GENERAL ELECTION — TUESDAY

STATE SENATOR SEVENTH DISTRICT	NO ELECTION	
STATE REPRESENTATIVE SEVENTH DISTRICT POSITION NO. 1 VOTE FOR ONE	HELEN FANCHER — Republic	
	DENNIS R. SCOTT — Democ	
STATE REPRESENTATIVE SEVENTH DISTRICT POSITION NO. 2 VOTE FOR ONE	SCOTT BARR — Republican	
	JOHN D. LINDER — Democr	
COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT NO. 1 VOTE FOR ONE	MAURY HICKEY — Republic	
	JOHN R. McBRIDE — Democ	
COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT NO. 2 VOTE FOR ONE	F. KEITH SHEPARD — Repub	
	HARRY M. LARNED — Demo	

7 SPOKANE COUNTY, GENERAL ELECTION — TUESD

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION NON-PARTISAN VOTE FOR ONE	FRANK (BUSTER) BROUILLE	
JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT — NON		
POSITION NO. 1 (Six-Year Term) VOTE FOR ONE	ROBERT F. UTTER	
POSITION NO. 2 (Six-Year Term) VOTE FOR ONE	JAMES M. DOLLIVER	
POSITION NO. (Six-Year Ter VOTE FOR ONE	FRED H. DORE	

Figure 2.5: Washington State Ballot (Office bloc), 1980

One such shift occurred in Ohio in 1949. Contemporaries believed that the reform won support in 1949 because Taft was set to run as a Republican in a year in which a popular Democratic governor, Frank J. Lausche, would run for reelection. By removing the straight-ticket option of the Indiana format and switching to the Massachusetts format, it was widely believed that Taft would benefit from the resulting increase in ticket-splitting (Childs 1951; Suddes 2014). However, Taft himself stated, "It is not true that the ballot amendment was proposed merely on account of my election. It has long been urged by large groups among the Ohio voters, and has been frequently before the Legislature." In a quick tabulation in a letter to Childs (the chairman of the National Municipal League of New York, a leading reform group), Taft stated, "If I were to guess, I would think that the new ballot was responsible

for something between 100,000 and 200,000 of my total majority of 430,000" (Wunderlin 2006, pp. 222–223). While it is very likely that the ballot amendment did not *cause* Taft's reelection, it is entirely possible that, had Taft faced a better opponent, the ballot would have been decisive. On the "extreme weakness" of Taft's 1950 opponent, Democrat Joseph T. ("Jumpin' Joe") Ferguson, one modern observer recounted an election story about Ferguson: "Joe Ferguson might not have needed much help in losing. Among his other gems, Ferguson, asked amid the Korean War what foreign policy he favored, supposedly answered, 'Beat Michigan!' Still, Republicans left nothing to chance. They seldom do" (Suddes 2014).

My extensive research over a two-year period yielded the ballot format for roughly 90 percent of all districts in the period from 1900 to 1980. While the additional ten percent have proven elusive, I hope to obtain full ballot law data in the future.[4] Figure 2.6 depicts the trends in ballot formats over time as percentages of collected ballot data per year.

As demonstrated, for much of the 1950s and early 1960s the two ballot formats were in rough parity after decades of dominance by the party column format. However, in the mid-1960s, the office bloc ballot began a marked increase relative to the party column ballot (the odd shift in 1976 is an artifact of the lack of data for that year). This figure resembles those produced by Roberts (2008, 2009), which note a similar trend.

While the effects of ballot format may seem relatively straightforward—indeed, work by Rusk (1970); Engstrom and Kernell (2005); Wittrock et al. (2008); Roberts (2008, 2009); Carson and Roberts (2013); Carson and Sievert (N.d.) already explores the effects of ballot format—it is important to consider the importance of ballot format for the broader question of the rise of candidate-centered politics. It is to this that I turn my attention in the following section.

[4]See Roberts (2008, 2009) for a discussion of the difficulty in collecting these ballot data.

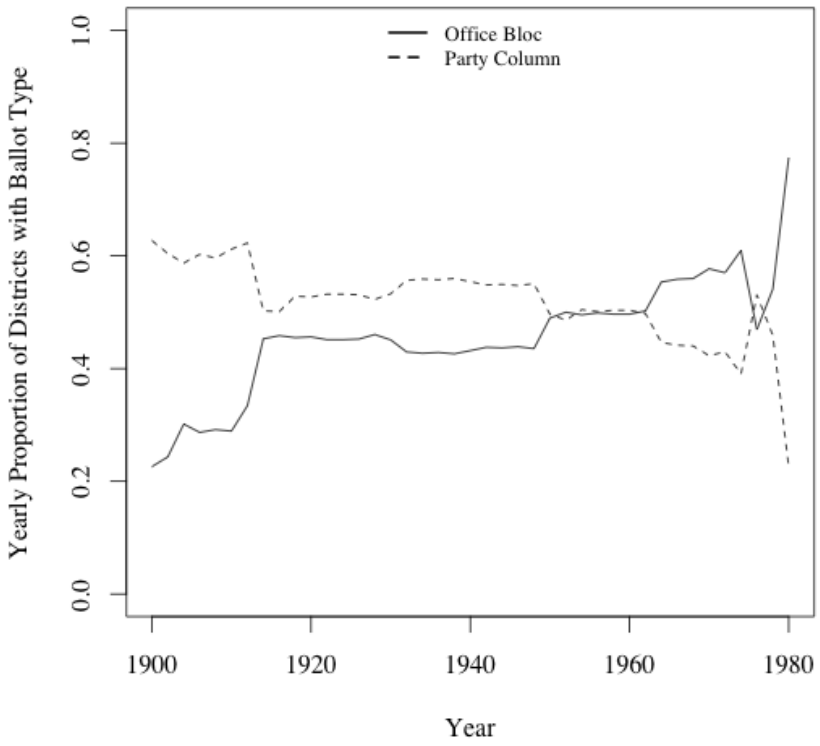


Figure 2.6: Proportion of Districts with Each Ballot Type, 1900–1980

The Effects of Ballot Format

An indicator of the early effects of the office bloc ballot format is available in Tables 2.1 and 2.2, which show the vote share won by the Democratic candidates in Kentucky and Virginia, respectively, in 1932. An interesting quirk of pre-"one person, one vote" elections is that many states unable to pass redistricting plans in time for the first election cycle after reapportionment opted instead for a full slate of at-large districts. In 1932, Kentucky and Virginia followed this plan. In each state, all nine districts were at-large districts won by Democrats. The primary statistical difference (besides the lower mean vote share in Kentucky) is the considerably larger standard deviation of the vote share in Virginia. That is, although all nine candidates in each state were elected by identical constituencies, the vote share in Virginia was more volatile than in Kentucky. Kentucky's use of the party

Table 2.1: Kentucky (Party Column), 1932

Winner	**Vote Share**
Cary	59.477
Vinson	59.597
Carden	59.409
Brown	59.552
Spence	59.542
Gregory	59.452
May	59.524
Chapman	59.504
Hamilton	59.387
σ	0.069

Table 2.2: Virginia (Office Bloc), 1932

Winner	**Vote Share**
Smith	74.856
Darden	77.877
Burch	75.135
Robertson	78.569
Bland	75.358
Flannagan	74.183
Drewry	74.900
Woodrum	88.807
Montague	88.503
σ	5.836

column ballot appears to have reined in some of the volatility experienced under the office bloc ballot in Virginia.

Scholars have also examined the effects of ballot format. While Rusk (1970) and Roberts (2009) examine the influence of ballot format on ticket-splitting—finding that office bloc ballots lead to greater rates of ticket-splitting than party column ballots—extant research has examined the effects of ballot format in other areas. Engstrom and Kernell (2005) find that the shift to the Australian ballot reduced the length of presidential coattails, a finding they suggest demonstrates the less responsive nature of electoral outcomes in the modern era. In the nineteenth century, they argue, elections were more responsive to public opinion due—in part—to the single party slip ballots. Interestingly, they do not find that the office bloc ballot reduced the length of presidential coattails to any greater degree than did the party column ballot.

Katz and Sala (1996) find that the adoption of the Australian ballot affected the activities of members of Congress. As the Australian ballot tied candidates directly to voters—without the intervention of partisan operatives common under the party slip ballots—members were encouraged to cultivate a "personal vote" with their constituents, in part by seeking out a semi-permanent assignment to a committee with a jurisdiction of importance to their

constituents. Thus, the adoption of Australian ballot laws helped usher in the "property rights" norm of committee assignments (but see Jenkins 1998).

Continuing in this vein, Wittrock et al. (2008) find that the effects of the ballot extend even further into the activities of members on the Hill. Extending the work of Katz and Sala (1996), Wittrock et al. find that members from districts using the office bloc ballot were more likely to seek and gain membership on preferred committees, vote against their party on the floor, and engage in pork-barrel politics, all in an effort to cultivate a personal vote with constituents. They find that the same patterns do not hold for members from districts with party column ballots.

Likely the most extensive empirical study of the effects of Australian ballot reform was conducted by Carson and Roberts (2013). In their book, Carson and Roberts examine the impact of Progressive reforms—specifically, the direct primary and the adoption of the Australian ballot—on a variety of trends in congressional elections. Among the effects they find for the adoption of the Australian ballot are an increase in the importance of candidate quality for electoral outcomes, a decrease in party unity, and an increase in the incumbency advantage. In particular, they find that, in districts with the office bloc ballot, the effect of candidate quality on the Democrat's share of the two-party vote is greater than in districts with the party column ballot. Furthermore, they find that the office bloc ballot helped lead to an increase in the incumbency advantage, but that the effects of the party column ballot were almost indistinguishable from those of the earlier party tickets. This finding is in line with earlier work by Roberts (2008), who attributes the rise of the incumbency advantage to, in part, the switch to office bloc ballots.

Ballots and Candidate-Centered Politics

After a review of this literature, a clear pattern appears to emerge: the adoption of Australian ballot reforms simultaneously encouraged candidates to cultivate a personal vote with their constituents, encouraged voters to split their tickets, and highlighted individual candidate

traits. The office bloc ballot appears to have had a greater impact on these trends than the party column ballot.

These findings lead naturally to the idea that the shift away from party-dominated elections and towards a more candidate-centered system are due, at least in part, to the adoption of Australian ballot laws and, more specifically, the adoption of the office bloc ballot. Thus, it would appear that scholars should not dismiss the argument for the role of Progressive reforms in the rise of candidate-centered politics in light of the lag between initial adoption and the onset of a candidate-centered system. As Figure 2.6 demonstrates, the office bloc ballot format began to replace the party column format as the dominant ballot type at around the same time most scholars recognized a shift in the electoral environment. This transition to the office bloc ballot was accomplished not only through actual changes in the laws adopted by states, but also by reapportionment cycles that saw more seats allocated to states already using the office bloc ballot format. Thus we see not only how Australian ballot reforms may have contributed to the rise of candidate-centered politics, but also how the effects of these reforms may have taken time to manifest themselves.

Another important theoretical note lies with the nature of the relationship between ballot laws and congressional elections. While Rusk (1970); Katz and Sala (1996); Wittrock et al. (2008); Roberts (2009) all find direct effects of the adoption of Australian ballot laws and ballot format, Engstrom and Kernell (2005), Roberts (2008), and Carson and Roberts (2013) all find *indirect* effects of ballot laws. So, while we should expect at least some direct effects of ballot laws on congressional elections, we should also be willing to explore the indirect effects—how the effects of other key variables are contingent on ballot type.

As I demonstrate here and in later chapters, ballot laws (in particular, ballot format) contribute both directly and indirectly to the rise of candidate-centered politics, by influencing the decision calculus of voters on election day, highlighting the differences between individual candidates, opening the door for candidate-run campaigns to influence voter decision making, and allowing for the increased salience of candidates in the television age to affect

the relative weight voters give to partisan cues. Direct effects would appear if simply having an office bloc ballot induces more candidate centeredness within the district. While I expect such effect, I anticipate seeing a greater impact of ballot format in an *indirect* manner, by structuring the effects of other important factors.

One of the key findings Carson and Roberts (2013) contribute is the impact of the *Democratic Quality Advantage* (hereafter *DQA*) on the Democrat's share of the two-party vote. This measure adapts Jacobson (2013)'s measure of candidate quality at the district level. Jacobson posited that what makes a candidate a "quality" candidate is successful electoral experience. As such, his measure takes a value of one when a candidate has previously held elected office and zero if not. While others have attempted to improve upon this basic measure by examining other qualities such as type of office held, celebrity status, and name recognition (see, for example, Bond, Covington and Fleisher 1985; Krasno and Green 1988; Canon 1993), Jacobson (1989) argues that this simple dichotomy has several benefits, including its simplicity and avoidance of arbitrary decisions regarding what constitutes a "quality" candidate. The measure also has several benefits for the time period I observe. First—and most practically—the data are available for this period.[5] Second, as Carson, Engstrom and Roberts (2007), Carson and Roberts (2011), and Carson et al. (2011) note, attempts to construct a more complex measure of candidate quality during this time period would likely increase measurement error and provide little additional explanatory power. "Despite numerous attempts to develop more detailed codings of challenger quality ... the simple dichotomy has typically proven just as reliable a predictor of a competitive House election" (Carson and Roberts 2011, 151).

To construct a district-level measure of quality, Carson and Roberts (2013) and others construct a trichotomous measure (*DQA*), which can take a value of 1, 0, or -1. The measure takes a value of one if only the Democratic candidate has previous elected experience, zero if neither or both the Republican and Democratic candidates have previous elected elected ex-

[5]I am immensely grateful to Carson and Roberts (2013) and Jacobson (2013) for sharing their candidate quality data.

perience, and negative one if only the Republican candidate has previous elected experience. Thus, in a district with a Democratic incumbent running against an inexperienced Republican challenger, the measure would take a value of one, while a value of negative one would appear if a Republican incumbent faced an inexperienced Democratic challenger. While this measure is indeed blunt, it has nonetheless proved quite powerful in previous studies.

Carson and Roberts (2013) find that, prior to 1944, the effect of DQA on the Democratic share of the two-party vote was more pronounced in office bloc districts than in party column districts. I reproduce (in part) and extend this analysis to 1980 in Table 2.3 below, regressing (via OLS) the Democratic share of the two-party vote on the Democratic quality advantage, the lagged Democratic two-party vote share, whether a Democratic incumbent defended the seat, and whether the open seat was previously held by Democrats. The effects found by Carson and Roberts (2013) persist here. The coefficients indicate that a one-unit increase in the Democratic quality advantage yields a roughly 1.4 point increase in the Democratic two-party vote share in party column districts, *ceteris paribus*, while the same effect is roughly 2 points in office bloc districts. Equally important is the failure of the DQA coefficient to reach traditional levels of statistical significance in districts using the party column ballots. This effect is not surprising; candidate traits should matter more in districts where voters are forced to vote for individual candidates and discouraged to vote for a straight party ticket. In districts with office bloc ballots, voters were forced to consider the individual candidates—we should expect individual candidate traits to play more of a role in these districts.

The above results demonstrate the potential for indirect effects of ballot format. We should expect contributing factors like district income and television to have different effects under party column and office bloc ballots, since both—as I demonstrate in later chapters—should contribute to voters' knowledge of individual candidate traits and reduce the salience of parties relative to candidates.

Table 2.3: Determinants of Democratic Share of Two-Party Vote, by Ballot Type, 1900–1980

Variable	**Party Column**	**Office Bloc**
DQA	1.373	1.985*
	(0.738)	(0.877)
Dem_{t-1}	0.775*	0.649*
	(0.034)	(0.047)
Dem Inc	5.272*	10.744*
	(1.466)	(2.998)
Open, Dem	1.005	4.456
	(1.254)	(2.252)
Constant	9.836*	10.013*
	(2.346)	(2.930)
N	8288	6723
R^2	0.795	0.749

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, yearly fixed effects not reported.

*: $p \leq 0.05$

Measuring "Candidate Centeredness"

One of the largest hurdles in the project involves estimating what I call "candidate centeredness." This is integral to the project and will require an innovative measurement or technique. As Carey and Shugart (1995) note, the greatest hurdle to estimating a model of personal vote-seeking behavior is measuring such behavior. They offer several proxies as possibilities, but subsequently dismiss them as either unavailable for some countries or inadequate for one reason or another. In this section, I shall begin by outlining the various strategies I have considered for estimating "candidate centeredness" and how to proceed; I will also discuss data sources for some of my other variables.

Candidates campaigning and winning election on their own merits—independently or with the help of the parties' reputation—is the definition of a candidate-centered election. This includes two factors which may be considered in measuring the phenomenon. First, candidates must rely on their own campaigns—rather than on the party organization—to

seek election. Second, candidates' elections must be *theirs* and not their party's. This second point implies that not only are candidates seeking election on their own, but that the media and—ultimately—the voters will see them as individuals, rather than as representatives of their party. Thus, at least some portion of the electoral outcome should be individual, rather than closely tied to the fortunes of the two major parties.

These two components hint at two potential approaches to measuring "candidate centeredness." The first approach involves collecting data about the campaign phase, such as examining the proportion of campaign expenditures originating with the party rather than the candidate's own campaign. Another measure using this approach would be to collect data on local newspapers to see how often the candidate's name is mentioned. Both of these measures, however, suffer from lack of data availability. Campaign finance records are unavailable prior to 1972 (at the earliest) and local newspaper archives—while available—would require thousands of man-hours' worth of sifting through microfilm and coding each mention of a candidate's name. Even then, there is no guarantee that I would be able to collect all the relevant information. As such, examining the campaign phase is either impossible or impractical at this stage.

Another measurement approach would be to examine the implications of a candidate-centered system; that is, rather than examining the campaign phase, we may examine election outcomes to see if voters are choosing individual candidates to a greater degree than parties. While this approach may seem less intuitive than the campaign-centered approach, it is likely to yield a considerably more conservative measure, in that voters must actually respond to the activities of candidates. If the motivation for researching this phenomenon is the far-reaching impact of candidate-centered politics, a measure focusing on how candidate-centered campaign techniques gain traction with voters is the best approach. The next step is to develop such a measure.

If candidates are elected regardless of what happens to their party at the national or state level, this would provide an indication that perhaps the election is candidate-centered. We can begin with the assumption that a candidate's vote share can be defined formally as:

$$v_t = f(c_t, p_t, e_t), \tag{2.1}$$

where v_t is a candidate's share of the two-party vote at time t, c_t is the component of the vote share for which the candidate him/herself is responsible, p_t is the portion of the vote share earned by the candidate's party, and e_t is the component of the vote attributable to environmental or contextual factors particular to a given election year or district. Put more simply, a candidate's vote share in any year is a function of the candidate's own efforts and recognition, the reputation of the party, and other factors particular to the district or context of the election itself. Any efforts to examine candidate-centeredness using election results must extract c_t from the vote share.

Jacobson (1987) notes the standard deviation of the interelection Democratic vote swing measures how volatile the electorate is with respect to the Democratic Party. He also notes that this measure increased throughout the 1960s and 1970s (see Table 4 on p. 134). If voters focus less on party and more on candidates, the standard deviation should increase, as voters in different districts are reacting differently to the Democratic Party label from one year to the next. To adapt this measure to the district level, we can derive:

$$|(Dem_t - Dem_{t-1}) - (AvgDem_t - AvgDem_{t-1})| \tag{2.2}$$

In this equation, Dem is the Democratic share of the vote in the current election (t) and the previous election ($t-1$), while $AvgDem$ is the national average Democratic vote share in the current election and previous election. As such, this is a measure of the magnitude of deviation from the national Democratic trend in the vote share. By including the measure of the average Democratic vote share, we can begin to control for p_t from Equation 2.1. Taking

the first difference allows us to control for e_t by removing from our measure any contextual effects of a given election.

The measure derived in Equation 2.2 can only control for the national effects of party reputation in a given election, however. If parties are more influential locally, this measure cannot account for the partisan component of the vote. For instance, the Democratic Party's fortunes from one election to the next may have been drastically different in different regions of the country. While the northeastern, more liberal Democratic candidates may have suffered setbacks in a given year, the conservative Southern Democratic candidates likely continued to thrive. To account for this, Equation 2.3 presents a state-level measure of candidate-centeredness.

$$|(Dem_t - Dem_{t-1}) - (AvgStDem_t - AvgStDem_{t-1})| \tag{2.3}$$

Equation 2.3 is identical to Equation 2.2 above, but with the national averages replaced with state averages. This should account for candidate deviations from the changing state party's fortunes.

Table 2.4 displays descriptive statistics for the measures calculated in Equations 2.2 and 2.3. As can be seen, the national measure has a mean of 8.205 and a standard deviation of 10.164, suggesting it is over dispersed. The same holds for the state-level measure, which has a mean of 6.987 and a standard deviation of 9.065. Generally, the state-level measure takes a value lower than the national-level measure. This is not surprising, as candidates' vote shares are less likely to deviate widely from the state party's vote share than they are from the national party vote share. Furthermore, the state-level measure is exactly zero in states with only one congressional district, while the national-level measure typically takes on some value in such districts.

While I am hesitant to average these measures by year, such an examination can be suggestive of a trend in the measures and how well the two measures correlate. It is important to note, however, that my theory does *not* account for a broad, nationwide shift towards a

Table 2.4: Descriptive Statistics, National and State-Level Measures of Candidate Centeredness, 1900–1980

Variable	National Candidate Centeredness	State Candidate Centeredness
Mean	8.205	6.987
Median	4.603	3.837
St. Dev.	10.164	9.065
Minimum	0.000	0.000
Maximum	104.884	94.497
N	17341	17341

candidate-centered electoral system. Rather, the rise of candidate-centered politics occurred at different time points in different districts. This is an important point, as any examination of nationally averaged measures of candidate centeredness can only *suggest* the timing of the rise of candidate-centered politics. It can, in no way, be considered proof. Candidate centeredness is not a dichotomy; as such, we cannot say that District A is candidate-centered while District B is not. We can only assert that District A is *more* candidate-centered than District B.

That said, however, a trend line can be suggestive of a broader national movement, or at least indicate whether the national trend noted by scholars (that candidate-centered politics arose sometime in the 1960s) is plausible. As seen in Figure 2.7, both measures appear to track quite well together. Individually, the national- and state-level measures correlate at 0.842 from 1900–1980. When averaged nationally by year, they correlate at 0.933. Additionally, Figure 2.7 seems to lend the measures substantial face validity. Beginning in the 1960s—when we should expect an increase—the mean scores appear to increase. Although I argue that the shift to a candidate-centered electoral system was largely a subnational, gradual phenomenon, the trends in Figure 2.7 provide preliminary evidence that the movement was nationally noticeable.

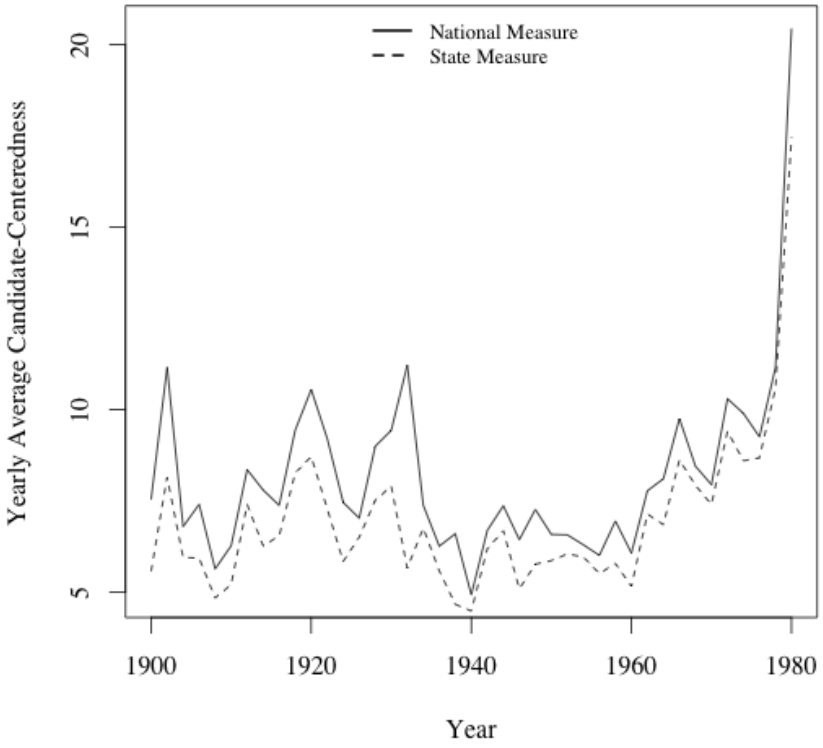


Figure 2.7: Averages of National- and State-Level Measures, 1900–1980

The presence of this measure allows for an examination of the direct effects of ballot type on candidate centeredness. I turn now to an examination of these direct effects.

Direct Effects of Ballot Type on Candidate Centeredness

As noted above, scholars such as Engstrom and Kernell (2005); Roberts (2008); Carson and Roberts (2013) explore the indirect effects of ballot type on congressional elections and behavior. Meanwhile, Rusk (1970), Wittrock et al. (2008), andRoberts (2009) (as well as Carson and Roberts 2013) find at least some direct effects of ballot type. It is important to consider both indirect and direct ballot effects. While the previous analysis (and analyses in later chapters) focus primarily on the indirect effects of ballot type and form the integral

components of my theory as to why politics became more candidate-centered, the results from scholars examining direct effects necessitate such an examination here.

To be clear, I anticipate that the effects of both the party column and office bloc ballots—relative to non-Australian ballots—on candidate centeredness will be positive. However, I anticipate finding a greater effect in districts with the office bloc ballot than in those with the party column ballot. In both cases, split-ticket voting would be easier than with party ballots. Moreover, even the party column ballot allows voters to choose candidates individually from different parties, despite the encouragement to vote for all candidates of a single party via use of the straight ticket option. With the office bloc ballot, we should expect to see a considerable effect on the degree of candidate centeredness within a district.

It is important now to reiterate that my theory is largely one of *indirect* ballot effects. As demonstrated in Table 2.3, the format of the ballot can structure the relationship between potential explanatory variables and electoral outcomes. While I do expect to find some direct effects of ballot type, these effects should be considered secondary to the more important indirect effects. Far from downplaying the role of ballots, this places ballot format at the center of my theory; indeed, it is the one factor common to all of my tests. As I will demonstrate in later chapters, the effects of income and television on the degree of candidate centeredness are conditional and dependent on ballot format.

Turning now to the test of direct effects, I estimate two models: one using the national-level measure of candidate centeredness as the dependent variable and one using the state-level measure. These models test directly the effects of party column and office bloc ballots. The primary independent variables are the presence of the office bloc and party column ballots within a district. These are likely to cause an increase in the degree of candidate centeredness within a given district.

I also include in this model the Democratic quality advantage variable, described in detail above. It is unknown what the effects of this variable would be on candidate centeredness, but its centrality in most other studies of congressional elections merits its inclusion here.

Due to the differenced nature of the dependent variable in Equations 2.2 and 2.3, it is important to know when a candidate is unchallenged. If a candidate faces no challenger in year $t-1$ but does face a challenger in year t, this will inflate the value of the dependent variable. Similarly, if a candidate remains unchallenged from one election to the next, the value of the dependent variable will be equal to the differenced average national or state Democratic vote share. Thus, I created two indicators: one for when there is a change in the status of an election's contestation (1 when there was no challenger at t or $t-1$ and a challenger was present in the other year, 0 otherwise), and one for when there was no challenger in either election observed (1 when no challenger was present in either of the two observed cycles, 0 otherwise). The reference category thus contains all elections where challengers were present both at time t and time $t-1$.

Another control is an indicator for whether the seat is incumbent-defended (1) or open (0). I expect this to take a negative value, in that incumbents' electoral fortunes are unlikely to change much from one election to the next, all else equal, which will drive down the first term in Equations 2.2 and 2.3.

Two more controls are for Southern states and at-large districts. The Southern indicator is necessary not only because of path dependence (the use of a Southern "dummy" is a time-honored tradition used by most and questioned by all), but also because of the unique nature of Southern politics during the time period observed. The Democratic Party dominated the "Solid South" for most of the twentieth century, so it should come as no surprise if Southern states are unique in some way with reference to candidate-centeredness. As I am already controlling for whether a district is challenged from one cycle to the next, this will capture the uniquely partisan nature of Southern politics at the time and its coefficient should take a negative value. At-large districts are also unique in most of this time period, in that these candidates are likely tied to the fortunes of their party at the state level and are less well-known or established with voters as those candidates with smaller constituencies.

A final control is for midterm elections. We might expect party fortunes to matter considerably less without a presidential candidate at the top of the ballot. As such, the expectation is that the coefficient on this variable will be positive and significant, especially so in districts with office bloc ballots.

The theory dictates that ballot structure heightens the salience of candidate-specific traits (office bloc ballots) or partisan reputations (party column ballots), but that both of these formats favor candidates to a greater extent than did the earlier party ballots. I estimate the models using OLS regression with yearly fixed effects to account for the nonlinear effects of time shown in Figure 2.6.[6]

The results of the OLS regressions are listed in Table 2.5. The first column reports the results using the state-level measure of candidate centeredness, while the second reports the results from a model using the national-level measure of candidate centeredness. Both measures begin with the difference between the individual Democratic candidate's vote share between the election at time *t* and the election at time *t-1*. The state-level measure then subtracts from this the difference between the average state Democratic candidate's vote share between the two elections. The national-level measure does the same, but replaces the average state Democratic vote share with the average national Democratic vote share at times *t* and *t-1*. The primary difference, then, is that the state measure examines candidate centeredness as a function of electoral independence from the state party's fortunes, while the national level measures candidate centeredness as a function of independence from the national party's fortunes.

As anticipated, both ballot formats increased the degree of candidate centeredness, though in both models the office bloc ballot exerted a greater effect, as expected. This

[6]I also tested the theory using OLS with a logged candidate-centered dependent variable. This improved the fit of the model slightly, but substantively, the results were identical to those in the model using the non-logged candidate-centered dependent variable. Thus, for ease of interpretation, I have used the non-logged dependent variable here. I also used a time trend variable to estimate the effects of time and received largely similar results, but due to the non-linear nature of the trends reported in Figure 2.6, the use of yearly fixed effects is preferred and, as such, is reported here.

indicates that the adoption of the office bloc ballot accomplished, in large part, what reformers intended. Voters were less likely to decide their vote based on party, although it is important to note that this by no means indicates that party does not play a role in voter calculus. It simply plays less of a role under the Australian ballot than it did under the party ballot. This makes sense, given that voters in a party ballot system would need to actively engage the party simply to obtain a ballot. By choosing the Democratic ballot over the Republican ballot, the first choice voters make at the polling place is a partisan one. Furthermore, that same voter cannot easily split his ticket with a party ballot. Thus, it makes perfect sense that the party column and office bloc ballots would both produce a more candidate-centered outcome.

Beyond that, the difference in effects across Australian ballot type is also intuitive. Voters in party column districts *can* split their ballots, but most party column ballots feature the straight ticket option, which provides a useful shortcut for the voter who has little or no interest in down-ballot races. Such voters have the option of voting their exact preferences by meticulously marking each race or they may choose to sacrifice their exact preferences in favor of the ease of the straight ticket option. Voters in office bloc districts will have no such luxury—their votes will count only in those races for which they mark their preferences. Thus, voters can choose to ease fatigue by engaging in roll-off behavior (skipping down-ballot races) or voting based on other cues such as party or incumbency. Regardless, voters must mark each individual candidate, so we should expect a more candidate-centered outcome.

The presence of an incumbent, as expected, reduces candidate centeredness. This is likely due to the presence of an established personal vote. As an incumbent's vote is less likely to change from one election to the next, the first term in Equations 2.2 and 2.3 is suppressed. While this might increase the value of the measures in some instances, on balance it may actually decrease the observed candidate centeredness.

Interestingly, the Democratic quality advantage appears to decrease the degree of candidate centeredness. The reasons of this are unknown, but it is possible that this picks up on

Table 2.5: Direct Effects of Ballot Type on State and National Measures of Candidate Centeredness, 1900–1980

Variable	State Candidate Centeredness	National Candidate Centeredness
Office Bloc	4.172*	4.062*
	(0.444)	(0.496)
Party Column	2.783*	3.012*
	(0.437)	(0.489)
ΔContested	15.117*	19.742*
	(0.355)	(0.348)
Uncontested	0.415	0.258
	(0.288)	(0.294)
DQA	−0.154*	−0.221*
	(0.070)	(0.070)
Inc. Def.	−1.231*	−1.698*
	(0.203)	(0.211)
South	−1.376*	−2.114*
	(0.196)	(0.192)
At-Large	−2.876*	−0.550
	(0.466)	(0.606)
Midterm	2.837*	1.437*
	(0.661)	(0.684)
Constant	1.854*	3.603*
	(0.636)	(0.661)
N	15453	15453
R^2	0.358	0.461

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, yearly fixed effects not reported.
*: $p \leq 0.05$

a similar pattern as the incumbency variable. In the data, experienced candidates are most likely to be incumbents or candidates from the same party as outgoing incumbents. So we can imagine that the party "brand" may be driving these lower results in such cases. This is worth additional contemplation in future work, as it is possible that the district's particular party"brand" affects not only incumbents, but also candidates for open seats.

Additionally, the South variable takes a negative coefficient in both models. This indicates that Southern districts were more likely to have party-centered elections. This is

not surprising at all, but it is intriguing that this effect holds even when controlling for uncontested elections.

At-large races also appear to be more party-centered than non-at-large districts, at least when using the state-level measure of candidate centeredness. The effects are negative and significant in the first model and fail to reach traditional levels of significance in the second. This is likely because of the inability or difficulty of such representatives to cultivate a reputation with voters independent of the state party, especially relative to representatives with smaller constituencies.

As expected, a change in the contestation of a district yields a much higher result in the candidate-centered variable. If a district goes from being uncontested to featuring a two-party contest, we should expect the first term in Equations 2.2 and 2.3 to take a substantially greater value, thus influencing the overall measure. This effect holds across districts with both the party column and the office bloc ballots.

The analysis presented here demonstrates the direct effects of ballot type on candidate centeredness. While these results are intriguing by themselves, they do not fully depict the effects of ballot type on candidate centeredness. More important than these direct effects are the indirect effects of ballot type, which can structure the relationship between any number of potential explanatory variables and candidate centeredness.

Summary and Conclusions

The reformers who advocated the adoption of the Massachusetts ballot in Pennsylvania in 1891 clearly understood the role such a ballot could play. Contemporary observations of the ballots adopted in New York and Indiana led reformers to pursue a more antiparty ballot. Party leaders, however, had their own endgame. Most of them understood three things: First, "bolters" and "pasters" demonstrated the inefficiency of the party ballot. Second, reformers were gaining ground nationwide, as demonstrated by the rapid spread of Australian ballot

laws. Third, parties could either obstruct the inevitable movement towards the secret ballot or work to ensure that the laws adopted were the least unfriendly to their goals (or even supportive of their goals).

The trajectory of ballot laws over the course of the twentieth century demonstrates the continued influence of the debate over the Australian ballot. Far from implementing a sharp and enduring change in the electoral system, the analyses presented in this chapter highlight the gradual nature of the effects of ballot reform. As more districts were covered by the office bloc ballot, the unique effects of this ballot type were extended and structured the influence of other factors.

The nature of the effects of ballot reform are both direct and indirect. My analyses demonstrate that ballot format can influence the relationship between candidate quality and the candidate's share of the two-party vote, but also that the type of ballot used can *directly* influence the degree of candidate centeredness within a district. While this latter finding demonstrates a modest effect, it is nonetheless important, in that it highlights the uniquely powerful effect seemingly minor institutional structures can play in our electoral system.

In the following chapters I turn to the effects of the increase in resources available to candidates (in the form of an increase in the income of candidates' constituents) and the rise of technological innovations (in the form of television) that presented candidates with a unique opportunity to reach voters independent of the party organization. It should come as no surprise, after the analyses here, that the effects of these factors are largely contingent on the format of the ballot used. Without the differences in ballot type, the potential causes of candidate centeredness explored in the following chapters may never have had their effects.

Chapter 3

Income, Campaign Spending, and Candidate-Centered Politics

In the November 1967 issue of *Playboy*, Rep. Morris K. "Mo" Udall—a Democrat from Arizona—wrote an article titled "The High Cost of Being a Congressman." In it, he lamented, "It's not news that campaigns cost money, but the explosions in costs over the past 15 years is dramatic and dangerous [...] Your lawmakers—state and Federal—are partly to blame for this deplorable situation, but the public shares a heavy responsibility, too" (Udall 1967).[1] That elections cost a considerable amount was not necessarily the problem; rather, the problem lay in the perceived (and real) increasing costs of mounting a competitive campaign. Udall placed blame not simply on the government—whose job, he felt, was to regulate campaign finance strictly—but also on the public. In part, he did so because he viewed the public as complicit in the inadequate regulation of campaign dollars. The cause of the drastic increase, he notes, is "population and television." The increasing population of congressional districts necessitates more money to accomplish the same tasks; whereas a candidate in the 19th century could often shake the hand of every eligible voter in his

[1]Interestingly, Republican Rep. Louis C. Wyman of New Hampshire spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives against the "pure pornographic pruriency" of the very same issue of *Playboy* that featured Udall's article (*Congressional Record*, 90th Congress, October 26, 1967, vol. 113, 30205).

Figure 3.1: Cartoon Appearing in *The Nation*—June 27, 1966

district, candidates in Udall's time could never accomplish such a task. Instead, they had to rely on expensive mailers or, even more costly, television advertisements.

Although Udall decried having to spend $35,000 in 1964 (roughly $265,000 in 2014 dollars), these figures are almost laughable today. Yet in the mid- to late-1960s, many liberals were up in arms against the ever-increasing numbers of expenditures required to compete in a House election. In an article for *The Nation* in 1966, former managing editor Victor Bernstein discussed the "steady and staggering rise in the cost of political campaigning." He poses the question, "How can a democratic electoral system be divorced from an aristocracy of wealth?" (Bernstein 1966, 770). The article even features a cartoon depicting a congressional candidate as a poor beggar soliciting passers-by for "a million dimes" (see Figure 3.1). Like Udall, Bernstein attributes the drastic increase largely to the costs of reaching district voters, including the costs of televised advertising and district mailers.

While Udall and Bernstein focused primarily on television, however, the extensive increase in campaign costs appears, in my view, largely attributable to three major factors: the rise

of television advertising, which added a new type of (highly costly) expense to campaign ledgers; the dissemination of new fundraising tools and techniques (such as the testimonial dinners made popular during Kennedy's campaign); and an increasingly wealthy population of potential donors. In this chapter, I will discuss the last of these causes. In the next chapter, I turn my attention to the effects of television.

Campaign donations—like all monetary transactions—follow the proverbial laws of supply and demand. While Udall and Bernstein devote their attentions to the demand for campaign dollars—the high costs of televised and mailed advertisements—it is important not to ignore the supply. Bernstein quotes Robert Price, then the deputy mayor of New York and a veteran campaign manager, as saying, " 'The average Congressional candidate can expect to get $1,500 from the National Congressional Campaign Committee, another $1,000 from the county committee, and perhaps an additional $1,000 from other party groups. The rest must be raised through solicitation.' " While he touches on the willingness of donors to give to campaigns, his focus—like that of most political scientists studying campaign contributions—quickly shifts to the presumed *quid pro quo* of campaign donations: "The real question in all this is not who gives, or how much, but what the giver gets in return" (1966, 772).

In this chapter, I examine the impact of increasing incomes and the associated increase in campaign donations and expenditures on the rise of candidate-centered politics, with a particular focus on the structuring effects of ballot format. In the sections that follow, I begin by exploring the extant literature on the relationship between contributions/expenditures and candidate centeredness. I then turn my attention to the rise of disposable income—particularly beginning in the mid-1960s—and discussing how this phenomenon translates into more money for candidates, providing a useful method of studying campaign finance in an era without any comprehensive financial data. In the subsequent section, I discuss how income and campaign contributions/expenditures fit into my own theory, with a particular eye towards the role of ballot format. I then test this theory with data spanning from 1930

to 1980. The results provide an important glance at the centrality of ballot format to many of the observations made by political scientists about the role of money in congressional campaigns.

Candidate Spending and Candidate Centeredness

There is a wealth of literature on the impact of candidate spending, especially in the American context. The debates between Jacobson (1978, 1985, 1990) on one side and Green and Krasno (1988, 1990) on the other over the role of incumbent and challenger expenditures is standard fare on graduate school syllabi. It is important to explore this well-established literature to determine how campaign expenditures might relate to candidate centeredness. If, after all, spending is found to affect election outcomes or voter calculus, it would be necessary to consider these studies when formulating a theory about the effects of expenditures on candidate centeredness.

While Jacobson and Green and Krasno disagree about the impact of incumbent expenditures, both recognize that challenger spending plays a key role in determining the ability of challengers to mount a successful campaign. In his 1978 article, Jacobson finds that challenger expenditures help to provide challengers with the name recognition already enjoyed by incumbents, suggesting that spending by challengers may increase the degree to which voters can make decisions about individual candidates. As such, challenger spending is more efficient, in that each dollar spent earns them considerably more than it would earn a typical incumbent.

In their response, Green and Krasno argue that challenger quality is a key consideration, finding that "the direct effect of challenger quality on the vote increases dramatically as the challenger spends more money" (1988, 900). As discussed in Chapter 2, candidate quality—as a trait unique to the candidate, rather than the party—is a candidate-centered factor voters may consider when submitting their ballots. That challengers are better able

to capitalize on this characteristic with increased levels of spending has direct implications for this project. Subsequent studies by Gerber (1998), Goldstein and Freedman (2000), and Moon (2006) extend this research and find largely similar effects—candidate spending, particularly by way of advertising—increases awareness of candidate-specific traits and affects electoral outcomes. Candidate spending effects are not limited to congressional outcomes, however.

A variety of research examines lower-level races. Owens and Olson (1977) finds that, in California, spending affects outcomes in state legislative elections. Particularly interesting is that, during the time period Owens examines, California had the office bloc ballot, indicating a potential linkage between ballot format and candidate spending (more on this later). Hogan (2002) finds that state legislative candidates do not find party spending on their behalf to be particularly helpful—a finding which may indicate that candidates even at this lower level have fully adopted the candidate-centered techniques mastered by candidates for the U.S. House, Senate, and presidency.

Brians and Wattenberg (1996) examine the impact of televised campaign advertising, televised coverage of campaigns, and newspaper coverage of campaigns to determine the degree to which voters evaluate candidates based on issue stances. This is, fundamentally, a candidate-centered approach to voter calculus. By evaluating candidates based on issue stances they themselves took (as opposed to party stances), voters are more likely to consider the candidates—rather than their party affiliations—when deciding how to vote. Coleman and Manna (2000) find that spending influences voters' affect for candidates, their own political efficacy, and trust in government, indicating that candidates can influence the way voters respond to them by reaching out through advertising. In a similar vein, Wattenberg (1982) finds that candidates who spend more money on advertising are able to reduce the salience of their party identification among voters.

Unfortunately, this line of inquiry is confined to the generally recognized candidate-centered era of American national and subnational politics. It is important to consider how

spending and the influence of candidate-centered factors may be related in a different, more party-centered environment. Luckily, American congressional elections prior to the 1960s are not the only elections generally recognized to be party-centered. In an examination of aldermanic elections in the quintessentially party-centered Chicago municipal elections, Gierzynski, Kleppner and Lewis find that—even in these party-centered elections—candidate spending influences outcomes, suggesting that "even in the last bastion of party machine politics, the era of cash-based, candidate-centered electoral politics has arrived" (1998, 171).

In examining the effects of spending in Irish multimember districts, Benoit and Marsh (2010) note that outspending rivals increases candidates' vote shares, while also increasing the likelihood of victory. Similarly, Shin et al. (2005) find that elections to the Korean National Assembly—a considerably more party-centered system than our own—are affected by both incumbent and challenger spending, with challenger spending playing a larger role than that of incumbents.

While these studies find clear evidence for the effects of expenditures on the ability of candidates to cultivate votes independently of their parties, it is difficult to extend this research to the period before comprehensive records of candidate expenditures were kept. Doing so is necessary to identify the effects of campaign money on the rise of candidate-centered politics. Nonetheless, other avenues of measuring expenditures indirectly provide a useful method for studying the effects of spending in an era without good data on expenditures.

Rising Incomes and Campaign Contributions

In the decades following World War II, the U.S. economy grew at a pace unparalleled since the Great Depression. In a July 6, 1960 news conference, President Eisenhower responded to questions about a potential recession by stating, "[I]n the second quarter our GNP was $503 billion, which is an all-time high. In May, the last month for which we have figures, the employment went up a million. The personal income is over 400 billion" (Eisenhower 1960).

In a 1962 address, President Kennedy put economic growth numbers into perspective: "The after-tax incomes of American consumers increased by $21 billion, or $92 per capita, during the year. Since consumer prices rose by only one-half of 1 percent, these gains in income were almost entirely gains in real purchasing power" (Kennedy 1962). Similar addresses in 1963 (Kennedy 1963), 1964 (Johnson 1964), 1965 (Johnson 1965), 1966 (Johnson 1966), 1967(Johnson 1967), and 1968 (Johnson 1968) noted the staggering increase in purchasing power for the average American family.

Discussing one measure of economic improvement in particular, President Johnson noted in his 1967 message to Congress about the state of the nation's economy,

> The single most meaningful measure of economic well-being is real disposable income per person—the after-tax purchasing power in stable dollars, available on the average to every man, woman, and child. It rose 3 1/2 percent or $89 per person in 1966. Although this advance was somewhat smaller than in 1965, it was still three times as large as the average yearly gain in the 1950s. (Johnson 1967)

Disposable income is calculated by subtracting from total income the amount of income paid in the form of taxes. "Real" disposable income is a measure that takes the degree of inflation into account by measuring with constant dollars—for instance, by converting all previous years' dollar totals into dollar totals weighted by the current value of the dollar. The per capita version of this measure provides an important snapshot of how much money the average individual has to spend.

Johnson's address puts into perspective the degree to which the economy expanded in the decades following World War II. Figure 3.2 displays the trend of real disposable income (RDI) per capita from 1929 to 2013. As can be seen, the first fifteen to twenty years following World War II saw noticeable—but modest—gains in per capita RDI, from $9,885 in 1945 to $12,766 in 1963 (2009 dollars), representing an average annual increase of 1.6 percent. Beginning in the mid-1960s, however, per capita RDI increased drastically, from $13,485 in 1964 to $20,080 in 1978, an average annual increase of 3.5 percent (2009 dollars).[2]

[2]These figures are drawn from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

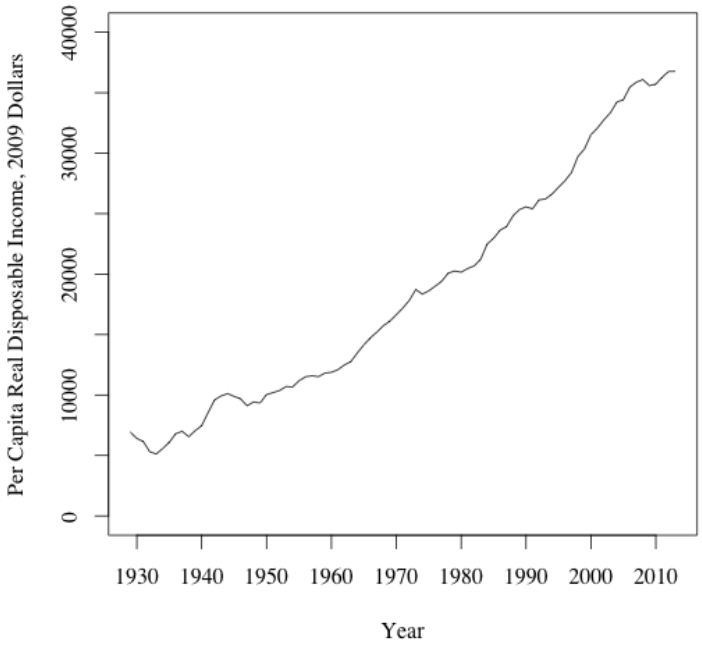


Figure 3.2: Real Disposable Income, 1929–2013

The staggering nature of this increase merits a closer examination of the potential effects of these changes. For one, how might this increase in disposable income impact the availability of resources to congressional candidates? Intuition might tell us that individuals have more money at their disposal, so they can choose to donate that money to some cause—political or otherwise—thus providing candidates and parties with more resources to expend. Second, to what extent does this relationship between income and campaign donations/expenditures provide a method for researchers to study the impact of campaign spending in an era without comprehensive data on candidate and party expenditures? If we can demonstrate that increased disposable income leads to increased contributions, we can begin to explain the demand side of the campaign finance puzzle.

Income and Donations: Evidence from Individual-Level Analyses

The bulk of scholarly research on political contributions focuses on the effects of these donations. That is, many scholars view donor-candidate relationships as *quid pro quo* scenarios—in this line of research, donations are seen as investments, with contributors expecting policy returns on their investments (see, for example, Denzau and Munger 1986; Baron 1989; Snyder 1990; Baron and Mo 1991; Grier and Munger 1991). This perspective is somewhat well-supported, given the research demonstrating that members in leadership positions or on powerful committees raise considerably more than other members (Romer and Snyder 1994; Ansolabehere and Snyder 1999). It also has led to policy proposals some might dub extreme (see, for example, Neuborne 1999).

This line of reasoning raises an important question: if contributions earn favorable policy outcomes, Tullock (1972) asked, why isn't there more money in politics? Given the stakes of the game and assuming a reasonable rate of return, we should expect even more money. Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder approach the question of contribution motives by viewing donations not as investments but as a form of consumption. Under this model, "[I]ndividuals give because they are ideologically motivated, because they are excited by the politics of particular elections, because they are asked by their friends or colleagues and because they have the resources necessary to engage in this particular form of participation" (2003, 117–118).

When viewed from this perspective, political participation itself is the good to be obtained via donation. Rather than contributing with a longer-term goal, this model posits a short, one-shot game in which the donor makes a contribution and receives nothing tangible in return. Viewed this way, the authors note, political donations are not unlike charitable donations, in that, "like any normal good, they will grow with income" (2003, 118). Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder test this theory after noting that a considerable amount of research demonstrates the strong relationship between income and individual political giving.

In one test, they examine gubernatorial campaign expenditures from 1976 to 2000 and find that per capita income is among the best predictors of gubernatorial spending. They then explain, "Using [these] coefficients [...] one can calculate that growth of per capita income and of population explain nearly all of the growth in per capita campaign spending in the states. The effect of income growth on predicted levels of campaign spending is roughly four times larger than the effect of population growth" (Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder 2003, 122). In a cross-sectional analysis of congressional elections, they note that "an additional $1,000 of per capita income in a district translates into an additional $20,000 of total campaign spending," though district competitiveness exerts an even greater effect (Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder 2003, 124). Clearly, then, income and campaign spending are related.

The mechanism for this is still uncertain, however. If district or state income predict overall spending, that trend could be the result of a greater overall level of wealth and the presence of larger industries who choose to contribute to the political process through political action committees or the parties (in the pre-BCRA era). It is also possible, however, that individual income increases the likelihood that a person gives to political campaigns.

Claassen (2007) examines ideologically-motivated giving using pooled National Election Study surveys from 1972 to 2004 and finds consistently positive effects for personal income. While these results suggest the pattern of interest, it does not test for the period before the onset of FECA. The NES asked questions about income and political contributions back to 1956 and in every presidential election year thereafter. While Claassen covers those data since 1972, I examine here the presidential election years from 1956 to 1968.

It is important to consider why such an analysis is warranted. While we can assume that post-FECA contribution behavior is identical to contribution behavior in a less-regulated environment, this assumption has little merit for several reasons. First, prior to the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 there existed no uniform contribution disclosure requirements for congressional candidates. Second, prior to the limitations on campaign donations placed

by FECA's amendment in 1974, candidates were theoretically able to finance their campaigns almost exclusively via large donations from individuals and PACs, mitigating the need to appeal to a wide base of individual donors. Finally—and related to the previous point—individuals in the less regulated era prior to FECA may have been less likely even to consider donating to a campaign; their candidates did not appeal to them for resources as often, so any "donation money" they may have had went to charitable organizations, rather than political campaigns and organizations.

While some states had disclosure laws, others had very little regulation at all. FECA and its later amendments erected an institutional structure to require and track political donations to all candidates for federal office, parties, and political action committees. In 1974 Congress followed up by creating the Federal Elections Commission, tasked with enforcing federal campaign finance law. In an era prior to these disclosure and enforcement mechanisms, it is unclear whether the calculus of political donations would have been identical to that in the era of regulated campaign money.

As Bernstein (1966) and Udall (1967) note, candidates in the decade prior to FECA were largely able to reach out to wealthy individual donors and PACs to fund the bulk of their campaigns, as the limitations on individual and PAC donations did not yet exist. Udall describes a system he developed early in his congressional career, whereby he would establish a base of small contributors "who eventually would provide all the financial support I needed." Lamentably, however, "the $5200 they gave ($4000 after expenses) is far short of the $22,000 I spent" (1967). The remainder he had to raise from large donors and PACs. Thus, massive solicitation appeals geared towards small donors would be unlikely to yield a sizable return on investment.

Fewer appeals to small donors meant those potential small donors were not signaled that they should (or could) donate to political campaigns and organizations. If donors primarily respond to appeals for their money, the relationship between income and political donations in the pre-FECA era is unlikely to be as strong as in the post-FECA environment.

This necessitates an examination of pre-FECA donation patterns to confirm the relationship between income and contributions/expenditures.

To begin, I collected the NES data from 1956, 1960, 1964, and 1968 (as Claassen had already examined all data in the succeeding presidential election years in his 2007 article). In all cases, the data contain a question asking whether the respondent gave money to a political campaign or organization and, if so, to which types of campaigns/organizations (this follow-up question was not present in 1956). I collapse these into a simple dichotomy—one for political donation, zero otherwise. Unsurprisingly, donations are quite rare in the data, with fewer than ten percent of all respondents self-reporting a contribution.[3]

I then use the NES's ordinal measure for income. This measure differs in each year and are unable to be recoded to match each other accurately. As such, I model each year separately with the same predictors. The income measure in three of the years contains only nine or ten categories, but in 1968 it contains fifteen. I also use the ordinal measure for respondent age used in 1956, followed by the respondent's actual age measured continuously in 1960, 1964, and 1968.

Also included are measures of political efficacy, interest in that year's campaign, education, gender, marital status, and the presence of children—all presumed to have a positive effect on political participation more generally (and therefore positive effects on donations), either because it increases an individual's inherent interest in politics or because it increases an individual's investment in electoral outcomes.

The results of a logit analysis with the dichotomous donation indicator are presented in Table 3.1. As is evident, income, interest, and age are the only consistently significant predictors of the likelihood of contributing to political campaigns/organizations. Other commonly significant predictors are efficacy and age—more efficacious and older respondents are

[3]As Brehm (1993) and Ensley (2009) note, political surveys such as the NES typically suffer from a selection bias, as politically interested individuals are more likely to respond. This is certainly true for these data as well, but the relationship is what matters, rather than the overall percentage of respondents who actually contributed.

Table 3.1: Determinants of Campaign Contributions, 1956–1968

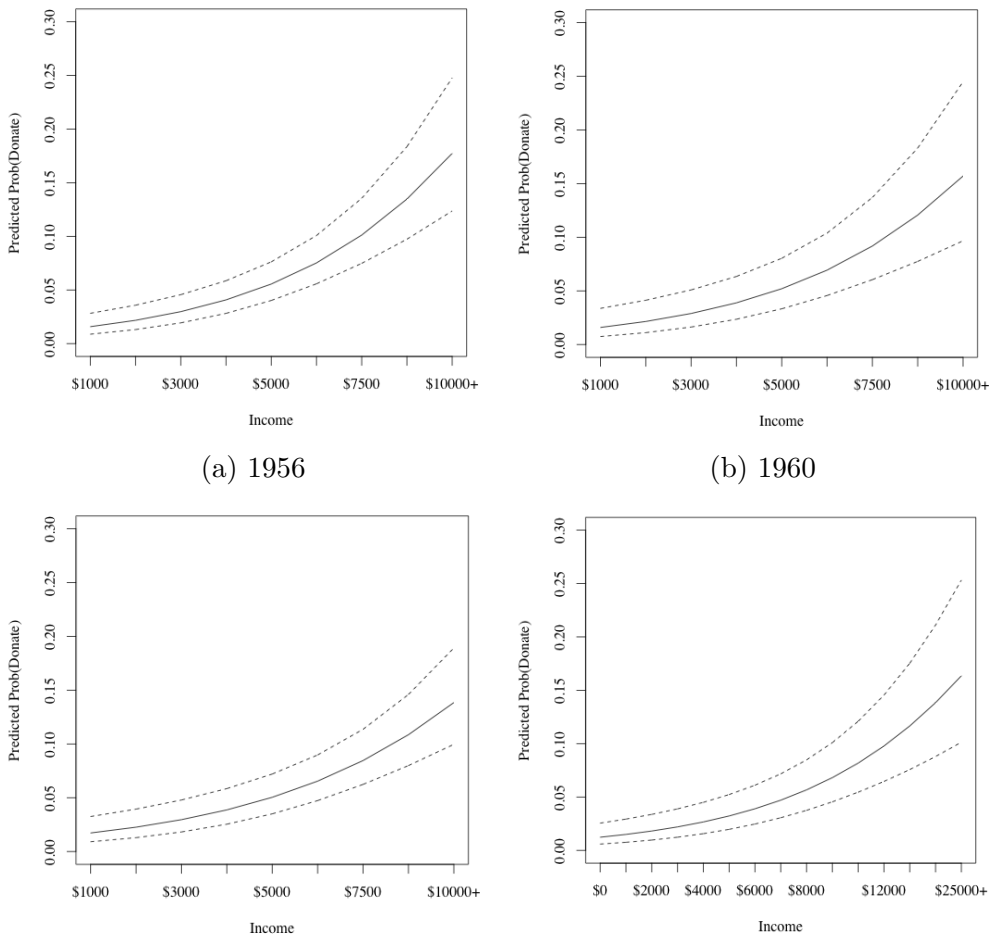
Variable	**1956**	**1960**	**1964**	**1968**
Income	0.325*	0.306*	0.277*	0.197*
	(0.050)	(0.062)	(0.047)	(0.035)
Interest	0.766*	0.880*	0.750*	0.848*
	(0.136)	(0.184)	(0.140)	(0.185)
Efficacy	0.255*	0.466*	0.325*	0.103
	(0.095)	(0.118)	(0.083)	(0.085)
Age	0.190*	0.017	0.018*	0.028*
	(0.083)	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.010)
Education	0.042	0.020	−0.001	0.001
	(0.046)	(0.031)	(0.003)	(0.001)
Male	−0.060	−0.301	0.035	0.086
	(0.177)	(0.211)	(0.177)	(0.218)
Married	−0.259	−0.492	−0.140	0.557
	(0.337)	(0.379)	(0.319)	(0.614)
Children	0.147	0.274	0.255	0.011
	(0.211)	(0.269)	(0.219)	(0.266)
Constant	−5.595*	−6.214*	−5.868*	−6.634*
	(0.555)	(0.874)	(0.597)	(0.868)
N	1654	1075	1579	1234
P.R.E.	0.241%	0.930%	0.000%	0.324%

Note: Coefficients are logit coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

*: $p \leq 0.05$

more likely to give. None of these results are particularly surprising, but they are important to note. Perhaps also not surprising are the atrocious proportional reductions in error of the models—with such a rare occurrence of ones in the data, getting a prediction of one is incredibly difficult (King and Zeng 2001). However, the effects of income are still significant in all models.

Figure 3.3 display the predicted probabilities of contributing to a political campaign—in all cases, the effects are positive, with greater effects concentrated in the upper levels of income. In no figure does the prediction exceed 0.2, however, indicating that even individuals



(a) 1956 (b) 1960

(c) 1964 (d) 1968

Figure 3.3: Effects of Income on Likelihood of Contributing to Campaign, 1956–1968

with the highest incomes are unlikely to contribute to campaigns and organizations in this era.[4]

Clearly, then, even in an era without required disclosure of campaign donations, contribution limitations, or any standard set of regulations, we see evidence of a relationship between an individual's income and his or her propensity to donate to political campaigns or

[4]It is also possible that this is an artifact of the ordinal nature of the NES's measure of income during this time. Individuals in the "tail" of the right-skewed income distribution are treated in these ordinal measures exactly the same as individuals within only a few standard deviations of the income mean.

organizations. This demonstrates that—despite the institutional differences before and after the enactment of the Federal Elections Campaign Act—donor calculus remained largely the same. As such, the "consumer contributors" described by Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder (2003)—who donate to political campaigns and organizations when they have the money to do so—existed even before the regulatory framework was in place to encourage such behavior.

I now turn my attention to the practical implications for this project of the relationship between income and expenditures. In particular, if income predicts expenditures, rising levels of income should associate with rising levels of expenditures, all else equal (though I do not necessarily believe this relationship to be linear in nature). While Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder (2003) demonstrate that income and expenditures in congressional campaigns are related in elections from 1992 to 2000, establishing this relationship in the pre-FECA era has practical implications for anyone seeking to study the impact of expenditures in this earlier time period.

The ability to predict expenditures with income provides a useful tool for analyzing the impact of campaign expenditures in an era for which we do not have comprehensive campaign finance data. While income is not a perfect proxy for expenditures (they are unlikely to be linearly related), it is a far better method than simply discarding these earlier periods.

The Role of Income and Campaign Spending on Candidate Centeredness

The key question, then, is whether campaign spending (or its proxy, income) helped usher in the era of candidate-centered politics. As discussed earlier, candidates seeking to run their own campaigns—independent of the party—needed funding to do so. In the pre-World War II era of congressional campaigns, such funds were largely unavailable or were provided by the party with the intention of having the party dictate the events of the campaign.

In candidate-centered elections, candidates are largely able to finance their own campaigns through donations from individuals, PACs, and—to a lesser extent—parties.[5]

The drastic increase in real disposable income per capita—coupled with the evidence that income increases are related to increases in expenditures—indicates that candidates who required additional resources to wage their own electoral campaigns were increasingly able to find these resources in the postwar era. Furthermore, such a trend is difficult to ignore when exploring another phenomenon presumed to have increased during the same time period (candidate-centered politics). The implications of rising income for candidate-centered electoral politics are fairly straightforward. I outline them below.

First, increasing expenditures is likely to result in greater weight given to candidate-specific factors by voters. Candidates who spend more gain name recognition and are able to disseminate important information about their policy stances, qualifications, personal lives, and anything else they feel might help them with certain voters. By weighing candidate-specific factors to a greater extent, voters are complicit in the shift away from a party-centered electoral system and towards a more candidate-centered system.

Second, the increase in income (and the associated rise of campaign contributions and expenditures) potentially contributed to the emphasis candidates themselves placed on their own characteristics, rather than their party loyalties. Once candidates were able to raise money independently of the parties from individual donors and PACs, it is likely they felt less pressure to continue emphasizing their loyalty to the party. This is in line with recent research by Carson and Roberts (2013), which finds that the adoption of Australian ballot

[5]Kolodny (1998) notes that congressional campaign committees have existed for over a century, but that sometime in the 1970s—and largely due to campaign finance reform—these committees became major sources of funds for candidates. This conflicts with the argument set forth by Herrnson (1988) that these committees emerged as a major shift in the role of the national party organizations; nevertheless, both agree that the in the 1970s, congressional campaign committees began to serve a vital role for its members. This further indicates the changing nature of party-candidate relations—whereas the party used to dominate, now the party organization serves the candidates by providing necessary resources (see, for example, Aldrich 1995).

and direct primary laws decreased party unity in Congress. As I am only interested in examining the *causes* of candidate centeredness, examining this is outside the scope of this project; nevertheless, future work in this area should examine the role increasing candidate expenditures played in helping to erode party unity in Congress in the 1950s and 1960s.

While the effects of increasing incomes and campaign expenditures appear relatively straightforward, a crucial consideration lies with the ballot format argument offered in Chapter 2. Recall that the effects of a candidate-specific trait—Democratic quality advantage (DQA)—were found to be conditional on ballot format. In party column districts, candidate-specific traits are unlikely to have the same effect as when present in office bloc districts. This is primarily due to the nature of the ballot and its encouragement of straight-ticket voting: party column ballots encourage straight-ticket voting behavior, while office bloc ballots encourage voters to consider individual candidates and their traits. As such, the effect of the quality advantage on the Democratic share of the two-party vote is positive and statistically significant in districts with the office bloc ballot. No such relationship emerges in party column districts, however.

I anticipate a similar effect for the role of income and donations/expenditures. In office bloc districts, spending which promotes the candidate and his or her traits is likely to influence how voters decide. In party column districts, this pattern is unlikely to emerge, as voters in these districts are encouraged to take the path of least resistance and vote a straight party ticket, with little or no consideration for individual candidate traits, especially in down-ballot races.

My theory, then, posits a largely indirect role for ballot format. Districts with the office bloc ballot should see greater effects of campaign spending on candidate centeredness, while districts with the party column ballot should see little or no such effects. As discussed in Chapter 2, the direct effects of ballot format—while present—are the least crucial effects of ballot laws on candidate centeredness. More important are the indirect effects—ballot format "flips the switch" to allow or deny candidate-specific traits to matter. Increased

expenditures—which promote candidate-specific traits—are thus unlikely to have much of an effect in party column districts, but are expected to influence candidate centeredness in office bloc districts.

I now turn my attention to testing this hypothesis. Unfortunately, direct observation of campaign expenditures for the bulk of the time period of interest is impossible. Comprehensive campaign finance data are simply unavailable prior to 1972 (at the earliest). For the reasons I outlined in the above sections, I instead rely on measures of income to serve as a proxy measure for campaign expenditures. Specifically, I use a measure of per capita personal income produced by the Bureau of Economic Analysis for each state from 1929 to the present day. Thus, I examine the time period from the 1930 House elections to the 1980 election cycle.[6]

While this measure does not take into account the proportion of income paid in taxes, per capita personal income from 1930 to 1980 correlates with per capita real disposable income in the same time period at 0.927. Figure 3.4 displays the time series of the national average, Southern average, and non-Southern average of state per capita personal income in congressional years from 1930 to 1980. Similar to the pattern in Figure 3.2, a marked increase is evident beginning in the mid-1960s.

Using the national and state-level measures of candidate centeredness discussed in Chapter 2, I test my theory of the conditional relationship between income, ballot format, and candidate centeredness. The primary predictor of interest is the effect of per capita personal income on candidate centeredness. Due to the right-skewed nature of the data, I normalized the income variable by calculating its natural log. Though this complicates interpretation, it improves model fit and generates residuals with more desirable properties.

[6]District-level measures of personal income are unavailable for the time period of interest as well. As such, I rely on state-level measures to conduct my analysis. Though this is less than ideal, it is the reality of historical economic data availability. This less precise measure undoubtedly affects my estimates of the effects of income, though I do not anticipate any systematic or biasing effects.

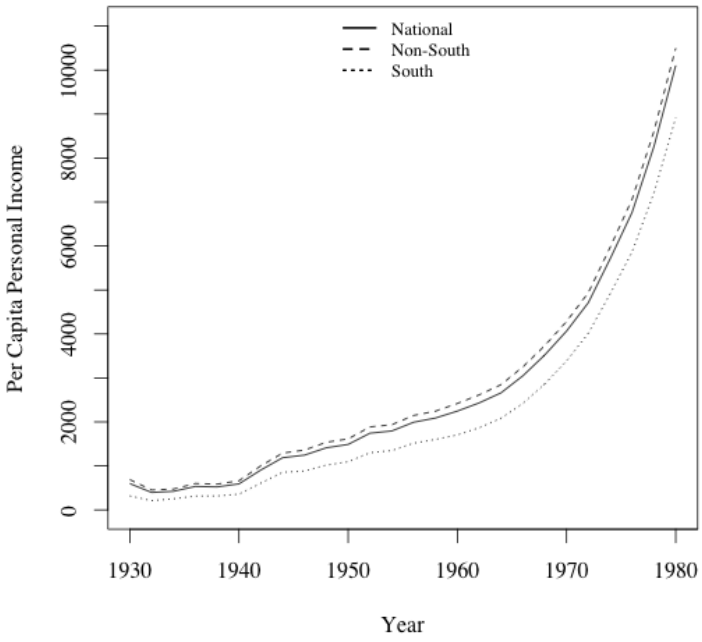


Figure 3.4: Per Capita Personal Income, 1930–1980

Similar to the analysis in Chapter 2, I include indicators for Southern states, at-large districts, whether the district experienced a change in contestation between time $t-1$ and time t, whether the district remained uncontested at both time points, whether the election year was a midterm election cycle, and whether the race was defended by an incumbent.

I expect the coefficient on the Southern, incumbent-defended, and at-large indicators to be negative. As stated in Chapter 2, Southern states—beyond merely seeing less competition—had a uniquely partisan political culture during this time frame. Districts with incumbents running for reelection are likely to have a lower differenced Democratic two-party vote share; as such, the first term in both candidate centeredness measure equations are likely to be suppressed. Finally, candidates for at-large districts are unlikely to be able to separate their fortunes from the fortunes of their parties, particularly at the state level; moreover, they are unlikely to be able to cultivate a personal vote with the larger constituency they face.[7]

[7]Of course, my measure of income is likely to be more precise for at-large districts, given that I use the state-level measure. I re-ran the models with an interaction term between

I expect the coefficient on the change in contestation indicator to be positive and significant. Unsurprisingly, a district whose Democratic two-party vote share drops from 100 to 60 (or some other competitive number) or increases from 0 to 40 will be captured in my measures as highly candidate-centered. As such, I include this indicator here.

Finally, I include the same DQA term discussed in Chapter 2. While I have no theoretical expectations for the effect of DQA on candidate centeredness, the effects in the analysis in Chapter 2 may indicate that districts with a quality advantage one way or the other may operate much the same as incumbent-defended districts. Districts with a strong candidate one way or the other and a "sacrificial lamb" to oppose them frequently feature the same dynamic in ensuing election years. As such, it is possible that the first term in the measurement equations will be suppressed, similar to the effects of an incumbent's presence in the race.

After logging state per capita personal income, I regress my measures of candidate centeredness on the aforementioned variables, along with yearly fixed effects. The results are presented in Table 3.2. Clearly, the anticipated positive effects of per capita personal income are only present in office bloc districts, regardless of whether I measure candidate centeredness as a function of independence from the national party or independence of the state party. Again, the difference between these measures is simply whether the Democratic candidate's vote share shift is different from that of the state or national average shift in the Democratic vote share.

While the effects are not easily interpreted, a few simple calculations demonstrate the effects of increases in per capita personal income. An increase from \$1,600 to \$1,800 yields a 1.011-unit increase in the state-level measure of candidate centeredness in districts with the office bloc ballot, while the same increase yields a 2.242-unit increase in the national measure. Similarly, an increase from the 25th percentile of per capita personal income

at-large districts and income. This yields substantively identical results, with the interaction term failing to reach significance, which at least suggests that the imprecise measure is not necessarily biasing my estimates.

Table 3.2: Determinants of Candidate Centeredness by Ballot Type, State- and National-Level Measures, 1930–1980

	State-Level Measure		National Measure	
Variable	**Party Column**	**Office Bloc**	**Party Column**	**Office Bloc**
ln(Income)	−0.909	8.585*	−1.241	6.888*
	(1.738)	(3.598)	(1.174)	(3.306)
South	−1.239	3.235	−2.353*	1.491
	(1.212)	(1.779)	(0.965)	(1.925)
At-Large	−2.733*	−6.607*	−1.228	−5.325*
	(0.793)	(1.166)	(1.878)	(1.551)
ΔContest	14.657*	19.004*	18.891*	22.639*
	(2.643)	(3.227)	(2.420)	(2.914)
Uncontested	5.540*	−2.245	−2.636*	−0.403
	(1.182)	(1.244)	(1.098)	(1.528)
Midterm	0.407	1.467*	−2.923*	−3.472*
	(1.106)	(0.557)	(1.217)	(1.685)
DQA	0.148	−0.377*	−0.281	−0.292
	(0.129)	(0.159)	(0.200)	(0.176)
Inc. Def.	−1.435*	−2.348*	−2.092*	−3.195*
	(0.431)	(0.518)	(0.441)	(0.754)
Constant	9.875	−46.589*	16.668*	−30.825
	(10.215)	(21.508)	(7.032)	(19.289)
N	4528	4784	4528	4784
R^2	0.385	0.480	0.461	0.533

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, yearly fixed effects not reported.
*: $p \leq 0.05$

($861) to the 75th percentile ($3,524.50) yields a 12.100-unit increase in the state-level measure of candidate-centeredness and a 9.708-unit increase in the national measure. This means that a shift from the 25th percentile to the 75th percentle in district income will yield an interelection vote swing more then 12 and 9 points different than those districts' state and national average interelection vote swings.

The effects of other variables largely conform to expectations. At-large districts suppress candidate centeredness in all models but one. The coefficient for the change in contestation indicator also conforms to expectations—districts that go from being contested by both

parties to being uncontested (or vice-versa) experience the expected increase in the measures of candidate centeredness. Across all models, the presence of an incumbent suppresses the measure, likely for the reasons outlined above.

One intriguing result is the negative effect of midterm elections on the national measure of candidate centeredness. This may be due to the characteristics of midterm voters—they tend to be more ideological and more partisan. Why these effects are absent from the models estimating the state-level measure of candidate centeredness is unclear.

While it is tempting to split the sample into two time periods—pre- and post-FECA—to examine the effects of actual campaign spending, the latter time period begins after many observers report a shift toward candidate-centered politics. As such, rather than a robustness check, this would simply test whether the findings presented here continue to drive candidate centeredness even in an already candidate-centered system. I would not expect strong results of such a split.[8]

Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I uncover evidence that the emergence of a candidate-centered electoral system is, in part, due to the increasing capacity of voters to contribute to candidates' campaigns and, in turn, those candidates' abilities to educate voters about their qualifications and personal traits. These effects are not uniform across districts, however. Candidates who can raise—and spend—more only see their electoral fortunes tied to these activities if their district uses the office bloc ballot. These ballots enable (or force) voters to consider the merits of each individual candidate before marking their ballots, in contrast to party column ballots, which encourage voters to consider only the parties' relative reputations.

[8]Such a time period split yields no such effects. In the period prior to 1972, income has the anticipated effects. After 1972, however, the effects are minimal or nonexistent, again due to the system already being candidate-centered.

These results largely conform to the expectations derived from the existing literature on spending in campaigns. Candidates who spend more have been demonstrated to increase their vote share relative to their opponents, increase name recognition, increase voter affect, foster trust among voters, and reduce the relative salience of party among voters. The results presented here demonstrate that these effects are not unconditional—an important addition and contribution to the extensive literature on campaign spending.

Arriving at these conclusions is not an easy task. For one, we do not have systematic campaign finance data during the era of interest, particularly the 1950s and 1960s. To overcome this obstacle, I demonstrated the important relationship between income on the one hand and donations (at the individual level) or expenditures (in the aggregate) on the other. After rigorously establishing this link, I was able to leverage the role of income in determining donations/expenditures to test (indirectly) the effects of candidate spending on candidate centeredness.

An important consideration at this juncture is the role of television. As discussed earlier, candidates required additional resources to reach voters in part because of the increasing role of television advertising in campaign strategy. It is therefore important to consider the role of television in informing voters about candidates and giving voters the opportunity to see their candidates for Congress directly, rather than through agents of the party organizations. In the next chapter, I test whether television has contributed to candidate centeredness and, as in this chapter and the preceding, whether these effects are conditional on ballot format and disposable income.

Chapter 4

Liberating Airwaves? Television and Candidate-Centered Politics

In November of 1959, a young senator from Massachusetts wrote an article for *TV Guide* discussing the role of television in American politics. Then-Senator John F. Kennedy wrote about the "new breed" of politician who crafts his image on the airwaves. He largely viewed television's role positively—a democratizing influence on the political process. He wrote,

> The searching eye of the television camera scrutinizes the candidates—and the way they are picked. Party leaders are less willing to run roughshod over the voters' wishes and hand-pick an unknown, unappealing or unpopular candidate in the traditional "smoke-filled room" when millions of voters are watching, comparing and remembering.[1]

He even noted that television could benefit candidates in years when their parties' fortunes were unfriendly. Citing the 1958 elections of Republican Governors Nelson Rockefeller of New York and Mark Hatfield of Oregon, he interpreted these candidates as able to "successfully [counter] the Democratic trend in 1958 with particular reliance on TV appeal."

The idea that candidates might be able to seek and win election despite their parties' relative struggles is the essence of candidate-centered politics. Kennedy's column in *TV Guide* demonstrates what had become a popular interpretation—television's unique ability to

[1] *TV Guide*, November 14, 1959

allow candidates to reach the public directly led voters to consider candidates as individuals, rather than as agents of their parties.

The prevalence of this interpretation is easy to understand; it is impossible to ignore the coincidence of the drastic rise of television and the general shift away from parties. The explanation makes intuitive sense as well—voters were able to see their candidates first-hand, without the intervention of party activists, and would therefore be more willing to split their tickets, choose candidates with desirable qualities, and engage in other candidate-centered voting behaviors. As a result, observers from JFK to the authors of political science textbooks (Iyengar 2011) have linked the rise of television to the increase in candidate-centered politics.

Much like radio before it and the Internet after, television spread extraordinarily rapidly throughout the country. In only ten years, the percentage of American homes with a television set grew from nine percent (in 1950) to over 87 percent (in 1960). Candidates were unlikely to ignore this new medium of communication with voters. As such, it stands to reason that voters might have responded to this new campaign tactic with new behaviors and patterns of their own.

Despite the apparent "conventional wisdom" status of the effects of television's advent, the empirical evidence has been mixed. Unsurprisingly, political scientists were relatively quick to question or dismiss the effects of television. The development of the "minimal effects" theory of mass media effects ran counter to public perceptions (see, for example, Lazarsfeld 1948). Decades later, however, several studies (such as Iyengar and Kinder 1987) found either positive or mixed results regarding the role of television in elections. There remains, as a result, a need to explore rigorously how television might have contributed to the rise of candidate-centered politics. In this chapter, I examine the effects of television on candidate centeredness, with particular attention to how television fits into my broader theory of the roles of ballot format and income/campaign spending.

I begin by discussing television's rapid rise throughout the 1950s, a truly remarkable expansion which exemplifies the rapid diffusion of information and communications technology. In the following section, I explore the reasons why television might contribute to candidate-centered politics and discuss the relevant literature supporting this conclusion. I then turn my attention to the equally strong argument and literature refuting such a conclusion. From there, I fit television into my theory of candidate centeredness, discussing my expectations and how these expectations derive from more recent work in the field of political communication. In my analyses, I examine not only television's role in the rise of candidate-centered politics, but also how television might (or might not) have enhanced the advantages of incumbency in determining vote share. I then conclude by linking these results back to the literature on the effects of television, largely siding with those who would attribute a minimal (direct) role to television in the rise of candidate-centered politics and the incumbency advantage, but with a few caveats regarding these minimal effects.

The Advent and Rapid Adoption of Television

Prior (2007) and McCarthy (2010) both document the development of television technology and the rapid increase in television's availability to and adoption by the mass public. In 1928, a radio station in Schenectady, NY became the first to produce a television drama as one of only a handful of radio stations with experimental television broadcast capabilities. The number of stations increased to eighteen by 1937 and, in 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's address at the New York World's Fair made him the first ever televised president. By 1941, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC)—which had replaced the Federal Radio Commission under the Federal Communications Act of 1934—began to grant commercial license to television stations, allowing for a slight increase in the number of television stations. During World War II, the FCC prohibited the establishment of new stations, followed by an expansion in the number of stations in the immediate postwar period.

In 1948, the *National Municipal Review* reported that a Milwaukee station, WTMJ-TV, was the first to use television "to get out the vote and to smooth out voting procedure." During its April 2 broadcast, the station featured a simulated voting environment, complete with a model polling place and an actor portraying "Mr. Average Citizen." After the election on April 6, WTMJ-TV set up cameras in the Milwaukee *Journal*'s newsroom, "giving viewers a first-hand look at the methods of assembling and tabulating unofficial election returns" (Slayton 1948, 264). The era of election-night coverage and televised efforts to promote viewer interest and engagement in the electoral process had begun.

From 1948 to 1952, the FCC implemented a licensing freeze due to the limited availability of very high frequency (VHF) airwaves. In 1952, the FCC added the ultra high frequency (UHF) airwaves, expanding the available number of channels. During the freeze, however, several pre-approved stations began operation, such that there were only 50 stations nationwide in January 1948, but by January 1951 that number had increased to 107. As the supply increased, so did demand—more Americans purchased television sets, encouraging the creation of new stations immediately after the freeze. The expanding availability of airwaves brought about by the inclusion of UHF stations, coupled with the increasing demand for more content brought about by the increased percentage of American homes with television sets, led to a dramatic increase in the number of television stations.

Figure 4.1 demonstrates the increasing demand for televised content. It depicts the percentage of American households with television sets from 1950 to 1980, as well as Americans' average daily television consumption, in minutes.[2] Even in the beginning of the 1950s, Americans with access to television were addicted—average viewing times were well above four hours each day. By 1980, this number had reached nearly six and a half hours each day. Television began to rival only sleep and work as the major time consumers of Americans' daily lives.

[2]Data on the percentage of American households with television sets are drawn from Steinberg (1985). Data on daily viewing habits are drawn from Nielsen.

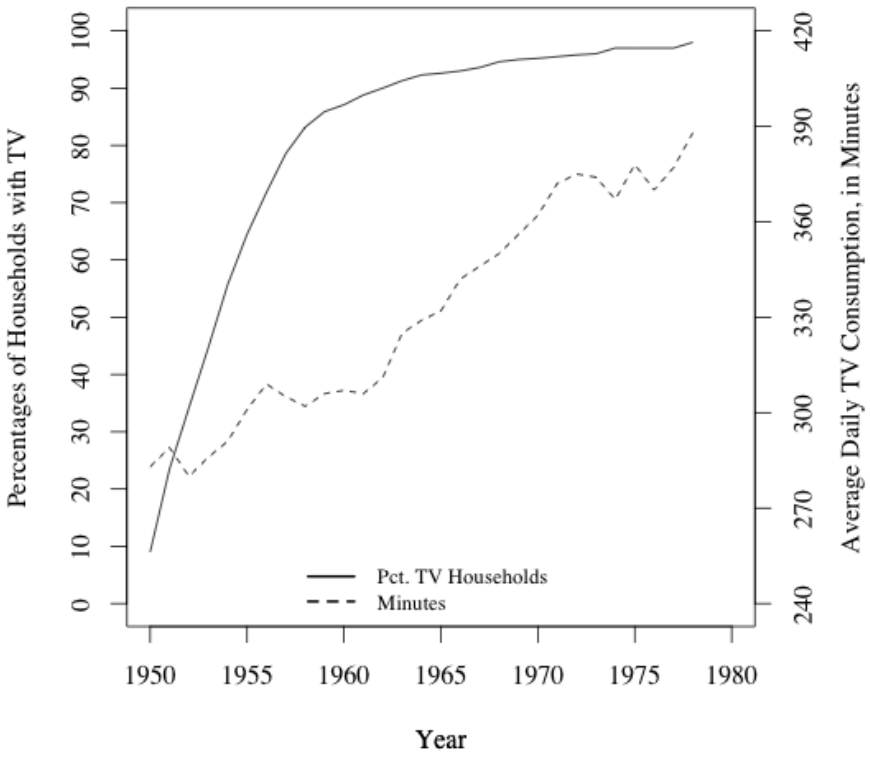


Figure 4.1: Television Households and Viewing Habits, 1950–1980

The drastic rise of the number of television sets continued through the 1950s, leveling off in the late 1950s. To match this demand, entrepreneurs and networks opened new UHF stations in the mid-1950s, as demonstrated in Figure 4.2. This increase in stations marked a response to a growing demand in the market for new content.

The figures reported here demonstrate why contemporary observers would have felt a need to explore the effects of television on politics. This parallels the rapid adoption of other recent communications technologies, such as the Internet and smartphones—both of which have sparked discussion and debate among nonacademic observers about how these technologies have influenced the way candidates and parties reach out to the electorate and how voters, in turn, respond to these new approaches (see, for example, Miller 2008; Mehta 2011; Bosker 2011; Smith and Duggan 2012; Siddiqui 2013; Delacourt 2014).

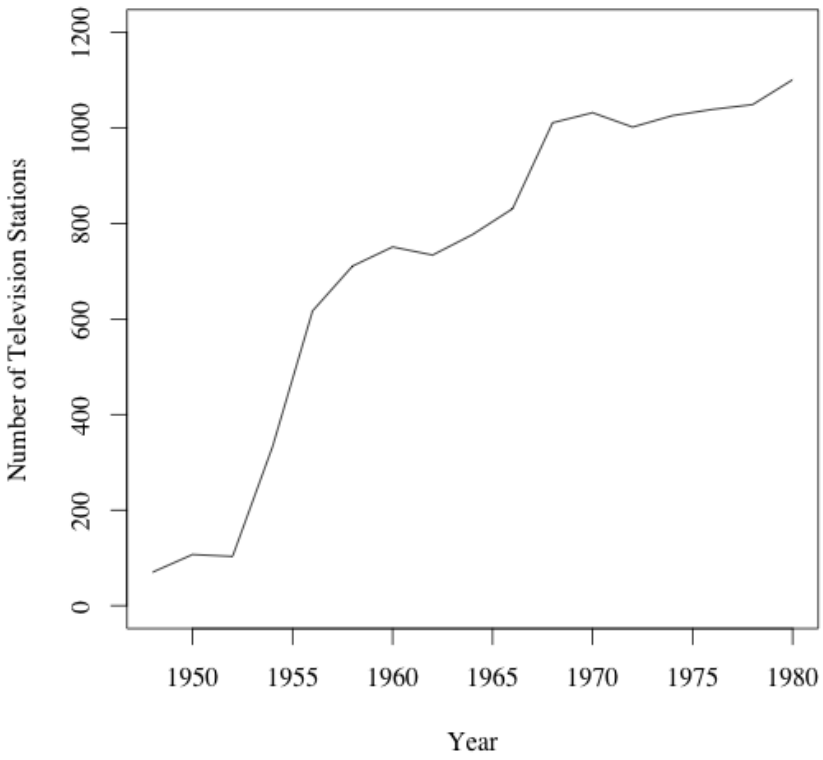


Figure 4.2: Television Stations, 1948–1980

It is unsurprising, then, that nonacademic and academic observers alike were quick to examine the effects of television. Such discussions reached a potential climax in 1960, during the first televised debates in presidential elections history. The September 27, 1960 edition of *The New York Times* included a lengthy story about the first ever televised debate. Even these early observations included a discussion of how television provided a unique opportunity for candidates to mold their "image":

> For the most part, the exchanges were distinguished by a suavity, earnestness and courtesy that suggested that the two men were more concerned about "image projection" to their huge television audience than about scoring debating points.
>
> Senator Kennedy, using no television makeup, rarely smiled during the hour and maintained an expression of gravity suitable for a candidate for the highest office in the land.

> Mr. Nixon, wearing pancake makeup to cover his dark beard, smiled more frequently as he made his points and dabbed frequently at the perspiration that beaded out on his chin.

The attention to candidates crafting their images indicates that the media—as well as candidates themselves—were concerned with identifying candidates as individuals, cultivating votes not only with partisan appeals but also with individual traits.

To test whether the 1960 debate had such an effect, Druckman (2003) examines the role television may have played during that election. Comparing television's effects to those of radio, he finds that experimental participants who viewed the 1960 debates rated Kennedy higher, largely as a result of priming viewers to consider candidate personality traits. Thus we can see that television *can* have drastic effects on viewers in an experimental environment. It remains to be seen, however, whether such effects hold up in the real world. These findings provide a useful introduction to the literature exploring the effects of television on elections and voters.

Television and Elections: A Literature Review

From the earliest studies of television's effects on elections, political science research has had a difficult time uncovering a consistent relationship. This is not surprising—to find definitive proof that television affected elections, scholars would have to demonstrate that, absent television, the purported effects would disappear. Nevertheless, several researchers have taken on the task of testing whether the rise of television had the profound influence on our political system that casual observers often believed.

One of the earliest analyses of the effects of television consumption on voting behavior examined voters in Iowa during the 1952 presidential election (Simon and Stern 1955). Using a natural experimental research design, the authors compared turnout and election results in counties in Iowa with considerable access to television stations to those without such access; as the counties were otherwise similar, any differences would be due to the presence

or absence of television. They summarize their findings, stating, "The data do not reveal any reliable difference either in the voting turnout or in the percentage of the vote case for the Republican candidate between [districts with considerable television access] and other areas" (1955, 471). They conclude that the lack of discernible effects of television may be due to the saturation of markets by other media—radio stations, newspapers, and magazines may have already provided the information that television was hypothesized to provide, giving television little or no role in the market.

In a 1962 article for the *Columbia Journalism Review*, Angus Campbell reviewed the meteoric rise of television and its potential effects on the political system. He says, "There was in fact no remaining frontier for further penetration by the mass media when television appeared in the late 1940s. At that time 90 percent of the population reported listening to radio and 80 percent read a daily newspaper" (1962, 12). He, like Simon and Stern (1955), takes this as evidence that television's effects are mitigated by its inability to provide new information to voters, a position supported by Key (1961, 374–375).

Converse (1962) provides insight as to why television's lack of new information might have led to its limited effects on voters. He finds that greater information reduces voter stability—as voters gain more information about candidates, parties, and policies, they are less likely to vote consistently for one party's candidates. As he notes, newspapers are consistently shown to provide more information than television, suggesting that newspapers may, in fact, help to reduce the salience of party identification and affiliation. When compared to newspapers, according to Converse's argument, television is less likely to effect drastic change within the electorate.

Glaser (1965) examines the efforts by televised news stations, political parties, and various elections commissions to promote voter turnout via advertisements and public service announcements. He finds that, while televised messages are both better at penetrating the market and more memorable than newspaper appeals, televised appeals are actually less effective than newspaper appeals in increasing voter turnout, due to television's lower levels

of information provision. This study therefore conforms to the expectations set forth in Converse's (1962) earlier work.

In a later study, Druckman (2005) finds similar results—newspapers are consistently better equipped to inform the electorate than is television. If Converse's (1962) work is correct, then, television may affect the nature of elections, but it is unlikely to exert a greater degree of influence than newspapers. This is an important consideration, as newspapers were prevalent in American life throughout the twentieth century—any potential effects of newspapers were likely realized long before the onset of candidate-centered politics.

It is important, then, to consider the specific means by which television might influence elections. I turn now to the literature on the role of television in several distinct electoral trends: the increase in split-ticket voting, the "personalization" of politics (particularly in other parts of the world), and the incumbency advantage.

Television and Ticket Splitting

As discussed in Chapter 1, one symptom of candidate-centered politics is an increase in the prevalence of ticket splitting. As Carson and Roberts (2013) demonstrate, ticket splitting existed even in the late nineteenth century, long before most scholars discuss a rise in candidate-centered politics. However, as Rusk (1970), Maddox and Nimmo (1981), Beck et al. (1992), and Roberts (2009) note, there was an increase in ticket splitting in the era following the adoption of Australian ballot laws and again in the 1950s and 1960s.

In their seminal study of ticket splitting, Campbell and Miller (1957) find that ticket splitting behavior is a function of ballot format (straight ticket options offer voters the chance to cast a ballot with minimal effort—for more information, see Chapter 2 of this work), party identification, and specific goal-motivated behavior, including the importance of issues. While they do not examine the role of television, they do find that voters with specific candidate preferences will split their ticket when those candidate preferences differ from the voters' party orientation. This suggests a possible role for television.

The timing of the 1950s and 1960s increase in ticket splitting coincides well with the rapid rise of television. Several observers noted that candidates desired to encourage ticket splitting, as their parties were unpopular within their districts and ticket splitting increased their chances of victory (see, for example, Wyckoff 1968; Nimmo 1970; Mendelsohn and Crespi 1970; DeVries and Tarrance 1972; Agranoff 1972). Many of these same authors posited a relationship between the meteoric rise of television and the increase in split-ticket voting.

The story makes intuitive sense; as Atwood and Sanders state, "Television appeared to be ideally suited for creating candidate 'images' that could be considered independent of party" (1975, 421). Agranoff (1972) emphasized the role of campaign media consultants, whose primary goal was to create, through television, a unique identity for their candidates that would maximize their vote share regardless of party strength. While candidates and campaigns clearly believed television could play a role in helping candidates develop their own image—independent of the party—it was unclear whether such an image would encourage split-ticket voting.

One early analysis of the effects of television on split-ticket voting examined data collected from voters in southern Illinois and St. Louis, MO in 1972, finding that, while television was the most widely-used and most believable medium, print media and radio were more likely to correlate with ticket-splitting behavior (Atwood and Sanders 1975). The authors attribute this pattern to the trend noted by Converse (1962)—newspapers provide more useful information, which promotes ticket-splitting behavior.

Maddox and Nimmo (1981) examine survey data from 1952 through 1976 and develop a measure of ticket-splitting behavior by combining respondents' reported votes for president, governor, senator, and representative; a split ticket occurs when a respondent claims to have voted for at least one candidate from each of the two major parties. Using this method, they explore ticket-splitting behavior as a function of, among other factors, the use of various forms of media. They find no support for the hypothesis that television encourages split-

ticket voting. "Prior to 1968, ticket splitting occurred at a higher rate (but only 5 to 7%) among newspaper users. In 1968 and 1976, the rates are virtually the same for users of both types of media" (404). Overall, though, self-reported independents and weak partisans are more likely to split their tickets, as are those who decided how to vote late in the campaign. They do find support, however, for the idea that voters who focus on candidate images over partisanship are more likely to split their tickets, suggesting that television may play a role by emphasizing these images over partisanship.

A more recent analysis by Beck et al. (1992) examines the elections for five statewide offices in Ohio in 1990. They find that 54 percent of the voters in their sample split their ballots among Democratic and Republican candidates. Their results suggest that reliance on television as a dominant source of election information has no effect on whether a voter will split his or her ticket. Rather, the long-documented influence of party identification appears to have the largest effect on a voter's decision to select a straight or a split ticket. One additional variable of interest, however, is the visibility of the candidate—candidates rated as more recognizable or visible were more likely to draw voters from across party lines. In particular, incumbency seemed to pull voters across party lines, "but this is because of the visibility advantages it often confers and not some intrinsic quality of incumbency itself" (926). This appears to leave open the chance that, in an earlier era, television helped candidates pull voters across party lines by increasing their visibility.

The "Personalization" of Electoral Politics

The increased visibility of candidates—coupled with the attempts by consultants and candidates to craft a unique "image" independent of the parties—led some researchers to explore the "personalization" of elections. In a comparative context, this trend often refers to the increased focus on party leaders, rather than the parties themselves. McAllister argues, "This is a phenomenon which is often traced to the election of Margaret Thatcher in Britain in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the United States in 1980, two strong, charismatic leaders

whose profile within the electorate easily eclipsed that of their respective parties" (2007). Considerable research has examined the role of television in helping to cause an increase in the personalization of politics, whether in the United States or abroad (see, for example, Rubin 1981; Popkin 1991).

Wanat (1974) began by examining how television can help candidates separate themselves in primary elections. He finds that advertising can help bring candidates' supporters to the polls or by informing voters and encouraging familiarity, which in turn should increase a candidate's vote share. He notes another means by which television might assist primary candidates; news reporting, interview shows, and even mentions during advertisements by opponents may help candidates separate themselves during primary elections. Without a party cue present, then, candidates may use television to increase their vote share—largely by connecting themselves to voters.

Patterson (1982) notes that presidential candidates in the 1960s began to rely more on television as a means of disseminating information, rather than the "militaristic strategy that stressed party loyalty and canvassing" (26). Rather than a cause of the rise of candidate-centered politics, however, Patterson argues that candidates were able to use television to respond to an already transitioned, candidate-centered environment: "Because of the weakening of partisanship, the electorate is now more volatile and more sensitive to the issues, personalities, and dynamics of an election, which are developed largely through the media" (35). This suggests that television plays a role, but only in a system which has *already become candidate-centered*.

This perspective appears to conform to the argument presented by Wattenberg (1982), who finds that increased advertising spending decreases the salience of party in congressional campaigns. However, he finds that these effects are less pronounced in districts with strong local party organizations, suggesting that television and advertising may only have an effect where parties are already weakened. It is important to consider, then, that television may not have led to a more candidate-centered electoral environment, but rather that

new technologies were able to be utilized by candidates already seeking to define themselves independent of their parties.

Campbell, Alford and Henry (1984) examine the congruence of media markets and congressional districts, finding that increased congruence promotes familiarity of candidates. Such familiarity helps challengers to a degree greater than incumbents. This suggests that television has the ability to assist candidates with their efforts to establish a base of voters independent of the party—an electoral base whose votes are cast for the candidate, rather than the party.

Morgan and Shanahan (1992) examined the television viewing habits of respondents on the General Social Survey from 1975 to 1989, finding that those who watched more television were less likely to engage their political self-identification when deciding whether and how to vote. They conclude that this suggests that "heavy television viewing goes with a reduction in the impact of basic political orientations on specific candidate choices" (18). This would seem to indicate that voters who consumed more television were less likely to make decisions motivated by partisanship—a seemingly more candidate-centered approach to voter decision making.

Keeter (1987) examines National Election Studies during presidential election years between 1952 and 1980, finding that personal qualities and characteristics of candidates began to replace long-term forces such as party identification in determining how voters decided. He also finds that this trend is particularly pronounced among voters who use television to gather information about the election. However, Hayes (2009) was unable to replicate Keeter's findings (due both to differences in coding and differing modeling and estimation techniques). Hayes finds no consistent effects of television viewing on the degree to which voters base their decisions on personal characteristics instead of partisan considerations. In fact, he finds that the trend Keeter uncovered had all but disappeared in the 1980s and 1990s—voters began to consider partisan factors more and more important. Though Hayes asserts that this is likely due to a reversion back to party-centered politics, it is equally likely

that the increasing ideological homogeneity of the parties meant that voters who chose based on issue dimensions were also choosing for reasons that would appear to be partisan in nature. That is, partisanship as a group identity may not be exerting any more influence today than it did in the past—rather, partisanship has now become a formalized organization of ideology. Because voters are unlikely to be able to separate these two concepts, analyses based on survey data are inadequate for separating these two concepts.

The personalization of electoral politics has been noted by comparative scholars as well. Elmelund-Præstekær and Hopmann (2012) examined surveys conducted during the Danish local elections in 2009. The Danish electoral system provides an especially good test for personalized politics, as voters can choose to vote via party ballots or preferential ballots. Party ballots allow voters to select parties, while preferential ballots allow voters to choose individual candidates. Elmelund-Præstekær and Hopmann hypothesize that exposure to the mass media will induce voters to cast a preferential ballot, with these effects primarily concentrated among those exposed to television news. Their results, however, fail to confirm these effects. They find that institutional factors—such as whether a party uses an open list or a closed list and the electoral size of the party—as well as urbanization, local issue salience, and individual characteristics such as knowledge and age exert greater effects on the decision to vote via preferential ballot. Media exposure has little or no effect across all analyses, suggesting that television may not induce candidate voting where voters have a choice between voting for the party slate or voting for individual candidates. This has clear implications for the decision of American voters in districts with the party column ballot to cast a more candidate-centered ballot.

Television and the Increase in the Incumbency Advantage

As I argued in the introductory chapter, another symptom of candidate-centered politics is the increasing incumbency advantage observed by political scientists in the late 1960s and 1970s. A few scholars have tied this increase to the rise of television. The story is

largely the same as why television may have increased ticket splitting or the personalization of politics. Exposure to candidate images help voters make decisions based on candidate-specific traits, including incumbency, which reduces the likelihood that voters will base their decisions entirely on party reputations or identifications.

One study linking television and the incumbency advantage was conducted by Goidel and Shields (1994). In it, they argue that media exposure encourages undecided voters to choose the candidate most likely to win. As incumbents tend to have a natural advantage anyway, television simply amplified this advantage by inducing a "bandwagon" effect among undecided voters. Such voters then opted to vote for the incumbent, largely due to their exposure to news stories of the campaign emphasizing the relative positioning of the candidates. As such, television was directly responsible for increasing the size of the incumbency advantage.

Prior (2006, 2007) formulates an argument asserting the means by which incumbents would be most likely to benefit from the rise of television, benefiting them over challengers, thus inducing the observed increase in the incumbency advantage. According to this argument, incumbents were given subsidized access to government-owned radio production facilities and filmed reports for their districts. They then sent these reports to the television stations covering their districts, who broadcast the reports to fulfill FCC public affairs programming requirements. Prior notes the rapid adoption of this practice by incumbents, finding that "more than three-quarters had 'regular programs' back home in 1965" (659). Prior argues that this gives the incumbent a "head start" on challengers in name recognition and favorability.

This imbalance changed somewhat once the campaign started, as the FCC's equal time rules required that stations must give equal access to air time to all qualified candidates. Prior notes, however, that candidates still had access to inexpensive production facilities. Thus incumbents would gain considerable advantage both before the campaign started and even during the campaign. Prior argues that these name-recognition advantages, along with

the fundraising advantages typically enjoyed by incumbents, helped increase the vote share of incumbents over time, but that these effects would be largely concentrated among low-education voters who got more of their information from television than from anyone else.

Through individual-level analyses, Prior finds that the number of television stations in a district increased the likelihood of voting for the incumbent, particularly among less-educated voters (who get more information from television), and that these effects are magnified among voters with high levels of television exposure. Through an aggregate-level analysis, Prior demonstrates that television does not seem to benefit challengers, but rather the number of television stations in a district enhanced the effects of incumbency on the Democratic share of the two-party vote, particularly beginning in the late 1960s. As he argues, this does not necessarily mean that the rise of television is responsible for all of the increase in the incumbency advantage, but that television was a major contributor to the increase.

This argument is largely different than those traditionally offered for why television matters. Vague notions of candidates crafting their own images and the public responding to these images pale in comparison to the well-defined argument established by Prior. This is a provocative argument—television helped incumbents not simply by providing them with an outlet to create an image to which the public might respond, but also by virtue of being more accessible to incumbents than to other candidates. In the section that follows, I incorporate Prior's research (and other research on the effects of television) into my theory of the rise candidate-centered politics.

The Role of Television in the Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics

Much of the literature discussed in the preceding sections found either minimal or nonexistent roles for television in the electoral process. This is puzzling, especially in light of the research on the effects of campaign advertising on the electorate (see, for example, Ansolabehere,

Iyengar and Valentino 1993; Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995; Finkel and Geer 1998; Kahn and Kenney 1999; Goldstein and Ridout 2002; Brader 2005, 2006; Geer 2006; Krupnikov 2011; Richey 2012; Kam and Zechmeister 2013). These researchers find that campaign advertising can mobilize (or demobilize) voters, prime certain considerations of candidates, activate latent preferences, and even lead voters to make decisions based on emotional responses rather than rational cues. The key difference between these studies and the role of television in our electoral system, however, lies in the nature of the effects. While campaign strategy (in which television played an increasing role) may affect voter turnout or even vote choice, the literature from the previous section necessitates skepticism that the mere presence of television could fundamentally change the way elections are determined.

How, then, might television have contributed to a more candidate-centered electoral system? As prior research has demonstrated, television leaves a more lasting impression than other forms of media and its messages are more likely to be recalled later by potential voters (Glaser 1965). Furthermore, the evidence is overwhelming that candidates began to incorporate tactics involving television into their campaign strategies in an effort to encourage voters to consider them (especially independent of the parties) (Agranoff 1972; Prior 2006). The question remains, however: Did any of this have an effect on the broader electoral system?

I believe the answer should contain two components. First, I do not expect to find evidence of a direct effect of the adoption of television on the electoral system. The overwhelming preponderance of evidence I have reviewed indicates that television's role in the electoral system is secondary (or even tertiary) to much more powerful forces, including voter partisanship, institutional rules, and other environmental factors. Regardless of whether candidates sought to establish their own identities, the best evidence to date suggests that these efforts were a response to—rather than a cause of—candidate-centered politics. Candidates took to the airwaves because they had to—voters were already considering candidates as individuals as the result of institutional and environmental changes and parties were unable

or unwilling to continue to provide high levels of support to candidates. Candidates therefore had to run their own campaigns, establish their own identities, and ultimately win (or lose) on their own merits.

The second part of the answer to the question of television's role is a bit more friendly to those who would argue that television helped usher in a candidate-centered electoral system. I believe television may have had some indirect effects on the electoral system. As Udall (1967) notes, television contributed to the skyrocketing costs of congressional campaigns. Importantly, Bernstein (1966) argues that television was not the primary cause of these skyrocketing costs, as the increasing cost of district-wide mailers due to rising postage rates and expanding district population, the need to form a professional campaign staff rather than relying on party organizational support, and other factors necessitated greater resources for competitive campaigns. If the rise of television contributed to this rise in spending—and spending, in turn, helped lead to candidate-centered elections—then television can be said to have had an indirect effect on the electoral system. Note, however, that increased spending was likely even without television, though television certainly played a role in determining the degree to which spending increased.

Unsurprisingly, I believe any effects of television in the transition to a candidate-centered electoral system (though again, direct effects are unlikely) are likely to be conditional in nature. As with spending and income in the previous chapter, I expect television's effects (if present at all) to be greater in office bloc districts than in party column districts. The logic is the same as with nearly all other variables. As Campbell and Miller (1957) note, voters tend to choose the route requiring the least effort. If voters are encouraged to vote a straight ticket through either the party column ballot or a straight ticket option, then any individualistic factors are unlikely to affect vote choice. If, however, voters are forced to make a choice for each candidate, individualistic factors may play a role.

Following Prior's lead, I sought to measure the number of television stations within a district by using the *Broadcasting Yearbooks*. However, repeated efforts to match television

station to district were unsuccessful. The problem lay in the method the *Broadcasting Yearbooks* use to report stations. In the publication, the reports contain only the name of the city in which the station can be found. Prior simply assumes that the station then only broadcasts to the county—and any districts containing part or all of that county—in which the city is located (a flawed assumption, as he notes in his 2007 book). Thus it is nearly impossible to get a good sense of which districts received which stations, as districts typically included part or all of numerous counties. Furthermore, stations during this time were likely to be centered in moderate- to large-sized cities. This undoubtedly biased his results, as studies have consistently found differences in the electoral environments of small towns and large cities.

To escape this problem (and for lack of a better measure), I was able to count the number of stations in each state, in each election year from 1948 to 1980.[3] I then divided the total number of stations in a state by the number of districts within that state, to develop a measure of number of stations per district. While this measure is also imperfect, the lack of available historical data on media markets' composition and overlap with congressional districts necessitate an imperfect measure. If anything, I believe this will overestimate the number of stations within a district, providing a more "liberal" test of the effects of television (while Prior's would be considered a more "conservative" test, by virtue of his underestimation).[4]

I then added this measure of the number of stations per district and estimated the models from Chapter 3, which included the logged state per capita personal income, indicators for whether the district was located in the South, at-large, or defended by an incumbent, indicators for whether the district saw a change in contestation from one election cycle to the next or was uncontested at both time points, an indicator for midterm election years,

[3]Prior only uses the number of districts in 1958, 1961, and 1971, assuming little or no change between these rather large gaps, another flaw in his measure.

[4]I also ran all tests with the raw count of television stations by state and found substantively identical effects.

the Democratic Quality Advantage measure discussed in Chapter 2, and yearly indicators to test for fixed effects.

The dependent variable was, for two models, my national-level measure of candidate centeredness, which is the change in deviation from the average national Democratic share of the two-party vote of the district's vote share from one election to the next. That is, I subtracted the difference between the "typical" Democratic candidate's vote share in the current year and the "typical" Democrat's vote share in the previous election from the difference between the district's Democratic vote share in the current election and the district's Democratic vote share in the previous election. I then took the absolute value of this measure, as I am only interested in the magnitude of this difference, rather than the direction. This measures the degree to which changes in the district's Democratic candidate's fortunes are independent of changes in the fortunes of the national Democratic Party. The remaining two models used the state-level measure of candidate centeredness, which is identical to the national measure but with the average state Democratic candidate's vote share substituted for the national average.

The results are found in Table 4.1. The effects of per capita personal income are substantively identical to those found in Chapter 3—income (and therefore spending) does not appear to have much influence in district using the party column ballot. In districts with the office bloc ballot, however, income (here, a proxy for campaign spending) has a rather sizable effect. The change in contestation of the district's elections also has a sizable effect, across all ballot types and with all measures of candidate centeredness. Similarly, the presence of an incumbent reduces the measure of candidate centeredness, though again this is largely an artifact of the nature of my measure.

The effect of the number of television stations, however, fails to reach traditional levels of statistical significance across all models.[5] While I hesitate to infer from null results, this finding is robust to a variety of specifications, suggesting that television's role is, at best,

[5]The fourth model, using the national level measure in office bloc districts, yields a p-value of 0.054 for the number of television stations, but the effect is substantively insignificant,

Table 4.1: Determinants of Candidate Centeredness by Ballot Type, State- and National-Level Measures (1948–1980)

	State-Level Measure		**National Measure**	
Variable	**Party Column**	**Office Bloc**	**Party Column**	**Office Bloc**
ln(Income)	−1.149	11.958*	0.483	9.386*
	(2.891)	(3.549)	(1.956)	(2.513)
TV Stations	−0.300	0.229	0.189	0.557
	(0.211)	(0.325)	(0.281)	(0.273)
South	−0.142	5.882*	−0.767	4.150*
	(1.214)	(1.081)	(0.867)	(1.392)
At-Large	−3.039*	−4.306*	−2.118	−2.742
	(1.263)	(1.703)	(2.189)	(1.884)
ΔContest	16.971*	19.084*	21.673*	22.379*
	(2.193)	(2.177)	(1.705)	(2.053)
Uncontested	7.396*	−1.786	−1.567	1.002
	(0.920)	(1.667)	(1.389)	(1.918)
Midterm	6.124	−1.010	1.259	−1.704*
	(5.623)	(0.739)	(4.081)	(0.746)
DQA	0.510*	−0.141	0.262	−0.069
	(0.228)	(0.180)	(0.230)	(0.195)
Inc. Def.	−1.611*	−3.002*	−2.287*	−3.722*
	(0.470)	(0.697)	(0.419)	(0.805)
Constant	12.861	−80.369*	3.311	−60.527*
	(20.907)	(25.246)	(14.056)	(18.363)
N	2570	3125	2570	3125
R^2	0.468	0.517	0.553	0.551

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, yearly fixed effects not reported.
*: $p \leq 0.05$

substantively insignificant (if not absent entirely). As expected, television is not found to exert a considerable influence on the nature of the electoral system within a district. These results are robust to a variety of specifications and measurements of the number of television stations, suggesting that television may not have contributed to the rise of candidate-centered politics, contrary to what Iyengar (2011) claims.

especially when compared to the effects of income, the presence of an incumbent, or the change in contestation within the district.

Why, then, was Prior able to find such effects for the number of television stations on the incumbency advantage? There are two potential reasons. First, Prior's estimates may have been biased due to his measure of the number of television stations in each district. Second, Prior's estimates may have suffered from poor specification. The inclusion in my model of a measure of income (or spending) may have washed out the effects of television.[6] To understand this, we must understand *how* television affected the incumbency advantage.

There are two ways television might have enhanced the effects of incumbency. First, Prior's (2006; 2007) argument asserts that incumbents were able to use television as a perquisite of being in office. In this argument, Prior notes, incumbents produced short videos cheaply and were able to send them back to their districts. Stations broadcast these videos in an effort to comply with public affairs programming requirements. As such, incumbents' use of television was not unlike their use of the franking privilege—it was a unique perquisite incumbents were able to leverage to advance their name recognition and reputation among voters (for more on the franking privilege and the advantages of incumbency, see Mayhew 1974; Cover and Brumberg 1982).

Second, it may well be that the effects of television were indirect. The rise of televised advertising as a campaign tool likely contributed to the increasing costs of campaigns. Incumbents—able to raise large sums of money through established networks—responded to the new environment more easily than challengers and candidates for open seats. If this indirect role is actually how television enhances the advantages of incumbent and affects election outcomes, we should not see direct effects for the number of stations in a given district, particularly after controlling for spending (or, in the case of pre-FECA elections, the capacity for campaign spending). Without controlling for spending, the number of television stations may actually capture the need for more spending to take advantage of those stations. This is a clear flaw with Prior's (2006; 2007) analyses.

[6]Exclusion of income does not yield significant effects for television, however.

In Table 4.2, I estimate models similar to that estimated in Prior's (2006; 2007) work, with two key differences. While I still estimate the Democratic share of the two-party vote as a function of candidate quality, incumbency, and the number of television stations, I include measures of campaign spending. I also divide the sample by ballot format. The first two columns of Table 4.2 display the results of an analysis including a measure of the Democratic candidate's spending advantage. As these data are only available from 1972 onward, they include the election years from 1972 to 1980. The models in the last two columns include the measure of income available during the earlier time period. As such, I include the election years from 1948 to 1980.

While estimating vote share as a function of spending has been found to result in simultaneity bias (Jacobson 1978, 1985, 1990; Green and Krasno 1988, 1990), I largely avoid this issue by using income in the models covering 1948 to 1980. We should not expect Democratic vote share to influence district income. Furthermore, the use of instrumental variables (such as income) to account for endogeneity yields substantively similar results presented here. I present only the basic OLS models, with the caveat that the first two models (using spending differences) yield biased results due to endogeneity (though the results are still significant even if I account for this).

In no model does the interaction term between Democratic incumbency and the number of television stations reach statistical significance. The number of television stations is only significant in office bloc districts from 1948–1980; while at first glance this may appear to indicate that Republican incumbents benefit from the presence of television stations, this model includes candidates for open seats. Excluding open seat races from the model results in insignificant effects of the non-interacted number of television stations.

These findings are robust to any number of specifications. I estimated the models year by year (as Prior did), at various time points, with varying measures of spending or income, and with the raw number of television stations per state rather than the number per district. The only estimation which yielded significant effects for the number of television stations included

Table 4.2: Determinants of Democratic Vote Share by Ballot Type

	1972–1980		1948–1980	
Variable	**Party Column**	**Office Bloc**	**Party Column**	**Office Bloc**
Dem_{t-1}	0.243*	0.225*	0.718*	0.584*
	(0.038)	(0.055)	(0.018)	(0.050)
Dem Inc	11.174*	8.075*	11.099*	16.243*
	(3.062)	(1.790)	(1.717)	(4.198)
DQA	4.845*	7.410*	−2.397	−1.201
	(1.080)	(0.906)	(1.411)	(1.630)
TV Stations	0.299	−0.501	−0.055	−1.485*
	(0.202)	(0.361)	(0.196)	(0.622)
TV*Dem Inc	−1.080	−0.177	−0.072	0.318
	(0.730)	(0.539)	(0.264)	(0.780)
ln(Dem $ Adv)	0.483*	0.391*	_	_
	(0.058)	(0.037)		
ln(Income)	_	_	−7.825*	−9.609*
			(1.910)	(2.155)
Constant	44.963*	46.006*	74.126*	133.889*
	(1.993)	(1.521)	(13.903)	(19.324)
N	441	599	2808	3008
R^2	0.774	0.776	0.795	0.745

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, yearly fixed effects not reported.
*: $p \leq 0.05$

the election years from 1960 to 1976, was not divided by ballot type, and included the raw number of television stations per district (and its interaction with incumbency status) but excluded any measure of spending or income. This yields results quite similar to those found by Prior, but the effects of television disappear entirely once I include measure of spending or income, suggesting his results suffered from omitted variable bias.

That the inclusion of measures of spending and/or income generates insignificant estimates for the effects of the number of television stations provides support for the idea that the effects of television are more indirect than Prior argues. Rather than directly enhancing the advantages of incumbency, it is likely that the advent of television forced candidates to

raise and spend more money on their own campaigns. Incumbents were better able to do this, so they benefitted the most from this practice.[7]

Summary and Conclusion

The role of television in the electoral system has been the subject of considerable scholarly debate over the past several decades. This is certainly no surprise, given the meteoric rise of television and its rapid adoption by candidates as a key component of campaign strategy. However, the evidence of television's effects on the electoral system have largely been mixed to date, with some arguing for television's importance and others arguing that it has had minimal effects.

The results presented here tell a different story. I do not argue that television has had no effect whatsoever on the electoral system. Despite finding no direct evidence that television contributed to the rise of candidate-centered politics, I argue that its effects were indirect. By requiring candidates to raise and spend larger sums of money, television encouraged greater campaign spending, which in turn contributed to the rise of candidate-centered politics, as demonstrated in Chapter 3.

Unsurprisingly, these effects are entirely contingent on ballot type, supporting the arguments made in Chapter 2. What emerges, then, is a clearer picture of the rise of candidate-centered politics. As a greater portion of congressional districts used the office bloc ballot, the efforts of candidates to separate their fates from the fate of their parties proved increasingly fruitful. Primarily, the efforts of candidates to reach out to voters either via television or through other methods (increasingly expensive over the observed time period), yielded the desired results only in districts with the office bloc ballots. Television's role—while indirect—

[7]The inclusion of an interaction term between the per capita personal income and incumbency status yields substantively similar results—the interaction term is significant, indicating that incumbents were benefitted more by higher levels of campaign spending.

was nonetheless present, as it required candidates to raise and spend ever-increasing sums of money.

In the concluding chapter, I close with an elaboration of the picture that has emerged in this and the preceding chapters. It is also important to consider the consequences of the shift that occurred in the mid-twentieth century to a more candidate-centered electoral system. Additionally, the research presented here suggests numerous, potentially fruitful avenues of research on the effects of candidate-centered politics.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The rise of candidate-centered politics was a complex phenomenon, the product of factors both exogenous to (income and television) and endogenous (ballot format and campaign spending) to the political system. Undoubtedly, other factors have influenced our political system at various points in time as well. All of these moving parts make distilling this momentous shift in the electoral environment down to a single, compelling story unlikely. Nevertheless, this is precisely what I have attempted to do here. After reviewing the literature on concepts related to a candidate-centered electoral system in the introductory chapter, I identified the likely explanations for the timing and rise of candidate-centered politics.

The central puzzle—why candidate-centered politics arose at all—has only been the subject of speculation and untested theories. This is not surprising; lacking a rigorous method for testing the rise of candidate centeredness, many scholars have resorted to telling a narrative about the nature of our electoral system rather than advancing an actual theory. The narratives often take one of two paths. Either candidate-centered politics is the result of Progressive-era reforms (*e.g.*, Ware 2002; Carson and Roberts 2013) or television is the primary culprit (*e.g.*, McAllister 2007; Iyengar 2011). Unfortunately, aside from some exploratory analyses by Wattenberg (1982, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1998)—which were not very

rigorous in nature—scholars have largely avoided advancing and testing any theories about the rise of candidate-centered politics.

With this project, I have sought to provide a more theory-based approach to the study of candidate-centered politics, tying together multiple potential explanations and testing this theory piece by piece. What has emerged is a story of the tremendous influence of institutions on our electoral system. Furthermore, institutional rules can hinder or enable the influence of other, exogenous factors. This suggests that, absent certain institutional structures, other potential explanations may not have exerted much of an influence on fully transforming our electoral system.

This project has provided some key answers to questions long asked by both academic and non-academic observers. First, what caused the rise of candidate-centered politics? Second, what is the role of institutional structures on the nature of our electoral system? Third, were the effects of the television's rise limited to the tactics candidates used? Or did television fundamentally change the way voters made decisions? Finally, how can we explain the lag between the adoption of Progressive reforms targeting the role of parties in the electoral process and their purported effects—the transition to a candidate-centered political system? Each of these questions, to varying degrees, are central to the study of American institutions and elections. In this project I have provided a response to each of these important questions.

In this chapter, I begin by reviewing my theory and central findings, with an eye towards the "bigger picture" of how these findings fit into the broader literature on our electoral system. I then discuss the potential implications of these findings for scholars in the fields of American politics, normative and democratic theory, and comparative politics. Finally, I close with a discussion of the various avenues for future research made available by the work I have done here.

Review

In the introductory chapter, I explored the various research agendas tied to the concept of candidate centeredness. The personal vote, the incumbency advantage, the reduced salience of parties in the public's mind, the decrease in voter turnout, and the effects of Progressive reforms are all subfields within the study of American politics related to the rise of candidate-centered politics. Within the field of comparative politics, research on the effects of institutional design and the "personalization" of politics are tied to the concept of candidate centeredness. From these literatures I was able to extract a series of potential explanations for the rise of candidate-centered politics. Specifically, the changing format of the ballot used in congressional districts, the role of rising incomes and campaign spending, and the advent of television all appear to be likely culprits in the transition from an electoral system dominated by parties to one in which candidates seek and ultimately win election on their own merits.

In Chapter 2, I began by tracing the rise of Australian ballot laws in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Even in the earliest days of these laws, it was evident that parties and reformers approached the reforms with differing goals. While leaders from the two major parties sought a ballot format (party column) that would advance their efforts to abolish rogue tickets and preserve their dominance over minor parties and independent candidates, reformers sought a ballot format (office bloc) that would enable voters to cast a ballot free from intimidation or bribery and to vote for the best candidates rather than a straight party ticket.

I then examined the trajectory of ballot laws over the course of the twentieth century, documenting a notable shift in the 1960s away from the party column ballot and towards the office bloc ballots. This transition was the product both of rational actors pursuing the latter format to advance their own goals (*e.g.*, Ohio Republicans seeking to help Senator Robert A. Taft's reelection in 1950) and the decennial reapportionment, which subtracted seats from party column states and added them to office bloc states (particularly California).

The timing of this shift coincides with the period when scholars typically say the rise of candidate-centered politics began to occur.

In the next section, I began to examine the effects of these ballots. Reproducing and extending the analysis by Carson and Roberts (2013), I examine the influence of the office bloc ballot on the role of candidate-specific traits, such as candidate quality. Specifically, I found that incumbency and candidate quality matter considerably more in districts with the office bloc ballot than in districts with the party column ballot. I then devise a method of testing the influence of ballots on candidate centeredness more directly, beginning with a measure of candidate centeredness grounded in existing literature (Jacobson 1987) and based on electoral outcomes. This measure produces a more conservative estimate of the degree of candidate centeredness within a district than would measures examining the campaign tactics used by candidates. This latter approach has two disadvantages. First, a candidate-centered system is one in which candidates both seek *and win* election on their own merits (in addition to the role played by parties); a measure focused on campaign tactics entirely ignores the criterion that voters must respond to candidates' efforts. Second—and equally important—the data are simply unavailable to construct such a measure over the time period observed. By focusing on electoral outcomes rather than campaign tactics, the measure is certainly more conservative, but it is also more holistic.

Using this measure, I examine the direct effects of ballot format on candidate centeredness, finding a limited but significant role for ballot format. While both ballot formats increase candidate centeredness relative to the absence of Australian ballot laws, the office bloc ballot clearly exerts a greater direct effect than the party column ballot. Importantly, however, my theory holds that the more important role of ballot format is indirect in nature—that is, ballot format structures the effects of other factors.

In Chapter 3, I explore the relationship between income, campaign spending, ballot format, and candidate centeredness. Beginning in the late 1950s, a drastic increase in the amount of money raised and spent for congressional campaigns stunned contemporary ob-

servers (Bernstein 1966; Udall 1967). I reviewed the literature on candidate spending to clarify the role that spending might play in the development of a candidate-centered era of electoral politics. The literature overwhelmingly demonstrates that increased spending can allow candidates to cultivate votes independently of their parties, even in party-centered elections at local levels and in comparative contexts. Unfortunately, this literature focuses exclusively on elections since 1972, when data on campaign expenditures were made available with the passage of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.

To overcome the lack of data prior to 1972, I examine the relationship between income and campaign contributions and expenditures—both at the individual and aggregate levels. Previous research has found a strong relationship in both contexts (Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder 2003; Claassen 2007), especially post-FECA. To determine whether the individual relationship holds prior to this era, I examine survey data from the National Election Studies of 1956, 1960, 1964, and 1968. I find that income is a consistently strong predictor of whether an individual will contribute to campaigns. This is important, in that it enables us to examine the impact of campaign spending in an era before we have comprehensive data on campaign finance.

The relationship between income and spending is also important because it demonstrates that the increase in real disposable income per capita that occurred in the 1950s and—in particular—the 1960s is likely related to the rise in campaign spending lamented by Bernstein (1966) and Udall (1967). Thus, individuals with more money to contribute decide to contribute to politics, resulting in the drastic increase in campaign spending. Furthermore, the linkage between income and spending allows researchers to examine the effects of campaign spending by using income as a proxy measure. While the relationship between these two factors is unlikely to be linear, it is nonetheless a better approach than ignoring this era entirely.

I then examine the effects of campaign spending (and income) on candidate centeredness. Importantly, I divide congressional districts into those using the party column ballot and

those using the office bloc format. As discussed in Chapter 2, anything which increases the salience of individualized candidate traits is more likely to have this effect in districts where the ballot format forces voters to consider the candidate individually. The office bloc format accomplishes this, while the party column format enables voters to take the path of least resistance by voting for a straight ticket, regardless of the traits of specific candidates down the ballot. It comes as no surprise, then, that the effects of income (and spending) are felt only in those districts using the office bloc ballot format. Income (and spending) increases the degree of candidate centeredness within a district by increasing the salience of candidate-specific traits, but these effects are not present in party column districts, suggesting that spending works, but only under certain circumstances.

In Chapter 4, I examine the role of television in the development of candidate-centered politics. I begin by documenting the meteoric rise of television throughout the 1950s and 1960s and its relationship to politics in the form of regulatory structures and electoral campaign tactics. I then shift focus to the literature on the relationship between television and elections, noting that the evidence for "minimal effects" on the electoral system largely outweighs the evidence for strong and/or direct effects, even among recent research. Television appears to have minimal effects on phenomena such as the increase in ticket splitting, the "personalization" of American and comparative politics, and the increase in the incumbency advantage.

I then turn my attention to the link between television and candidate centeredness. I begin by laying out an examination of the role of television in highlighting candidate-specific traits. I posit a potentially indirect, more minor role for television. Whereas previous researchers (including Prior 2006, 2007) sought a direct role for television, I argue that the research finding "minimal effects" makes it unlikely that television would have a direct effect on the electoral system, contrary to some other research. As such, I did not expect to find a strong direct effect for television. It should come as no surprise that I did not find such effects. A direct examination of the number of television stations on candidate centeredness

yielded no significant results. While I hesitate to draw definitive conclusions from null results, these findings are robust to a number of specifications, strengthening an argument in favor of null effects.

Rather than settling for these results, I search for more indirect effects of television. Following work by Prior (2006, 2007), I examine the impact of the number of television stations on the incumbency advantage. Prior's research finds that the effect of incumbency on vote share is stronger in districts with more television stations. This is a direct effect of television on candidate centeredness—television heightens the degree to which candidate-specific traits matter. However, my argument is that television plays a more indirect role—by opening new avenues for reaching voters, television presented candidates with a chance to "sell themselves" directly to voters. This opportunity was not cheap, however. Coupled with other trends—such as expanding populations, urbanization and suburbanization, and rising postage rates—television advertising necessitated greater campaign spending. This led to the increased campaign spending documented in Chapter 2. Once I included a measure of spending or contributions (in the form of the proxy measure of income), the direct effects of television on the incumbency advantage disappear. These findings are also robust to a variety of specifications. Thus, the story woven by Prior—that television was a medium uniquely suited to advantage incumbents—appears to be mistaken. Rather, television allowed candidates to reach voters directly. Once this aspect of television's benefits is taken into consideration, the direct effects on the incumbency advantage fail to reach transitional levels of statistical significance.

What has emerged as a result of these analyses is a fairly straightforward story. First, the adoption of the Australian ballot (among other Progressive reforms) incentivized candidates to seek election on their own merits, but they were largely unable to do so, either because they lacked the resources to campaign independently of their parties or because their efforts failed to translate into higher vote shares due to a ballot format favoring straight-ticket voting. Over time, however, more districts began to use the office bloc ballot, which forced

voters to consider the individual merits of candidates for each office. As this happened, candidates' efforts to seek election on their own merits were increasingly rewarded, incentivizing candidates even further to reach out to voters and cultivate a personal vote. This caused candidates to begin to spend more money on their campaigns, as money spent on such pursuits was more efficient in districts with the office bloc ballot. As such, the capacity for campaigns to raise money (in the form of higher district income levels) translated into more campaign expenditures, which in turn helped candidates who spent money to cultivate a personal vote.

Note that this narrative lacks any mention of television. Where television fits in is in this last phase. As candidates began to seek new methods for reaching voters, they raised and spent money on television advertising. The effects of advertising are diverse and have been documented by numerous scholars, so to say television has no effect would be misleading. Rather, television's effects on the electoral system as a whole are indirect—institutional forces incentivized candidates' pursuit of personal votes, so candidates raised and spent money to reach out to voters. A large portion of that money has been spent on television advertising, an expensive medium that necessitated expanding campaigns' bank rolls. Thus, television has an effect on the electoral system as a whole, but the effect is not direct; nor is it necessarily substantial.

Importance and Implications

The theory and findings presented here have important implications for the study of American politics. If we accept that trends such as the increasing incumbency advantage, increased ticket splitting, decreased turnout, the increase in pork barrel politics, and the reduced salience of parties in the public's mind are all symptoms of a candidate centered system, this project speaks to some of the most widely-studied bodies of literature within the field of American politics. By explaining the rise of candidate-centered politics, I have also provided

researchers with a narrative to help explain these other phenomena. The implications of this project extend to other fields as well, particularly comparative politics. In the field of comparative politics, this research can guide researchers seeking to study the impact of certain institutional designs on electoral systems and the personalization of politics. In this section, I review these implications in detail.

First, the increase in the incumbency advantage is a subject that dominated the study of American elections for decades. Beginning with Tufte (1973) and Mayhew (1974) and continuing through work by Fiorina (1977), Cover (1977), Alford and Hibbing (1981), Cover and Brumberg (1982), Alford and Brady (1993), Prior (2006), and countless others, scholars have repeatedly demonstrated that incumbents won with higher vote shares beginning in the late 1960s. If incumbency indeed began to replace party affiliation as one of the dominant cues for voters on election day, why did this occur? In part, I believe, it is due to the forces examined here—institutional structures such as ballot design as well as campaign spending. Of course, other factors undoubtedly contributed to this particular phenomenon, but voters would be unlikely to consider candidate-specific traits like incumbency in a party-centered electoral environment.

Why do voters split their tickets? Scholars such as Campbell and Miller (1957), Rusk (1970), Maddox and Nimmo (1981), Beck et al. (1992), and Roberts (2009) have examined the prevalence of ticket splitting and have offered a variety of explanations for why individuals may do so or why aggregated districts may end up voting for Republicans for the presidency and Democrats for Congress or vice-versa. As I have discussed, a candidate-centered system is one which allows or encourages voters to decide based on candidate-specific traits. In such a system, voters are able to split their tickets either due to institutional design or because the efforts of the candidates have increased the salience of candidates relative to parties. As our electoral system transitioned from a party-centered system to a candidate-centered system, then, we should expect an increase in ticket splitting.

The decline in turnout since the 1960s has also been discussed by many scholars (including Burnham 1965, 1982, 1987; Abramdon and Aldrich 1982; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995; Putnam 1995; Gerber and Green 2000). While McDonald and Popkin (2001) developed a better measure of voter turnout and noted a less pronounced decline than previously estimated, they nevertheless demonstrate a marked decline beginning in the 1960s in their Figure 1 (though the trend levels out in the 1970s). Why this decline? As Gerber and Green (2000) discuss, direct voter contact is the most effective method for inducing voters to show up on election day. This method outperforms telephone calls, mailers, and advertisements of all types. They argue that, in an earlier era, party organizations and party workers served as canvassers, contacting voters directly to mobilize them. Once we transitioned to a candidate-centered model of campaigning, however, campaign staff were fewer in number and unable to canvass to the same extent as the party organization. Instead, candidates' staffers relied on phone banking, mailers, and television advertising to mobilize voters. This wider use of this less effective tactic led to a decline in voter turnout. Thus, the transition to candidate-centered politics affected not only electoral outcomes, but also electoral tactics. These changes in tactics led to a decline in turnout.

This project also has implications for research in the area of pork barrel politics. Stein and Bickers (1994) and Bickers and Stein (1996) note that members (especially vulnerable members) seek to increase their vote share by procuring federal dollars for their districts. Candidates are unlikely to engage in this kind of electorally motivated behavior in a more party-centered era. Of course, the pork barrel existed in the era of party dominance—and was even perceived as "out of control" (see Bovitz, Carson and Collens 2012)—but the motivations for procuring more federal dollars for one's district was likely different in this era. Whereas before, members sought federal dollars to enhance the reputation of their party and expand the number of patronage jobs at the party's disposal, members in a candidate-centered era are more likely to seek federal dollars to expand their own personal vote.

Finally, scholars such as Wattenberg (1982, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1998) have documented the decreasing salience of parties and party identities over the latter half of the twentieth century. While this can be seen as simply another way of saying that we transitioned to candidate-centered politics, it is also a potential symptom of a candidate-centered system. As candidates began to seek and win election on their own merits, the relevance of party identifications for the average voter declined, reinforcing the candidate centeredness of their district.

This project also helps illuminate the conditional nature of the effects of campaign spending on outcomes. Even in the 1980s, the party column ballot was used in a large number of states; as Roberts (2008, 2009) documents, it was not until the 1990s and 2000s that the party column ballot largely disappeared. For the first 30 years for which we have campaign finance data, then, there existed a ballot format that encouraged voters to disregard individual candidates' merits entirely. Given that the formative research on the effects of campaign spending examined elections during this time (see, for example, Jacobson 1978, 1985; Green and Krasno 1988, 1990; Jacobson 1990; Gerber 1998; Goldstein and Freedman 2000), it is possible that these studies suffer from omitted variable bias. Without accounting for ballot type, their estimates of the effects of candidate spending are likely biased, as office bloc districts are likely to see greater effects of spending than party column districts.

The implications of this project also extend to American politics in more practical manners. First, the development of a measure of candidate centeredness enables scholars to examine more directly the rise and consequences of the candidate-centered era of American politics. Second, the use of income as a proxy measure of campaign spending opens doors to scholars seeking to uncover the effects of campaign spending in an era without campaign finance data.

Of course, the American system is not the only one to be identified as candidate-centered. Research in a comparative context has noted personal vote-seeking behavior and the personalization of politics for decades. As Carey and Shugart (1995) note, certain institutional

designs across countries make those systems more or less encouraging of personal vote-seeking behavior. This project provides evidence that institutional factors not only influence this behavior cross-sectionally, but also over time. As institutions evolve and are altered, they are likely to have an effect on the behavior of both candidates and voters. Furthermore, this project highlights the subnational nature of candidate-centeredness and the personal vote. Institutional structures change not only across countries, but also across subnational units. States (or provinces) and districts vary in institutional rules, so it is important to consider the effects of institutional rules both across countries and across state or provincial borders.

Furthermore, the literature on the "personalization" of politics highlights the increased importance of individuals (specifically, party leaders) relative to parties. Even in party-centered systems such as Denmark, voters often choose to vote for specific candidates rather than parties (see Elmelund-Præstekær and Hopmann 2012, who find key effects for institutional rules in determining this behavior). This project presents useful insight into the ways institutional structures interact with candidates' own efforts to win elections, providing further evidence that institutional rules affect the degree of personalization.

Future Research

The research I have presented here suggests several avenues for future research. While the focus of this research has been uncovering the causes of the rise of candidate-centered politics at the congressional district level, this research can be extended to cover elections to other levels of government. Furthermore, I have not sought to examine the consequences of the rise of candidate-centered politics. Another potential research agenda focuses on extending this research to the comparative environment. Finally, scholars should examine whether the trends noted here have continued or whether, perhaps, we have reverted back to a more "party-centered" system as party polarization increased.

First, scholars should turn their attentions to the implications of the transition to a candidate-centered system for the tactics used by candidates. As candidates seek and win election on their own merits, they are likely to seek to attempt to add to their vote share by continuing to reach out to voters in new ways. At the congressional level, the typical candidate was not running his own campaign in the early twentieth century. As the system transitioned to a candidate-centered one, however, candidates became more and more accustomed to running their own campaigns. This was likely to force candidates to consider adopting new tactics such as advertising. Perhaps even the shift towards negative campaigning can be explained by the shift to candidate-centered politics. As voters began to consider individual candidate characteristics, candidates may have been incentivized to attack their opponents' characteristics rather than their parties.

A related consequence may have been the rise of professional consultants in congressional campaigns. Candidates had to fill the role previously played by party operatives. Under a party-dominated system, party organizations canvassed voters and worked on behalf of the party to get their candidates elected. Without such a support structure, candidates had to rely on their own staff (who only worked on their candidates' campaigns) and, increasingly, campaign consultants, whose experience and career as a full-time campaign worker provided valuable assistance to candidates. These consultants brought the experience that party operatives once brought to campaigns and were able to work in a variety of electoral environments, which further increased their usefulness to congressional campaigns.

As discussed in the section above, candidate centeredness as a concept is likely to have implications for numerous other subfields of research. Scholars should attempt to uncover the impact of a candidate-centered environment on the incumbency advantage, the decline in turnout, and the use of pork barrel politics to cultivate a stronger personal vote. Relating candidate-centered politics to each of these phenomena could yield a wealth of research for the scholar seeking to undertake such an agenda. Furthermore, by tying the rise of candidate-

centered politics to the incumbency advantage and the decline in turnout, scholars can make important contributions to two considerable debates in the study of American politics.

Another potential avenue for future research lies in the effects of candidate-centered politics on party unity in Congress. Whether members of Congress feel pressure to vote with their parties is a function of several factors: institutional incentives to do so or disincentives to vote against their parties, the strength of congressional party leaders, the ideological congruence between parties and their members, the electoral vulnerability of the member, etc. If candidates perceive that they owe their election to constituents rather than parties, this would reduce the incentives to vote with the party on every vote.

Related to this, this project has implications for the nature of representation in the United States. As members of Congress owe their elections more and more to voters—rather than parties—their behavior in the Congress may be altered beyond party unity scores. Members are likely to view themselves as agents of their constituents, rather than agents of their parties. This shift in the agency of congressional representation has important implications for the strength of our democracy. While I am careful not to make any normative claims in this project, normative theorists should examine the effects of a shift towards candidate-centered politics on the quality of our government. A candidate-centered system is one in which voters' voices are more likely to be considered by their representatives.

Scholars should also extend this research into other levels of government. As Gerring (1998) notes, candidates for the presidency engaged in candidate-centered campaigning even in the early twentieth century. While research on presidential campaigns can be difficult due to limited observations, scholars should nevertheless attempt to examine the efforts of contenders for the presidency in the pre- and post-candidate-centered eras. Scholars can and should also examine candidate centeredness in Senate elections since 1913 (and potentially earlier in states with direct senatorial election before the ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment). While the data are more difficult to find, statewide and local elections may

also have been subject to the rise of candidate centeredness at different times and under different circumstances, suggesting even further avenues of research.

Similarly, scholars in comparative politics can extend this research to their own countries of interest. It would even be possible to adapt my measure of candidate centeredness to multiparty systems (though it would be considerably more complicated to construct). Such an extension would allow for direct testing of the degree of candidate centeredness around the world, something Carey and Shugart (1995) suggest would provide an extremely fruitful avenue of research.

Finally, scholars should seek to examine whether this trend towards candidate centeredness has continued unabated or whether it has, in fact, begun to reverse in more recent decades. The increased prominence of party considerations in the current, hyper polarized environment suggests that, as the ideological makeup of the parties became more cohesive, voters—having "sorted" themselves appropriately into the correct parties—began voting more along party lines. This would make sense, but I am uncertain it would classify as a "party-centered" electoral system, in that candidates still largely highlight their ideological leanings over their party identifications (even going so far as to criticize copartisans who fail to meet certain ideological standards, such as "Republicans in Name Only" or "RINOs"). Nonetheless, it would be interesting to explore the relationships presented here in the modern era.

While the findings presented here hold considerable importance for political science research, there are nonetheless several further avenues for research. The question of what caused the rise of candidate-centered politics is central to the study of American and comparative politics. As I have found, however, the causes are not the result of an overly romanticized tale of reformers wrestling control away from parties or television "enlightening" viewers and voters on the importance of candidates. Rather, institutional forces combined with exogenous factors (rising incomes and campaign spending) to usher in an era of candidate-centered politics in elections to the U.S. House. It was this combination of

forces that finally allowed candidates to "break free" of partisan control of their electoral fortunes once and for all.

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