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**CANDIDATES, PARTIES, AND CAMPAIGN EFFECTS
IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, 1992-2002**

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IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, 1992-2002**

by

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Political campaigns are vital to democracy in the United States. Campaigns educate and mobilize voters, thus making it possible for citizens (through elections) to select government leaders and indirectly to control public policy. From the point of view of those who create them, campaigns are vehicles for winning elective office. For candidates and parties, campaigns should activate and mobilize supporters while persuading undecided voters and demobilizing those who support the opponent.

This dissertation looks at one set of campaigns – those bearing on Congressional elections from 1992 to 2002 – with the purpose of addressing three important research

questions. The first research question asks what campaigns do. Related to that is the question of how that activity varies depending on who is conducting the campaign: the candidate or the political party. The second research question asks why campaigns do what they do. For both candidates and parties, it is vital to create an efficient campaign that will maximize the probability of achieving the primary goal: the winning of elective office. The third research question asks about the effects of campaigns on voters. Moving beyond existing research into campaign effects, this dissertation looks at how candidates and parties influence turnout and vote choice behavior by focusing on those components of the campaign designed to reach voters.

The results of this study provide compelling answers to these three questions. First, candidate and party campaigns allocate most of their resources to voter contact activities, though resource allocation patterns have changed significantly over the last decade. Second, competition is a key factor that candidates consider when making resource allocation decisions; it is less crucial when parties make resource allocation decisions. Both, however, also look to what other campaigns (not just their opponents) are doing when making resource allocation decisions regarding overhead, fundraising, and grassroots campaign activities. Third, campaign efforts have effects on voters. Candidate efforts both persuade and activate voters, but party efforts have little independent effect once one controls for the efforts of the candidates.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

In 2000, Michigan was considered a battleground state by the two Presidential campaigns. The Bush and Gore campaigns purchased over 13,000 and 11,000 gross ratings points in television advertising, respectively. The national political parties were also active in Michigan, with the RNC and DNC each purchasing around 10,000 gross ratings points and transferring nearly \$7 million each in hard and soft money to state and local party committees. It is not an understatement to say that Michigan voters were exposed to a vigorous campaign environment.

It was in this environment that Debbie Stabenow and Spence Abraham waged their campaigns for the U.S. Senate. Abraham spent almost \$14.5 million on his campaign; Stabenow spent over \$8 million on hers. Both allocated over half of their campaign budgets to advertising, though both spent less than two percent of their budgets on grassroots campaign activities. In the end, despite challenging a powerful incumbent who outspent her by over eighty percent, Stabenow won the seat by less than 70,000 votes out of over 4 million cast.

Why did Stabenow win? Certainly the character of Michigan's voters had something to do with it. So too did the news media, with its coverage of the campaigns and the issues both in Michigan and in the country as a whole. But most would argue that the campaigns also played a large role in determining who would win the U.S. Senate seat from Michigan. But which campaign? Was Stabenow's campaign exceptional, despite being outspent? Did Abraham's campaign underperform, especially

for an incumbent? Did the presidential race and the fact that Michigan was a battleground state make a difference? And what about the efforts of the state parties?

This dissertation looks at these questions. Broadly speaking, this dissertation addresses two central research topics: how parties and candidates come together to create campaigns, and whether those campaigns have effects on individual voters and/or aggregate outcomes. Political scientists have written extensively in these areas, with answers varying depending on the type of campaign being studied and the effects being sought. Despite the volume of existing research, numerous questions remain as to the nature of political campaign activity and the possible effects of that activity on American voters. In this dissertation I answer some of those questions and shed light on the continuing debate in the literature.

To address these questions, I analyze Congressional elections from 1992 to 2002. The analyses in this dissertation utilize data on how candidates allocate resources within their campaigns for U.S. House and U.S. Senate. In five election cycles that fall within the time frame¹, I examine over four thousand campaigns. The data include over three thousand House campaigns and over three hundred Senate campaigns. Furthermore, the data include almost two thousand challengers, two thousand incumbents, and over five hundred open seat candidates. All told, these campaigns comprise over one hundred and fifty Senate races and nearly two thousand House races.

The analyses in this dissertation also include data on political party efforts on behalf of their candidates. Party organizations become involved in campaigns through

hard money contributions to candidates and through soft money spending traditionally done by state party organizations. Why the effects of the former can be accounted for by records of candidate expenditures, the soft money used by state party organizations to educate and mobilize voters can have a large impact on the Congressional races in their states. In order to capture these effects, I also use data from the Federal Election Commission to track the campaign spending of state party organizations for the Republican and Democratic Parties.

The debate regarding the nature of campaigns and the magnitude of campaign effects continues, but three significant areas of inquiry remain. First, what activities do candidate campaigns perform? Does campaign activity vary between Senate and House campaigns, between incumbent, challenger, and open seat campaigns, between Democrats and Republican? How has candidate campaigning changed over the course of the 1990s?

Second, what kinds of campaign activity are party organizations performing? Are these activities limited to the traditional functions performed in service to the candidates, or are parties pursuing their own goals through engaging in activities independent of the candidates? How have changes in campaign finance, particularly rulings on soft money spending that took effect in the middle of the decade, changed the nature of party campaigning? And if so, how did candidates respond to a new era of party involvement in campaigns?

¹ Actually, there are six election cycles between 1992 and 2002, but 1996 will be omitted from this analysis because resource allocation data are not available for that year.

Third, how exactly do modern political campaigns influence electoral behavior? As campaigns engage in more and different types of activity, what activities are crucial to affecting the behavior of voters and the outcomes of elections? Further, since parties are increasingly active campaigners, is it useful to search for campaign effects without considering the efforts put forth by the parties? And finally, where do campaign effects exist? Do campaigns have an impact in competitive races or in blowout ones (or both)? Can they affect turnout by mobilizing voters, or do they affect vote choice by persuading them? What aspects of the campaign are crucial to mobilization and/or persuasion effects?

The study of campaigns and their effects has become vitally important over the last decade. The increasing polarization in the United States has had a tremendous impact on campaigns. In many areas, the underlying demographic and partisan characteristics of the voters result in uncompetitive elections that, in turn, produce weak campaigns on the part of both the favored candidate and the underdog. With weaker campaigns, voters will not receive a thorough airing of the issues, which impedes democratic deliberation and hinders accountability. Furthermore, a favored candidate in an uncompetitive race would be free to pursue secondary goals such as providing donations to other candidates, thus having an impact on elections outside his or her district. Yet in the few remaining competitive districts, the efforts of the campaigns can mean the difference between victory and defeat, and in a nation closely divided by party, victory in a few key districts or states can mean the difference in the battle for control of Congress or the White House.

This study also coincides with renewed scholarly interest in campaigns and campaign effects. Recent research has revealed important campaign effects associated with television advertising, campaign events, and grassroots mobilization activities. Building on this recent work, this study continues the search for campaign effects by employing a unique framework (looking at the combined efforts of candidate and party) and innovative data that span a broad (but recent) period of American political history.

This period (1992-2002) is important not only because it is recent, but also because it covers several election cycles in which the nature of campaigning changed. Parties and candidates were forced to innovate as the context in which they ran campaigns changed. For example, the nature of campaign finance changed dramatically over the course of the 1990s. By the end of the decade candidates were able to raise much more money (even controlling for inflation), and parties made use of favorable changes in campaign finance rules² to move beyond their service roles to become independent players in campaigns. In addition, changes in the legal context of elections forced candidates and parties to adapt. Motor voter legislation made it easier for many citizens to register to vote; campaigns then had to adjust their mobilization strategies to account for these additional (traditionally marginal) potential voters. Redistricting following the 1990 and 2000 censuses also forced candidates to adapt to different constituencies. Finally technological changes altered the media environment in which a campaign takes place. The rise of cable and satellite television, talk radio, and the World

² Two events in 1996 paved the way for parties to become more influential players in elections. One, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *FEC v. Colorado Republican Federal Campaign Committee* made it possible for parties to use hard money on independent expenditures without violating coordinated

Wide Web forced candidates and parties alike to respond with new and innovative campaign strategies.

These changes in campaigns that occurred during the 1990s are worth documenting because campaigns have such a large impact on American democracy. Campaigns provide information to voters and foster deliberation. They also serve as vehicles for democratic accountability, allowing voters to remove poorly performing incumbents and to replace them with new leadership. From another point of view, studies of campaigns speak to the behavior and motivations of those elites who would serve in public office. But fundamentally, the study of political campaigns provides scholars with insight into how campaigns operate. By studying campaigns we can see how elites seek to affect electoral outcomes through the mobilization and persuasion of voters. The results of this process, then, are manifested in which elites are elected to public office and therefore which groups in society will be represented and which public policies will be pursued.

Outline of this Dissertation

Following this brief introduction, the second chapter develops the theory behind this dissertation project. While motivated by gaps in the existing literature, this dissertation builds on previous empirical findings as it constructs a new theory of campaigns and campaign effects. This theory leads to specific, testable hypotheses about

expenditure limits. Two, the FEC issued an advisory opinion allowing parties to engage in issue advocacy funded with a mix of hard and soft money.

campaigns and elections, and those hypotheses are presented here as well. In addition, the second chapter previews the data and methods employed in this dissertation.

Briefly, the data on candidate campaign organizations come from the Campaign Finance Analysis Project (www.campaignfinanceanalysisproject.com)³. The CFAP analyzes campaign expenditure reports filed with the Federal Election Commission. The product of the CFAP analyses is a dataset that classifies campaign spending into twenty-six different spending categories, including eighteen related to campaign organization. The data on political parties come from Federal Election Commission records of state party administrative spending. These data contain records of individual expenditures made by the state parties that I have classified into categories similar to those used by the CFAP. Data used to test for campaign effects come from the American National Election Studies (for individual level analyses) and from various national and state election officials (for aggregate analyses).

The third chapter focuses on describing campaigns. I begin by describing the structure and activity of candidate campaign organizations in the 1990s and how they vary over time. I go on to describe the campaign activity of state parties and how that activity has varied over the course of the 1990s. I also consider several multivariate models that explain why candidates and parties allocate resources in the way that they do.

In the fourth chapter I consider strategic behavior on the part of candidates and parties. When creating a campaign, a candidate or party will certainly react to the current electoral context; the opposing candidate or party will do so as well, so one could say that

each side considers the other side's behavior when allocating resources within a campaign. In this chapter I go beyond that explanation of resource allocation to make an argument that candidates also consider the behavior of campaigns *not involved in their particular races* when allocating resources. To that end, I consider several multivariate models of resource allocation that are rooted in the theory that candidates consider what their party is doing, as well as what top of the ballot candidates are doing, when making resource allocation decisions.

In the fifth chapter I turn my attention to analyses of campaign effects. Campaigns can have effects through advertising, through events, or through the efforts of the campaign organization. I test for campaign effects in four different analyses. The first two involve individual level models. Using data from the National Election Studies, I create models that include campaign advertising and grassroots voter mobilization efforts for the campaign nuclei (party campaigns plus candidate campaigns), as well as individual level factors that affect electoral behavior. I estimate these models to see what aspects of the campaign have an effect on the probability of turning out to vote and on an individual's choice among candidates. The third and fourth analyses are based on aggregate models. Again using data on campaign advertising and the mobilization efforts of campaign nuclei, as well as aggregate measures of key control variables, I estimate these models to see if campaigns have an effect on district-wide turnout and on candidate vote-share.

³ Access to these data was made possible by support provided by Daron Shaw and by the Public Policy Clinic in the Department of Government at The University of Texas at Austin.

The final chapter serves as a conclusion by reviewing the results from the empirical chapters. I then discuss the implications of this research on the future of campaigning and on voting behavior. Finally, this chapter presents prospects for future work on the topic of campaigns and campaign effects, including a call for the collection of more and better data on what campaigns are and what they do.

Chapter 2 – Theory

Election campaigns exist, arguably by definition, because the people who create them – candidates and parties, most notably – want to win elections. The parties, candidates, and other individuals who participate may have other goals – sometimes more important goals – but on the whole their most important, shared goal is to win. Thus, we may think of candidates and parties as rational actors. More specifically, throughout this dissertation I assume that individuals are self interested, that they have hierarchically ordered preferences, and they engage in behavior that will help them achieve their most preferred outcomes.

This broad perspective leads to some specific assumptions about candidates' behavior. First and foremost, I assume that candidates are most concerned with winning (re)election (Jacobson, 1985-1986). This is consistent with scholarship such as that of Mayhew (1974), who refers to candidates as “single minded seekers of re-election.” How they do so is a matter of some recent disagreement. While much of the literature assumes that election-minded candidates are risk averse and therefore seek to maximize votes (e.g. Jacobson, 2001), a new perspective has emerged that suggests candidates seek to maximize the probability of winning in the face of uncertainty (Gerber, 2004). Both of these perspectives accord with the assumption that candidates strategically allocate resources. But, the idea that candidates attempt to maximize the probability of winning in the face of uncertainty fits nicely with the assumption that as candidates become more certain of victory, they will be more likely to use their (campaign) resources to pursue

goals other than election. Such secondary goals include increasingly the likelihood of victory in future elections (Goodliffe, 1999; Box-Steffensmeier, 1996; Loomis, 1988; Fenno, 1978) as well as providing assistance to other candidates and/or party organizations in an effort to secure legislative majorities (Malbin and Bedlington, 2002) or to increase one's standing in the institution (Heberlig, 2003; Sinclair, 1995; Cox and McCubbins, 1993). In summary, candidates have preferences over a variety of goals and they allocate resources so as to maximize their expected utility across all of those goals.

The rationality assumption also leads to some additional, specific assumptions about the behavior of parties. While a candidate is primarily concerned with maximizing his or her utility across a variety of goals (the foremost being winning the election), a party must attempt to pursue its own goals as well as those of its candidates in an effort to maximize the total expected utility. Parties are institutions created by strategic politicians to help the latter pursue their own goals (Aldrich, 1995). Thus, with the exception of a few small parties that seek only to influence the issue agenda (or perhaps influence the issue positions of the larger parties), it is reasonable to assume that parties consider other goals (passing public policy, for example) only after they have achieved their primary goal to have their members elected to office. As a result, I assume that parties strategically allocate resources in order to maximize electoral success. It is unlikely, however, that a party's candidates will all win, so it remains an empirical question as to how a party goes about allocating resources to maximize the number of races its candidates do win.

I assume that voters have preferences regarding election outcomes and that they will behave in ways designed to achieve their most preferred outcomes. But this first assumption is tempered by a second, that voters are cost minimizers. Voters may like to see particular candidates or parties elected to office, but they are not willing to bear high costs to achieve those outcomes. Voters use this type of cost-minimizing behavior when they attempt to make decisions with minimal amounts of political information (Popkin, 1991) or rely on parties to reduce the costs of participation (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994).

Rational Behavior Among the Elites and Changes in the Political Environment

Throughout much of the twentieth century, campaigns were dominated by party organizations, and candidates played little role in their own quest for office (Aldrich, 1995). Party leaders controlled nominations for office (Hershey and Beck, 2003; Bibby, 1998), and party organizations alone possessed the resources necessary for voter contact and mobilization (Bibby, 1998; Merriam, 1923). But by the 1960s the context of elections was changing. Such Progressive era reforms as the institution of the direct primary and the adoption of civil service legislation had taken their toll on the power of the parties over nominations and patronage rewards for voter loyalty, respectively (Hershey and Beck, 2003; Herrnson, 1998b). Reforms initiated by the Democratic Party further weakened the parties' control over nominations and, hence, candidates (Herrnson, 1998b). In addition, technological change, most notably the rise of television as a medium for voter contact, but also the advent of relatively low-cost air travel and

advances in polling and voter contact, made it easier for candidates to reach out to voters (Foster and Muste, 1992).

As a result, candidates in the 1960s began creating campaign organizations that were distinct from the party organizations (Aldrich, 1995). As candidates for office became largely self-selected (Ehrenhalt, 1992), nominated through direct primaries rather than through party conventions (Hershey and Beck, 2003), and elected by means of their own campaign organizations, scholars came to see this new context of elections as an era of candidate centered politics (Aldrich, 1995; Shively, 1992). Partisan identification declined (Wattenberg, 1990) and candidates, rather than parties, became the mechanism by which voters came to understand politics (Wattenberg, 1991). These transformations led some to proclaim the decline of the political party (Dalton, 2000; Wattenberg, 1990; Crotty and Jacobson, 1980; Fiorina, 1980; Broder, 1972).

Yet party elites were not to be left out, and beginning in the 1970s parties adjusted to the new era. The Republican Party began developing organizations designed to provide candidates with the campaign money and services they would need to win (Cotter and Bibby, 1980; Herrnson, 1998b) and the Democrats did so shortly thereafter (Herrnson, 1998b; Cook, 1981). The Democratic Party, which had inadvertently hurt itself in the late 1960s with reforms to the nomination process (Polsby, 1983), sought to reassert its power in nominations by creating superdelegates (Hershey and Beck, 2003). Both parties became more nationalized – the Democrats in an effort to reign in the diverse and frequently obstinate state and local parties, and the Republicans in an effort to survive in an era of Democratic dominance (Cotter and Bibby, 1980). The parties

worked to integrate and strengthen their organizations at multiple levels (Huckshorn, Gibson, Cotter, and Bibby, 1986), and these efforts were reflected in more active organizations at the national (Cotter and Bibby, 1980), state (Huckshorn, Gibson, Cotter, and Bibby, 1986; Gibson, Cotter, Bibby, and Huckshorn, 1983), and local (Gibson, Frenreis, and Vertz, 1989) levels. By the end of the 1980s, the parties had firmly established themselves in the new role as service providers to largely independent candidates (Hershey and Beck, 2003; Bibby, 1998; Herrnson, 1988).

A clear theme that emerges from this discussion is the ability of rational actors to respond to change. New circumstances either force parties and candidates to adapt or present them with opportunities for innovation. For parties, this has given rise to the “adaptive brokerage” model (Frenreis and Gitelson, 1993), or the view that parties respond to changes in the electoral environment by developing new capacities and altering the service roles they play. In the 1960s and 1970s, changes in technology, the nomination process, campaign finance law, and party identification in the electorate drove candidates to strike out on their own in pursuit of electoral success while forcing parties to strengthen and assume a more subservient (yet still significant) role in campaigns. And just as they did before, parties and candidates faced tremendous change in the 1980s and 1990s. Again, change confronted parties on three fronts: technological, contextual, and partisan.

Candidates and parties have had to adapt to numerous technological advances over the last twenty years. Most significantly, changes in technology presented new methods for political communication. Political talk radio (Fineman, 1993), electronic

mail and the world wide web (Davis, 1999), and numerous television channels – a result of the rise of cable and satellite television (Schnur, 1999) – have all provided elites with new ways to reach voters and citizens with new sources of political information. Advances in computing have also had an impact on campaign elites, as better hardware and software make campaign management and voter contact easier and less costly (Purnick, 2004; Bernstein, 1991).

The context in which campaigns take place has also changed. Parties and candidates face an expanded electorate, as the National Voter Registration Act (Motor Voter) made it easier for people to register to vote (Knack, 1999; Knack, 1995)⁴. Congressional redistricting following the 1990 and 2000 censuses reduced the number of competitive seats for the House of Representatives (McDonald, Forthcoming). Finally, changes in campaign finance rules altered the playing field for campaigns. Specifically, Supreme Court decisions validating the use of agency agreements⁵ and party independent expenditures⁶ altered the way parties campaigned on behalf of their candidates (Sorauf, 1998).

In addition, a trend of decreasing Democratic advantage in partisanship had profound consequences on the context of campaigns. According to the American National Election Studies, Democrats had a 52-32 identification advantage in 1980; by 2000 that advantage had diminished to 49-38 (Sapiro et al, 2003). Other studies put the

⁴ While the NVRA has made voter registration easier, it does not appear to have increased voter turnout (Martinez and Hill, 1999). As a result, parties and candidates must be even more meticulous with their persuasion and mobilization activities.

⁵ *Federal Election Commission v. Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee*, 454 U.S. 27 (1981)

⁶ *Colorado Republican Federal Campaign Committee v. Federal Election Commission*, 518 U.S. 604 (1996)

advantage as low as 5 points (Taylor, 2004). As a result of having a more even playing field for the first time in decades, parties and candidates were forced to work harder to mobilize partisans and persuade the all-important undecided voters.

These changes in technology, context, and partisanship have affected the way campaigns are waged. Candidate campaigns are different, and the interplay between parties and candidate campaigns is evolving. In the past five to ten years, students of campaigns have begun to address the implications of these changes, but these studies still lack a firm theoretical grounding for understanding how and why campaigns are put together and what effects they have on voters.

Campaigns and Campaign Effects

The study of campaign effects has come a long way in the last fifty years. At the birth of behavioral research in the 1940s and 1950s, scholars of campaigns were still looking to party organizations as the loci of campaign activity. Early in this period, Cousens (1942) wrote of the “campaign” as (solely) the efforts of the party organization. Parties are also the recipient of campaign funds and the source of campaign spending. Schlesinger (1965) developed the theory of the party organization as a nucleus, or the “collective effort devoted to the capture of a single public office,” (p. 775). For Schlesinger, parties in the aggregate are the product of the relationships among the various party nuclei. Even at the end of the 1960s, scholars still saw campaigning as primarily the responsibility of local party organizations, and it was assumed that

“prospective office-seekers... will coordinate their campaigns through the established party organs,” (Crotty, 1968, p. 252)

While some scholars studied campaigns by focusing on party organizations, many looked elsewhere for insights into campaigns. Studies focusing on voters provided significant contributions to our understanding of campaigns. Using panel studies conducted in Erie County, Ohio and Elmira, New York, scholars from the Columbia School assessed the impact of social characteristics and group identification on individual-level voting behavior (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Berelson et al., 1954). These scholars broadly argue that voters’ opinions are shaped by “opinion leaders,” and exposure to opinion leaders varies depending on the social groups with which one interacts. Yet these studies also show how the party-run campaigns influenced voting behavior. For example, in 1948, many groups that were sociologically disposed to support the Democratic candidate moved from indecision to supporting Truman. By emphasizing issues that appealed to Democratic-leaning groups, the Truman campaign activated their underlying predispositions (Berelson et al, 1954).

Instead of using panel studies, scholars from the University of Michigan found that partisanship – or a citizen’s psychological attachment to a party – could explain quite a lot with respect to voting behavior (Campbell et al., 1960). Their description of the campaign, then, focuses on how voters perceive the campaign through the lens of their partisanship, thus affecting other attitudes (issue opinions, feelings towards the candidates) that in turn affect vote choice.

It is interesting to note how these camps differ with respect to the role of the campaign. With their emphasis on the role of communication in shaping voters' opinions, scholars in the Columbia School were more likely to look to the (party-run) campaigns as the source of the messages that would be funneled through opinion leaders and eventually be perceived by voters depending on the latter's social characteristics. On the other hand, scholars with the Michigan School – with its emphasis on psychological factors – were less likely to see the campaign as central to the voting decision. As the “socio-psychological” model of voting behavior triumphed over the purely “sociological” model, scholars could feel free to ignore the specific impact of campaigns and instead turned began to focus on party identification and other psychological factors that affect voting behavior. Though campaign was important, its importance was manifested through behavior that could be predicted by individual-level attitudes; as a result, the efforts of the campaign appeared not to matter.

Later scholars, working well into the era of party decline/candidate-centered politics, continued to search for other factors that have an influence on individual votes. Retrospective evaluations of incumbent party performance have an impact (Fiorina, 1981), as do economic concerns such as retrospective evaluations of the national economy (Markus, 1988) and perceptions of inflation and unemployment (Kiewiet, 1981; Key, 1966). And while much work continued to look to the (now candidate) campaigns as possible explanations for voting behavior, many found that noncampaign factors accounted for the majority of individual votes. For example, Holbrook (1994) finds that national conditions (such as presidential popularity or consumer sentiment) have a larger

impact on voting than do the efforts of the campaigns; Finkel (1993) finds the same thing for political predispositions such as partisanship and presidential approval. Little or no room is left for campaigns to have an impact on either individual vote choice or aggregate outcomes (Holbrook, 1994; Finkel, 1993).

Despite the implications of the Columbia and Michigan findings that campaigns were critical to the impact of social groups and partisanship on voting behavior, the onslaught of scholarship indicating that votes could be accounted for without considering the efforts of the campaign prompted some to adopt a theory that campaigns had “minimal effects.” According to this theory, campaigns are not important in explaining electoral outcomes because they inevitably create a balanced information environment due to equal funding (in the presidential case) and the fact that (presidential) campaigns employ the best possible people and use the best possible tactics. While not explicitly a “campaigns do not matter” argument, proponents of minimal effects suggest that non-campaign factors best explain voting behavior and that campaigns, though potentially having effects, are largely unimportant in explaining election outcomes. But it should be noted that proponents of minimal effects only argued for its applicability to presidential campaigns.

Working from the minimal effects perspective, several scholars have developed techniques for forecasting the results of presidential elections using indicators measured months before Election Day (e.g. Campbell and Garand, 2000; Lewis-Beck and Rice, 1992; Rosenstone, 1983; Fair, 1978; Tufte, 1978). Using variables championed by other minimal effects scholars (e.g. party identification, retrospective evaluations, economic

evaluations) as well as other individual-level and aggregate indicators (presidential popularity, consumer sentiment), the “forecasters” have created models that can predict election results with great accuracy at earlier and earlier stages in the election cycle. Even when the forecasting models work poorly, as in the 2000 Presidential election, the modelers tend either to change their models to produce the right result (e.g. Bartels and Zaller, 2001) or to claim that they did indeed work, as when they predicted a Gore victory, and Gore did win the popular vote (e.g. Lewis-Beck and Tien, 2001).

But even in the midst of much of the minimal effects literature, there is evidence for campaign effects. For example, Finkel (1993) argues that the majority of individual votes can be accounted for by considering partisan identification and presidential approval as measured before the conventions. Yet Finkel concedes that his results support an activation model of campaign effects; Markus (1988) allows for activation as well. Gelman and King (1993) argue that voters decide for whom to vote based on preferences enlightened by information learned from the campaigns. These findings echo the work of the Columbia school, whose found in 1948 that Democrats were persuaded to come back to Truman by the Democratic Party’s use of class-based appeals (Berelson et al., 1954). Indeed, campaigns that merely activate latent predispositions are still having an effect.

Furthermore, campaign effects in presidential elections are not limited to activating existing dispositions. Individual-level data show that campaigns can have an impact on voting behavior. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) find that negative television ads demobilize voters, while Goldstein and Freedman (2002) find that the

negative ads mobilize voters⁷. Presidential debates have been shown to affect vote choice (Holbrook, 1996; Geer, 1988), as do presidential campaigns more broadly through agenda-setting, framing, and priming (Petrocik, 1996).

Aggregate analyses have also found that campaigns can persuade voters and thus affect aggregate vote totals and public opinion. The broadest indicator of campaign effort – campaign spending – has been shown to affect state-level vote share (Nagler and Leighley, 1992). Several components of the campaign have also been shown to have an impact on voters in the aggregate. Appearances (Herr, 2002; Shaw, 1999b) campaign events (Shaw, 1999a; Holbrook, 1994), national conventions (Holbrook, 1996, 1994; Campbell, Cherry, and Wink, 1992) and debates (Holbrook, 1996, 1994) all have an effect on voters' preferences among candidates. Finally, several studies have shown that presidential campaigns have an impact through agenda-setting, priming, and framing effects (Mendelberg, 1997; Mutz, Sniderman, and Brody, 1996; Petrocik, 1996).

Some of the most interesting findings of campaign effects come from studies using experimental designs. For example, Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) use an experimental design to show that exposure to negative campaign advertising decreases the likelihood of an individual turning out to vote. On the other hand, Clinton and Lapinski (2004) use experiments to show that negative ads do not decrease turnout in presidential elections.

Of course, the case for minimal effects generally was not applied to elections below the presidential level. In the case of Congressional elections, campaigns have

⁷ Finkel and Geer (1998) and Wattenberg and Brians (1999) show that negative ads at least do not

considerable effects. Again, the broadest indicator of campaign effort – total spending – has been a frequent predictor of aggregate voting behavior. Several studies suggest that total spending has effects on voting that benefits House and Senate challengers (Abramowitz, 1991, 1988; Erikson and Palfrey, 1998; Gerber, 1998; Green and Krasno, 1988; Jacobson, 1990, 1985, 1980, 1978); for incumbents, the evidence is mixed, with some arguing that spending has no effect or a negative effect (Feldman and Jondrow 1984; Jacobson, 1990, 1985, 1980, 1978; Levitt 1994; Ragsdale and Cook 1987) while others show that it has a positive effect (Abramowitz, 1988; Erikson and Palfrey, 1998; Gerber, 1998; Green and Krasno, 1988). Campaign spending also increases vote share for open seat candidates (Abramowitz, 1988). In any event, there is general consensus that campaign spending exhibits diminishing marginal returns. And at the individual level, campaign spending increases turnout (Caldeira, Patterson, and Markko, 1985).

As for particular components of the campaign, television advertising has been shown to affect vote choice in Congressional elections, if only indirectly (West, 1994). The effects of negative advertising have also been explored in the context of Congressional elections, with many of the studies arguing for a demobilization effect (Ansolabehere, Iyengar, and Simon, 1999; Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995; Ansolabehere, Iyengar, and Simon, and Valentino, 1994). Studying the role of information, Lodge, Steenbergen, and Brau (1995) use an experimental design to show that Congressional campaigns provide voters with information that affects vote choice through its effect on candidate appraisals. Franklin (1991) considers the role of strategy

demobilize voters.

in Congressional campaigns, showing that the issues emphasized by Senate campaigns affect how clearly voters perceive the candidates on those issues.

Campaign effects are prevalent in other contexts as well. In gubernatorial elections, campaign spending has been shown to have an effect on turnout (Patterson and Caldeira, 1983), while the negative advertising debate continues with arguments for demobilization (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995) as well as mobilization (Freedman and Goldstein, 1999). Also in the context of gubernatorial elections, Leal (2001) shows that campaign spending has an impact on vote choice. And in state legislative elections – where the candidates and campaigns are much less visible – there is a strong connection between campaign spending and electoral success, especially in larger states and states with professional legislatures (Cassie and Breaux, 1998).

Political parties are also a source of campaign effects. Indirectly, parties affect electoral outcomes through the assistance they provide candidates. Numerous scholars have documented the rise of parties in service to candidates (Hershey and Beck, 2003; Bibby, 1998; Aldrich, 1995); Herrnson (1988) describes the party as the “intermediary” between candidates and the resources they require. And candidates report that party assistance is important and helpful (Hogan, 2000; Frensdreis and Gitelson, 1996; Herrnson, 1986). Parties have also become quite important financial players in elections (Dwyre and Kolodny, 2002)

But political parties can also have direct effects on voters. The mobilization efforts of political parties have been shown effective, both through direct efforts (Ansolabehere and Snyder, 2000) and through the “secondary” mobilization by activists

who are contacted by a party who, in turn, mobilize additional friends and family members (Huckfeldt and Sprague, 1992). Generally speaking, party organizations help to reduce the transaction costs associated with participation. Increased contact by a party organization helps individuals increase their perception of the benefits of participation, increase their perception of the probability of affecting the outcome, or decrease their actual or perceived costs of participation (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994). With respect to vote choice, Buchler and LaRaja (2002) show that party campaigning increases vote shares for a party's candidates for the U.S. House. In addition, party efforts are also important in recruiting candidates to run for office, and the presence of candidates running for lower-ballot offices appears to increase vote totals for higher-level offices (Frendreis, Gibson, and Vertz, 1990).

The most recent efforts in the study of campaign effects have focused finding campaign effects in the same places with new methods or with better data. For presidential elections, Blunt (2001) looks for campaign effects at the individual level using polling data from commercial pollsters and finds that the campaigns activate pre-existing attitudes in voters. Hillygus and Jackman (2003) also look for campaign effects in presidential campaigns, but instead use individual-level data from Knowledge Networks, a private research firm that generates data through surveys administered to users who receive free internet service. Using these data, Hillygus and Jackman find that debates and conventions have important effects on vote choice. Shaw and Roberts (2000) assess the impact of campaign events in general using data from the Iowa Electronic Market's Presidential Election Market. With these data, Shaw and Roberts show that

campaign events have effects that are reflected in the prices traders are willing to pay for futures contracts tied to the outcome of the election. Shaw (1999b) also uses innovative data in his assessment of the impact of television advertising on voting behavior. Using gross ratings points purchased by the campaigns (rather than dollars spent on advertising, which does not really measure how often ads are shown in a market), Shaw demonstrates that television advertising does have a positive effect on statewide vote returns.

At the Congressional level, Goldstein and Freedman (2000) study the impact of television advertising on voting behavior using ad data from the Campaign Media Analysis Group. With the CMAG data, which track each airing of a political commercial, Goldstein and Freedman show that television ads in U.S. Senate campaigns have an effect on vote choice. Kahn and Kenney (1999) also address television advertisements, but in their case to address the mobilization/demobilization debate surrounding negative advertising. Rather than using new data, Kahn and Kenney employ a better method – differentiating between negative ads that unfairly attack the opponent and those that justifiably highlight differences between the candidates – to show that the former demobilize voters while the latter mobilize them. Kenny and McBurnett (1994) also use innovative methods in their treatment of the effects of campaign spending. Rather than using aggregate data, Kenny and McBurnett merge information on campaign spending with individual level data to show that campaign spending by both incumbent and challenger candidates for the U.S. House has an effect on vote choice.

Innovative research in other contexts includes work by Sides (2001) on campaign effects in the 1998 California gubernatorial election. Using rolling cross-sectional data,

Sides finds that the campaigns primed voters to base their vote choices on information about the candidates rather than simple cues such as partisanship or opinions on the state of the economy. Another example of campaign effects research that employs both better methods and better data is the work of Gerber and Green (2001, 2000). In their studies of mobilization, Gerber and Green use field experiments to test the impact of campaign mobilization activities. They find that nonpartisan applications of canvassing, leafleting, and direct mail increase turnout. While they do not find the same effect for nonpartisan telephone calls, Imai (Forthcoming) uses statistical methods to “clean” Gerber and Green’s own data and finds that telephone calls increase turnout as well.

A New Approach

To this point, much of the research on campaign effects is focused on presidential campaigns, with most of the attention being given to television advertising and campaign events such as debates and conventions. What work that does focus on down ballot campaigns (especially those for Congress) tends to concentrate on the effects of total spending. Even the most recent literature only departs from the mainstream in that it searches for campaign effects in the same places with new methods, or finds them in same places with better data.

Fortunately, there are several encouraging trends in the literature. Scholars have worked hard to find campaign effects using different types of data and research design. Many studies rely on aggregate data while others derive individual-level from surveys or experimental designs. In addition, scholars have identified campaign effects for both

turnout and vote choice. For the former, scholars have shown how campaigns can both mobilize and demobilize; for the latter, scholars have provided evidence of persuasion as well as more subtle effects such as priming and activation. Finally, scholars have examined both parties and candidate campaigns as sources of campaign effects (though the literature is still relatively scant for the former).

Despite these advances, there is still a great deal of room for improvement in the description of campaigns and campaign effects. This dissertation builds on the momentum of the most recent research into the description of campaigns and campaign effects, but it is not merely an extension of existing analyses. This dissertation addresses two significant issues that have not yet been fully accounted for in the literature.

First, the literature does not fully account for the breadth of activity that takes place in a modern political campaign. Some studies of campaigns try to summarize the “total” campaign effort by using total spending as a proxy; unfortunately, the use of total spending is problematic because the failure to account for how campaigns spend money (i.e. not relying on money spent for actual voter contact) leads to biased result about the impact of campaign efforts (Ansolabehere and Gerber, 1994). As a result, many scholars disaggregate campaigns in order to study their effects. Much work has been done analyzing the impact of advertising or campaign events, but relatively little attention has been paid to the role of the campaign organization and the various activities in which it engages. Much of this dearth of organizationally-focused research is a function of lack of data.

Second, the efforts of candidates and political parties are not well integrated in studies of campaign effects. Parties are no longer merely the money and service providers as they are often portrayed by scholars of campaigns. Party campaigning has important implications for candidates; in those races where parties become involved, candidates are able to adjust their own campaigns so as to maximize their chances of victory. This interaction between candidates and parties within the process of campaigning is understudied and undertheorized.

This dissertation addresses both of these concerns through analyses of Congressional campaigns in the 1990s and early 2000s. I describe the breadth of candidate and party activity across multiple dimensions of the campaign: overhead, fundraising, polling, voter contact activity, and donations to other candidates, parties, and groups. This not only provides a critical look at late twentieth century campaign, but it also charts how campaigning is transformed over the course of a decade marked by technological and contextual changes. Furthermore, I advance the search for campaign effects by considering the multiple dimensions of the campaign: not only television advertising and campaign events, but also grassroots mobilization efforts. In addition, I present a unified treatment of campaigns, considering the contributions of both party campaigns and the campaign organizations created by candidates. Not only do both types of campaigns have effects on voters, but they also have effects on each other; this dissertation also innovates by describing the strategic interaction between parties and candidates in the context of a unified effort to capture elective office.

To that end, let me first describe what a “campaign” is for the purposes of this dissertation. Recalling Safire’s (1978) definition, a political campaign is “virtually all phases of an effort to win any kind of election, but most particularly the phase involving open, active electioneering.” Important in that definition is the fact that Safire does not indicate that it is only the candidate that wages the campaign. In fact, many actors wages campaigns; the most notable non-candidate campaigner is the political party. As a result, efforts to describe campaigns and their effects would be incomplete without considering the contributions of both. In order to capture the campaign efforts of parties and candidates alike, I rely on Schlesinger’s (1994, 1965) conception of the campaign as a “nucleus,” or the systematic effort to capture a single office. In most races in the United States, both the candidate’s efforts and the party’s efforts (as well as efforts by other actors) form this nucleus. Yet each organization has different goals. Only by looking at both – taking into account the differing strategies each will be guided by – will we generate a fuller picture of why parties and candidates behave the way they do and how the efforts of both have an impact on voters.

Although there have been few efforts to unify the parties and campaigns literatures, it is crucial to do so for several reasons. Most importantly, parties are now crucial to U.S. elections. Ironically, studying campaign effects in any other country would require a scholar to look at the efforts of the party organization. It is only in the unique, candidate-centered context of the United States that scholars look for campaign effects exclusively from the candidates’ organizations. But parties can no longer be treated separately in the American case. Given the explosion of soft money in the late

1990s, party organizations are increasingly relevant and influential⁸. Yet much of the parties literature focuses on either the services parties provide for candidates or the advertisements parties produce on behalf of candidates. Little consideration is given to the fact that parties have their own goals – goals perhaps divergent with the goals of individual candidates – and that parties engage in diverse activities designed to achieve these goals.

Candidate Campaigns

But first let us consider the candidate's campaign. As discussed above, I assume that candidates are strategic politicians (Jacobson, 1985-1986) who are most concerned with winning an election. Since they are only concerned with their own races, they do not face the same resource allocation decisions faced by the parties (as well as the presidential candidates). Yet they do face the issue of resource allocation in terms of how to spend their money. Even the most successful candidates possess finite resources, and the key to electoral success is the strategic allocation of those finite resources among various campaign activities.

Much of the resource allocation literature has focused on the case of presidential campaigns. Furthermore, most of this work is more appropriately characterized as studies of the geographical allocation of resources. Like parties, presidential candidates face a campaign waged in multiple districts, so they have to make decisions concerning *where* to spend money as well as a *how* to spend those resources. Generally, presidential

⁸ Parties raised more money during the 2004 campaign than in any prior campaign (Federal Election

candidates will allocate resources to states where the race will be close or will the outcome may be pivotal to the overall election outcome (Nagler and Leighley, 1992). More to the point, Bartels (1985) differentiates between instrumental resources (those vital to winning votes) and ornamental resources (those less important to winning votes), arguing that the former are distributed to the more populous states while the latter are distributed more broadly. Other work that considers the allocation of resources vis-à-vis population addresses the “rule” for the distribution of resources; Brams and Davis (1975, 1974) argue that resources are allocated based on a state’s electoral votes take to the $3/2$ ’s power⁹, a result supported by Owen (1975).

But all candidates face the question of how to allocate their resources – that is, what to spend their money on. Rather than relying on Bartels’s (1985) distinction between instrumental and ornamental resources, I instead adopt a theory of organizational dimensionality proposed by several scholars of political parties. Writing in the 1980s, researchers with the Party Transformation Study surveyed political parties with an eye toward countering the “party-in-decline” literature with a story of strengthening party organizations (Cotter et al, 1984; Gibson et al. 1985, 1983). These scholars used their survey data to establish a “party organizational strength” score. Organizational strength, in turn, was the product of two dimensions: the infrastructure needed to conduct electoral “business” (“organizational complexity”) and the capacity to persuade and mobilize voters (“programmatic capacity”). Organizational complexity variables include permanent staffing, formal structure, formal budget, permanent existence (telephone and

Commission, 2004). As a result, parties look to remain relevant and influential players in American

physical headquarters), and regular activity during both campaign and noncampaign periods. Programmatic capacity variables include formation of campaign strategy, candidate recruitment, campaign activity¹⁰, patronage involvement, and effectiveness of precinct-level organizations.

This classification scheme can easily be adapted toward the study of candidate campaigns, which must also have the infrastructure necessary to contest an election and the wherewithal to contact, persuade, and mobilize voters. Particular components of the latter dimension are easy to identify: persuasion activities (television and radio advertising, in particular), mobilization activities (direct mail, canvassing and other volunteer efforts, telephone call), and other activities designed to reach voters (constituent gifts and entertainment, donations to local groups). On the other hand, components of the “infrastructure” necessary to wage a campaign include the campaign organization, the fundraising apparatus, and information/polling operation. Obviously, the strength of many of these individual components bears on the strength or productivity of the other components. Broadly speaking, campaigns must possess sufficient infrastructure to make possible campaign output.

As one might expect, candidates would prefer to allocate a larger proportion of resources to components of the campaign designed to mobilize and persuade voters while minimizing the allocation toward campaign overhead and other features that do not

elections despite the elimination of soft money following the 2002 campaign.

⁹ See Colantoni, Levesque, and Ordeshook (1975) for a different perspective.

¹⁰ Many measures go into their campaign activity variable. Among them are distributing literature, arranging campaign events, contributing money, telephoning voters, buying advertisements in the media (newspaper, television, radio, billboard), distributing posters/yard signs, distributing news releases, mailing literature to voters, conducting registration drives, and conducting door-to-door voter contact.

directly bear on winning the election. Previous research tends to bear out this logic. In their study of U.S. House races in 1978, Goldenberg and Traugott (1984) find that candidates spend about a third of their budgets on printing and around a quarter of their budgets on television advertising. More recently, U.S. Senate candidates in the early 1990s allocated over half of their budgets to voter contact activities while allocating between 20 and 25 percent of their budgets to both fundraising and overhead (VanHeerde, 2001). For U.S. House campaigns, Herrnson (1998a) finds that candidates allocate three-quarters of their budgets to voter contact (including 18 percent to television advertisements, 14 percent to other advertisements, 18 percent to direct mail, and nearly 25 percent to other voter contact activity) and only 18 percent to overhead.

While these empirical findings lend support to the theory that campaigns are organized around two dimensions, theory suggests there may be a third dimension related to a candidate's pursuit of goals other than election. While I assume that no candidate will jeopardize his or her own election in pursuit of other goals, it is nonetheless plausible that a candidate who is sufficiently confident of victory may use the campaign to pursue other goals such as achieving power and prestige within the institution or helping the party achieve or maintain power (Heberlig, 2003; Malbin and Bedlington, 2002; Sinclair, 1995; Cox and McCubbins, 1993). This third dimension of the campaign used to pursue secondary goals would likely show up through increased use of donations to other campaigns and to party organizations. Recent research explores this phenomenon, arguing that incumbents are likely to use contributions to Congressional campaign

committees when they have leadership positions and the ability to raise excess funds (Larson, 2004).

Several factors loom large as we explore candidate campaigns. One crucial factor is the concept of competition. As elections become more competitive, candidates devote even larger proportions of their campaign budgets to activities related to voter contact (Greenwood, 1974). Another important consideration is geography. In smaller districts, candidates may be able to conduct more of their voter contact in person (largely with staff and volunteer labor), while in larger districts candidates will be forced to use direct mail and broadcast advertising to reach voters. A third important factor is whether the campaign is for the House or the Senate. Senate races have a higher profile, as voters are more likely to be aware of the race and more informed about the candidates and issues involved. As a result, a campaign for Senate will have different needs regarding polling and voter contact than would a campaign for the House. Fourthly, partisanship needs to be considered. Democrats, with their tradition of grassroots organization, may tend to emphasize organizational development and personal forms of voter contact while Republicans, traditionally the better-funded candidates, may lean towards more expensive (i.e. electronic) forms of communication¹¹. Finally, time is a factor; more to the point, changes over the course of the 1990s suggest that candidates will be spending more over time (especially those in competitive races).

¹¹ The 2004 election (and 2002, to a lesser extent) saw an unprecedented effort on the part of Republicans to engage in grassroots mobilization (Balz and Edsall, 2004). Fortunately, the expanded timeframe of this study will permit me to assess more generally whether the expectation of a partisan difference in the use of grassroots mobilization is still warranted.

In summary, this dissertation describes candidate campaigns through an analysis of resource allocation in recent Congressional campaigns. I expect that candidates create campaigns that reflect three underlying dimensions – organization, activity (voter contact), and donations (secondary goals) – though the focus will be on voter contact and the extent of the donations dimension will vary based on race competitiveness. Race competitiveness will also affect resource allocation more generally, causing candidates to enhance voter contact activities and perhaps rely on methods of voter contact that are geared toward persuasion rather than designed for mobilization. The size of the district will affect the forms of voter contact employed, and the candidate’s party will affect not only voter contact but also organizational development.

Party Campaigns

In the case of parties, I also assume that we are dealing with strategic politicians that have an overarching goal of winning elective offices in order to secure governing majorities (Aldrich, 1995). But parties have goals beyond getting their candidates elected, such as creating and maintaining a viable organization and developing identification and support among voters. And like candidates, parties possess limited resources, and thus are forced to target their resources. As a result, parties face the “*how*” resource allocation decision in the same way candidates do. But unlike candidates, parties must balance the desire for current electoral success (which involves decisions regarding what to spend money on and which candidates should benefit) with the need for the organizational and grassroots development that will make future success possible.

As I did before, I will adopt from the Party Transformation Study scholars the idea that party campaigns manifest themselves in distinct dimensions. But while parties are expected to be organizationally complex and programmatically active, I have no expectation that there will be a third dimension of party campaigns related to the pursuit of secondary goals. This is because parties, in a candidate-centered environment (and unlike most other Western democracies) are not themselves on the ballot; their primary goal is to help candidates win elections. However, I do have an expectation that the infrastructure dimension for political parties will be more extensive than that for candidates; unlike candidates, who only create organizations for the purposes of contesting a single election, parties maintain a permanent presence and thus require additional resources to maintain a viable organization.

In order to help candidates win elections, parties allocate resources to campaigns where they will do the most good. Several authors have noted that the Congressional campaign committees, for example, target resources to close races (Dwyre, 1994; Herrnson, 1988, 1992, 1994; Kolodny, 1998). Many have found that Republicans are more efficient at targeting resources to close races (Herrnson, 1988, 1989; Jacobson, 1985–1986) while recent evidence suggests the Democrats are also efficient distributors of resources (Glasgow, 2002).

Yet parties have different types of resources to allocate. Parties can provide candidates with hard money contributions; yet since these contributions are limited to relatively low levels, it might be logical to expect that parties distribute them fairly broadly. Soft money, on the other hand, can be spent by parties in unlimited amounts for

issue advocacy and party building efforts. Thus, one would expect that this money would be focused on races where it will do the party the most good.

To summarize, this dissertation describes party campaigns through an analysis of resource allocation by state parties in recent Congressional campaigns. I expect that party campaigns reflect two underlying dimensions – organization and activity (voter contact). Competitiveness will affect how prominent a part the party will play in any particular campaign nucleus, especially with the more fungible (and hence more valuable) soft money resources. As for the nature of party contributions, I expect that most resources devoted to activity will focus on voter mobilization efforts, though as the decade of the 1990s progress I suspect parties will focus larger amounts of money on persuasion activities in response to favorable court rulings regarding issue advocacy spending.

Strategic Behavior

While both the candidate and the party will contribute to the campaign nucleus – or systematic effort to capture the office for which the candidate is running – it is unreasonable to assume that each contributor will do so without considering the contributions of the other one. Hence, members of the nucleus will act strategically to allocate their own resources in the best possible fashion given the resource allocation decisions made by the other member.

But members of the nucleus are not the only actors whose behavior will affect the decisions of the affiliated candidate and party. Other campaigns are usually operating in

the same state or district, and their efforts must also be considered. For example, extensive television advertising by a presidential campaign might make it difficult for down-ballot candidates to use commercials to get their messages across to voters; as a result they may divert resources from advertising to other forms of voter contact.

As a result, we would expect any particular campaign to consider what other campaigns in the area are doing when making resource allocation decisions – whether or not those other campaigns are contributing to the campaign nucleus. In the case of candidates, they will look to their party as well as to other (primarily top of the ballot) campaigns when allocating resources to various components of their campaigns. For instance, if the state party, the presidential campaign, and the Senate candidate are all engaged in large mobilization efforts, a House candidate would be free to move resources to persuasion activities and rely on the other campaigns to mobilize his or her supporters. In the case of parties, they too will consider outside efforts – primarily those of the presidential campaign in the state – when allocating resources, but given their permanent nature, we would expect little effect of outside campaigns on party resource allocation to overhead and fundraising efforts. In summary, for two candidates otherwise similarly situated, if one resides in an area with extensive campaigning by the party and other top of the ballot candidates while the other does not, we would expect to see quite different patterns of resource allocation.

Campaign Effects

To some degree, the campaigns created by candidates and parties – and the strategic interaction between them – are interesting and important in and of themselves. But their significance also lies in the fact that they are designed to affect voting behavior. Voters perceive the campaign (here considered to be the efforts of the two campaign nuclei) and potentially act on the information received. But voters perceive the campaign in light of the two goals he or she is trying to achieve: securing his or her preferred outcome while minimizing the costs incurred in achieving that outcome. To that end, the voter will “allow” many things to influence his or her behavior. Those influences bear themselves out in a two-stage process. First, the voter has to decide whether or not to turn out on Election Day. If he or she decides to do so, the voter must then decide for which candidate to vote¹².

Much of the literature already discussed attests to the fact that the campaign should have an effect on voting behavior. But other factors influence voting behavior. District conditions such as the level of competition can create an environment that encourages or discourages participation. Candidate characteristics such as candidate status, issue positions, and candidate quality often interact with other factors (most notably the campaign and individual attributes) to influence voting behavior. The electoral context, including registration requirements, the ease of voting, and whether the election contains a Presidential campaign, can also influence the voter. Finally, the

¹² Many scholars argue that this is not a sequential process but instead a simultaneous process. Namely, the turnout decision is made only in light of the vote choice options presented to the voter. See Sanders (1999) for an example of an analysis that treats turnout and vote choice simultaneously. In any event, whether

voter's own attributes such as issue positions, candidate and economic evaluations, partisanship, and sociodemographic characteristics influence both turnout and vote choice.

All of these factors play a role in determining individual level voting behavior (and hence aggregate outcomes) and thus warrant inclusion as control variables in models of campaign effects¹³. The question then becomes what specifically could one expect the campaign to affect in the presence of all of these controls. Generally, the expectation is that the campaign will have an effect on turnout and vote choice to the benefit of the sponsoring nucleus. More specifically, I expect that mobilization efforts on the part of a campaign nucleus will increase turnout, particularly among voters from the same party, as theory and previous research suggests parties focus their mobilization efforts on their supporters (Gershtenson, 2003). With respect to vote choice, I expect that the persuasion efforts on the part of a campaign nucleus will be manifested in increases in aggregate vote share and increased probability of an individual voting for the sponsoring candidate; obviously, the latter effect will be most pronounced for individuals with weaker partisanship, as strong supporters do not need to be persuaded and strong opponents will be resistant to such advances. Furthermore, I expect candidate efforts to play a larger role in the persuasion process than those of the party.

turnout and vote choice are simultaneous or sequential does not affect the theory regarding what factors influence voting behavior.

¹³ Specific expectations about the effects of the control variables will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 3 – Describing Campaigns

In the preceding chapter I discussed the theoretical basis for a study of party and candidate campaign organizations. As it is their combined efforts that will influence the outcome on Election Day, it is important for scholars of campaign effects look to understand the interaction between the two and their respective and combined effects on the electorate. But before I address these, it would be helpful to get a handle on what it is exactly that candidate and party campaigns are doing. Do they perform the same activities? Has the nature of their campaign activities changed over time? And what factors explain variance in organizational strength and voter outreach. It is to these questions that I now turn.

Changes in Campaigns

The transition from party-centered to candidate-centered campaigns has been one of the most important developments in American politics in the latter half of the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1960s, candidates took advantage reforms in the candidate nominating process (Schlesinger, 1994) and developments in technology (Foster and Muste, 1992) to seize control of their own efforts to capture elective office. As a result, candidates began to raise money independently of the party and to create campaign organizations distinct from those of the party organization (Dodenhoff and Goldstein, 1998; Jacobson, 1992; Wattenberg, 1991). Parties subsequently redefined their role in

campaigns to act in service of their now independent candidates (Sabato and Larson, 2002; Aldrich, 1995; Herrnson, 1988).

The consequences of this change have been significant. With individual candidates at the helm, campaigns have become more personalistic. Voters are presented with appeals that are less focused on the candidate's relationship to institutions (with the possible exception of incumbents emphasizing their current service in office) and less focused on building broad coalitions. Instead, each candidate searches for his or her "personal vote," or the specific set of voters that will ensure the candidate's victory. The mechanics of this search often involve television advertisements and staged campaign events. These appeals are typically a good deal less personal than the grassroots contacting that characterized party-centered electioneering.

There is, in fact, evidence that candidate-centered campaigning had a detrimental effect on voters. Voters are increasingly subject to more pervasive (even permanent) campaigns (Ornstein and Mann, 2000; King, 1997; Blumenthal, 1980). As a result, voter evaluations of campaigns are quite negative (Lipsitz et al., 2003). Furthermore, the era of candidate-centered campaigning is coincident with a profound decrease in citizen interest and engagement in politics (Putnam, 2000) as well as a decline in voter turnout (Election Assistance Commission, 2005)¹⁴. All of these conditions are troublesome if democracy is going to function effectively in the United States; negative perceptions of campaigns,

¹⁴ A linear trendline that summarizes voter turnout from 1960 to 2002 has a slope of $-.0027$ (that is, turnout is decreasing by .27 percent per year over the 42 year period).

decreasing interest, and declining voter turnout make it difficult for society to engage in meaningful policy debate and to select a truly representative government¹⁵.

It is not clear, however, exactly how much candidate-centered campaigns have contributed to this state of affairs. Specifically, political science has not engaged in systematic empirical research on the nature of candidate campaigns. Only through looking into what candidate campaigns actually “do” can we thoroughly assess the impact they are having on voters, elections, and society.

Previous research in this area has examined the nature and effects of the individual components of contemporary campaigns. The ability of a campaign to spread its message through the electronic media is critical in an era when candidates have to rely on their own efforts to persuade and mobilize voters. Shaw (1999b) shows that television advertising (the most common form of media campaigning) has an impact on aggregate vote totals. Other scholars argue that television advertising has an effect on turnout – though they don’t agree on the nature of the effect (Ansolabehere, Iyengar, and Simon, 1999; Freedman and Goldstein, 1999; Kahn and Kenney, 1999). Campaign events also appear to have an impact on voters (Shaw, 1999a); events such as candidate appearances (Shaw, 1999b), televised debates, and political conventions (Hillygus and Jackman, 2002; Holbrook, 1996) allow candidates to reach voters through mediated coverage. Further, studies of presidential campaigns show that the messages put forth by the candidates can have an impact on voters (again, via the media) through agenda-setting, priming, and framing effects (Mendelberg, 1997; Mutz, Sniderman, and Brody, 1996; Petrocik, 1996).

¹⁵ Politicians, pundits, and scholars would like to believe that this story is overstated – and some evidence

Where this research is lacking is in the systematic description of the campaign organization and the testing of its effects. The campaign organization is the entity created by candidates that makes electioneering possible. Television advertising, campaign events, debates, and message development (as well as many other features of campaigns) are all products of the campaign organization. Yet research into the campaign organization itself is limited. The reasons for this dearth of research are relatively straightforward. One, data on campaign organizations are scarce. Two, the characteristics and features of a campaign organization are hard to quantify; how does one measure how “big” a campaign organization is or how “active” it is? Three, some scholars believe it unlikely that the campaign organization has much of an effect on voters. These factors mean that campaign organizations are either ignored or measured through (overly) simple proxies. In particular, among scholars of Congressional and state-level elections, assessment of campaign organizations has taken a back seat to analyses that use measures that serve as proxies for the organization: campaign spending (Jacobson, 1990; Abramowitz, 1988; Caldeira, Patterson, and Markko, 1985; Patterson and Caldeira, 1983) and candidate quality (Squire, 1991; Jacobson, 1980) – the latter on the assumption that “quality” candidates are better able to constitute a campaign organization.

Yet it is important for scholars to focus on campaign organizations. Recent research suggests that the efforts put forth by organizations can have significant effects on electoral behavior. Innovative field experiments by Alan Gerber and Donald Green

suggests that some of these trends have reversed following September 11th, 2001 (Putnam, 2002).

suggest that organizational efforts can increase voter turnout (Green, Gerber, and Nickerson, 2003; Gerber and Green, 2001, 2000). And while Gerber and Green's work has focused on nonpartisan appeals, research into the efforts of party organizations suggest that their efforts also have effects on turnout (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994; Caldeira, Patterson, and Markko, 1985).

Simultaneously, parties and candidates are beginning to “rediscover” the campaign organization and the shoe-leather techniques of an earlier era, enhanced with advances in technology (Balz and Allen, 2003; Nagourney, 2002). For example, in 2004 the Bush campaign and the Republican National Committee used the Internet to recruit and deploy volunteers. Moreover, they created mobilization strategies that incorporated early voting programs and a “72 Hour” plan for Election Day get-out-the-vote drives (Balz and Allen, 2003). In addition, both parties are using technological developments to aid in the development of a vote-getting organization and in its implementation. For instance, voter list software allows the parties to create profiles – including political, demographic, consumer, and personal data – of individuals that can drive email, phone, and direct mail efforts for both fundraising and mobilization (Theimer, 2003). This renaissance of interest both on the part of scholars and practitioners suggests that campaign organizational strength should be incorporated into any analysis of modern campaigns.

Studying Campaign Organizations

In focusing on the organizations created by candidates and parties in pursuit of electoral success, this study seeks to build on previous research into campaigns and to address oversights in the literature. Specifically, this study looks to answer several questions about campaign organizations: what do they look like? how do candidate campaign organizations vary by party, by type of election, over time, and by candidate type? how are party campaigns different from those created by candidates? what factors explain why candidates and parties allocate resources the way that they do? It is clear that campaigns are changing, and research into the most recent campaigns is necessary to understand their role in contemporary elections.

To that end, I make use of unique data. I collected data on candidate campaigns from the Campaign Finance Analysis Project, a subscription-based web site that tracks contributions to and expenditures from the campaigns of candidates for federal office¹⁶. The specific data for this project are campaign spending totals for candidates for federal office (U.S. House and U.S. Senate) in 1992, 1994, 1998, 2000, and 2002¹⁷. These data include all campaign expenditures for each two-year election cycle. For the elections under consideration, the CFAP data cover 3572 candidate campaigns, including 3232 U.S. House candidates and 340 U.S. Senate candidates.

To produce these data, the CFAP obtains campaign expenditure reports from the Federal Election Commission and categorizes campaign spending into twenty-seven

¹⁶ Available at <http://www.campaignfinanceanalysisproject.com>.

different categories¹⁸. These categories are then grouped into eight major spending categories. Two of these major categories involve expenditures related to voter contact: advertising, which includes electronic advertising and advertising in other media (newspapers, billboards, etc.), and grassroots campaigning, which includes expenditures for such things as telephone banks, door-to-door canvassing, and voter contact mail. Three of these major categories (overhead, fundraising, and polling) include expenditures that are not related to direct voter contact but are nonetheless essential for the operation of the campaign. Finally, three major categories cover expenditures not related to voter contact or campaign operations: constituent gifts and entertainment, donations (to other candidates, parties, and other groups), and unitemized expenses (for those expenditures that the CFAP was not able to categorize).

Data on party campaigns are also from the Federal Election Commission, but required significant original cleaning and sorting. The FEC requires political parties to file reports accounting for their administrative expenses. In this chapter I make use of data on the administrative expenditures of state party organizations between 1992 and 2002. For each two-year election cycle, state parties keep a record of expenses that bear on elections involving federal candidates. These administrative expenses are paid for with a mixture of hard and soft money in accordance to established ratios (FEC, 1991, esp. Appendix 6). For the six election cycles covered in the data, state parties reported 1,552,917 unique expenditures that constitute 127,614 different expenditure types.

¹⁷ The CFAP has not made available data for the 1996 elections. Also, the data from 2002 include only Senate candidates.

¹⁸ For more information, see Fritz and Morris (1992).

To render these data comparable to the candidate data, I have recoded the administrative expenditures into the twenty-seven categories as described in Fritz and Morris (1992), producing spending totals for each category of campaign expense. As with candidate campaigns, these twenty-seven categories reflect eight major categories of campaign spending, two of which involve voter contact (advertising, grassroots campaigning), three of which relate to organizational operations (overhead, fundraising, polling), and three of which do not directly deal with campaigning (constituent gifts and entertainment, donations, and unitemized spending). However, I omit from my analyses the data on constituent gifts and entertainment and donations to candidates, parties, and other groups. Practically speaking, these types of expenditures are quite infrequent in the administrative spending data and account for a tiny share of the total spending. Furthermore, any data on donations to candidates or other party organizations would be reflected in the recipient's expenditure totals, and including them here would be double counting.

These spending data are particularly useful because they encompass everything on which candidates and parties spend money. Much of the literature fails to account for of the breadth of campaigns in their activity and organization, an oversight that can lead to incorrect inferences about the impact of campaigns on electoral behavior (Ansolabehere and Gerber, 1994). In addition, these data capture the lion's share of party campaign expenditures. Legally speaking, any state party campaign activity that might bear on a federal election (which includes all of the candidates included in this analysis) must be reported to the FEC and will appear in the administrative spending files. Furthermore,

during the 1990s national party organizations began transferring large sums of money to state party organization to take advantage of more favorable hard money/soft money spending ratios available to the state parties (Dwyre and Kolodny, 2002), thus providing additional assurance that these data yield an accurate picture of the party's campaign.

In addition to the expenditure data for candidates and parties, I make use of data on candidate status, district competitiveness, district size (in terms of both people and land area), and yearly inflation. The latter, obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was used to adjust the campaign spending data for earlier years to constant 2002 dollars. Other pieces of data were collected from various sources and are described fully in Appendix A.

With these data, I focus on how campaign expenditures vary. But this initial pass at the data is more than just a look at campaign spending. Studies that only consider total campaign spending miss the fundamentally strategic nature of campaign resource allocation. Some candidates may decide to create relatively weak organizations in terms of structure and activity, focusing instead on creating an organization that can develop relationships with other groups (party committees, campaigns, constituent groups). Other candidates may be engaged in competitive races and will focus the strength of their organizations on voter contact. And many candidates who do not stand a chance of winning will not create campaign organizations at all. Similarly, political parties in competitive states will allocate more resources to voter contact while those facing less competitive environments may focus resources on organizational development. Only by looking at *how* campaign money is spent can we fully understand how and why

campaigns differ. Accordingly, I will proceed to discuss resource allocation within these campaigns.

Campaign Spending

With respect to total spending, previous research – as well as logic – leads us to several straightforward expectations. First, one would expect campaign spending to increase over time (Sorauf, 1995). The increasing cost of communication suggests that campaigns will spend more over the course of the 1990s. Second, one would expect more spending by incumbents than challengers (Sorauf, 1995; Goldenberg and Traugott, 1984). Not only do incumbents enjoy fundraising advantages, but many also enjoy the benefit of having cash-on-hand from previous campaigns. As for open seat candidates, given that open seat races are traditionally more competitive than incumbent versus challenger races, one would expect that these candidates' expenditures would look more like those of incumbents than those of challengers. Third, one would expect more spending in U.S. Senate campaigns than in those for the U.S. House. This expectation conforms to logic – Senate elections encompass larger constituencies, thus requiring more spending – as well as previous findings (Herrnson, 1998a). Finally, one would expect more spending from Republican candidates than from Democratic ones (controlling for candidate status). Previous research into U.S. House campaigns reports this Republican spending advantage (Goldenberg and Traugott, 1984), and Republican fundraising advantages throughout the 1990s (Wilcox, 2002) make it likely that Republican campaigns will spend more.

Expectations for parties are similarly straightforward. Given the parties' success at fundraising (FEC, 2001) as well as a trend for national party committees to transfer funds to state and local parties, one would expect increased campaign spending by state parties over time. In addition, the traditional Republican advantage in fundraising should manifest itself as increased spending by Republican state parties (Aldrich, 2000).

Data on campaigns for U.S. House and U.S. Senate in the 1990s bear out some of these expectations. Table 3-1 presents total spending for candidate campaigns over the five elections in question. Total spending¹⁹ among all three types of House candidates increases over the entire timeframe, though the difference in spending between 1992 and 2000 is statistically significant for incumbents and open seat candidates only²⁰. The magnitude of the increase is far greater for open seat candidates than for incumbents; while incumbent spending increased fourteen percent, spending by open seat candidates grew by over 125 percent. This finding is probably a result of a closely divided House of Representatives that became even more closely divided over the course of the decade, with the result being that the competitive open seat campaigns became important for control of the chamber.

¹⁹ These, and all subsequent, spending figures are in constant 2002 dollars. Inflation adjustment was based on the Consumer Price Index as reported on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website (<http://www.bls.gov/home.htm>)

²⁰ In an independent samples T-test (assuming unequal variances), the 1992-2000 difference in spending for House incumbents had a T value of -2.363 ($p < .05$) while the difference for House challengers had a T value of -1.135 ($p > .25$) and the difference for House open seat candidates had a T value of -5.125 ($p < .01$).

Table 3-1
Total Campaign Spending – Candidates

	1992	1994	1998	2000	2002	Number of Cases
Senate	\$3,656,204 (3258225)	\$4,900,987 (5735999)	\$4,277,466 (5212173)	\$5,956,895 (10122255)	\$4,362,751 (3522177)	340
Inc.	\$5,276,435 (3198478)	\$5,846,517 (3837440)	\$5,875,475 (5786631)	\$5,281,716 (3651022)	\$5,065,984 (2893656)	137
Chal.	\$1,965,091 (2074626)	\$4,739,954 (8334657)	\$3,113,634 (5031341)	\$2,583,997 (3802840)	\$2,219,457 (2501686)	137
Open Seat	\$3,771,389 (3697687)	\$3,626,178 (1819897)	\$3,018,352 (2226028)	\$17,696,321 (22023678)	\$7,140,011 (3974857)	66
Number of Cases	68	68	68	68	68	
House	\$484,562.90 (499242.8)	\$493,535.60 (450917.1)	\$515,917.60 (638874.6)	\$601,510.50 (741290)	–	3232
Inc.	\$740,066.50 (457058.3)	\$678,674.20 (446444.6)	\$728,570.00 (628360.3)	\$842,936.90 (691947)	–	1414
Chal.	\$217,506.20 (464477.9)	\$252,866.30 (348013.6)	\$239,742.40 (543181.5)	\$261,143.60 (558509.8)	–	1406
Open Seat	\$504,119.50 (357478.5)	\$670,806.00 (392425)	\$838,162.40 (581238.3)	\$1,134,376.00 (1002964)	–	412
Number of Cases	836	791	781	824	–	

Cell entries are inflation adjusted total spending figures
Standard errors are in parentheses

Unlike House campaigns, spending in Senate campaigns remained largely stagnant with the exception of open seat candidates; differences in candidate spending between 1992 and 2002 were only statistically significant for open seat candidates²¹. As was the case in the House, Senate open seat candidates finished the timeframe spending much more in their campaigns than they did only ten years earlier. Between 1992 and 2002, spending in open seat Senate campaigns increased by ninety percent. Interestingly,

²¹ The 1992-2002 difference in spending for Senate incumbents had a T value of $-.251$ ($p > .80$) and the difference for Senate challengers had a T value of $-.404$ ($p > .65$), while the difference for Senate open seat candidates had a T value of -2.392 ($p < .05$).

open seat spending was especially high in 2000, though this figure is skewed by the atypical candidacies of Rick Lazio (R-NY), Hilary Clinton (D-NY), and John Corzine (D-NJ). Even without these three outlying cases, however, the upward trend continues; open seat candidates in 2000 still spent over \$5 million, up from \$3 million in 1998.

For both House and Senate campaigns, two trends bear mentioning. First, incumbents grossly outspent challengers, though the trend is for the differences to be decreasing slightly. In House races, incumbents outspent challengers by almost 240 percent in 1992 (\$740,000 to \$218,000); in 2002, the difference was still a hefty 220 percent (\$843,000 to \$261,000). For Senate elections, the differences are not quite as impressive, though still quite large. In 1992, Senate incumbents outspent challengers by 165 percent (\$5.3 million to \$2.0 million), while in 2002 incumbents spent 130 percent more than challengers (\$5.1 million to \$2.2 million). Nonetheless, incumbents still enjoy large advantages in campaign expenditures.

The second thing to keep in mind is the trend for campaign spending among open seat candidates. In 1992, spending by open seat candidates for both the House and Senate was approximately halfway between the spending levels for incumbent and challengers. By 2000 (for House campaigns) and 2002 (for Senate campaigns), open seat candidates for both chambers were spending more than both incumbents and challengers. This trend is likely the result of the nearly equal partisan balance that has developed since 1994 as well as the increased importance of each seat. As more and more incumbent seats (especially in the House) become safe, both parties see open-seat races as the means for winning control of Congress.

Table 3-2
Total Campaign Spending – Parties

	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	Number of Cases
Parties	\$1,381,300 (1441775)	\$1,475,899 (1749766)	\$2,914,872 (2938176)	\$2,298,546 (2309840)	\$5,508,705 (6802621)	\$3,904,485 (4084415)	518
Dem.	\$1,481,957 (1526272)	\$1,470,356 (1786483)	\$3,374,808 (3288282)	\$2,223,135 (2031820)	\$5,993,297 (6597993)	\$4,355,829 (4451299)	262
Rep.	\$1,270,822 (1353109)	\$1,482,864 (1725732)	\$2,454,937 (2493285)	\$2,377,309 (2589621)	\$5,067,187 (7028658)	\$3,519,191 (3755958)	256
Number of Cases	86	88	90	92	86	76	

Cell entries are inflation adjusted total spending figures
Standard errors are in parentheses

Data on total spending by state party campaigns are presented in Table 3-2. In the case of party campaigns, the average state party organization had \$1.4 million in administrative expenditures in 1992, a figure that rose to \$5.5 million in 2000 before declining to \$3.9 million in 2002²². This seesaw pattern clearly reflects the impact of presidential elections. When looking at total spending among only Republican or Democratic party organizations²³, the see-saw pattern generally applies except for Democratic spending from 1992 to 1994 and Republican spending from 1996 to 1998; in those cases, spending remained fairly constant. What is more interesting is the fact that Democratic party organizations had higher levels of spending in four of the six years, including 2000 and 2002. This seems to contradict the conventional wisdom of a Republican spending advantage (see Aldrich, 2000), though it is consistent with recent

²² This difference is statistically significant at the .01 level (T= -5.111)

²³ The differences in campaign spending between 1992 and 2002 for both Democratic (T= -3.656) and Republican (T= -3.606) are statistically significant at the .01 level.

findings of a Democratic advantage in soft-money fundraising (Dwyre and Kolodny, 2002).

What Campaigns Do

Campaigns go to great lengths to create organizations and to communicate with voters in an effort to do two things: mobilize supporters who may not turn out to vote and persuade voters who may not support the candidate. But an election takes place in a fixed amount of time, and candidates and parties are forced to go about their mobilization and persuasion activities with fixed resources. Thus, campaigns are forced to make crucial decisions about how to allocate resources in order to maximize the chances of winning. In presidential elections, resource allocation decisions are two-fold, one involving where (geographically) resources are targeted and the other involving how the resources will be used (on what component of the campaign). In sub-Presidential contests, candidates do not have to make resource allocation decisions in terms of geography²⁴, but candidates do have to make decisions about how to distribute resources within the campaign. For parties, the national organizations clearly face a two-fold resource allocation decision, but state parties must only engage in geographic targeting with respect to direct contributions to candidates as well as coordinated and independent

²⁴ Admittedly, House and Senate candidates in large districts also face decisions regarding where to allocate resources; however, this situation is quite different from the one faced by Presidential candidates. Congressional candidates run in a single district, so even geographic resource allocation decisions are made in the context of winning a plurality of votes in one district. In other words, a Senate candidate in Texas may shift money from Dallas to Houston, but a vote won in Houston is equal to one lost in Dallas. Presidential candidates, on the other hand, run in fifty-one separate districts. A Democratic Presidential candidate would want to allocate more resources to Florida than to California, as a vote won in (competitive) Florida is much more valuable to the candidate than the one lost in (solidly Democratic) California. This makes resource allocation decisions much more difficult for Presidential candidates.

expenditures. Yet these forms of spending account for a relatively small piece of the entire state party spending pie²⁵, and the targeting decisions regarding administrative spending only involve how to spend the money.

To ascertain what “works” and where campaigns are headed, it is vital that we go beyond total spending to look at how campaigns allocate resources to their various organizational and voter contact components. While candidates would prefer to allocate a larger proportion of resources to components of the campaign designed to mobilize and persuade voters, they are nonetheless forced to allocate resources to overhead and other features that do not directly bear on winning the election. Failure to account for how campaigns allocate money to the various components of the campaign can lead to biased results about the impact of campaign efforts (Ansolabehere and Gerber, 1994).

It is again worth observing that previous research on campaign resource allocation has been largely descriptive. In their study of U.S. House races in 1978, Goldenberg and Traugott (1984) find that candidates spend about a third of their budgets on printing and around a quarter of their budgets on television advertising. As elections become more competitive, candidates appear to devote even larger proportions of their campaign budgets to activities related to voter contact (Greenwood, 1974). More recently, U.S. Senate candidates in the early 1990s allocated over half of their budgets to voter contact activities while allocating between 20 and 25 percent of their budgets to fundraising and overhead, respectively (VanHeerde, 2001). For U.S. House campaigns, Herrnson

²⁵ For example, in 2000 Democratic state and local party committees provided \$5.4 million to federal candidates in direct contributions, coordinated expenditures, and independent expenditures; Republican state and local party committees provided \$3.8 million (FEC, 2001). In contrast, Democratic state party

(1998a) finds that candidates allocate three-quarters of their budgets to voter contact (including 18 percent to television advertisements, 14 percent to other advertisements, 18 percent to direct mail, and nearly 25 percent to other voter contact activity) and only 18 percent to overhead.

While VanHeerde and Herrnson focus on Senate and House candidates, respectively, it is perhaps more instructive to consider resource allocation by type of candidate. Data on resource allocation patterns for Congressional candidates are presented in Table 3-3.

House and Senate candidates of all types allocate between 20 and 25 percent of their resources to overhead and around three percent to polling. For other campaign components, such as advertising, grassroots campaigning, fundraising expenses, and donations, there is considerable variation between the two chambers and/or the three types of candidates.

committees had administrative expenditures of nearly \$350 million in 2000 and Republican state party committees had \$345 million.

**Table 3-3
Candidate Resource Allocation**

Category	All	HR			Sen		
		Inc	Chal	Open	Inc	Chal	Open
OVERHEAD	23.25	23.91	22.97	20.99	24.53	24.82	22.23
Furniture and Office Supplies	1.61	1.39	2.07	1.35	1.27	1.52	1.08
Rent and Utility Payments	1.72	1.70	1.95	1.50	1.21	1.54	0.97
Salaries and Payroll Taxes	10.44	10.18	9.97	11.31	11.11	13.04	12.65
Other Taxes	0.69	1.09	0.28	0.31	1.31	0.52	0.64
Bank and Investment Fees	0.21	0.27	0.16	0.13	0.37	0.11	0.08
Lawyer and Accountant Expenses	1.14	1.85	0.48	0.62	1.51	0.61	0.54
Telephone Expenses	2.27	1.75	2.99	2.18	1.43	2.93	1.98
Campaign Automobile Expenses	0.26	0.45	0.08	0.15	0.35	0.20	0.09
Computers and Office Equipment	1.46	1.59	1.49	1.16	1.30	1.10	1.15
Travel Expenses	3.13	3.09	3.37	2.20	4.18	3.18	2.96
Food and Meeting Expenses	0.32	0.56	0.13	0.08	0.48	0.07	0.08
FUNDRAISING	13.06	18.30	7.52	8.71	18.51	12.60	13.14
Direct Mail	2.83	3.09	1.88	2.08	6.06	6.07	5.33
Fundraising Events	9.94	14.94	5.49	6.47	11.20	5.89	6.96
Telemarketing	0.28	0.27	0.15	0.16	1.26	0.64	0.85
POLLING EXPENSES	2.35	2.49	1.90	3.03	2.56	2.17	3.00
ADVERTISING	28.67	23.34	28.18	35.88	41.50	43.95	50.74
Electronic Media Advertising	24.66	20.32	22.39	31.59	40.51	40.83	49.77
Other Media Advertising	4.02	3.02	5.79	4.29	0.99	3.12	0.97
GRASSROOT CAMPAIGNING	22.16	16.03	31.49	26.99	6.99	13.85	9.61
Persuasion Mail and Brochures	12.39	9.60	16.59	17.16	2.62	5.71	3.43
Traditional Campaigning	9.63	6.24	14.79	9.73	4.31	8.09	6.13
Staff and Volunteer Expenses	0.13	0.18	0.10	0.09	0.06	0.05	0.04
CONST. GIFTS/ENTERT.	0.80	1.71	0.03	0.10	1.07	0.02	0.09
DONATIONS	5.24	11.33	0.45	0.45	3.64	0.25	0.21
Same State Candidate Donations	0.60	1.33	0.06	0.05	0.17	0.02	0.02
Other State Candidate Donations	0.75	1.70	0.00	0.04	0.26	0.02	0.01
Party Donations	3.23	7.01	0.22	0.19	2.77	0.16	0.14
Ideological Group Donations	0.21	0.43	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.02	0.01
Civic Group Donations	0.45	0.87	0.12	0.14	0.38	0.03	0.04
UNITEMIZED	4.47	2.89	7.45	3.86	1.19	2.34	0.98
Number of cases	3298	1414	1147	404	137	130	66

Cell entries are the percentage of total spending within each column

With respect to voter contact, Senate candidates spend between 50 and 60 percent of their resources on advertising and grassroots campaigning, as do House candidates (except for House incumbents, who spend only 40 percent). Yet the ratio between advertising and grassroots varies between the two chambers, with House candidates

having a much more equitable allocation and Senate candidates heavily relying on advertising. Also, as one might expect, House and Senate incumbents are able to allocate far lower percentages to voter contact than are challengers and open seat candidates, though in most cases these smaller percentages still amount to larger absolute expenditures. Clearly challengers must focus more resources on voter contact in order to achieve name recognition and to persuade voters against the incumbent while open seat candidates allocate more to voter contact due to the fact that these contests tend to be more competitive.

On the subject of fundraising, incumbents of both chambers allocate nearly twenty percent of their resources to the search for more money. Challenger and open seat candidates in both chambers trail behind in their allocations to fundraising, though it is interesting to note that Senate challengers and open seat candidates allocate roughly thirteen percent to fundraising while House challengers and open seat candidates allocate roughly eight percent. The relative emphasis by incumbents on fundraising is clear – incumbents raise more money so that they can use the extra resources to pursue other goals, perhaps to scare off future electoral challenges (Box-Steffensmeier, 1996; Epstein and Zensky, 1995) or to spread that money around to fellow candidates, party organizations, or constituent groups.

In fact, resource allocation to donations and constituent gifts and entertainment shows significant variation between different types of candidates. Generally speaking, challengers do not have enough resources to warrant large allocations to these components, and open seat candidates tend to be in more competitive races, thus

requiring that more funds be reserved for voter contact. Incumbents of both chambers, on the other hand, tend to have less competitive races and can therefore allocate campaign funds in pursuit of other goals. As a result, House incumbents allocate thirteen percent of their spending to donations and constituent gifts and entertainment (approximately 26 times what challengers and open seat candidates do) and Senate incumbents allocate nearly 5 percent (approximately 16 percent more than challengers and open seat candidates). These findings in general, and the data on incumbent donations to parties and other candidates in particular, reflect a desire among incumbents to use campaign spending as a tool for strengthening their support in their home districts as well as to curry favors with colleagues and party leaders (Hollihan, 2001).

Political parties also face important resource allocation decisions, but those decisions are structured by a context quite different from the one faced by candidates. While candidate campaigns only exist for a few months every two or six years, party organizations exist continuously. As a result, parties are forced to allocate a larger percentage to overhead. In addition, we would expect increasing allocations to media over time, particularly after 1996 when national party organizations began shifting resources to state parties in order to fund issue advocacy advertising (La Raja and Pogoda, 2000). Previous research on party campaign resource allocation largely supports these notions. La Raja and Pogoda (2000) find that state party organizations in the 1990s allocated between forty and seventy percent of their spending to overhead expenses, between fifteen and twenty percent to grassroots campaigning, and five to seven percent to fundraising. Interestingly enough, they also find that state parties in the early 1990s

only allocated a small portion of their resources (less than five percent) to media; in 1996 that portion jumped to over one-third before settling down to sixteen percent in 1998.

Data on resource allocation by Democratic and Republican state party organizations are presented in Table 3-4. Over the course of the 1990s, state parties allocated slightly over half of their resources to overhead, around five percent of their resources to fundraising, and around one-third of their resources to voter contact, almost evenly split between advertising and grassroots campaign efforts. Generally speaking, partisan differences were minimal – both Republican and Democratic state parties spent five to six percent on fundraising, about one percent on polling, slightly over fifteen percent on grassroots campaigning, and small sums on constituent gifts and entertainment. The major differences occur in resource allocation to overhead and advertising. For the former, Republican state parties allocate seven percent more than do Democratic ones. On the other hand, Democratic state parties allocate around seven percent more to advertising than do Republican ones. The Republican advantage in overhead is consistent with previous findings of strong Republican Party organizations at the state level (Aldrich, 2000) while the Democratic advantage in advertising is unexpected. Overall, however, these findings are remarkably consistent with those of La Raja and Pogoda (2000).

**Table 3-4
Party Resource Allocation**

Category	DEM	REP	ALL
OVERHEAD	54.79	62.10	58.40
Furniture and Office Supplies	4.30	5.42	4.85
Rent and Utility Payments	4.33	4.48	4.41
Salaries and Payroll Taxes	31.93	36.73	34.30
Other Taxes	1.89	1.45	1.67
Bank and Investment Fees	0.37	0.33	0.35
Lawyer and Accountant Expenses	0.89	1.67	1.27
Telephone Expenses	4.52	3.70	4.12
Campaign Automobile Expenses	0.23	0.21	0.22
Computers and Office Equipment	3.06	3.99	3.52
Travel Expenses	2.74	3.15	2.94
Food and Meeting Expenses	0.54	.097	0.75
FUNDRAISING	4.86	6.25	5.55
Direct Mail	3.27	4.28	3.77
Fundraising Events	1.22	0.98	1.10
Telemarketing	0.37	1.00	0.68
POLLING EXPENSES	1.06	0.60	0.83
ADVERTISING	19.17	12.36	15.81
Electronic Media Advertising	19.02	12.22	15.66
Other Media Advertising	0.15	0.14	0.15
GRASSROOT CAMPAIGNING	17.17	15.77	16.48
Persuasion Mail and Brochures	3.35	4.15	3.75
Traditional Campaigning	13.50	11.36	12.44
Staff and Volunteer Expenses	0.32	0.27	0.30
CONSTITUENT GIFTS/ENTERT.	0.18	0.23	0.21
UNITEMIZED	2.76	2.59	2.68
Number of cases	256	262	518

Cell entries are the percentage of total spending within each column

Changes Over Time

The preceding discussion provides a general description of candidate and party campaigns in the 1990s and early 2000s, but within that timeframe there may be volatility in the resource allocation decisions of candidates and parties. The fact that fewer and fewer Congressional seats are competitive means that candidates will allocate fewer resources to voter contact over the timeframe – though this applies more for incumbents and House candidates and less for challengers, open seat candidates, and Senate

candidates. Furthermore, declining competition suggests increasing allocation to donations throughout the decade, especially for (House) incumbents. For parties, increased fundraising throughout the decade (FEC, 2001), increased transfer of resources from national to state party organizations (Dwyre and Kolodny, 2002), and changes in campaign finance regulations that made issue advocacy attractive to state parties (Potter, 1997) lead us to expect that resource allocations to voter contact will be increasing during the timeframe.

Data on resource allocation over time for candidates are presented in Table 3-5. For House candidates, spending on overhead declined in the 1990s, though most drastically for challengers and open seat candidates. Between 1992 and 2000, resource allocation to overhead declined only two percent for incumbents, but for open seat candidates it declined five percent and for challengers the decline was seven percent.

Spending on fundraising for House candidates remained largely unchanged among challengers and open seat candidates while incumbents allocated increased their allocation to fundraising by three to four percent. This slight rise in fundraising allocation among incumbents is understandable, given their desire to build war chests or to raise excess fund for distribution to other party and candidate campaigns. On the other hand, the failure of challengers to increase fundraising expenses probably reflects a desire to maximize resources for voter contact. The consistency of open seat candidate allocations to fundraising is unexpected, particularly considering the fact that these races tend to be more competitive and tend to involve candidates of higher quality.

Resource allocation among House candidates to voter contact also varied depending on the status of the candidate. As expected, the types of candidates who tend to run in less-than-competitive races (i.e. incumbents and challengers) reduced allocations to voter contact over the course of the decade while the open seat candidates who tend to face more competitive contests actually increase resource allocation to voter contact from 60 percent in 1992 to 66 percent in 2000. The drop-off for challengers was particularly steep (from 45 percent to 33 percent), and this general trend certainly mirrors the trend of fewer competitive House races that emerged in the 1990s.

Finally for House candidates, resource allocation to donations²⁶ matches expectations. Namely, open seat candidates and challengers spend one percent or less on donations due to the fact that they need to allocate as much as possible to voter contact activities²⁷. The fact that the trend is stable over the course of the 1990s only reiterates how competitive open seat races are and how focused challengers have to be to make an impression on voters. Incumbents, on the other hand, spent nearly eight percent of their campaign budgets on donations in 1992, and that figure increased to twenty percent in 2000. This finding certainly affirms previous suggestions that safe incumbents will use their campaign accounts to solidify support at home or to enhance their profile among party leaders or colleagues in the House (Hollihan, 2001).

²⁶ This figure includes spending for constituent gifts and entertainment.

²⁷ One might expect that any spending on donations by House open seat candidates comes from those candidates running in safe districts. This is generally the case. The correlation between district competition and spending per 1000 voters on donations is $-.164$ (significance $< .01$), indicating that increased competition results in less money allocated to donations.

**Table 3-5
Candidate Resource Allocation Over Time**

Senate	1992	1994	1998	2000	2002
<i>Overhead</i>					
Incumbent	26.80	22.87	26.65	21.67	24.75
Challenger	29.22	23.75	25.72	22.14	17.09
Open Seat	23.94	21.37	24.85	17.57	16.25
<i>Fundraising</i>					
Incumbent	17.90	17.08	18.22	19.78	19.44
Challenger	13.40	12.80	9.86	9.01	15.16
Open Seat	14.35	12.48	11.56	12.19	10.51
<i>Voter Contact</i>					
Incumbent	48.14	53.53	46.42	49.03	45.64
Challenger	52.89	58.84	52.70	59.80	49.88
Open Seat	46.84	50.03	59.86	66.06	69.99
<i>Donations</i>					
Incumbent	2.77	2.61	5.32	6.16	6.37
Challenger	0.06	0.11	0.12	0.64	0.29
Open Seat	0.17	0.30	0.28	0.25	0.47
House	1992	1994	1998	2000	2002
<i>Overhead</i>					–
Incumbent	24.97	23.46	23.82	23.47	–
Challenger	22.93	20.67	15.98	15.87	–
Open Seat	21.85	20.54	21.43	16.77	–
<i>Fundraising</i>					–
Incumbent	15.81	18.08	20.23	18.88	–
Challenger	7.02	7.36	4.90	5.41	–
Open Seat	7.81	9.26	9.38	8.41	–
<i>Voter Contact</i>					–
Incumbent	45.45	43.65	36.18	33.10	–
Challenger	51.03	51.40	45.69	46.94	–
Open Seat	60.35	61.98	59.58	66.27	–
<i>Donations</i>					–
Incumbent	7.57	8.56	15.07	20.08	–
Challenger	0.41	0.39	0.36	0.44	–
Open Seat	0.44	0.40	0.75	0.72	–

Cell entries are percentages spent on each component by each type of candidate in each year

The story for the Senate is a bit more complicated. With regard to overhead expenses, the trend over the timeframe is generally downward, but there was an up tick in 1998 among all three types of candidates, and in 2002 incumbent Senators decided to push allocations to overhead to levels nearly as high as they did in 1992 and 1998. Closer scrutiny reveals that the true anomaly occurs among open seat candidates in 2000. Looking at the trend while keeping the Senate's "classes" in mind, we can see that in 1992 and 1998, incumbents and open seat candidates allocated similar levels to overhead, and while challengers allocated less to overhead in 1998 compare to six years earlier, that decline was only from 29 percent to 26 percent. Looking at the candidates in 1994 and 2000, we again see similar percentages allocated to overhead except for open seat candidates, who for some reason chose not to spend as much on overhead expenses in the latter year (though again the decline is only three percent). These findings suggest that certain patterns of resource allocation may emerge based on the particular group of Senate seats that comes up for election in any given year.

Spending on fundraising among Senate candidates appears to be more volatile than does that for House candidates, but generally speaking incumbents spent similar amounts on fundraising throughout the timeframe (just short of twenty percent) while open seat candidates allocated slightly less to fundraising over the course of the decade. Senate challengers, on the other hand, showed a trend of declining emphasis on fundraising until 2002, when candidates increased the allocation to fundraising to fifteen percent, up from 9 percent in the 2000 election.

For Senate campaign allocations to voter contact, the “matched elections” scenario that turned up in overhead spending is evident here for incumbents and challengers. For some reason, the seats that are up for election in 1992 and 1998 exhibit lower levels of voter contact spending than do the seats up for election in 1994 and 2000. For open seat candidates, however, the pattern does not apply; open seat candidates are allocating steadily rising amounts to voter contact, as one would expect given the highly competitive nature of open seat races and the close partisan balance of the Senate.

Finally, the pattern of resource allocation to donations that existed for House candidates is also evident among Senate candidates. Open seat candidates and challengers each allocate less than one percent to donations²⁸, and that figure remains relatively constant between 1992 and 2002. Incumbents, on the other hand, increase their allocations to donations, though the level of their allocations is still well below the level of House incumbents (in percentage terms).

Data on trends in resource allocation for state parties are presented in Table 3-6. With regard to these campaigns, trends in resource allocation lead to two broad findings. First, there appears to be an inverse relationship between spending on overhead and voter contact spending. As expected, Republican state parties allocate a larger percentage of their budgets to campaign overhead than do Democrats throughout the period. In addition, the percentage of the typical state party’s budget allocated to overhead

²⁸ Contrary to the findings for House open seat candidates, those Senate open seat candidates who do allocate resources to donations do not seem to come from safe districts. The correlation between district competition and spending per 1000 voters on donations is .132 (significance > .25), indicating an insignificant relationship between competition and money spent on donations.

decreases between 1992 and 2002. However, the trend is not linear, as the percentage decreases in presidential election years and increases in midterm election years.

Interestingly enough, data on resource allocation to voter contact show that it is the Democratic state parties that are allocating a larger share of resources to voter contact than are Republicans throughout the period. Perhaps more importantly, the pattern that emerges is the exact opposite of that for overhead spending: the percentage allocated to voter contact increases between 1992 and 2002, and the non-linear trend shows increases in presidential election years and decreases in midterm election years.

While this is not firm evidence that one form of spending is being replaced by the other, it is highly suggestive that state parties emphasize voter contact in the high profile presidential election years by downplaying organizational development, and then return to party building activities during the midterm elections. It should be noted, however, that even with this apparent shift in resources, overhead spending still accounts for a greater percentage of state party spending than does voter contact in almost all cases – the exceptions being the Democratic state parties in 1996 and 2000, when voter contact accounted for five to ten percent more of their budgets than did overhead, and in 2002 when they allocated 46 percent of their budgets to both.

Table 3-6
Party Resource Allocation Over Time

	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002
<i>Overhead</i>						
Dem.	65.63	68.47	44.00	58.98	41.39	45.69
Rep.	70.26	71.81	58.24	67.86	51.98	53.71
<i>Fundraising</i>						
Dem.	6.14	4.51	3.25	4.76	5.28	5.37
Rep.	5.87	5.04	6.51	5.65	7.22	7.12
<i>Voter Contact</i>						
Dem.	23.23	22.64	49.11	32.16	49.75	45.90
Rep.	19.93	19.80	31.17	23.19	37.87	35.68

Cell entries are percentages spent on each component by each type of candidate in each year

The second broad finding is related to state party resource allocation over time deals with fundraising. While Republican state parties appear to follow a pattern of fundraising expenditures that mirrors the presidential election / midterm election cycle, Democratic state parties inexplicably cut their fundraising expenditures in the first half of the decade before increasing them in the 1998, 2000, and 2002 election cycles. The pattern for the Republicans is easy to explain – they tend to allocate larger percentages to fundraising in the presidential election years when interest is higher and therefore the potential return on investment is higher. It is not clear, however, why the Democrats, who were allocating a higher percentage of their budgets to fundraising in 1992, cut fundraising expenditures in the next two election cycles, leaving them to play catch-up for the next six years.

How Campaigns (Re)Allocate Resources

The notion that state parties reallocate resources from overhead spending to voter contact in presidential election years brings forth questions about the process by which parties and candidates allocate resources to various components of a campaign. More to the point, with so many different ways to spend campaign money, it would be interesting to know which activities tend to be funded by reallocation of resources from other components of the campaign and which tend to be funded by the acquisition of additional resources (i.e. fundraising).

To get at this question, I adapt a technique employed by Ansolabehere and Gerber (1994) in their discussion of how to measure campaign spending. In their article, Ansolabehere and Gerber calculate the elasticity between total campaign spending and “communications spending” (roughly equivalent to my voter contact category). To do this, they regress total spending on communications spending²⁹, with the estimated slope coefficient serving as their elasticity measure. The interpretation of the elasticity is straightforward: it is the effect on total campaign spending of additional spending on campaign communications. For example, do campaigns that spend more on communications (for example) tend to have correspondingly higher total spending? If so, and if (across cases) total spending tends to increase by the same amount that communications spending increases, we can infer that campaigns are raising additional money when they want to spend more on communications. The elasticity in this case would be equal to one. If, however, in looking at communications spending across cases,

we do not see proportional increases in total spending, then we can infer that campaigns are not able to raise additional money (which would be reflected in higher total spending) to pay for the increased communications spending. As a result, the elasticity would be less than one.

By calculating elasticities, I am attempting to describe a general tendency among party and candidate campaigns. For the purposes of this analysis, the elasticity between a component of a campaign and total campaign spending indicates what percentage of spending on the component is paid for by additional funds raised by the campaign. Conversely, the difference between 100 and the elasticity indicates what percentage of spending on the component is paid from “reallocated” money, or money that would have been spent on some other component.

In their analysis of incumbents and challengers running for the House in 1990, Ansolabehere and Gerber find that challenger communications spending has an elasticity value of 0.79 while incumbent communications spending has a value of 0.53. This indicates that challengers pay for eighty percent of their communications expenditures with new money while incumbents pay for half of their communications spending with new money and half with reallocated resources.

I perform similar analyses for candidate and party campaign spending on overhead expenses, fundraising expenses, voter contact expenses, and (for candidates only) donations. The data for candidates are presented in Table 3-7.

²⁹ Ansolabehere and Gerber use the natural logarithm of total and communications spending in their regression analyses, as will I.

For overhead spending, all types of candidates in both chambers have elasticities of less than one. Senate candidates tend to have higher overhead elasticities than do House candidates, and Senate open seat candidates have an overhead elasticity that is nearly equal to one, indicating that they are less willing to reallocate resources from other components of the campaign in order to spend more on overhead.

For spending on fundraising, one would expect the elasticity measures to be greater than one. That is, if fundraising efforts generate more money than they cost, a dollar spent on fundraising should translate to total spending of greater than one dollar (the one dollar spent on fundraising plus the additional funds generated by the fundraising that were spent on other components of the campaign). Yet we do not see fundraising elasticities for any type of candidate in either chamber that even approach one. This result seems counterintuitive, that candidates have to pay for 40 to 50 percent of the cost of fundraising activities through reallocation of resources, rather than fundraising expenses paying for themselves (and more). However, the explanation probably relates to the distinction between fixed and discretionary spending. All candidates have fixed costs that they must spend money on (such as overhead and fundraising). Only well financed candidates have the discretion to reallocate large amounts of money from one spending category to another. Thus, what appears to be the reallocation of funds to fundraising is, in fact, a reflection of the fact that all campaigns have to spend money on fundraising thus “reallocate” funds that – if the candidate were flush and had another source of money to cover such fixed costs – would be spent on additional voter contact or donations to other candidates and parties.

Table 3-7
Candidate Elasticities

House		Slope	Standard Error
<i>Overhead</i>	Incumbent	.645	.014
	Challenger	.719	.011
	Open Seat	.838	.022
<i>Fundraising</i>	Incumbent	.556	.015
	Challenger	.651	.012
	Open Seat	.573	.022
<i>Voter Contact</i>	Incumbent	.448	.009
	Challenger	.932	.007
	Open Seat	.878	.010
<i>Donations</i>	Incumbent	.050	.014
	Challenger	.453	.034
	Open Seat	.208	.029
Senate		Slope	Standard Error
<i>Overhead</i>	Incumbent	.810	.044
	Challenger	.869	.028
	Open Seat	.997	.060
<i>Fundraising</i>	Incumbent	.511	.040
	Challenger	.656	.035
	Open Seat	.656	.052
<i>Voter Contact</i>	Incumbent	.699	.030
	Challenger	.913	.022
	Open Seat	.927	.024
<i>Donations</i>	Incumbent	-.038	.051
	Challenger	.421	.063
	Open Seat	.374	.073

Cell entries for ‘Slope’ are OLS regression coefficients for the regression:
 $\text{Log Total Spending} = a + b (\text{Log Component Spending}) + \text{error}$
for each type of candidate

Spending on voter contact also exhibits elasticities of less than one for all types of candidates in both chambers, though incumbents have lower scores than do challengers and open seat candidates. So while House incumbents, for example, pay for over half of their voter contact spending through the reallocation of existing resources, challengers

and open seat candidates pay for voter contact with around 90 percent new money. Given that challengers, in particular, have a serious fundraising disadvantage, these high elasticities make it all the more difficult for challengers to fund voter contact programs comparable to those of the incumbent, who can pay for large portions of voter contact with existing resources.

Finally, spending on donations to other candidates and party organizations reflect some of the lowest elasticities of any spending type, and the elasticities are particularly low for incumbents. House incumbents pay for 95 percent of their donations with reallocated resources. Senate incumbents even show a negative elasticity for donations, suggesting that Senate incumbents who want to donate money to colleagues and party organizations will not only pay for it entirely with reallocated resources, but also that Senate incumbents who give donations tend to reduce total spending at the same time.

Elasticity data for party expenditures are presented in Table 3-8. In the case of overhead spending, the elasticity for Republican state parties approaches one and for Democratic state parties the value exceeds one. This means that for Republican parties, additional overhead spending is reflected almost entirely in additional total spending, or that the overhead spending is paid for with additional resources. For Democratic parties, the elasticity greater than one indicates inefficient expenditures. Theoretically speaking, elasticities of greater than one are good for fundraising expenditures, but for other components of the campaign, elasticities greater than one indicate the money is being lost somewhere, in this case that total spending has increased by \$1.08 but that the party only got \$1.00 worth of overhead out of it.

Table 3-8
Party Elasticities

		Slope	Standard Error
<i>Overhead</i>	Dem.	1.079	.030
	Rep.	.982	.026
<i>Fundraising</i>	Dem.	.516	.030
	Rep.	.441	.033
<i>Voter Contact</i>	Dem.	.616	.017
	Rep.	.481	.021

Cell entries for ‘Slope’ are OLS regression coefficients for the regression:
 $\text{Log Total Spending} = a + b (\text{Log Component Spending}) + \text{error}$
for each party

In terms of fundraising, parties pay additional fundraising expenses with 45 percent to 50 percent new funds, the rest being reallocated from other components. For voter contact, additional spending is paid for to a larger degree by additional funding, but even here up to 50 percent of the cost comes from other components of the campaign. This finding provides additional support for the idea presented above that, in presidential election years, parties increase voter contact spending through decreasing spending on overhead (see discussion of Table 3-6 above).

Explaining Resource Allocation Decisions

To this point, I have described the general state of resource allocation in candidate and party campaigns as well as the trends in those allocations over the course the 1990s and early 2000s. With respect to the former, I have shown that campaigns perform numerous activities, though candidates tend to allocate half or more of their resources to voter contact and try to limit overhead spending to one quarter of the budget; parties

spend more on overhead (which is understandable given their permanence), but they still manage to spend around a third of their resources on voter contact. Concerning trends over time, it is important to note the rise of party spending that occurred over the 1990s. In terms of total spending, parties in 2000 and 2002 spent more than double what they did in 1992. And while a pattern of emphasis on voter contact spending in presidential election years and on overhead spending in midterm years exists for parties, the data suggest a trend in which parties are moving away from overhead spending while increasing spending on voter contact. Clearly parties are no longer relegated to service provision and Election Day mobilization; they have capitalized on opportunities to reassert themselves as independent campaigners who make significant expenditures in pursuit of their goals.

Having discussed how resource allocation to various components of the campaign is made possible by both additional fundraising and reallocation of resources among campaign components, it would be helpful at this point to attempt to get at *why* candidates and parties allocate resources in a particular fashion. If they could, most candidates and parties would spend 100 percent on voter contact, but of course it is impossible to wage a campaign without spending money to raise money, without spending money on the people and things necessary to wage a campaign, and in the case of many incumbents, it is even preferable to give money to the party, constituent groups, and colleagues in pursuit of goals other than getting elected. To that end, I will estimate several models designed to explain why candidates and parties allocate particular levels

of resources to overhead, fundraising, two types of voter contact (advertising and grassroots campaigning), and donations.

In the five models related to candidate campaigns, I employ five explanatory variables. **District Land Area** is the size of the district in square miles³⁰. I expect that it will be positively associated with overhead (larger districts require larger organizations and therefore more overhead spending) and advertising (larger districts require forms of voter contact that are less labor intensive), negatively associated with grassroots campaigning (it would be harder to do extensive grassroots campaigning in larger districts), and I have no expectation in relation to fundraising and donations. **Competition** is based on *Roll Call*'s spring assessment of the competitiveness of each race (see Appendix A for more detail). I expect competition to be positively related to all of the dependent variables except donations, where increased competitiveness will lead to less spending on donations. **Incumbent**, **Open Seat**, and **Democratic** are dummy variables indicating whether or not the case fits those particular characteristics. I expect more overhead, fundraising, advertising, grassroots, and donations from incumbents; more advertising, more grassroots campaigning, and fewer donations from open seat candidates; more overhead and more grassroots campaigning among Democrats. Since it is possible that the effect of these variables on spending will be different for House and

³⁰ Generally, larger districts require more campaign organization and an emphasis on “broadcast” rather than “retail” voter contact activities. However, there are a few examples (Alaska, for one), where the district is large geographically but where the population is concentrated in a few areas; in these cases, campaigning may require less overhead and may be able to focus more on grassroots activities. Nonetheless, short of an accurate measure of population concentration, I believe district land area serves as a reasonable proxy.

Senate campaigns, I estimate the five models first for Senate and then separately for House campaigns.

Table 3-9
Regression Results – Senate Candidates

	Dependent Variables				
	Natural Log of Overhead Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Fundraising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Advertising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Grassroots Campaigning Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Donations Per 1000 Voters
Competition	.474 (.073)**	.470 (.076)**	.744 (.082)**	.332 (.073)**	-.105 (.099)
District Land Area	-1.038x10 ⁻⁶ (.000)	-4.113x10 ⁻⁷ (.000)	-1.285x10 ⁻⁶ (.000)	-5.168x10 ⁻⁷ (.000)	-1.009x10 ⁻⁶ (.000)
Incumbent	1.680 (.160)**	1.996 (.167)**	1.715 (.180)**	.976 (.161)**	4.102 (.223)**
Open Seat	.563 (.216)**	.618 (.223)**	.631 (.243)**	.441 (.216)*	1.371 (.290)**
Democratic	-1.106x10 ⁻² (.143)	-.594 (.149)**	-.181 (.161)	-.324 (.144)*	-3.293x10 ⁻² (.194)
Constant	4.716 (.170)**	4.280 (.182)**	4.992 (.193)**	4.236 (.172)**	.595 (.249)*
R ²	.310	.368	.358	.165	.568
N	331	324	331	330	291

** – statistically significant at the .01 level

* – statistically significant at the .05 level

+ – statistically significant at the .10 level

Cell entries are unstandardized OLS regression estimates

Standard errors are in parentheses

Tables 3-9 and 3-10 present the results of the five regression analyses. For overhead spending, the Senate model explains thirty-one percent of the variance while the House model explains almost thirty-eight. Coefficients for the same three variables

are statistically significant in both models. It was expected that incumbents and those in competitive races would allocate more to overhead. More unexpected is the finding that running for an open seat causes candidates to allocate greater resources to overhead, especially considering that this model controlled for the competitiveness of the race. Unexpectedly, coefficients for the Democratic dummy variable and for district land area were statistically insignificant. Taken together, these two non-results suggest that a certain level of overhead spending is sufficient to maintain a campaign organization regardless of the size of the district, and that Democrats and Republicans alike have similar assessments of the amount of overhead required in a campaign.

For fundraising expenses, the Senate model explains slightly more than a third of the variance while the House model explains nearly half. As before, both House and Senate models have the same, and same number of, coefficients that are statistically significant. As expected, incumbents and candidates in competitive races spend more on fundraising – incumbents because they can while those in competitive races because they have to. While I had no *a priori* expectations with regard to the Democratic and open seat dummy variables, both exhibit statistically significant coefficients. Open seat candidates tend to allocate more to fundraising while Democrats tend to allocate less. As expected, the size of the district is unrelated to the amount candidates spending on raising funds.

Table 3-10
Regression Results – House Candidates

	Dependent Variables				
	Natural Log of Overhead Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Fundraising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Advertising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Grassroots Campaigning Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Donations Per 1000 Voters
Competition	.509 (.025)**	.474 (.024)**	.845 (.031)**	.498 (.022)**	-.169 (.029)**
District Land Area	7.211×10^{-7} (.000)	-4.267×10^{-10} (.000)	3.387×10^{-6} (.000)**	-3.027×10^{-6} (.000)**	-3.058×10^{-6} (.000)**
Incumbent	1.981 (.054)**	2.495 (.054)**	1.217 (.069)**	1.086 (.048)**	4.494 (.068)**
Open Seat	1.043 (.082)**	1.025 (.081)**	.877 (.104)**	.860 (.074)**	1.124 (.100)**
Democratic	-3.264×10^{-3} (.049)	-.177 (.049)**	-6.983×10^{-3} (.063)	-5.930×10^{-2} (.045)	-5.696×10^{-2} (.059)
Constant	4.297 (.048)**	3.595 (.049)**	4.344 (.062)**	4.674 (.043)**	1.023 (.065)**
R ²	.379	.466	.292	.275	.687
N	2912	2763	2814	2939	2402

** – statistically significant at the .01 level

* – statistically significant at the .05 level

+ – statistically significant at the .10 level

Cell entries are unstandardized OLS regression estimates

Standard errors are in parentheses

For advertising expenses, the Senate model explains over thirty-five percent of the variance while the House model explains around thirty percent. In this case, the Senate model had only three statistically significant coefficients while the House model had four. The three relevant coefficients in the Senate model – competition, incumbent, and open seat – all exhibit positive coefficients. It was expected that incumbents, open seat candidates, and candidates in more competitive races would have greater advertising

expenditures; this finding is mirrored in the House analysis. Also for both types of candidates, the coefficient for Democratic candidates is statistically insignificant, suggesting there is no partisan difference in campaign strategy as it relates to the use of advertising. The one difference in the two models is the coefficient for district land area variable, which is positive and statistically significant in the House model but insignificant in the Senate model. A possible explanation for this result is that Senate candidates tend to rely on advertising while House candidates (most of whom have relatively small districts) tend to focus more on grassroots campaigning; when a House candidate does run in a large district (an entire state, for example), the size of the district strongly pushes him or her to spend money on advertising.

The models for grassroots campaigning explain only sixteen percent of the variance in the Senate model and almost twenty-eight percent of the variance in the House model. Each has four variables with statistically significant coefficients, but not the same four. In the Senate model, incumbents, open seat candidates, and candidates in competitive races allocate more to grassroots campaigning, as expected. Interestingly, the coefficient for the Democratic candidate variable is negative and statistically significant, contrary to expectations. The last variable in the Senate model, district land area, shows an insignificant coefficient. In the House model, coefficients for competition, open seat candidates, and incumbents are statistically significant and in the expected direction, indicating that these factors are associated with increased grassroots spending. More importantly, the coefficient for district land area is negative and statistically significant, as expected. This result, coupled with the positive coefficient for

district land area in the model of advertising spending, confirms the assertion that House candidates in larger districts must move away from grassroots voter contact and focus on reaching voters through advertising. Finally, the coefficient for the Democratic dummy variable fails to reach statistical significance; this finding is surprising, as one would have thought that Democratic candidates, with their tradition of strong grassroots mobilization, would be more inclined to spend money on this component of the campaign.

The models for donations explain much more of the variance than any of the previous four models. The House model explains nearly sixty percent of variance while the Senate model explains nearly seventy percent. As expected, incumbents and open seat candidates from both houses are more likely to allocate campaign resources to donations. This was expected for incumbents, who are more likely to be in uncompetitive races and therefore willing to use campaign spending to pursue the secondary goal of building support in the community or among colleagues and party leaders. The fact that open seat candidates also allocate more to donations perhaps speaks to the fact that once one controls for competitiveness, it does not seem unreasonable that open seat candidates are more likely than challengers to divert resources to a component of the campaign designed to pursue a secondary goal. The key variable in these models, competition, is negative and statistically significant only in the model for House candidates, indicating that candidates in competitive races allocate less to donations as they focus on the goal of getting elected. In the Senate model, on the other hand, the fact that the coefficient fails to reach statistical significance is probably a function of the fact that Senate races tend to be both more competitive and better funded

and thus Senate candidates are making donations without regard to the competitiveness of their races. The coefficient for district land area also exhibits statistical significance in only the House model, though this is perhaps not as unexpected as one might think. I have already shown that larger districts force House candidates to rely on (more expensive) advertising for voter contact, thus draining marginal funds that might have gone to donations if the candidate could have waged a campaign more focused on grassroots campaigning. In the Senate model, the lack of statistical significance for the district land area coefficient makes sense, as Senate candidates in states of any size tend to rely on advertising for voter contact, again draining away those marginal funds that could have gone toward donations. Finally, the coefficients for the Democratic dummy variable fail to reach statistical significance in either model, indicating no partisan difference in the use of campaign funds for donations.

Turning to party campaigns, I estimate four models using four explanatory variables. **Voting Age Population** is the human size of the district, whereas **District land area** is the district's geographic size. I expect that districts with more people will have campaigns with greater overhead spending, greater fundraising expenditures, and more of both types of voter contact. As before, I expect that districts with larger land areas will require more overhead spending as well as a reliance on advertising and a move away from grassroots campaigning. **Competition** is calculated from the difference in the two-party vote for all house races in a state (see Appendix A for more detail). I expect competition to be positively related to all four dependent variables. **Democratic**

is a dummy variable indicating whether or not the party is a Democratic one. I expect less overhead and more grassroots campaigning from Democratic state parties.

Table 3-11
Regression Results – Parties

	Dependent Variables			
	Natural Log of Overhead Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Fundraising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Advertising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Grassroots Campaigning Per 1000 Voters
Voting Age Population	-3.055x10 ⁻⁸ (.000)**	-2.541 x10 ⁻⁸ (.000)	-2.223 x10 ⁻⁸ (.000)	-1.540 x10 ⁻⁸ (.000)
District Land Area	7.155 x10 ⁻⁷ (.000)	-1.156 x10 ⁻⁶ (.000)	9.245 x10 ⁻⁷ (.000)	2.059 x10 ⁻⁶ (.000)*
Competition	-4.145 x10 ⁻³ (.003)	-5.878 x10 ⁻³ (.006)	2.596 x10 ⁻² (.013)*	-5.534 x10 ⁻⁴ (.006)
Democratic	-1.870 x10 ⁻² (.071)	3.184 x10 ⁻³ (.141)	.960 (.275)**	.406 (.125)**
Constant	6.953 (.275)**	4.383 (.549)**	1.091 (1.070)	4.754 (.490)**
R ²	.037	.013	.035	.035
N	515	509	472	514

** – statistically significant at the .01 level

* – statistically significant at the .05 level

+ – statistically significant at the .10 level

Cell entries are unstandardized OLS regression estimates

Standard errors are in parentheses

Table 3-11 presents the results of the four regression analyses. None of the models explains much of the variance in the dependent variables; the explanatory variables do best explaining overhead spending, and even there they only account for around four percent of the variance.

For overhead spending, only one variable has a statistically significant coefficient and its sign is in the wrong direction. It would seem logical to expect more overhead spending from state parties that have to cater to larger populations. Yet a reasonable explanation exists for this finding. Note that the dependent variable in this case is not spending, but spending per 1000 voters. With respect to the negative coefficient for voting age population, the differences in overhead spending that one would expect to see between states with small and large populations have already been built into the dependent variable. As a result, the negative coefficient is likely the product of economies of scale, as more populous states are able to spend less per voter on overhead expenses even as they spend more in absolute terms than states with fewer people.

In the model for fundraising expenses, none of the variables have statistically significant coefficients. It is not unexpected that the variables for district land area and for Democratic parties are statistically insignificant. Even though Democratic state parties have been spending more than Republican ones over the last decade, there is no reason to believe that the cost of raising those funds is higher for one or the other. It is also not surprising that district land area has an insignificant coefficient, as technology (direct mail and telephone solicitation) make it easy for parties to raise money regardless of the size of the state. What is unexpected is the insignificant coefficient for voting age population. One would expect parties in more populous states to have to spend more on fundraising because of larger numbers of potential donors. Obviously controlling for voters in the dependent variable has eliminated the impact this variable can have on fundraising expenses.

In the models for advertising expenses and grassroots campaigning, the coefficients for Democratic are positive and statistically significant. While this was expected for grassroots campaigning, it was unexpected for advertising. Given the fundraising advantage enjoyed by Republicans throughout much the 1990s, one would expect their state parties would be able to outspend the Democrats. Also, in the model for grassroots campaigning, the coefficient for district land area is statistically significant and positive. This result is unexpected, though it does seem reasonable to see that parties in larger states tend to spend more per voter for grassroots campaigning than those in smaller ones, reflecting the increased cost to parties of engaging in grassroots activities over a larger area.

A final note in regard to the models of party resource allocation concerns the relative unimportance of competition as an explanatory variable in these models. Only in the model for advertising spending is the coefficient for the competition variable significant. In that case, competition performs as expected, with parties in more competitive states spending more on advertising. In the models for overhead spending, fundraising expenses, and grassroots campaigning, the coefficients for competition are statistically insignificant. These results give the impression that state parties are not considering the strategic context when making spending decisions about these components of the campaign. A more reasonable interpretation, however, is that parties spend money on overhead and fundraising regardless of the nature of competition within the state. Since parties are enduring organizations, they have incentives to invest in overhead and raise money for future campaigns, even if those expenditures do nothing to

alter the strategic context of the current year's election. As for the insignificant coefficient for grassroots campaigning, the most plausible explanation is that in competitive areas, state parties focus their resources on broader appeals while leaving grassroots campaign activities to local party organizations.

Conclusion

The preceding analyses shed light on the nature of political campaigns as they existed over the past twelve years. Data on campaign spending by candidates and parties have helped answer three important questions: what do campaigns spend money on, how has that spending changed over time, and what factors affect the way candidates and parties allocate resources.

For candidates, campaign spending is focused on voter contact. Overall, candidate campaigns spend 50 to 60 percent of their budgets on voter contact, with Senate campaigns spending a larger portion of that on advertising while House campaigns spend more on grassroots campaigning. Candidate campaigns tend to spend 20 to 25 percent of their budgets on overhead and anywhere from 8 to 20 percent of their budgets on fundraising (the higher percentages coming from incumbents and Senate campaigns). Parties, on the other hand, spend much more on overhead – generally 55 to 60 percent of their budgets. Another third goes to voter contact.

But these amounts are not fixed; in fact, they have shifted considerably since 1992. For candidates, allocations to overhead have decreased, especially among challengers and open seat candidates. Open seat candidates increased their spending on

voter contact over the timeframe while incumbents shifted money toward donations and fundraising expenses. Parties developed a pattern of increasing overhead spending in midterm election years while focusing on voter contact during presidential elections years. Throughout the period, Republican parties outspent Democratic ones on overhead, and the opposite was true for voter contact.

Many factors play a role in determining where candidates and parties allocate resources, but clearly the most important factor for candidates is competition. The competitiveness of the campaign influences campaign spending on overhead, fundraising, voter contact, and donations (in the opposite direction). For parties, though, competition seems to be an important factor only when making decisions about spending on advertising. Otherwise, parties seem to be spending on overhead, fundraising, and grassroots campaigning without regard to considerations of competitiveness, if not in pursuit of near term success than in hopes of future victories.

Having described what campaigns are doing, in the next chapter I will move on to describe how candidate and party campaigns interact in the creation of the campaign “nucleus,” or systematic effort to capture elective office. Both party and (especially) candidate have an interest in seeing the candidate win, and as such both create campaigns in pursuit of that goal. Electoral outcomes are the product of their combined efforts, but those efforts are not undertaken without consideration of what the other one is doing. As I will show in the next chapter, the rise of parties as independent campaigner has drastically changed the way candidates create their own campaigns.

Chapter 4 – Strategic Behavior

In the preceding chapter I described modern party and candidate campaign organizations and looked into several factors that explain why parties and candidates allocate resources to particular components of the campaign. In this chapter I argue that parties and candidates are strategic actors who consider more than the competitive nature of the state or race when making resource allocation decisions. In fact, parties and candidates look to each other, and to other candidates on the ballot, when deciding how to put together their campaign organizations. Specifically, it would be helpful to get a handle on what factors outside of their immediate electoral contest parties and candidates consider when creating their campaigns. What role do presidential campaigns play? In what ways do candidates react to what the party is doing? And how do candidates take into account the activities of other campaigns in their areas when making resource allocation decisions? It is to these questions that I now turn.

Strategic Behavior by Candidates and Parties

Much research into Congressional elections rests on the assumption that candidates are strategic actors (Jacobson, 1985-1986). As a result, we would expect to see strategic behavior throughout the course of a campaign, from the decision to enter the race to the choice of electioneering tactics to the particular method of allocating resources. For example, in the case of candidate emergence, Jacobson and Kernell (1983) show that “quality” challengers enter races when electoral conditions are

favorable. Hetherington et al. (2003) suggest that elections immediately following redistricting are likely to exhibit those favorable conditions. Another example of strategic behavior comes when candidates choose to use negative television advertising, a decision that results from the interplay between opposing candidates (Damore, 2002).

Strategic behavior is particularly crucial when candidates make decisions regarding the allocation of resources within a campaign. In the case of presidential elections, the campaign is waged in multiple districts (states); as a result, candidates must allocate resources to states with more electoral votes (Brams 1978; Brams and Davis 1974; Owen 1975), states that are more competitive (Shaw, 1999c; Nagler and Leighley, 1992), or states that may be pivotal to the overall election outcome (Nagler and Leighley, 1992). Shaw (2003, 1999c) shows that presidential candidates do create strategies for winning under the Electoral College system and that the allocation of resources is based on these strategies, as well as the resource allocation patterns of the opponent. Bartels (1985) presents a more nuanced view; after differentiating between instrumental resources (those vital to winning votes) and ornamental resources (those less important to winning votes), he shows that the former are distributed to the more populous states while the latter are distributed more broadly. In the sequential primary system of the presidential nomination process, Gurian et al. (1998) show that candidates who are not the frontrunner allocate campaign resources to those states where they stand the best chance of beating the frontrunner.

Congressional candidates do not have to face the multiple district condition when making resource allocation decisions, though candidates in larger districts may have to

target resources to particular areas within the district. More important, however, are the decisions regarding how much money to spend and on what to spend it. Congressional candidates have been shown to consider their opponents when deciding how to spend money (Green and Krasno, 1988), with incumbents likely to engage in “defensive spending,” or spending large sums in response to a strong challenge (Jacobson, 1978). On the question of what to spend the money on, it is clear that candidates would prefer to spend more on activities designed to mobilize and persuade voters while allocating less toward campaign overhead and other features that do not directly bear on winning the election. Studies of House (Herrnson, 1998a; Goldenberg and Traugott, 1984) and Senate (VanHeerde, 2001) campaigns find that candidates spend anywhere from half to three-quarters of their budgets on voter contact activities.

Candidates are not the only political actors with incentives to behave strategically. Given their desire to help their candidates win elections, political parties also have the motivation to allocate resources strategically. National parties, for example, allocate resources to congressional candidates based on electoral considerations (Nokken, 2003; Damore and Hansford, 1999; Herrnson, 1989). State parties behave in a similar strategic fashion when they allocate resources to federal (Brox, 2004) and state legislative candidates (Schechter and Hedge, 2001). As for funding their own campaigns, parties tend to raise and spend more money when competition is greater. This phenomenon is called performance symmetry, or when party organizations exhibit similar levels of development as a result of a given level of competition as well as a similar electoral context (Marvick, 1980). Stronger interparty competition will beget stronger party

organizations (Key, 1964). For example, state party organizations will be stronger in states where both parties are competitive (Elkins, 1974). At the local level, Gibson et al. (1985) find a strong correlation between strength of local Republican and Democratic party organizations, no doubt due to both reacting to the same electoral context.

Studying Strategic Behavior

Previous research has established that candidates and parties make campaign decisions after considering the electoral context (especially the general level of competition) and the behavior of their opponents. Yet the electoral context, in particular, can be quite complex, and scholars have employed numerous techniques in an attempt to capture that complexity. In his models that analyze the impact of candidate spending on vote share, Jacobson (1978) uses previous vote in the district and the candidate's party to account for local (long term) and national (short term) conditions, respectively. Jacobson notes that the "party variable accounts for national short-term forces favoring one party or another in a particular election year" while previous vote serves "as an approximation of the expected or 'normal' vote," (p. 471).

The idea that short term (partisan) forces – as opposed to long term conditions that would be manifested in a normal vote – bear on the way candidates run their campaigns lies at the heart of research into candidate coattails. The common argument for coattails is that the forces that motivate presidential voting also have an influence on Congressional elections (Mondak, 1989; Campbell, 1986; Born, 1984; Calvert and Ferejohn, 1983). One explanation for coattails is the "surge and decline" theory, or the

idea that the presidential campaign mobilizes people who would not have otherwise turned out, and that those individuals vote disproportionately for the winning presidential candidate and down-ballot candidates of the same party (Campbell 1991; Campbell, 1966). Beyond presidential elections, Chubb (1988) finds coattails effects of U.S. Senate and gubernatorial races on down-ballot elections.

The research into coattails is particularly appropriate because it rests on the assumption that the efforts of one race will affect the outcomes of other races. Candidates know this, so they adapt their strategies accordingly. But other candidate campaigns are not the only other actors that will influence the electoral context in a district. Candidates must also consider the activities of parties and interest groups who might also be working to influence the election outcome (Faucheux and Herrnson, 1999). As a result, it seems appropriate to revisit the question of why candidates and parties allocate resources in the ways that they do.

Campaign Spending in Response to Opponents

The most obvious factor that candidates and parties consider when deciding how to spend campaign funds is the electoral context. As two (or more) candidates face off in a contest for a single elective office, both must consider the same electoral conditions as well as each other's likely behavior when making campaign decisions. Because of this, one would expect candidates to spend money in a strategic fashion across five broad areas of the campaign: **overhead**, **fundraising** activities, (electronic) **advertising**, **grassroots** campaign activities, and **donations** to other candidates and groups. With

regard to the first four areas, one would expect candidates to spend money in a similar fashion: if the Republican sees a need to invest more in overhead, the Democrat likely will as well. But in the area of donations, one would expect candidates to have opposing strategies. In competitive races, neither will spend much to donations; in uncompetitive races the frontrunner may choose to make donations while the underdog will forego making donations, due either to lack of funds or to an attempt to focus limited funds on voter contact activities.

To get a general picture of the campaign spending strategies of opposing candidates, I use data on campaign spending for U.S. House and Senate candidates from 1992-2002 to assess the relationship between campaign spending in the five broad areas³¹. Specifically, I have generated bivariate correlations between the five areas of spending for Republican and Democratic candidates in contested races. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4-1.

Among Senate candidates, the hypothesized relationships do not exist except in the case of donations. In that area, it appears that when one candidate chooses to spend funds on donations to other candidates and groups, his or her opponent spends less money to all aspects of his or her campaign. This result is likely a product of competition; as illustrated in the previous chapter, competition is a driving force in the allocation of funds to donations. Thus, it seems likely that it when a seat is safe enough that a Senate candidate can spend money to donations, the opponent is probably not going to have enough funding to spend much on any component of the campaign.

³¹ See Chapter 3 for a full description of the campaign spending data.

Among the other four areas of the campaign, the lack of relationship seems puzzling and may be a result of different candidate appraisals of the context in which the election is taking place.

Among candidates for the U.S. House, the hypothesized negative relationship for donations also appears, but so too do relationships for overhead, fundraising, and advertising. As expected, opposing candidates do their best to match each other in spending on advertising: as the Democrat spends more on advertising, so does the Republican. For overhead and fundraising, however, the relationships are negative. This too is likely the product of competition. In uncompetitive races, as the frontrunner spends more on overhead and fundraising, the underdog must attempt to remain competitive by spending less on those areas (presumably to fund additional advertising). As was the case with Senate candidates, it appears that a clearer picture of this relationship would emerge if viewed through the lens of competition.

Table 4-1 also presents the bivariate correlation between four campaign components implemented by state political parties³². As noted above, the concept of performance symmetry suggests that we would see similar patterns of campaign spending for Republican and Democratic state parties facing the same electoral context. As the analysis of correlations confirms, this is indeed the case. Along the main diagonal, three of the four relationships have coefficients that are positive and statistically significant. Thus, as both parties sense a more competitive statewide environment, both spend more on overhead, advertising, and grassroots. It is also interesting to note a couple of

Table 4-1
Correlation in Campaign Spending

Senate N = 164	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	-.075 (.338)	-.139 (.075)	-.054 (.490)	-.021 (.786)	-.277** (.000)
Fundraising	-.077 (.324)	-.141 (.073)	-.041 (.598)	-.025 (.755)	-.273** (.000)
Advertising	-.026 (.740)	-.087 (.270)	-.004 (.958)	.020 (.803)	-.236** (.002)
Grassroots	-.014 (.855)	-.071 (.365)	.026 (.742)	.033 (.679)	-.192* (.014)
Donations	-.218** (.005)	-.292** (.000)	-.197* (.012)	-.157* (.044)	-.453** (.000)
House N = 1501	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	-.071** (.006)	-.141** (.000)	.022 (.405)	-.013 (.627)	-.298** (.000)
Fundraising	-.125** (.000)	-.194** (.000)	-.024 (.354)	-.047 (.067)	-.368** (.000)
Advertising	.002 (.941)	-.065* (.012)	.128** (.000)	.038 (.145)	-.229 (.000)
Grassroots	-.015 (.561)	-.083** (.001)	.059* (.021)	.040 (.125)	-.234** (.000)
Donations	-.287** (.000)	-.363** (.000)	-.219** (.000)	-.210** (.000)	-.510** (.000)
State Party N = 300	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	
Republican Overhead	.118* (.041)	.041 (.474)	.127* (.028)	.117* (.043)	
Fundraising	.100 (.084)	.048 (.411)	.172** (.003)	.100 (.084)	
Advertising	.067 (.247)	.075 (.198)	.317** (.000)	.127* (.028)	
Grassroots	.108 (.062)	.063 (.279)	.139* (.016)	.129* (.026)	

Cell entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. Significance levels in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

³² See Chapter 3 for an explanation of why I have omitted donations from the analysis of party resource allocation.

relationships that are not on the main diagonal. As one party spends more on advertising, the other tends not only to spend more on its own advertising, it also tends to spend more on grassroots campaigning. The inverse is also true – more grassroots by one begets more advertising by the other. This performance symmetry between both types of voter contact activities confirms earlier research and speaks to the way that state parties react to a highly competitive environment.

Given the importance of competition in the creation of candidate campaign spending strategies, I have reanalyzed the bivariate correlations between candidates, separated by level of **competition**. The results of this analysis for Senate candidates are presented in Table 4-2.

Among candidates for safe seats, there is generally little relationship between the spending strategies of the opposing candidates. There are only two exceptions to this general rule. The first – as expected – is the negative and statistically significant coefficients for the relationship between one candidate’s donations and all five campaign components of the opponent’s campaign. As discussed above, this is clearly the product of situation where frontrunners spend more on donations as the underdog spends less (if anything at all) on them. The second exception is the negative relationship between opposing candidate fundraising spending. Given that all the cases here are safe seats, the explanation for this finding lies in the fact that fundraising – like donations – does not win votes, so sure losers spend little on fundraising while sure winners will likely spend more money to raise money in order to afford donations or to generate a war chest for future campaigns. Besides those negative relationships, Senate candidates contesting safe

Table 4-2
Correlation in Campaign Spending in the Senate – By Level of Competition

Safe N = 45	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	-.250 (.097)	-.314* (.035)	-.258 (.087)	-.174 (.252)	-.430** (.003)
Fundraising	-.241 (.111)	-.316* (.035)	-.233 (.124)	-.161 (.291)	-.400** (.006)
Advertising	-.214 (.158)	-.290 (.054)	-.241 (.111)	-.130 (.396)	-.384** (.009)
Grassroots	-.167 (.272)	-.226 (.135)	-.150 (.326)	-.109 (.476)	-.326* (.029)
Donations	-.456** (.002)	-.538** (.000)	-.475** (.001)	-.385** (.009)	-.695** (.000)
Favored N = 46	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	-.110 (.467)	-.218 (.145)	-.124 (.412)	-.009 (.955)	-.277 (.063)
Fundraising	-.130 (.390)	-.229 (.125)	-.134 (.374)	-.024 (.873)	-.294* (.048)
Advertising	-.085 (.574)	-.196 (.193)	-.089 (.557)	.005 (.973)	-.280 (.059)
Grassroots	-.051 (.735)	-.157 (.299)	-.045 (.768)	.032 (.831)	-.211 (.160)
Donations	-.323* (.029)	-.384** (.008)	-.280 (.059)	0.238 (.111)	-.461** (.001)
Leaning N = 40	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	.338* (.033)	.266 (.097)	.372* (.018)	.393* (.012)	.151 (.353)
Fundraising	.170 (.296)	.141 (.386)	.206 (.201)	.205 (.205)	.020 (.904)
Advertising	.431** (.006)	.382* (.015)	.480** (.002)	.444** (.004)	.297 (.062)
Grassroots	.319* (.045)	.302 (.058)	.358* (.023)	.399* (.011)	.330* (.038)
Donations	.160 (.323)	.109 (.503)	.191 (.237)	.138 (.395)	-.079 (.629)

Table 4-2 (continued)

Competitive N = 33	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	.517** (.002)	.306 (.083)	.330 (.060)	.395* (.023)	.138 (.443)
Fundraising	.173 (.335)	.040 (.826)	.216 (.227)	.160 (.375)	-.104 (.565)
Advertising	.447** (.009)	.541** (.001)	.423* (.014)	.175 (.331)	.084 (.641)
Grassroots	.366* (.036)	.184 (.305)	.162 (.369)	.384* (.027)	-.031 (.864)
Donations	.084 (.642)	.073 (.684)	.152 (.399)	.391* (.024)	.040 (.825)

Cell entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. Significance levels in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

seats do not appear to be reacting strategically to each other's spending decisions. In other words, the frontrunners likely spend whatever they want on each area of the campaign while the underdogs spend little.

Among Senate candidates contesting seats in which one candidate is favored, the only relationship that appears is the negative one for donations and a few (but not all) components of the opponents campaign. Otherwise, there again appears to be no relationship between what one candidate spends on a particular campaign component and what his or her opponent does.

The story changes, however, for Senate candidates engaged in races that are only leaning toward one of the candidates or are truly competitive. Here the negative relationship between one candidate's donations and all other campaign components of the opposing candidate falls away, presumably because the competitive nature of the race makes it irrational for either candidate to devote precious resources to donations. The other components, on the other hand, exhibit coefficients that are positive and statistically

significant, indicating that as the Republican spends more on overhead, advertising, and grassroots activities, so does the Democrat. Part of this relationship is certainly a factor of increased spending by both candidates in the more competitive races. But these positive relationships also suggest that candidates are responding strategically by spending money on the same types of activities. It is also interesting to note that in the case of candidates for leaning seats – but not for competitive seats – there emerges a pattern similar to that for state parties, where spending by one candidate on advertising is related to increased spending by the other on both advertising and grassroots activities (and vice versa).

Among candidates for U.S. House, the story is largely the same. Table 4-3 presents the results of an analysis of the correlation in campaign spending for House candidates, segmented by level of competition. For candidates in safe and favored races, there is very little relationship between the spending patterns, save the aforementioned pattern related to spending on donations. For candidates in leaning and competitive races, there is support – though more limited – for strategic behavior. For candidates in leaning races, the only coefficient that is positive and statistically significant is the one for advertising, while in competitive races that coefficient is more strongly positive and the one for overhead spending is positive and statistically significant. As with their Senate counterparts, these House candidates in the top two levels of competition appear to be reacting strategically to the competitive electoral context, though it remains unclear why the relationships between campaign spending by Senate candidates are stronger than those for House candidates. An explanation for this discrepancy perhaps lies in the fact

that Senate contests are of a higher profile, with more professional campaigns and higher levels of spending, thus placing a premium on strategic behavior on the part of those who allocate campaign resources.

Table 4-3
Correlation in Campaign Spending in the House – By Level of Competition

Safe N = 1003	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	-.169** (.000)	-.253** (.000)	-.098** (.002)	-.102** (.001)	-.372** (.000)
Fundraising	-.238** (.000)	-.322** (.000)	-.157** (.000)	-.148** (.000)	-.456** (.000)
Advertising	-.113** (.000)	-.197** (.000)	-.014 (.664)	-.067* (.034)	-.311** (.000)
Grassroots	-.110** (.001)	-.192** (.000)	-.051 (.105)	-.049 (.119)	-.298** (.000)
Donations	-.370** (.000)	-.460** (.000)	-.313** (.000)	-.275** (.000)	-.606** (.000)
Favored N = 149	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	-.110 (.182)	-.160 (.052)	-.103 (.209)	-.115 (.162)	-.284** (.000)
Fundraising	-.115 (.163)	-.157 (.056)	-.195* (.017)	-.097 (.238)	-.329** (.000)
Advertising	.002 (.976)	-.018 (.828)	.103 (.213)	-.027 (.740)	-.144 (.080)
Grassroots	.052 (.527)	-.026 (.752)	-.093 (.260)	.119 (.149)	-.156 (.057)
Donations	-.186* (.023)	-.253** (.002)	-.234** (.004)	-.170* (.039)	-.349** (.000)
Leaning N = 190	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	-.029 (.689)	-.065 (.373)	.039 (.594)	-.042 (.563)	-.067 (.359)
Fundraising	-.034 (.639)	-.072 (.320)	-.023 (.750)	-.020 (.783)	-.144* (.047)
Advertising	-.026 (.724)	-.076 (.294)	.267** (.000)	-.078 (.286)	-.047 (.522)
Grassroots	-.015 (.835)	-.045 (.534)	-.100 (.170)	.046 (.529)	-.084 (.247)
Donations	-.039 (.595)	-.112 (.124)	.014 (.849)	-.067 (.357)	-.091 (.212)

Table 4-3 (continued)

Competitive N = 159	Democratic Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Republican Overhead	.169* (.033)	.172* (.031)	.205** (.010)	.147 (.065)	-.048 (.549)
Fundraising	-.044 (.585)	.006 (.938)	-.020 (.801)	-.038 (.638)	-.031 (.694)
Advertising	.163* (.040)	.122 (.127)	.437** (.000)	.102 (.200)	.114 (.154)
Grassroots	.027 (.738)	.051 (.522)	-.046 (.563)	.133 (.094)	-.032 (.690)
Donations	-.036 (.652)	-.024 (.768)	-.016 (.838)	-.090 (.261)	-.175* (.028)

Cell entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. Significance levels in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

Campaign Spending in Response to Other Campaigns

As candidates and parties consider the context of a particular election, they cannot focus solely on the characteristics of the district and the behavior of their opponents. The actions of other campaigns will certainly bear on the results in a particular district, and strategic politicians will certainly consider these “outside” influences when making decisions regarding campaign spending.

Perhaps the most prominent outside influence on a given election is the activity associated with the presidential campaigns. Presidential campaigns tend to target only a subset of states based on their own Electoral College strategies (Shaw, 1999c), but in those states the presidential campaigns invest significant resources to create campaign organizations and to reach voters. Down ballot candidates certainly have to adjust their own behavior if they are running in state or district that will see extensive presidential campaigning.

To assess the likely influence of the presidential campaigns on state parties and down ballot candidates, I perform two analyses. The first assesses the relationship between campaign spending and the intensity of presidential campaigning. Specifically, I have generated bivariate correlations between the five areas of spending for candidates and parties and an ordinal level measure of a state's **battleground** status. The use of the battleground status measure serves as a proxy for a host of presidential campaign attributes. Battleground states have extensive presidential campaign organizations, they see greater volumes of advertising and grassroots voter contact from the presidential campaigns, and experience more candidate appearances. Parties and down ballot candidates would have to adjust to all of these factors, as well as the attending changes in voter attitudes that accompany such increased campaigning. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4-4.

Table 4-4
Correlation Between Campaign Spending and Presidential Battleground Status

	Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Senate cand N = 134	-.044 (.612)	-.016 (.857)	.040 (.642)	-.106 (.221)	-.141 (.130)
House cand N = 1535	-.062* (.016)	-.063* (.017)	.020 (.431)	-.074** (.003)	-.035 (.207)
State party N = 193	.095 (.187)	.203** (.005)	.210** (.007)	.231** (.001)	—

Cell entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. Significance levels in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

For Senate candidates, it appears that the presence (or absence) of the presidential campaign in a state is not related to spending on various components of their own campaigns. Given that Senate races tend to be more competitive (or at least more competitive than the vast majority of House races) and of a higher profile, it appears that Senate candidates create campaign organizations, raise funds, contact voters, and donate to other candidates and groups without regard for the efforts of the colleagues on the top of the ballot.

The story is quite different for House candidates, however. House candidates running in battleground states tend to spend less on overhead, less on fundraising, and less on grassroots campaign activities. These three results, as well as the insignificant coefficient for advertising, all conform to what one would expect. In a presidential battleground, voter interest will likely be high, as will the mobilization efforts of the presidential campaign, so House candidates will not need to spend as much on grassroots campaign activities. As a result, they do not need to create as extensive a campaign organization, and thus they may not need to spend as much on their fundraising operations. Advertising, on the other hand, is the prime method for engaging in voter persuasion, and the presence of the presidential campaign should not alter the House candidate's desire to reach persuadable voters and bring them into his or her camp.

State parties in battleground states also have to adapt to the presence of a vigorous presidential campaign. In the case of parties, those in battleground states tend to spend more on fundraising, advertising, and grassroots campaign activities. Given that the purpose of the party is to assist its candidates, it makes sense that even state parties would

ramp up their efforts in those states the presidential candidates consider crucial. Plus, a state being a presidential battleground probably indicates that the state as a whole is competitive, and so other candidates on the ballot would benefit from the increased state party advertising and grassroots campaigning. Increased fundraising is a function of the fact that these parties need more money to sustain this higher level of activity. What they do not need, apparently, is more overhead. The insignificant coefficient suggests that state parties spend money on overhead regardless of the nature of the presidential campaign being waged in the state. This makes sense, given that state parties are permanent organizations that require overhead to contest elections and support lawmakers, functions that do not depend on the intensity of the presidential campaign.

The second assessment of the impact of the presidential campaign on candidate and party campaign spending deals specifically with voter contact activities. Besides appearances (which I argue is adequately covered in the battleground analysis above), the prime method of voter contact for presidential campaigns is television advertising. Other candidates and parties will have to adjust their own levels of voter contact activities to account for the volume of presidential campaign advertising in the state. One would expect that candidates – though not parties – would engage in more advertising as the presidential candidates spend more on advertising, not only to break through with their own messages, but also because the costs will be higher due to increased demand for air time. For grassroots campaign activities, one would expect that candidates would spend less (due to the mobilizing effect of presidential advertising) while parties would spend more (for the same reason that the presidential candidates are spending more – running in

a competitive state). To assess the impact of presidential advertising on candidate and party campaign spending, I analyze the bivariate correlations between the advertising and grassroots spending for candidates and parties and the number of **gross ratings points** of advertising their presidential candidate purchased in the state. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5
Correlation Between Campaign Spending and Presidential Advertising

	Advertising	Grassroots
Senate cand N = 133 / 132	.070 (.424)	-.004 (.965)
House cand N = 1461 / 1530	.001 (.979)	-.082** (.001)
State party N = 165 / 192	.310** (.000)	.213** (.003)

Cell entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. Significance levels in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

As was the case with the battleground analysis, spending by Senate candidates on voter contact activities does not appear to be related to the amount of presidential advertising that is purchased in their state. The lack of significance on the advertising coefficient is understandable; Senate elections may be significant enough that candidates do not have to purchase any more advertising than they would have to break through the presidential advertising. As for the insignificant grassroots activity coefficient, this too is not completely surprising considering that Senate candidates tend to spend a much smaller percentages of their budgets on this component of the campaign than do House

candidates³³, so additional presidential advertising may not have the effect of further reducing this amount. Spending by House candidates and state parties, on the other hand, is related to the number of gross ratings points purchases by the presidential campaigns. As expected, House candidates spend less on grassroots when the presidential campaigns spend more on advertising; it seems they are indeed allowing others to do their mobilization for them. What is unexpected, however, is the insignificant coefficient for advertising. While it makes sense to think that House candidates would spend more to get their message out and persuade voters, it may be the case that this result is an indirect example of coattails; in areas of high presidential advertising, House candidates may advertise as they would normally, counting their presidential candidate's commercials as just additional voter contact on their behalf. An alternate explanation for the lack of relationship lies in the fact that most House campaigns are uncompetitive, and House candidates in uncompetitive races are not going to spend much on advertising regardless of the competitiveness of (and hence level of advertising in) the presidential campaign. For state parties, the expectations are confirmed, as increased presidential advertising is generally a signal of a competitive state, and state parties in turn increase their levels of advertising and grassroots campaigning.

But the presidential campaign is not the only one that candidates must take into account when planning their own campaigns. The efforts of other candidates on the top of the ballot, as well as the state party's campaign, will influence how down-ballot candidates conduct their campaigns. To assess these influences, I perform two further

³³ See Chapter 3 for further detail regarding Senate campaign resource allocation.

analyses of correlation in campaign spending. The first assesses the relationship between candidate campaign spending and that of the state party. In a truly candidate-centered environment, one would expect the efforts of the party to have no bearing on what the candidates do with their own campaigns. However, much research has shown that candidates consider the efforts of the party to be helpful (Hogan, 2000; Frensdreis and Gitelson, 1996; Herrnson, 1986), and it is reasonable to expect that they will adapt their own campaigns when they see party campaigning on their behalf. Specifically, while one would expect no relationship between candidate and party allocations to overhead and fundraising, one would expect candidates to allocate less to grassroots campaigning when the state parties allocate more, and more to advertising when parties allocate more (in response to a presumably competitive race).

Table 4-6 presents the results of this analysis. For both Senate and House candidates, the expectation of no relationship between the candidate's overhead or fundraising spending and that of the state party is confirmed. Despite the resurgence of parties as independent campaigners, it is still a candidate-dominated era, and candidates have to create (and fund) their own organizations regardless of what the party is doing. As for the voter contact activities, the expectations are largely unsupported. For grassroots campaigning, state party spending is unrelated to Senate candidate spending and *positively* related to House candidate spending. Rather than rely on the state party to mobilize voters, it appears that House candidates and state parties are reacting to the competitive environment in a similar fashion, both spending money for the mobilization for voters. Also unsupported (in the case of House candidates) is the expectation that

increased state party advertising will be associated with increased candidate advertising. Instead, as parties spend more on advertising, House candidates spend less. The one confirmed expectation is that among Senate candidates, increased state party advertising is associated with increased candidate advertising.

Table 4-6
Correlation Between Candidate Campaign Spending
and State Party Campaign Spending

Senate N = 325	State Party Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots
Overhead	.074 (.179)	.148** (.007)	.081 (.144)	.088 (.110)
Fundraising	.035 (.531)	.108 (.053)	.092 (.099)	.051 (.358)
Advertising	.026 (.634)	.097 (.080)	.109* (.047)	.080 (.147)
Grassroots	.042 (.449)	.081 (.144)	.039 (.476)	.062 (.262)
House N = 2826	State Party Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots
Overhead	.019 (.295)	-.007 (.691)	.003 (.867)	.011 (.535)
Fundraising	.027 (.148)	.011 (.563)	.051** (.007)	.031 (.099)
Advertising	.013 (.473)	-.053** (.004)	-.039* (.038)	.003 (.859)
Grassroots	.021 (.259)	-.004 (.823)	.015 (.425)	.049** (.007)

Cell entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. Significance levels in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

The second analysis of correlation in campaign spending assesses the relationship between campaign spending by House and Senate candidates. Given the results in Tables 4-4 and 4-5 above, it is clear that spending by House candidates is related to that of

candidates at the top of the ballot. As a result, it is not unreasonable to think that House candidates will also consider how the Senate candidate of the same party spends money on his or her campaign. Yet there is no theoretical reason to expect a relationship between the House and Senate candidates' spending on overhead, fundraising, advertising, or donations, as each candidate is involved in separate campaigns that tend not to get conflated in the minds of voters. One would expect, however, less spending on grassroots campaigning by the House candidate when the Senate candidate spends more, on the assumption that the House candidate could save money on those activities when the Senate candidate is providing them.

Table 4-7
Correlation Between Senate and House Candidate Campaign Spending

House N = 2438	Senate Overhead	Fundraising	Advertising	Grassroots	Donations
Overhead	.013 (.506)	.006 (.761)	.011 (.573)	.011 (.588)	.018 (.387)
Fundraising	.016 (.431)	.026 (.201)	.025 (.212)	.016 (.428)	.015 (.464)
Advertising	.038 (.059)	.023 (.266)	.031 (.124)	.039 (.057)	.057** (.005)
Grassroots	-.051* (.011)	-.019 (.346)	-.033 (.105)	-.042* (.037)	-.033 (.099)
Donations	-.063** (.002)	-.041* (.043)	-.051* (.012)	-.066** (.001)	-.028 (.170)

Cell entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. Significance levels in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

Table 4-7 presents the results of this analysis. All of the expectations are confirmed in that House candidate spending on overhead, fundraising, advertising, and donations is unrelated to Senate candidate allocations to the same components. Also, as

Senate candidates allocate more to grassroots, House candidates tend to allocate less. This result, as well as similar results for the relationship between House candidate campaigns and presidential campaigns (see Tables 4-4 and 4-5) suggest that House candidates in particular are apt to cut costs on grassroots campaigning when they see other candidates engaging in such activity.

Revised Models Explaining Campaign Spending Decisions

The results of the correlation analyses are suggestive that candidates and parties consider more than just their opponents and the characteristics of the state or district when making decisions about how to spend campaign funds. The data presented in Tables 4-4 through 4-7 hint at strategic behavior on the part of candidates and parties who look to the presidential campaigns, to the state parties (on the part of the candidates), and to the Senate candidate (on the part of House candidates) as they go about creating their campaigns. But correlation is not causation, and these analyses test only bivariate relationships. To address adequately the question of whether Congressional candidates look to other campaigns in their districts when making their own campaign spending decisions, we must turn to a multivariate model.

To that end, I estimate several models designed to explain why candidates and parties spend particular amounts of money on the various components of their campaigns. These models are similar to those presented in Chapter 3, but they have been modified to reflect the results discussed above. More to the point, the models of campaign spending will be fully specified to include as explanatory variables those from the Chapter 3

analyses that exhibited statistically significant coefficients as well as those from the above analyses that exhibited statistically significant correlation coefficients. For Senate campaigns, the only relationship noted above was between advertising spending and state party advertising spending, so only the model of Senate campaign advertising will be included. For House campaigns, several factors discussed above yielded significant correlations coefficients, so I will estimate models for spending on overhead, fundraising, advertising, and grassroots campaigning. For state party campaigns, the presidential variables (battleground and gross ratings points) had significant correlations to three campaign components, so I will estimate models for spending on fundraising, advertising, and grassroots campaigning.

In the model of Senate campaign spending on advertising, I include three variables found to be important in Chapter 3. **Competition** is based on *Roll Call's* spring assessment of the competitiveness of each race³⁴. I expect increased competition to lead to increased advertising spending. **Incumbent** and **Open Seat** are dummy variables indicating whether or not the case fits those particular characteristics. As before, I expect both the have positive coefficients as incumbents and open seat candidates are likely to spend more on advertising than challengers. **Party Advertising** is the amount of money spent per 1000 voters on electronic advertising by the Senate candidate's state party, adjusted to 2002 dollars and then logged. While the bivariate correlation between this variable and the dependent variable was positive, the fact that this model controls for the level of competition means that the independent effect of party advertising on Senate

³⁴ See the Appendix A for more detail.

candidate advertising may fall away. As a result, I have no *a priori* expectation for its coefficient.

The results of the Senate regression analysis are presented in Table 4-8. All expectations (or lack of expectations) are confirmed. Incumbents, open seat candidates, and those in competitive races allocate more money to advertising. Furthermore, the insignificant coefficient for party advertising shows that Senate candidates are not looking to other campaigns when making allocation decisions for their own race.

Table 4-8
Regression Results – Senate Candidates

	Natural Log of Advertising Spending Per 1000 Voters
Competition	.716** (.084)
Incumbent	1.649 (.182)**
Open Seat	.606 (.242)*
Party Advertising	3.275×10^{-3} (.013)
Constant	4.902 (.163)**
R ²	.334
N	327

** – statistically significant at the .01 level

* – statistically significant at the .05 level

Cell entries are unstandardized OLS regression estimates

Standard errors are in parentheses

In the four models of House campaign spending on advertising, I include several variables found to be important in Chapter 3. Besides **Competition**, **Incumbent** and **Open Seat**, I include measures of **District Land Area** (the size of the district in square

miles³⁵) as well as a dummy variable indicating whether the candidate is **Democratic**. In all four models I expect more spending by candidates in competitive races, incumbents, and open seat candidates. I expect more advertising in larger districts and less grassroots campaigning. I also expect less fundraising and advertising by Democrats. Based on the correlations analyzed above, I expect less spending on overhead, fundraising, and grassroots for candidates in **Battleground** states. As with Senate candidates, I expect no relationship between **Party Advertising** and House candidate advertising now that the model controls for the level of competition. Finally, the model for spending on grassroots campaigning has measures of presidential **Gross Ratings Points**, **Party Grassroots Campaigning**, and **Senate Candidate Grassroots Campaigning**. I expect no relationship between GRPs and candidate advertising (due to the control for level of competition), though I suspect the two grassroots campaigning explanatory variables will have negative coefficients indicating the House candidate is piggybacking on their mobilization efforts.

The results of the House regression analysis are presented in Table 4-9. In the model of overhead spending, the three variables identified in Chapter 3 again show statistically significant coefficients in the expected direction. In addition, the coefficient for the battleground variable is negative and statistically significant. This could signify

³⁵ Generally, larger districts require more campaign organization and an emphasis on “broadcast” rather than “retail” voter contact activities. However, there are a few examples (Alaska, for one), where the district is large geographically but where the population is concentrated in a few areas; in these cases, campaigning may require less overhead and may be able to focus more on grassroots activities. Nonetheless, short of an accurate measure of population concentration, I believe district land area serves as a reasonable proxy.

Table 4-9
Regression Results – House Candidates

	Natural Log of Overhead Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Fundraising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Advertising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Grassroots Campaigning Per 1000 Voters
Competition	.527 (.036)**	.481 (.035)**	.837 (.031)**	.510 (.037)**
District Land Area	—	—	3.354x10 ⁻⁶ (.000)**	-2.481x10 ⁻⁶ (.000) ^a
Incumbent	2.102 (.076)**	2.511 (.076)**	1.203 (.069)**	1.213 (.080)**
Open Seat	1.086 (.111)**	.984 (.109)**	.866 (.104)**	1.009 (.112)**
Democratic	—	-5.700x10 ⁻² (.069)	-6.983x10 ⁻³ (.063)	—
Battleground	-8.637x10 ⁻² (.023)**	-9.045x10 ⁻² (.022)**	—	-.105 (.009)**
Party Advertising	—	—	-6.493x10 ⁻³ (.006)	—
Party Grassroots	—	—	—	6.417x10 ⁻² (.015)**
Presidential GRPs	—	—	—	-4.857x10 ⁻⁶ (.000)
Senate Cand Grassroots	—	—	—	-2.222x10 ⁻² (.010)*
Constant	4.297 (.048)**	3.529 (.077)**	4.373 (.057)**	4.424 (.102)**
R ²	.394	.468	.288	.320
N	1499	1408	2789	1127

** – statistically significant at the .01 level

* – statistically significant at the .05 level

^a – significance = .063

that House candidates in battleground states do not feel the need to create as strong a campaign organization as they might otherwise, due to the presence of the presidential candidate's organization. In the model of fundraising spending, three of the variables

identified in Chapter 3 show statistically significant coefficients in the expected direction, but in this case the coefficient for the Democratic dummy variable fails to reach statistical significance. In this model the coefficient for battleground states is negative and statistically significant. Since the battleground variable is the only addition to the House fundraising model specified in Chapter 3, its presence must be what accounts for the Democratic dummy variable failing to produce a significant coefficient. The coefficient for battleground is negative; as discussed above, I believe this result is a function of House candidates not spending as much on overhead, and as a result not having to spend as much raising funds. In the model of advertising spending, the results for House candidates are similar to those for Senate candidates: the variables identified in Chapter 3 are statistically significant and in the expected direction while the new variables identified by means of correlations fail to reach statistical significance. Finally, in the model of spending on grassroots campaigning, all of the Chapter 3 variables retain coefficients that are statistically significant coefficients and with the expected sign, and here three of the four “other campaign” variables have significant coefficients. Thus, with respect to grassroots campaigning, House candidates feel comfortable spending less when their Senate candidates are spending more and/or when they can count on the efforts of the presidential campaign (though not necessarily its advertising). On the other hand, House candidates spend more to grassroots when they see the state party doing the same.

Finally, I estimate models of state party spending on fundraising, advertising, and grassroots campaigning. These models incorporate from Chapter 3 measures of

Competition, District Land Area, the **Democratic** dummy variable. From the above analyses, they include variables for **Battleground** states and presidential **Gross Ratings Points**. As the rationale behind my expectations can be seen earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 3, let it suffice to say that I expect positive coefficients for all explanatory variables in all three models.

The results of the state party regression analysis are presented in Table 4-10. In the model of fundraising spending, no variables from the Chapter 3 model were statistically significant, so the only regressor is the Battleground variable. As expected, its coefficient is significant and positive, indicating that state parties do indeed increase their fundraising efforts when faced with an intense presidential campaign. In the model of advertising spending, competition strangely enough fails to reach statistical significance. Given that the measure of competition for state parties measures overall statewide competition and not the level of competition for any particular race, this nonresult perhaps makes sense in light of the positive and statistically significant coefficient for presidential gross ratings points. In other words, state parties increase their advertising efforts in relation to the competitiveness of the race at the top of the ballot. Of the other two terms in the advertising model, the coefficient for the Democratic dummy variable is significant and positive while the coefficient for the battleground measure fails to reach statistical significance (no doubt due to the presence of the gross ratings points measure).

Table 4-10
Regression Results – State Parties

	Natural Log of Fundraising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Advertising Spending Per 1000 Voters	Natural Log of Grassroots Campaigning Per 1000 Voters
Competition	—	1.209×10^{-3} (.022)	—
District Land Area	—	—	2.845×10^{-6} (.000)*
Democratic	—	1.288 (.512)*	.395 (.203) ^a
Battleground	.229 (.084)**	-.301 (.250)	8.910×10^{-2} (.102)
Presidential GRPs	—	2.312×10^{-4} (.000)**	3.272×10^{-5} (.000)
Constant	3.207 (.189)**	1.786 (1.845)	4.178 (.206)**
R ²	.042	.143	.090
N	170	150	170

** – statistically significant at the .01 level

* – statistically significant at the .05 level

^a – significance = .053

In the model of spending on grassroots campaigning, the previously identified variables again work as expected, and unfortunately both new “outside campaign” variables fail to register. Given that one of the main functions of a state party is to engage in grassroots mobilization, it is perhaps no surprise that it spends funds on this function without regard for the level of activity of the presidential campaign.

Conclusion

The preceding analyses provide some interesting detail regarding how candidates and parties decide how much to spend on various components of their campaigns. In addition to considering the opposition and the general electoral context, the results presented here suggest these strategic politicians also look to other campaigns in their state or district when spending money on overhead, fundraising, advertising, and grassroots campaigning.

While analysis of correlations provides some clues as to what factors might affect this behavior, the multivariate models provide a clearer picture of what factors affect the decision to spend more or less money on a particular component of a campaign. The data presented in Tables 4-8, 4-9, and 4-10 yield three broad points. First, spending by Senate candidates is best explained by the level of competition as well as the status of the candidate. Other campaigns do not appear to affect spending in Senate campaigns, suggesting that Senate races are prominent enough for candidates to behave rather independently of other actors. The second broad point is the candidate advertising is not affected by the behavior of outside actors. While other components of the campaign might respond to these external influences, advertising is still the primary way House and Senate candidates communicate their messages to voters, and they appear not to alter their advertising strategies based on what others are doing. A third and final broad point is that spending on other components of the campaign – overhead, fundraising, grassroots campaign – is indeed affected by the behavior of outside actors. Strategic politicians –

both candidates and parties – look to what other politicians in their area are doing before they spend precious funds to these important components of the campaign.

With a better understanding of why candidates and parties spend money in the way that they do, it is now time to assess whether this spending has an impact on the behavior of voters, either as individuals or in the aggregate. Considering the efforts of both candidate and party and focusing solely on their voter contact activities, I will show in the next chapter that campaigns do have demonstrable effects on voters.

Chapter 5 – Campaign Effects

In the preceding two chapters I described the nature of party and candidate campaigns and showed how each party leaders and candidates look not only to their opponents but also to other campaigns in their districts when allocating resources to key components of their organizations. At this point we turn to an assessment of campaign effects. It is important for scholars of campaign effects look to both the party and candidate in this assessment, as both will influence voters and hence the outcome on Election Day. More specifically, do both candidate and party efforts have an impact on the decision to turnout? Do they have the power to persuade voters toward (or against) a candidate? And do these effects vary depending on the characteristics of the voters? It is to these questions that I now turn.

The Search for Campaign Effects

Over the last several years many scholars have sought to counter claims that campaigns have limited – or minimal – effects. The minimal effects thesis, however, pertains primarily to presidential campaigns. Certainly, one is more likely to see campaign effects in lower-profile elections where it is less likely that the campaigns balance one another out. And much research has identified campaign effects in sub-presidential elections. Spending in Congressional elections has effects on both vote choice (Jacobson, 1990; Abramowitz, 1988) and turnout (Caldeira, Patterson, and Markko, 1985). In gubernatorial elections, campaign spending has been shown to have

an effect on turnout (Patterson and Caldeira, 1983). And in state legislative elections – where the candidates and campaigns are much less visible – there is a strong connection between campaign spending and electoral success, especially in larger states and states with professional legislatures (Cassie and Breaux, 1998).

But recent efforts have also turned up campaign effects in presidential campaigns. Studies using aggregate analysis have shown that campaigns can persuade voters and thus affect aggregate vote totals and public opinion. Television advertising and candidate appearances have an impact on aggregate vote totals (Shaw, 1999b). In addition, national conventions and debates (Holbrook, 1996) as well as other aspects of an election campaign such as campaign messages, events, and mistakes (Shaw, 1999c) have an effect on public opinion. Furthermore, recent studies have shown that presidential campaigns have an impact through agenda-setting, priming, and framing effects (Mendelberg, 1997; Mutz, Sniderman, and Brody, 1996; Petrocik, 1996).

Despite these impressive findings, there is still a great deal of room for improvement in the description and prediction of campaign effects. One area of oversight in this literature is the failure to adequately integrate the efforts of political parties into the study of campaign effects. Campaigns are no longer merely the money and service providers as scholars of campaigns often portray them. As it stands, the literature has a very bifurcated view as to where to search for campaign effects, with some studies focusing on the efforts of party organizations while others focus on the campaign efforts of candidates. Campaign effects researchers need to conceptualize campaign effects as the product of the efforts of both types of campaigns.

This study seeks to build on previous research into campaign effects and to address oversights in the literature. Specifically, this study looks to address several issues related to the effects of campaign activity: what components of the campaign have effects on voters? are those effects manifested in individual level behavior or are they only apparent in the aggregate? is it the party's campaign organization or the candidate's campaign – or both – that has an effect on voters? do those effects vary depending on the characteristics of the voters? By looking at party and candidate campaigns over five recent election cycles, we can hope to get a clearer picture of the nature of these effects.

To that end, I make use of the data from the Campaign Finance Analysis Project and Federal Election Commission that are described fully in Chapter 3. These data cover Congressional races from 1992, 1994, 1998, 2000, and 2002. There are 170 Senate races in the dataset and 2175 House races.

In the subsequent analyses, I employ as explanatory variables the two categories that reflect voter contact activity: advertising and grassroots campaigning. In addition to these expenditure data, I make use of data on campaign competitiveness and yearly inflation. The latter, obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, were used to adjust the campaign spending data for earlier years to constant 2002 dollars. Individual level analyses were performed on the National Election Studies Cumulative Data File (Sapiro et al., 2003) while aggregate analyses were performed on data collected from various sources that are described fully in Appendix A.

With these data, I focus on how candidate and party campaigns seek to affect voter behavior. But this is more than just a study of the effects of campaign spending.

Total campaign spending is a poor proxy for campaign activity as it includes spending on many features (overhead, fundraising expenses) that are not perceived by voters. Only by focusing on those spending categories that relate to voter contact will we get an unbiased assessment of campaign effects. Further, campaigns do not engage in activity with one “effect” in mind; some efforts are designed to persuade undecided (likely) voters while other efforts are designed to mobilize (likely) supporters who may not participate. By looking at the how candidate and party advertising and grassroots campaigning might differentially persuade and mobilize, we will take a small step closer to understanding the true effects of campaign activity.

Individual Level Campaign Effects

One would expect that campaign activity would benefit the candidate or party who performs it. This expectation stems straightforwardly from an assumption that political elites (candidates, campaign workers, party officials) are rational actors who make decisions in order to achieve particular goals – in this case the winning of elections. At the individual level, this expectation leads one to believe that increased campaign spending by a candidate or party will make individuals more likely vote for that candidate or that party’s candidate(s). It also suggests that increased campaign spending will make individuals more likely to turnout to vote.

Several studies have identified individual level campaign effects on vote choice. Presidential debates have been shown to affect vote choice (Holbrook, 1996; Geer, 1988), with the candidate who was perceived to have “won” the debate gaining support among

voters. Hillygus and Jackman (2003) also find that nominating conventions move individuals to support presidential candidates. Considering turnout, previous research has shown how campaigns can mobilize individuals to turnout to vote. Experimental research, in particular, has found that grassroots contacting (Gerber and Green, 2000) and media advertising (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995) increase the likelihood of voting. In addition, survey research has shown that individuals are more likely to turnout to vote when they are mobilized by political elites (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995; Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993).

In order to test the impact of voter contact spending on individual level voting behavior, I use data from the National Election Studies to estimate logistic regression models of vote choice and turnout. For the former, I estimate separate models for House and Senate elections. As explanatory variables I include measures of **Republican and Democratic candidate advertising spending and grassroots contact spending**³⁶. I also include measures of **Republican and Democratic state party advertising spending and grassroots contact spending**³⁷.

Aside from these eight campaign variables, I include several control variables related to vote choice. **Party identification** (Campbell et al, 1960), **income** (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, 2003), and **race** (Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde, 2002; Wayne, 2000) all bear on one's choice among candidates. I also include a measure of the **level of competition** of each race to control for more spending occurring in more competitive races. This control allows for a campaign effect to show in an otherwise uncompetitive

race. Finally, given the pooled nature of the analysis, I have included dummy variables for the years.

I estimate the House model on respondents in 1992, 1994, 1998, and 2000. I omit 2002 from the House analysis because the CFAP did not make available the data on campaign spending for House candidates in 2002. The Senate model includes 2002, but since the NES Cumulative Data File does not include the income measure for the 2002 respondents, it is omitted from the Senate model.

The results of the individual level vote choice analysis are presented in Table 5-1. Since the dependent variable is coded 1 if the individual voted for the Republican and 0 if the individual voted for the Democrat, positive coefficients indicate an increased likelihood of voting Republican and negative coefficients a decreased likelihood.

In the analysis of voting for the U.S. House of Representatives, only three of the eight campaign variables have statistically significant coefficients. And interestingly enough, all three coefficients have signs that are the opposite of what one would expect. For example, as the Democratic candidate spent more on advertising, the respondent was *more* likely to vote for the Republican for the House of Representatives. Also, as a state Republican party spent more on advertising, the respondent was *less* likely to vote for the Republican. Finally, as the Republican candidate spent more on grassroots contact, the individual was *less* likely to vote for him or her.

However, a reasonable explanation exists for these counterintuitive findings. Even controlling for level of competition, all three findings are likely the result of parties

³⁶ As is the custom in the literature, I have taken the natural logarithm of the candidate and party spending

and candidates spending larger sums of money competitive races. As a result of the increased competition, these elites will spend as much as necessary in order to win; yet because of the competitive nature of the race the margins of victory will be relatively small. This is an individual level finding that is similar to the incumbent spending dynamic found previously in aggregate level research (Levitt, 1994; Ragsdale and Cook, 1987; Feldman and Jondrow, 1984). Two other points bear mentioning in the House analysis. One, the efforts of the state parties in general (and particularly the Democratic state parties) do not appear to have much of an effect. Only one state party activity had a statistically significant coefficient, and as discussed above, that activity did not produce the desired effect. The second point worth mentioning is that the three control variables all perform as one would expect. Increasing Republican identification and income make one more likely to vote Republican for the House while being nonwhite makes one less likely to do so.

The second column of Table 5-1 presents the results for voting for U.S. Senate. Again, only three of the eight campaign variables exhibit statistically significant coefficients. Yet this time, the coefficients have signs that are in the expected direction. Thus, in Senate elections, increased advertising and grassroots contact by the Democratic candidate makes one less likely to vote for the Republican while increased advertising by the Republican candidate makes one more likely to vote for him or her.

figures to account for the diminishing marginal returns of campaign spending.

³⁷ For more information, see Fritz and Morris (1992).

Table 5-1
Individual Level Vote Choice

Variable	House	Senate
Dem. State Party Advertising	.0024 (.0143)	-.0103 (.0149)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	-.0064 (.0190)	-.0121 (.0184)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	6.87×10^{-5} ** (2.60×10^{-5})	-.1639** (.0339)
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	6.53×10^{-5} (3.85×10^{-5})	-.0851 ^a (.0436)
Rep. State Party Advertising	-.0213* (.0097)	-.0091 (.0119)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	.0111 (.0162)	-.0138 (.0181)
Rep. Candidate Advertising	-2.4×10^{-6} (2.52×10^{-5})	.1999** (.0319)
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	-.0001** (3.24×10^{-5})	-.0198 (.0445)
Party Identification	.6305** (.0227)	.7563** (.0252)
Income	.1365** (.0415)	–
Race	-.4877** (.1290)	-.2582* (.1316)
Level of Competition	-.0191 (.0431)	.0551 (.0566)
1994 Dummy	.5372** (.1155)	.3973** (.1374)
1998 Dummy	.9203** (.1516)	.1033 (.1762)
2000 Dummy	.5041** (.1494)	.0968 (.1800)
2002 Dummy	–	.3169 (.1927)
Constant	-3.3145** (.2002)	-2.9240** (.2519)
-2 Log Likelihood	3268.802	2899.465
Percent Correctly Predicted	78.17	81.59
Number of Cases	3386	3336

Cell entries are logit coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

^a - significance = .0509

This difference between House and Senate campaigns, with the efforts of the former producing a statistical artifact while the efforts of the latter produce a campaign effect, is one that has been identified previously in the literature (For House - Levitt, 1994; Ragsdale and Cook, 1987; Feldman and Jondrow, 1984; For Senate – Moon, 2002; Gerber, 1998; Abramowitz, 1988). It could be the product of many House races being uncompetitive – thus producing the reverse coefficients when those in the few competitive races spend a lot – while Senate races tend to be more competitive. Another explanation would be that Senate races tend to have a higher profile than House races, and as such voters are more likely to perceive the efforts of the Senate campaigns than those of the House campaigns. This second explanation is made all the more reasonable when one considers that the unit of analysis in this instance is the individual while the measures of campaign activity are aggregations, added to the individual-level data depending on the district in which that individual resides.

As with the House analysis, the Senate analysis also shows a glaring unimportance of the campaign spending by state political parties. None of the four measures of state party campaign activity exhibit a statistically significant coefficient. And as was the case before, the control variables work as expected in the Senate analysis, with stronger Republican identification making one more likely to vote Republican and being nonwhite making one less likely to do so.

Turning to the question of turnout, previous research at the individual level has shown how campaigns can mobilize people to turnout to vote. Experimental research, in particular, has found that grassroots contacting (Gerber and Green, 2000) and media

advertising (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995) increase the likelihood of voting. In addition, survey research has shown that individuals are more likely to turnout to vote when they are mobilized by political elites (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995; Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993) or when the campaigns are engaged in a particularly close race (Cox and Munger, 1989).

To test for turnout effects, I again use NES data with merged campaign spending data. Based on the previous literature, one would have to expect that the efforts of candidate and party campaigns of both parties would serve to mobilize voters. In addition to the campaign variables, I include several control variables related to turnout. **Race, education, age** (and **age-squared**, to account for the nonlinear relationship), and **efficacy** are individual level characteristics that are associated with political participation (Wayne, 2000; Shields and Goidel, 1997; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Verba and Nie, 1972). **Residential mobility** is another factor that affects turnout, though in this case increased mobility decreases the likelihood of participating (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). Finally, psychological characteristics such as **interest** in the campaign and the **strength of one's partisan identification** are related to the decision to turnout (Campbell et al., 1960). I also include a measure of the **level of competition**, not only to control for more spending occurring in more competitive races, but also because increased competition tends to motivate people to turnout to vote (Cox and Munger, 1989). Finally, given the pooled nature of the analysis, I have included dummy variables for the years.

I estimate the turnout model on respondents in 1992, 1994, 1998, and 2000. I omit 2002 from this analysis because the CFAP did not make available the data on campaign spending for House candidates in 2002.

The results of the individual level turnout analysis are presented in Table 5-2. Since the dependent variable is coded 1 if the individual turned out to vote and 0 if the individual did not, positive coefficients indicate an increased likelihood voting and negative coefficients a decreased likelihood.

In the analysis of turnout, none of the eight campaign variables have statistically significant coefficients, though all of the control variables exhibit coefficients that are statistically significant and in the expected direction. This lack of effect runs contrary to conventional wisdom as well as previous findings (e.g. Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994; Caldeira, Patterson, and Markko, 1985). However, two important caveats might lead one to believe that all hope is not lost for campaign effects. First, as with the vote choice model, the turnout analysis relies on individual level data merged with aggregate level campaign data. Since the campaign variables do not directly measure how much advertising or grassroots contact the individual was exposed to, it is possible that respondents in the NES sample are not “perceiving” these mobilization efforts³⁸. Another important caveat involves the strategies used by political parties to target people with mobilization efforts. Gershtenson (2003) shows that parties tend to target their mobilization efforts at those with “higher underlying propensities for political

³⁸ Brox (2002) shows that individuals who were contacted by the parties were more likely to turnout in the 2000 general election, and that campaign spending helps explain the incidence of party contact. So it is likely that these measures of campaign activity do have an effect, yet that affect is not apparent at the individual level.

Table 5-2
Individual Level Turnout

Variable	Turnout
Dem. State Party Advertising	.0055 (.0120)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	-.0054 (.0175)
Rep. State Party Advertising	.0043 (.0083)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	.0112 (.0144)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	1.49×10^{-5} (2.38×10^{-5})
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	1.74×10^{-5} (3.38×10^{-5})
Rep. Candidate Advertising	-3.10×10^{-5} (1.88×10^{-5})
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	5.93×10^{-6} (2.25×10^{-5})
Strength of Party Identification	.3224 (.0403)**
Interest	.9864 (.0584)**
Efficacy	.0045 (.0010)**
Age	.0912 (.0124)**
Age-Squared	-.0007 (.0001)**
Education	.3790 (.0266)**
Race	-.3603 (.0926)**
Length of Residence	.2887 (.0325)**
Level of Competition	.0559 (.0287) ^a
1994 Dummy	-.8540 (.1067)**
1998 Dummy	-.9504 (.1333)**
2000 Dummy	.0338 (.1460)
Constant	-6.4506 (.3563)**
-2 Log Likelihood	4252.173
Percent Correctly Predicted	78.05
Number of Cases	4637

Cell entries are logit coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

^a - significance = .0516

participation,” (p. 20). If candidates are doing likewise, it would explain why all of the control variables have statistically significant coefficients while none of the campaign activity variables do.

The Partisan Nature of Campaign Effects

While the previous two individual level analyses provide marginal support for vote choice effects and no support for turnout effects, it is possible that lumping all voters together into one pool is conflating two distinct forces at work in each process. For example, in the choice between candidates, campaign efforts might activate some voters and persuade others. Activation is the process by which political elites (in this case candidates and parties) stimulate voters to behave in accordance with their underlying political predispositions. The most fundamental of these predispositions is party identification (Anderson and Iyengar, 1998), and campaign activity makes partisans even more likely to vote based on that identification (Iyengar and Petrocik, 2000; Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995; Finkel, 1993; Gelman and King, 1993). Persuasion, on the other hand, is the process by which political elites induce voters to vote for a candidate they were not previously disposed to support. Campaigns have the potential to persuade voters (Shaw, 1999b), though this effect may be limited if there is a balanced campaign environment or if voters' existing predispositions make them resistant to persuasive messages contrary to their established views (Zaller, 1992).

In order to assess whether candidate and party campaign activity is activating or persuading voters, I perform the same vote choice analysis as described above, except in this case I run it separately on subsamples of Democrats (including independent leaning Democrats), independents, and Republicans (including independent leaning Republicans). The results for House elections are presented in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3
Individual Level Vote Choice in the House – By Party

Variable	Democrats	independents	Republicans
Dem. State Party Advertising	.0099 (.0222)	-.0553 (.0578)	.0123 (.0206)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	-.0184 (.0283)	.1903* (.0909)	-.0278 (.0294)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	4.90x10 ⁻⁵ (3.28x10 ⁻⁵)	.0002 (.0001)	.0001 (6.16x10 ⁻⁵)
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	7.32x10 ⁻⁵ (5.06x10 ⁻⁵)	-.0001 (.0001)	6.43x10 ⁻⁵ (8.55x10 ⁻⁵)
Rep. State Party Advertising	-.0312* (.0138)	-.0467 (.0311)	-.0046 (.0150)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	.0007 (.0226)	.0452 (.0513)	.0216 (.0246)
Rep. Candidate Advertising	-1.10x10 ⁻⁵ (3.57x10 ⁻⁵)	6.21x10 ⁻⁵ (9.95x10 ⁻⁵)	-8.40x10 ⁻⁶ (4.28x10 ⁻⁵)
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	-9.80x10 ⁻⁵ * (4.59x10 ⁻⁵)	-.0007 (.0006)	-.0001* (5.22x10 ⁻⁵)
Strength of Party Identification	-.4665** (.0795)	-	.5462** (.0834)
Income	.1314* (.0604)	.0199 (.1457)	.1472* (.0649)
Race	-.4373** (.1648)	-.8583 ^a (.4456)	-.5952* (.2349)
Level of Competition	-.0550 (.0641)	-.0515 (.1466)	.0435 (.0674)
1994 Dummy	.3759* (.1727)	-.0164 (.3890)	.7749** (.1764)
1998 Dummy	.9214** (.2081)	1.0732 ^b (.5531)	.8556** (.2455)
2000 Dummy	.3399 (.2209)	.9320 (.5546)	.5934** (.2276)
Constant	-.4940 (.3625)	-1.2997* (.6416)	-1.2273** (.3755)
-2 Log Likelihood	1580.643	264.038	1384.415
Percent Correctly Predicted	80.08	63.43	78.55
Number of Cases	1697	216	1473

Cell entries are logit coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

^a - significance = .0541

^b - significance = .0526

As a whole, the results provide limited support for activation and an unusual finding indicating possible reverse persuasion. Among Democrats, spending by Democratic candidates and parties had no effect. However advertising done by state Republican parties and grassroots contact performed by Republican candidates made Democrats less likely to vote for the Republican candidate for U.S. House. This likely stems from Democratic voters perceiving Republican campaign efforts and reacting negatively toward them, thus activating their own underlying partisanship. Among Republicans, however, no such activation occurs, either as a result of their own party's efforts or as a backlash against Democratic campaign activities. Finally among independents, a statistically significant and positive coefficient for Democratic state party grassroots spending suggests that independents that were the recipients of these efforts were persuaded *in favor* of the Republican candidate. This result should be seen as irrational behavior on the part of Democratic state parties, as for some reason the messages contained in these grassroots contacting activities were not appealing to independents.

The results for Senate elections are presented in Table 5-4. These results provide stronger support for both activation and persuasion. Among partisans, both processes were at work. Advertising by the Democratic candidate made Democrats less likely to vote for the Republican (activation) while advertising by the Republican candidate made Democrats more likely to vote for him or her (persuasion). Similarly, advertising and grassroots contact by the Democratic candidate made Republicans less likely to vote for the Republican (persuasion) while advertising by the Republican candidate made

Republicans more likely to vote for him or her (activation). In the case of independents, where persuasion is the only possible process because there are no partisan predispositions to activate, Democratic candidate grassroots contact makes these voters less likely to vote for the Republican candidate while Republican candidate advertising make them more likely to do so. It should be noted that only the candidate activity items had any effect on voters in Senate elections; despite the congruence of their constituencies (i.e. a state), the efforts of state political parties did not seem to activate or persuade voters in Senate races.

Campaign activity by candidates and parties not only activates and persuades – it can also affect the decision to turnout. And as was the case with vote choice, campaign activity might manifest itself in two distinct effects: mobilization or demobilization. Mobilization is the process of motivating individuals to participate in politics (in this case, vote), either by reducing the costs associated with participation or by increasing its benefits (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994). Previous work has shown mobilization effects associated with party contacting (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994), nonpartisan grassroots activities (Gerber and Green, 2000; Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee, 1999), candidate campaign spending (Caldeira, Patterson, and Markko, 1985), and television advertising (Kahn and Kenney, 1999; Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995). Demobilization, on the other hand, occurs when campaign activity reduces the likelihood that an individual will turnout to vote. Much of the support for demobilization effects comes from studies of negative campaign advertising (Ansolabehere, Iyengar, and Simon, 1999; Kahn and Kenney, 1999; Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995; Ansolabehere et al., 1994).

Table 5-4
Individual Level Vote Choice in the Senate – By Party

Variable	Democrats	independents	Republicans
Dem. State Party Advertising	-.0110 (.0231)	-.1053 (.0621)	.0057 (.0214)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	-.0504 (.0302)	-.0302 (.0745)	.0014 (.0256)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	-.1710** (.0457)	-.0792 (.1350)	-.2555** (.0766)
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	.0105 (.0626)	-.3406* (.1710)	-.1343* (.0685)
Rep. State Party Advertising	-.0242 (.0171)	.0049 (.0393)	.0046 (.0186)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	.0136 (.0270)	-.0650 (.0603)	-.0186 (.0280)
Rep. Candidate Advertising	.4042** (.0892)	.3773* (.1775)	.1488** (.0387)
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	-.1105 (.0784)	-.2715 (.2013)	.0691 (.0594)
Strength of Party Identification	-.5310** (.0890)	–	.5315** (.0896)
Race	-.1328 (.1689)	-1.1307* (.4935)	-.2842 (.2442)
Level of Competition	-.1308 (.0879)	.0807 (.3032)	.1810* (.0865)
1994 Dummy	.1381 (.2005)	.9000 ^a (.4654)	.4657* (.2070)
1998 Dummy	-.2229 (.2579)	.3846 (.5636)	.2426 (.2823)
2000 Dummy	-.3824 (.2731)	1.0348 (.6717)	.4203 (.2840)
2002 Dummy	-.5396 (.3244)	.6576 (.8136)	.8232** (.2979)
Constant	-.5209 (.5696)	.8413 (.9940)	.3544 (.5057)
-2 Log Likelihood	1322.744	203.715	1248.146
Percent Correctly Predicted	82.64	66.19	82.62
Number of Cases	1613	210	1513

Cell entries are logit coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

^a - significance = .0531

In order to assess whether candidate and party campaign activity is mobilizing or demobilizing voters, I perform the same turnout analysis as described above, except in this case I run it separately on subsamples of Democrats (including independent leaning Democrats), independents, and Republicans (including independent leaning Republicans). The results are presented in Table 5-5.

The results provide very limited support for mobilization and demobilization effects. In essence, only Republican candidate activity exerts effects, and only in the case of turnout among Democrats. Among those individuals, Republican candidate advertising demobilizes³⁹ while Republican candidate grassroots contact mobilizes⁴⁰. Republican candidate grassroots contact also appears to demobilize Republicans, though this is most likely an artifact of increased grassroots activity in competitive districts, where the closeness of the race forces candidates to spend more to try to mobilize otherwise marginal participants.

Two other findings stand out, one expected and the other unexpected. Among independents, no form of campaign activity mobilizes these individuals to turnout to vote. This result is expected, as parties and candidates would rather ignore independents and others whom the elites are not sure will cast a vote in their favor (Goldstein and Ridout, 2002). Quite unexpected, however, is the fact that no form of state party campaign activity mobilizes partisans or demobilizes other-partisans. Given that one of the prime roles of parties in a candidate-centered era is to mobilize voters, this null finding is either

³⁹ One could speculate that Republican candidate advertising demobilizes Democrats because they find it persuasive, yet would prefer not to turnout rather than turnout and cast a vote for the candidate of the other party.

⁴⁰ Presumably as a result of activating partisan predispositions.

Table 5-5
Individual Level Turnout – By Party

Variable	Democrats	independents	Republicans
Dem. State Party Advertising	.0106 (.0178)	.0320 (.0361)	-.0089 (.0197)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	-.0031 (.0252)	.0318 (.0547)	-.0246 (.0290)
Rep. State Party Advertising	.0068 (.0117)	.0416 (.0246)	-.0097 (.0140)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	.0087 (.0209)	.0159 (.0404)	.0170 (.0239)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	6.12×10^{-6} (3.17×10^{-5})	3.89×10^{-5} (8.00×10^{-5})	4.18×10^{-5} (4.14×10^{-5})
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	-1.60×10^{-5} (4.94×10^{-5})	2.38×10^{-5} (.0001)	2.08×10^{-5} (5.62×10^{-5})
Rep. Candidate Advertising	-6.50×10^{-5} (2.72×10^{-5})*	-4.30×10^{-5} (4.67×10^{-5})	1.20×10^{-5} (3.36×10^{-5})
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	6.43×10^{-5} (3.15×10^{-5})*	-6.80×10^{-5} (6.32×10^{-5})	-8.40×10^{-5} (4.19×10^{-5})*
Strength of Party Identification	.3523 (.0718)**	–	.3905 (.0843)**
Interest	.9717 (.0826)**	.9582 (.1752)**	1.0301 (.0985)**
Efficacy	.0059 (.0015)**	.0079 (.0032)*	.0017 (.0017)
Age	.0784 (.0171)**	.0234 (.0397)	.1322 (.0211)**
Age-Squared	-.0006 (.0002)**	.0002 (.0004)	-.0011 (.0002)**
Education	.3928 (.0392)**	.4026 (.0807)**	.3477 (.0426)**
Race	-.2373 (.1217) ^a	-.4025 (.2787)	-.7171 (.1868)**
Length of Residence	.2761 (.0445)**	.3526 (.0923)**	.2649 (.0572)**
Level of Competition	.0524 (.0404)	-.0981 (.0838)	.1163 (.0493)*
1994 Dummy	-1.0219 (.1494)**	-.9335 (.3360)**	-.6622 (.1788)**
1998 Dummy	-1.2362 (.1829)**	-.5345 (.4087)	-.6655 (.2284)**
2000 Dummy	-.0125 (.2037)	-.5519 (.4413)	.2783 (.2477)
Constant	-6.2227 (.5203)**	-4.9599 (1.0042)**	-7.4886 (.6299)**
-2 Log Likelihood	2373.195	477.040	1568.311
Percent Correctly Predicted	77.83	77.55	80.13
Number of Cases	2305	490	1842

Cell entries are logit coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

^a – significance = .0511

an artifact⁴¹ or a monumental repudiation of much previous research and conventional wisdom. At this point I favor the former explanation.

⁴¹ The lack of significant effects for state party campaign activity is more than likely a function of trying to tease out effects in an individual level model with aggregate measures of campaign activity. As was the case with the earlier turnout model, without measures of how much of this campaign activity was actually received by the NES respondents, it is impossible to tell if these activity are having no effect or if they are merely not being perceived.

To summarize the individual level analyses, one would have to say that there is only limited support for turnout and vote choice effects, though breaking the sample into partisan groups does permit us to see instances of activation, persuasion, mobilization, and demobilization. Furthermore, the efforts of the state parties were largely irrelevant in producing those effects, an outcome that I will presently ascribe to having forced aggregate data on campaign activity into individual level models. Hence, one could claim that these models serve as conservative assessments of campaign effects. Aggregate level models, on the other hand, would match the campaign activity data to other district-level characteristics to predict vote share or rates of turnout. Such analyses are perhaps a more appropriate test for the aggregated campaign activity data, and it is to these analyses that we now turn.

Campaign Effects in the Aggregate

As discussed earlier, one expects increased campaign activity to be associated with increased support at the polls and higher turnout. In the aggregate, this expectation leads one to believe that increased campaign spending by a candidate or party will increase the vote share received by that candidate (or that party's candidate). It also suggests that increased campaign spending will yield higher turnout rates in the district.

Studies using aggregate analyses have shown that campaigns can persuade voters and thus affect aggregate vote totals. The broadest indicator of campaign effort – campaign spending – has been shown to affect state-level vote share (Nagler and Leighley, 1992). Several components of the campaign have also been shown to have an

impact on voters in the aggregate. Appearances (Herr, 2002; Shaw, 1999b) campaign events (Shaw, 1999a; Holbrook, 1994), national conventions (Holbrook, 1996, 1994; Campbell, Cherry, and Wink, 1992) and debates (Holbrook, 1996, 1994) all have an effect on voters' preferences among candidates.

In order to test the impact of voter contact spending on aggregate voting in Congressional elections, I use data on races for U.S. House and Senate from 1992 to 2002 to estimate linear models of vote choice and turnout. For the former, I estimate separate models for House and Senate elections. As explanatory variables I include measures of **Republican** and **Democratic candidate advertising spending** and **grassroots contact spending**. I also include measures of **Republican** and **Democratic state party advertising spending** and **grassroots contact spending**. In addition to these main variables of interest, I include a control variable to account for the partisan leanings of the district. I ran the analyses once using **previous** (Republican) vote **percent** in the district as the control, a method that is used frequently in aggregate vote choice studies (e.g. Shaw, 1999b; Ansolabehere and Gerber, 1994). I then ran the same analyses with an ordinal measure of **competition** as the control in order to incorporate a measure that was drawn from the same timeframe as the rest of the data. Finally, given the pooled nature of the analyses, I have included dummy variables for the years.

As with the individual level analyses, I estimate the House model for only 1992, 1994, 1998, and 2000 since the CFAP did not make available the data on campaign spending for House candidates in 2002. The Senate model includes 2002.

The results of the aggregate model of House elections are presented in Table 5-6. Since the dependent variable is coded as the percent won by the Republican candidate, positive coefficients indicate an effect that increases Republican vote share while negative coefficients indicate a negative effect on Republican performance.

In the analysis of voting for the U.S. House of Representatives, two findings are striking. One, candidate efforts appear to have a significant impact on aggregate vote. In the model with the previous percent control, coefficients for all four candidate variables are statistically significant and in the expected direction. In the model that uses level of competition as the control, three of the four candidate variables have statistically significant coefficients in the expected direction. It seems we can conclude with confidence that Democratic candidate advertising and grassroots contact will reduce the Republican vote share in House elections while Republican candidate advertising and grassroots contact will increase it. The other finding of note, however, is that none of the state party campaign variables have statistically significant coefficients. While this does not support my expectations, it is perhaps not a surprise given the notion that the role of parties is to motivate committed supporters to turnout while leaving persuasion efforts to the individual candidates (Gershtenson, 2003).

Table 5-6
Aggregate Vote Choice – House

Variable	Model with Competition	Model with Previous Percent
Dem. State Party Advertising	-.023 (.058)	-3.99×10^{-3} (.132)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	.162 (.117)	-.111 (.252)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	-.043 (.066)	-1.421** (.186)
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	-.998** (.071)	-2.268** (.272)
Rep. State Party Advertising	-.058 (.049)	-.068 (.121)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	-.057 (.079)	.090 (.254)
Rep. Candidate Advertising	.334** (.057)	2.087** (.189)
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	.555** (.070)	1.617** (.277)
Competition / Previous Percent	4.931** (.101)	.497** (.019)
1994 Dummy	4.467** (.557)	4.724** (.743)
1998 Dummy	.319 (.625)	a
2000 Dummy	-.356 (.689)	-.907 (.716)
Constant	33.500** (.801)	24.052** (2.356)
R ²	.847	.775
Number of Cases	1600	698

Cell entries are ordinary least squares coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

^a - This variable was excluded from the analysis by the data analysis software

The analysis of voting for the U.S. Senate provides results that are not quite as clear-cut. The results of that analysis are presented in Table 5-7.

Table 5-7
Aggregate Vote Choice – Senate

Variable	Model with Competition	Model with Previous Percent
Dem. State Party Advertising	-.207* (.087)	-.117 (.317)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	.220 (.141)	-.761 (.647)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	-.604** (.229)	-2.571** (.462)
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	-.373 (.242)	-.938 (.665)
Rep. State Party Advertising	-.036 (.087)	.248 (.320)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	.047 (.125)	-.298 (.622)
Rep. Candidate Advertising	.323 (.205)	4.401** (.706)
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	.582** (.213)	1.176 (.712)
Competition / Previous Percent	4.862** (.244)	.195* (.074)
1994 Dummy	4.089** (1.225)	4.499 (2.402)
1998 Dummy	.940 (1.320)	.576 (2.605)
2000 Dummy	.715 (1.422)	1.796 (2.813)
2002 Dummy	3.510* (1.461)	3.039 (3.020)
Constant	33.489** (1.748)	28.323** (6.225)
R ²	.893	.653
Number of Cases	165	111

Cell entries are ordinary least squares coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

As with House campaigns, several measures of candidate campaign activity had statistically significant coefficients in the expected direction. In the model using previous

percent as the control, for example, both Republican and Democratic candidate advertising had an effect on voters. Grassroots contact by both candidates, on the other hand, had no statistically significant effect, and neither did any of the activities performed by the state political parties. In the model using level of competition as the control, Democratic candidate advertising again reduces Republican vote share, but in this case it is Republican candidates grassroots contact – and not advertising – that has a statistically significant effect. Furthermore, in this latter model one of the state party variables exhibits a statistically significant coefficient; Democratic state party advertising proves to reduce Republican vote share. While this is not overwhelming evidence that state party efforts have an strong impact on vote share, it does make sense that any impact would be seen in Senate races, where the constituencies of the party and the candidate are the same (the entire state). What is more certain, however, is that candidate efforts – particularly advertising – do have an effect on aggregate votes in Congressional elections.

Turning to the question of turnout, I again use district level voting data merged campaign spending data to estimate a linear model. Previous research (Brox, 2002) as well as logic suggest that increased campaign activity should result in higher turnout rates. In addition to the campaign variables, I include several control variables related to turnout. Income, race, and residential mobility are individual level characteristics that are associated with political participation, so I have included aggregated measures of median household **income**, percent **minority population** in the district, and **residential mobility** in the model. Contextual features also have an impact on aggregate turnout, so I include a measure counting the number of days before the election one has to be registered in

order to vote⁴² (**registration days**) as well as variables measuring the amount of competition in the state (**presidential battleground, Senate competition, average House competition**). Given the pooled nature of the analysis, I have included dummy variables for the years. Finally, in an effort to create a more parsimonious model, I estimate the model a second time, replacing all of the control variables (except the competition measures) with **previous turnout**, on the assumption that state-level characteristics that would affect turnout in a given year were also operating two years prior.

I estimate the turnout model on statewide voter turnout in 1992, 1994, 1998, and 2000. As before, I omit 2002 from this analysis because the CFAP did not make available the data on campaign spending for House candidates in 2002.

The results of the aggregate turnout analysis are presented in Table 5-8. Since the dependent variable is coded as the percent of the voting age population turning out to vote, positive coefficients indicate an effect that increased the turnout rate while negative coefficients indicate an effect that decreased turnout.

Unfortunately, in the aggregate turnout analysis none of the eight campaign variables have statistically significant coefficients. In the model with the aggregate control measures, measures of racial composition and registration requirements have statistically significant coefficients in the expected direction; in the model with previous percent, the measure of previous turnout does positively (and significantly) correlate with current turnout. Yet the lack of impact of any of the campaign variables is disappointing

⁴² See Powell (1986) for a discussion of the impact of registration requirements on turnout.

Table 5-8
Aggregate Turnout – Statewide

Variable	Model with Aggregate Measures	Model with Previous Turnout
Dem. State Party Advertising	.072 (.116)	-.085 (.118)
Dem. State Party Grassroots	-.240 (.204)	-.237 (.206)
Dem. Candidate Advertising	.043 (.175)	.099 (.181)
Dem. Candidate Grassroots	.063 (.234)	-.074 (.238)
Rep. State Party Advertising	-.014 (.102)	.031 (.105)
Rep. State Party Grassroots	.217 (.156)	-.097 (.164)
Rep. Candidate Advertising	.118 (.232)	.012 (.236)
Rep. Candidate Grassroots	1.55 (.273)	.289 (.278)
Previous Turnout	–	.595 (.063)**
Income	1.45x10 ⁻⁴ (.000)	–
Residential Mobility	-.038 (.176)	–
Minority Population	-.278 (.055)**	–
Registration Days	-.274 (.057)**	–
Senate Competition	.577 (.546)	.678 (.553)
Presidential Battleground	-.170 (.462)	.720 (.466)
Average House Competition	-.798 (1.868)	2.627 (1.852)
1994 Dummy	-15.155 (2.362)**	-20.394 (3.563)**
1998 Dummy	-19.641 (2.623)**	-18.710 (2.527)**
2000 Dummy	-5.070 (2.647) ^a	-.146 (2.364)
Constant	57.822 (5.170)**	26.730 (3.860)**
R ²	.776	.753
Number of Cases	127	127

Cell entries are ordinary least squares coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses.

** - significant at .01 level

* - significant at .05 level

^a – significance = .058

and probably erroneous. As was the case at the individual level, multiple processes are probably at work, with parties working not to increase total turnout but only turnout among likely supporters (and possibly working to demobilize opponents). It is possible that with data at a lower level of aggregation (county, or voter tabulation district) that

includes measures of underlying partisanship or normal voting, these campaign efforts would be shown to have mobilization and/or demobilization effects.

Discussion and Conclusion

The preceding analyses provide some interesting detail regarding the campaign effects associated with candidates and parties involved in campaigns for Congress. In general, it appears that candidate activity has an important impact on vote choice and perhaps an impact on turnout. State party activity, on the other hand, does not have much of an impact on vote choice or turnout when included in models that control for the activity of the candidates.

But that candidate activity does have some varied effects. Advertising and grassroots contacting showed both activation and persuasion effects at the individual level. In the aggregate, candidate advertising and grassroots contact were associated with higher vote total for the sponsoring candidate. At the individual level, the effects were more prominent in Senate elections while in the aggregate, the effects were more prominent in House elections.

By considering the efforts of both candidates and parties, and by counting only those components of the campaign designed to reach voters, this paper provides a clearer picture of what types of campaigns have effects, what those effects are, and in what circumstances do they manifest themselves. But an even better description of campaign effects would be possible if better data were used within the analytical framework presented here. With regard to the turnout analyses, gathering data from a lower level of

aggregation, data that included district partisanship or normal voting, would permit a more nuanced look at the mobilization and demobilization effects of campaign activity. It is likely that effects associated with state party campaigning would manifest themselves there. Also, finding campaign spending data disaggregated into distinct time periods throughout the fall campaign season would permit aggregate level analyses in which campaign activity could be matched to time-series polling data. Such an analysis would help answer questions related to when partisans are activated to support the party's candidate, when independent and other-party voters are susceptible to persuasion, and when campaign effects on vote choice cease and candidates and parties should begin focusing on mobilizing supporter. Yet with a framework that looks to both candidates and parties and focuses solely on voter contact spending, such questions are well worth exploring.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

The context of American elections changed dramatically over the past 10 years. Not only did the amount of money in politics increase dramatically between 1992 and 2002, but the regulatory environment in which that money was raised and spent also changed. Contextual changes such as Motor Voter legislation and Congressional redistricting changed the playing field for candidates and parties, giving the former new districts in which to compete and forcing both to attend to new groups of voters. Furthermore, technology brought about opportunities for candidates and parties to reach voters in novel and interactive ways.

With these changes we would expect that Congressional campaigns would change dramatically as well. Given that political elites – candidates as well as party leaders – respond strategically to the electoral context, it is only natural that they will adapt their campaign techniques in ways that help them achieve their goal of winning elective office. Such strategic behavior is most clearly manifested in the way they create campaigns, and specifically in the way they allocate resources to various campaign components. Thus as many elections have become less competitive over the last decade, we should expect to see different types of campaigns as time moves forward: campaigns for sure winners will look quite distinct from the sure losers, and those in the few competitive races will spend lots of money, most of which will be devoted to activating, persuading, and mobilizing voters.

The implications of these changes are important for American democracy, as elections nominally select government officials and implicitly decide who gets represented and what policies will be enacted. Since campaigns affect voters who in turn decide election outcomes, by looking at campaigns and their effects, we shed light into the first stage of the democratic process and illustrate how the campaign behavior of candidates and parties translates into public policy.

Summary of Results

The empirical chapters of this dissertation provide insight into three aspects of recent Congressional campaigns. First, they describe the breadth of activity in campaigns and how campaign activity varies among candidates and between candidate and party campaigns. Next, they discuss the factors that parties and candidates consider when making decisions regarding the allocation of resources to various components of a campaign. Finally, they assess the impact of campaigns on voters in Congressional elections, using both individual and aggregate models and giving particular attention to those components of the campaign designed to mobilize and persuade voters.

Describing Campaigns

In Chapter 3, I use Federal Election Commission data on campaign spending to describe candidate and party campaigns in Congressional elections from 1992 to 2002. When adjusted for inflation, campaign spending increased dramatically for all House candidates (especially those running in open seats) and for Senate candidates running for

open seats. Indeed, while incumbent spending advantages over challengers remained relatively constant over the period, spending by open seat candidates began to look remarkably like that of incumbents. Among state parties, spending increased during the ten year period, and I observe a see-saw pattern of higher levels of spending during the more intense presidential election years and lesser spending during the midterm election years.

Regarding how that money is spent, I find that candidates spend most of their funds on voter contact. Indeed, 50 to 60 percent of candidate campaign budgets go to voter contact, with Senate candidates spending a larger portion of that on advertising and House candidates spending more on grassroots campaigning. Candidates then devote around a quarter of their budgets to overhead and a smaller fraction to fundraising. Parties, given that they are permanent organizations, spend more on overhead – generally 55 to 60 percent of their budgets. They devote another third to voter contact.

Strategic Behavior

In Chapters 3 and 4, I show how several factors play a role in determining where candidates and parties allocate resources. For candidates, the most important factor is competition. Increased competitiveness leads to increased campaign spending on overhead, fundraising, voter contact, and decreased spending on donations to other candidates and groups. Parties, on the other hand, seem only to consider competition when making spending decisions on advertising. Indeed, analyses in Chapter 4 suggest

that competition is the only factor that candidates and parties consider when allocating resources to advertising.

But competition is now the only factor that these strategic politicians consider when allocating campaign resources. Candidate status is an important predictor of resource allocation among Senate candidates. For House candidates and state parties, the campaigns waged by Presidential and Senate candidates bear on the formers' resource allocation decisions. The analyses of Chapter 4 suggest that strategic politicians look to what others in their area are doing before they allocate precious funds to important components of the campaign.

Campaign Effects

In Chapter 5 I provide an innovative assessment of campaign effects. By focusing on only those components of the campaign designed to reach voters, I avoid generating biased estimates of campaign effects that one gets by using total campaign spending. I augment these campaign data with National Election Studies data so that I can estimate individual level models of turnout and vote choice. I use aggregate voting and contextual data to estimate district (or state) level models of turnout and vote choice as well.

At the individual level, it is important to consider different types of campaign effects. By estimating the models separately for Democrats, independents, and Republicans, I show how the efforts of the parties can have both persuasion and activation effects on vote choice, and both mobilization and demobilization effects on turnout. Specifically, the results at the individual level show that candidate efforts have

activation effects in House elections and both activation and persuasion effects in Senate elections. Regarding turnout, the evidence is more limited, but results are suggestive of both mobilization and demobilization effects associated with candidate efforts. Unfortunately, the individual level results in Chapter 5 show that state party campaigns do not have much of an impact on vote choice or turnout when included in models that control for the activity of the candidates.

In the aggregate, campaign effects are clearly visible. In the case of House elections, candidate efforts have the expected effects on vote totals, while in the case of Senate elections the results are more mixed, but there is nonetheless evidence that advertising and/or grassroots campaigning has an effect on vote totals. Unfortunately, the efforts of the state parties are largely unimportant in the explanation of voting in the aggregate. Furthermore, the efforts of both candidates and parties did not appear to influence aggregate turnout once one controls for other factors known to influence voter participation.

Directions for Future Research

Given the importance of, as well as the interest in, research into campaigns, it is important the future studies of campaign and campaigns effects consider the two main contributions of this project: a focus on those components of the campaign designed to reach voters, and a conception of the campaign as the product of the efforts of the many groups (the candidate and party organizations, in particular) working to win the election. With that said, there are several avenues for future research in this area.

First, research into the nature and effects of campaign spending would benefit from having campaign spending data coded by the date of expenditure. By knowing when campaigns are spending money on particularly components or activities, two types of analyses are possible. One type is descriptive work that would show how spending priorities change over the course of the campaign. The other type is work into the strategic nature of resource allocation; such research would show how resource allocation shifts based on changing circumstances (shifts in voter preferences, opponent expenditures, campaigning by outside groups).

A second avenue of future research would be to assess optimal resource allocation strategies given different circumstances. With extensive data on campaign spending and aggregate voting, it would be interesting to know what is the best possible method for allocating resources to the various components of the campaign. With additional contextual data, such analyses could be extended to discuss optimal resource allocation given varying electoral contexts; for example, such work could show what the best resource allocation strategy would be for an experienced challenger facing a weak incumbent in a presidential election year.

A third avenue of future research would be to consider a broader array of campaigns. The preceding analyses only take into account the campaigns created by the candidates and the state political parties. Future work should seek to incorporate the efforts of county and local party organizations, interest groups, labor unions, 527 committees, and other who join in the effort to influence the outcome of a particular election.

Finally, future research in this area should consider of a broader array of effects. The preceding analyses are limited to vote choice and turnout effects – the effects most important from the point of view of those running the campaigns. But the efforts described in the preceding chapters will have effects on other aspects of campaigns such as voter learning and sophistication, intra-campaign shifts of public opinion, and the dynamics of future campaigns such as fundraising and challenger entry.

Future scholars will be left with these, and many other, questions that will certainly be answerable with sufficient data and clear focus on campaigns and their role in American democracy.

Appendix – Description of Variables

Variables in Chapter 3

Candidate

year

state

district – 0 indicates Senate candidate

candidate

party

votes – from USHR clerk’s website –

<http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/elections.html>

percent – calculated

status – incumbent, challenger, or open seat candidate

win – 1 if winner, 0 if loser

turnout – from USHR clerk’s website

sqmle – land area of the district in square miles – Adler, E. Scott. “Congressional District Data File.” University of Colorado, Boulder, CO.

Comp1 – competitiveness of the district – 0 (safe dem), 1 (likely dem), 2 (leans dem), 3 (tossup), 4 (leans rep), 5 (likely rep), 6 (safe rep) – data are from Roll Call on the following dates: 3/2/92, 3/9/92, 6/15/92, 6/18/92, 6/22/92, 5/9/94, 5/12/94, 5/20/94, 5/18/98, 5/15/00, 5/20/02 – any gaps in those data filled in from CQ Weekly Report on the following dates: 9/19/92, 10/24/92, 10/8/94, 10/22/94, 10/24/98, 9/23/00, 10/5/02, 10/26/02

Comp2 – Comp 1 “folded in half” – measures absolute competitiveness without partisan dimension – 0 (uncompetitive), 1 (slightly competitive), 2 (somewhat competitive), 3 (highly competitive)

Campaign finance data – from www.campaignfinanceanalysisproject.com - see further description at Fritz and Morris (1992), pp. xi-xii.

all – total campaign spending

unitem – unitemized expenses

parties – donations to party organizations

ideogrp – donations to ideological groups

civicorg – donations to civic organizations

other – donations to candidates in other states

same – donations to candidates in the same state

cge – constituent gifts and entertainment

staffvol – staff and volunteer expenses

pmb – persuasion mail and brochures

tradcamp – traditional (grassroots) campaigning

othermed – other media advertising

elecmed – electronic media advertising (including internet)

polling – polling expenses

telemktg – telemarketing (fundraising) expenses

dirmail – direct mail (fundraising) expenses

events – cost of fundraising events
foodmtg – food and meeting expenses
travel
equip – computers and office equipment
campauto – campaign automobiles
telephon – telephone expenses
lawyacct – lawyer and accountant fees
bankfees – bank and investment fees
othertax – other taxes
salary – salary and payroll taxes
rentutil – rent and utility payments
supplies – office furniture and supplies

Party

year

state

name

party

VAP – voting age population – from FEC website – www.fec.gov

turnout – 1994 from USHR clerk’s website – other years from FEC website

sqrmile – land area of the state in square miles – Adler, E. Scott. “Congressional District Data File.” University of Colorado, Boulder, CO.

Comp1 – competitiveness of the state – calculated from aggregate votes for USHR in all districts in a state – calculated as absolute margin of (Dem % – Rep %) – score for each year is the average of the margins from that year’s election and the previous two (i.e. $92\text{Comp1} = (92\text{AbsMargin} + 90\text{AbsMargin} + 88\text{AbsMargin})/3$)

Comp2 – rescaled so that higher values indicate increased competitiveness –
 $\text{Comp2} = (100 - \text{Comp1})$

Campaign finance data – state party administrative spending files from <ftp://ftp.fec.gov/FEC/> - coded by author based on guidelines from Fritz and Morris (1992), pp. xi-xii.

all – total campaign spending

unitem – unitemized expenses

cge – constituent gifts and entertainment

staffvol – staff and volunteer expenses

pmb – persuasion mail and brochures

tradcamp – traditional (grassroots) campaigning

othermed – other media advertising

elecmed – electronic media advertising (including internet)

polling – polling expenses

telemktg – telemarketing (fundraising) expenses

dirmail – direct mail (fundraising) expenses

events – cost of fundraising events

foodmtg – food and meeting expenses

travel
equip – computers and office equipment
campauto – campaign automobiles
telephon – telephone expenses
lawyacct – lawyer and accountant fees
bankfees – bank and investment fees
othertax – other taxes
salary – salary and payroll taxes
rentutil – rent and utility payments
supplies – office furniture and supplies

Variables in Chapter 4

Campaign spending variables – all variables were adjusted to 2002 constant dollars, then adjusted for every 1000 voters, then logged

Overhead – furniture and office supplies, rent and utility payments, salaries and payroll taxes, other taxes, bank and investment fees, lawyer and accountant expenses, telephone expenses, automobile expenses, computers and office equipment, travel expenses, food and meeting expenses

Fundraising – direct mail fundraising, fundraising events, telemarketing

Advertising – electronic media advertising (including internet), other media advertising

Grassroots contact – persuasion mail and brochures, traditional campaigning, staff and volunteer expenses

Donations (candidates only) – to candidates in the same state, to candidates in other states, to civic organizations, to ideological groups, to political parties

Level of Competition – competitiveness of the race – 0 (safe dem), 1 (likely dem), 2 (leans dem), 3 (tossup), 4 (leans rep), 5 (likely rep), 6 (safe rep) – data are from Roll Call on the following dates: 3/2/92, 3/9/92, 6/15/92, 6/18/92, 6/22/92, 5/9/94, 5/12/94, 5/20/94, 5/18/98, 5/15/00, 5/20/02 – any gaps in those data filled in from CQ Weekly Report on the following dates: 9/19/92, 10/24/92, 10/8/94, 10/22/94, 10/24/98, 9/23/00, 10/5/02, 10/26/02 – measure is actually “folded in half” to get absolute level of competition (0-uncompetitive, 1-slightly competitive, 2-somewhat competitive, 3-highly competitive)

Presidential Battleground – 5-point scale based on data from Shaw (1999c)

Gross Ratings Points – “average” number of gross ratings points purchased in the state by the presidential campaign – From Shaw (1999b)

District Land Area – land area of the state in square miles – Adler, E. Scott.

“Congressional District DataFile.” University of Colorado, Boulder, CO.

Incumbent – dummy variable

Open Seat – dummy variable

Democratic – dummy variable

Variables in Chapter 5

Individual Level Analyses

Vote choice – 0 for Democrat, 1 for Republican

Turnout – 0 for failure to vote, 1 for voting

Campaign spending variables – all variables were adjusted to 2002 constant dollars, then adjusted for every 1000 voters, then logged

Advertising – electronic media advertising (including internet), other media advertising

Grassroots contact – persuasion mail and brochures, traditional campaigning, staff and volunteer expenses

Party Identification – NES variable

Income – NES variable

Race – 0 if white, 1 if nonwhite

Level of Competition – competitiveness of the race – 0 (safe dem), 1 (likely dem), 2 (leans dem), 3 (tossup), 4 (leans rep), 5 (likely rep), 6 (safe rep) – data are from Roll Call on the following dates: 3/2/92, 3/9/92, 6/15/92, 6/18/92, 6/22/92, 5/9/94, 5/12/94, 5/20/94, 5/18/98, 5/15/00, 5/20/02 – any gaps in those data filled in from CQ Weekly Report on the following dates: 9/19/92, 10/24/92, 10/8/94, 10/22/94, 10/24/98, 9/23/00, 10/5/02, 10/26/02 – measure is actually “folded in half” to get absolute level of competition (0-uncompetitive, 1-slightly competitive, 2-somewhat competitive, 3-highly competitive)

Strength of Party Identification – 7 point NES variable “folded in half”

Interest – NES variable

Efficacy – NES variable

Age – NES variable

Age-Squared – computed from NES variable

Education – NES variable

Length of Residence (in one’s house) – NES variable

Aggregate Analyses

Percent vote for the Republican – calculated based on vote data from USHR clerk’s website – <http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/elections.html>

Percent turnout – turnout divided by voting age population – data from USHR clerk’s website, Federal Election Commission, and Electoral Assistance Commission

Level of Competition – as above

Previous Percent – percent vote for Republican in the district in the previous election

Income – mean household income in the district or state

Residential Mobility – percentage of the population that moved within the last two years

Minority Population – percent of the population that is nonwhite

Registration Days – number of days between Election Day and the close of voter registration

Senate Competition – level of competition measure for Senate races

Average House competition – average of level of competition for all state’s House races

Presidential Battleground – 5-point scale based on data from Shaw (1999c)

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