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THE PARTIES STRIKE BACK

In the aftermath of his party's defeat in the 2004 presidential election, Howard Dean launched his candidacy for the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee with a bold suggestion. At a forum for eight potential successors to previous DNC chairman Terry McAuliffe, Dean suggested that the Democrats adopt "a 50-state strategy in this country, not an 18-state strategy. If you don't run, you can't win," (Nagourney 2004). This suggestion, echoed by many of the other candidates for the DNC chairmanship, tapped into the frustrations—and aspirations—of many Democrats in late 2004. As one party strategist noted, "People are in the mood for somebody to offer a strategy for success here—not just how we win in 2006, but how do we change the party so it is competitive in the long term?" (Marlantes 2004).

With the "Fifty-State Strategy," Dean was advocating a shift in focus away from a single-minded pursuit of short-term electoral success. Instead, Dean was arguing that Democrats should campaign in areas that were not immediately competitive in hopes of making them competitive in the future. To that end, the Democratic National Committee would place renewed emphasis on building grassroots organizations¹ in all fifty states. Upon his election to the chairmanship, Dean implemented his plan, and within a year it paid dividends with Democratic wins in unlikely congressional districts (Kamarck 2006; Kasindorf and Kenworthy 2006). Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama would continue this strategy in 2008 by implementing a fifty-state strategy during his general election campaign (Wolffe 2008). But the true test of the Democrats' strategy shift would be seen beyond 2008.

Around the same time, the Republican National Committee was in the midst of a project that would radically alter the way it would persuade and mobilize voters. Following the 2000 election,

Republican technicians began to upgrade their Voter Vault database. Essentially an electronic card catalog of the nation's potential voters,

Voter Vault, according to the instruction and training manual the R.N.C. distributes, allows Republican workers to log on over the Internet, pull up a voter profile and then—after calling that particular voter or making a home visit with a hand-held computer—add vital personal information to the record . . . This under-the-radar data-mining campaign has been joined more visibly by Republican figures [who] asked supporters to supply the party with their church membership rolls, hunting-club registries, college-fraternity directories and P.T.A. membership rosters. The hope is not only to target individuals and specific segments of society, but also to get those quarries into the voting booths. “We can tailor our message to people who care about taxes, who care about health care, who care about jobs, who care about regulation—we can target that way,” [said] Ed Gillespie, the Republican National Committee chairman. (Gertner 2004, 44)

Voter Vault would make use of advanced (and cheap) computer technology as well as developments in market research to compile a national voter file with extensive political, cultural, and consumer data on each voter. With these data, Republican candidates and party organizations could “microtarget” voters—deliver narrowly tailored messages directly to voters—rather than rely on television advertisements and hope that targeted groups would be watching the right channel at the right time.

Thus, 2004 would prove to be a dynamic year for America’s political parties. The Democrats implemented a shift in strategy, while the Republicans developed new tactics in their quest to win elections. But why did these changes take place? Why would the Democrats return to grassroots organizing in all fifty states, even those that were Republican strongholds? And why would the Republicans invest money and time to develop a national voter list—a task traditionally left to state and local party organizations? The answer to both questions is simple: because the parties want to win elections. But the story is more complicated. American political parties are doing new and important things in election campaigns in order to remain relevant.

POLITICAL PARTIES: A FUGITIVE PROPOSITION

The Fifty-State Strategy and Voter Vault are not the only examples of the recent advances made by the American political parties. Like their Republican counterpart, the Democratic National Committee sought to create a national database of Democratic voters. The DNC’s initial effort, DataMart, had over 160 million entries by the 2004 election (Farhi 2004). DataMart was later scrapped, to be replaced by Vote Builder for the 2008 election cycle

(Jaquith 2007). But the advances made by the parties were not limited to voter identification and targeting; throughout the 2000s the parties adapted their nominations processes, mobilization efforts, and finance operations to increase their relevance in the American electoral system.

Both parties took increased control of the calendar for their presidential nomination contests. Democrats in 2006 altered their calendar to lessen the influence of Iowa and New Hampshire (Nagourney 2007) and proceeded to strip delegates from Florida and Michigan for scheduling primaries not in accordance with the new rules (Shear 2007). Republicans had earlier altered party rules to prohibit 2008 nomination contests before February 5; they chose to punish violators (most notably Florida) by stripping convention delegations of half of their delegates (Santora 2007). Also related to the nomination calendar, in 2004 the Republican National Committee scheduled its national convention for August 30 through September 2 (Lambro 2002). By pushing the convention back to the end of the summer, the Republicans managed to place the major media event quite close to the traditional Labor Day beginning of the general election campaign when voters would be starting to pay attention. This decision had the added benefit of extending the nomination season and allowing their nominee to continue to spend money under the nomination season campaign finance rules while also shortening the general election season, thus maximizing the impact of the general election public funding. In 2008, both parties would schedule their conventions as close to Labor Day as possible (Cillizza 2007).

In response to the Democrats' traditional strength at last-minute get-out-the-vote operations, the Republicans in 2000 implemented a coordinated seventy-two-hour strategy to make sure that Republican voters were mobilized to go to the polls and vote during the last three days of the campaign (Kirchhoff and Kornblut 2002). In subsequent elections this effort would be conducted by a formal seventy-two-hour task force that would use personal contact by over 1 million volunteers to mobilize Republican voters (Mooney 2004). Republicans also innovated in their mobilization efforts by reaching out to churches in an effort to expand their base and turn conservative voters out on Election Day. By collecting directories of church members, Republican party organizations sought to register and mobilize Christian congregations because "people who regularly attend church usually vote Republican when they vote," (Cooperman 2006).

In the area of campaign finance, party contributions to candidates took on a new importance. While remaining nominally marginal, contributions by party organizations to candidates were seen as "signals" to other contributors—in particular, political action committees (PACs)—that the recipients were worthy of support (Herrnson 2007a). In addition, parties began leaning on their own candidates, especially incumbents and others in uncompetitive

contests, to use funds from their own campaign accounts and leadership PACs to support fellow partisans in close races (Dwyre et al. 2007; Herrnson 2007b). Finally, following their wins in the 1994 midterm elections—and accelerated upon reclaiming the White House in 2000—Republicans instituted the “K Street Strategy.” This strategy aimed to marshal the resources of federal lobbyists (frequently located along K Street in Washington) toward Republican goals. Lobbyists, if they wanted access to the now-Republican-controlled government, were expected to purge Democrats from their offices and to funnel large campaign contributions to Republican candidates and party organizations (Confessore 2003).

It would not be an overstatement to suggest that 1996–2008 constituted a critical period in the development of party campaigning. Yet the parties are fundamentally a “fugitive proposition.” As the parties evolve, journalists and pundits do well in describing the changes, though journalistic accounts of party campaigning tend to be atheoretical and idiosyncratic. Those most capable of offering more thorough descriptions and explanations for evolving party behavior—scholars—have largely failed to come to terms with the development of party campaigning during the critical period of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Thus, parties are a “fugitive proposition,” elusive in nature; their true character is captured only in fleeting glimpses by journalists and only in detail by scholars in hindsight.

In this book I provide that detail and perspective on the current state of party campaigning. Specifically, in the subsequent chapters I address three important research questions related to party campaigning in the most recent critical period. First, I provide a thorough description of how the national political parties are involved in American campaigns and how that involvement differs from the recent past. Next, I offer an analysis of how parties target resources in order to remain relevant in American campaigns. Finally, I assess the impact of systemic changes, most notably changes in campaign finance regulation enacted in 2002, on the behavior of political parties. As we shall see, the new role that parties play in American campaigns is more than just a service provider to autonomous candidates; instead, it is an independent role that suggests we have entered an era of parties in partnership with candidates.

PARTIES AS PARTNERS—AND WHY WE SHOULD CARE

In this book I argue that American political parties have become more than the organizations that support their relatively independent candidates; they have become important actors in their own right in ways that are fundamentally different from the roles they have previously played in the American electoral system. In answering the question, What are parties doing now?

I help address the empirical puzzle of how parties remain relevant to campaigns in light of changes that would seem to marginalize them.

Unfortunately, much of the recent scholarship on American political parties fails to recognize the reality that parties are now partners with candidates in the business of conducting election campaigns. Indeed, the last fifty years of political party scholarship has closely tracked the ups and downs of these organizations as they have adapted to changes in the political system. Until the 1960s, political parties used to dominate the business of running campaigns. Throughout much of the twentieth century, parties controlled the nomination process, selecting which candidates would run for office under the party label (Hershey 2007). Those campaigns would be run by party organizations; the national parties developed separate organizations to run presidential, senatorial, and congressional campaigns (Kolodny and Dwyre 1998). Party machines then mobilized voters on Election Day, promising government services in exchange for people's votes (Hershey 2007).

Yet the 1960s was a(nother) critical period for political parties. Changes in electoral rules and communications technologies served to weaken the parties and usher in an era of candidate-centered elections. Declining partisan identification (Wattenberg 1990), increased use of primaries (Herrnson 1988), changes in campaign finance regulations (Dodenhoff and Goldstein 1998), and new technologies (Foster and Muste 1992) all contributed to the weakening of ties between candidate and party organization. As a result candidates grew increasingly independent of the parties when running for office.

Not to be left out of campaigns, parties proceeded to reform themselves. In the 1970s, the Democratic Party pursued reform through altering the structure of the party. The work of several party reform commissions led to the Democrats adopting new rules to regulate the selection of convention delegates and the organization and operation of state parties (Bibby 1998). These reforms took a toll on the Democratic Party as an organization; the new focus on candidates and special interests resulted in the organizational needs of the party being neglected (Herrnson 1998). The Republican Party also pursued reforms in the 1970s, but instead of altering rules and structure, the Republicans transformed the function of their party. Following electoral defeats in 1964 and in the mid-1970s, the Republicans initiated programs designed to provide candidates with the campaign money and services they would need to win (Cotter and Bibby 1980; Herrnson 1998). Unlike the Democrats, however, the development of the service party gave the national Republican Party more influence over national and state elections (Cotter and Bibby 1980). Democrats would quickly follow the Republicans in the development of party as a service organization (Herrnson 1988).

Though it began as early as 1972 with Saloma and Sontag (1972), scholars by the 1980s were starting to counter the previously dominant

candidate-centered/party-in-decline paradigm with a recognition of this new perspective of the role of political parties in campaigns: the parties were strengthening as organizations in service to their candidates. The key features of the service-orientation framework are the ability of the national party organizations to raise funds and those organizations' use of funds to provide services on behalf of their candidates. Herrnson (1988, 47) describes this model as parties "act[ing] as appendages or accessories to the campaign organizations of their . . . candidates, providing advice, information, and a myriad of specialized campaign services that would otherwise have to be purchased from professional campaign consultants." Even as campaigns modernized and political consultants began providing many of these same services, it was the political parties who adapted to incorporate consultants into the parties' efforts and to fund the services through the use of coordinated expenditures (Kolodny and Dulio 2003). Significant scholarship on political party organizations in the late 1980s and 1990s assumes this service-orientation framework,² and even as recently as the late 1990s and early 2000s, we still see scholars assessing the role of parties by describing their ability to serve candidates in a candidate-centered electoral environment.³

Yet it is important to move beyond the service-orientation framework that dominates the literature and consider how parties serve as partners with candidates in the conduct of American election campaigns. The importance of this endeavor is hard to overstate. Campaigns themselves—whether conducted by candidate or party—are fundamental to democratic governance. They serve as a forum for deliberation by presenting information to voters that allows the latter to exercise retrospective judgment on officeholders and to provide prospective guidance on the direction of public policy. Inasmuch as they are designed to affect voting behavior, campaigns are also significant in that by understanding the campaign process we come to know about the strategies of the elites seeking to control government and the preferences of the citizens who will put them there.

The parties' particular role in the process is also important. Since they continue to provide services to their candidates, it is only through the consideration of party campaigns that one can see how parties prioritize among candidates and subsequently how candidates employ party-provided resources in the pursuit of electoral success. Not only do parties help candidates, but they also engage in independent campaigning and activities done with medium- and long-term party goals in mind. Basically, understanding the "what" and "why" of party campaigning—as well as its impact—is critical because those things educate, persuade, and mobilize the American electorate.

Parties have been involved in American campaigns since the 1820s, for most of that period as the primary strategic decision makers (Bruce

1927; Merriam 1923; Sait 1927). Reforms of the 1960s and 1970s, however, forced parties into a support role, and as a result American elections became “candidate-centered” (Agranoff 1972; Sabato 1981). But that is no longer the case; parties have reemerged as significant independent forces in the American electoral landscape. These reforms began as early as the 1980s, though much of this reemergence took place in the critical period of 1996–2006. Earlier reforms, from roughly 1980 to 1995, established the parties as important players and provided them with the resources to assist their candidates.

But it was during the later period of reform, from 1996 to 2006, that we see several developments that helped move parties back into a prime position to influence election outcomes. Several legislative changes affected the parties. Passage of the National Voter Registration Act (“Motor Voter”) made it easier for people to register to vote (Knack 1999). While the NVRA made voter registration easier and thus expanded the electorate, it did not increase voter turnout (Martinez and Hill 1999). As a result, parties had to adapt to effectively persuade and mobilize an expanded electorate. In addition, a majority of states implemented some form of early or convenience voting (Giammo and Brox 2010). While such changes made it easier for individuals to participate, the expanding window in which voters could cast ballots required parties (and candidates) to address two groups of voters⁴ through a longer get-out-the-vote effort.

Political parties also adapted during this period in response to judicial decisions. In *Federal Election Commission v. Colorado Republican Federal Campaign Committee*,⁵ the U.S. Supreme Court held that political parties could conduct independent expenditure campaigns on behalf of a candidate while still engaging in coordinated spending with that candidate. This ruling would be affirmed in *McConnell v. Federal Election Commission*,⁶ thus freeing political parties to campaign both in coordination with and independently from their candidates. Political parties also began making extensive use of “issue advocacy” around 1996. Rather than promoting the election or defeat of a candidate, issue advocacy involves communicating with the public in hopes of shaping public opinion on matters of public policy. Though made legal with the passage of the Federal Election Campaign Act in the 1970s and subsequent judicial interpretation in *Buckley v. Valeo*,⁷ issue advocacy became an important tool for political parties as a result of a 1995 FEC advisory opinion⁸ that allowed parties to pay for issue advocacy with mix of hard (regulated) and soft (unregulated) campaign funds.

Even changes that occurred beyond the regulatory environment helped the parties return to a position of influence in the period of 1996 to 2006. Significant technological changes took place that give parties new methods for political communication (Farrell 1996). 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) provided parties with new ways to reach voters and citizens with new forms political information. Advances in computing also had an impact on parties, as better hardware and software made campaign management and voter contact easier and less costly (Bernstein 1991; Purnick 2004).

While these developments went a long way toward advancing the role of parties in American campaigns, their positions would fundamentally shift after the 2002 elections, as new campaign finance regulations were enacted following the passage of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA). Parties were affected by several of BCRA's changes, including the elimination of soft money, changes in contribution limits, new restrictions on electioneering communications, and a prohibition on engaging in both coordinated and independent spending in a race. While the restrictions on electioneering communications⁹ and the prohibition on making both coordinated and independent expenditures¹⁰ were later invalidated by the U.S. Supreme Court, parties nonetheless had to adapt to a new fundraising environment characterized by a loss of unregulated “party building” funds and changes in the amounts individuals and PACs could give to parties and changes in the ways the national parties could fund candidates and affiliated party organizations.

As a result of—or perhaps in spite of—these changes in the regulation of campaign finance, there was been a dramatic increase in the amount of money in political campaigns for both candidates and parties (Brox 2005). Even when adjusted for inflation, parties were able to bring significant financial resources to bear as they waged increasingly independent campaigns.

In essence, several events largely outside the control of the parties themselves occurred during a crucial ten-year period, most notably the passage of a significant reform in the way campaigns are financed. Yet while many thought BCRA would further marginalize the power of parties to influence campaigns, parties instead reacted strategically by accelerating a strengthening process begun in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Huckshorn et al. 1986). By the end of this crucial period, not only would parties become strong enough to provide their candidates with valuable services, but they would also be strong enough to exert independent influence on election campaigns, even to the point of occasionally holding sway over the very candidates that are supposed to be at the “center” of American campaigns.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND STRATEGIC BEHAVIOR

While the electoral environment has generally evolved over the last half century—with significant changes in the last decade—it remains as true today as it ever has that political parties seek to control government by

helping their candidates win elections. To remain relevant in the face of technological and regulatory change, parties must adapt; this adaptive process is the topic of the subsequent chapters of this book. Yet whatever the role they play in elections—dominant, in service to candidates, or partners—political parties must behave strategically in order to accomplish the goals of winning elections and controlling government.

Just as candidates are political elites, political parties are comprised of elites who engage in strategic behavior designed to accomplish certain goals. However, unlike a candidate (who is primarily concerned with maximizing his or her ability to win an election), a party must attempt to pursue its own goals as well as those of its candidates in an effort to maximize total expected utility. Given that parties are institutions created by strategic politicians to help the latter pursue their own goals (Aldrich 1995), it can be argued 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.¹¹ To that end, parties must strategically allocate resources in order to maximize their candidates' electoral success. It is unlikely, however, that all of a party's candidates will 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.

But helping its candidates win office is not the only goal. Beyond the short-term considerations of helping candidates win current elections, party elites must consider longer range goals. National political parties are interested in enhancing their own power. Early efforts on this count were achieved through a successful program of nationalization and integration that reversed the earlier decentralized flow of power within the party and made state and local parties more dependent on the national party organization (Cotter and Bibby 1980). More recently national party organizations have attempted to increase their importance and influence through determining the schedule for the presidential nominations (Nagourney 2007) and through attempts to compel candidates to fundraise on behalf of the parties (Heberlig et al. 2008). National political parties are also interested in supporting future candidates. Unlike candidates, who tend to focus on their most immediate reelection campaign, parties are enduring organizations that must plan for the needs of future candidates and campaigns. To that end, parties must continually develop technology, recruit personnel (leaders, staff, and volunteers), and research policy proposals that will enable their organizations to function between election cycles and to recruit and support candidates in future campaigns. But perhaps most important, parties have to find, register, persuade, and mobilize future voters. Databases such as the DNC's Vote Builder and the RNC's Voter Vault are vanguard efforts at creating national voter lists that contain political, demographic,

and consumer information that will help parties in their voter outreach efforts now and in the future.

In other words, parties have a long-range goal of organizational development. As articulated by Cotter and colleagues (1984), a party develops a strong organization by being “programmatically active” (i.e. engaging in electoral activity) and “organizationally complex” (i.e. maintaining a bureaucracy capable of sustaining electoral activity). Parties must be able not only to engage in electoral activity and provide candidates with services in the current election cycle, but they must also allocate resources strategically so that the party organization strengthens (or at least does not weaken), making future electoral success possible. It is clear that party organizations strengthened in the 1960s and 1970s (Cotter et al. 1984)—albeit during the period in which campaigns became candidate centered—and a more recent assessment (Aldrich 2000) shows that party organizations at the turn of the twenty-first century had further strengthened as they fully adapted to their service role. But with the numerous changes highlighted above, it now appears that parties have strengthened even further, to the point that they can now play an independent role in campaigns as partners to their candidates.

While political parties have many resources at their disposal, including policy/rhetoric, internal party rulemaking, and the power of their officeholders, it is clear that the most important resource for both immediate electoral success and long-term organizational development is money. Financial resources give political parties the ability to campaign now or save for future contests, to hire staff and to invest in infrastructure, to strengthen state and local party committees and/or support candidate campaigns. While much has been written on how parties raise money,¹² relatively little has been offered on how that money is spent,¹³ and almost nothing examines how national political parties develop strategies for allocating financial resources to secure short-term electoral success and to ensure long-term viability and competitiveness.

THE PARTIES-AS-PARTNERS FRAMEWORK

As the American political parties enter the second decade of the twenty-first century, they face an electoral landscape quite distinct from that of twenty years ago. As summarized above, advances in technology as well as changes in the regulatory environment (especially campaign finance reform enacted in 2002) made party ascent possible. As strategic actors, political parties innovated to enhance their role in the system through new types of service provision, stronger efforts at rulemaking, better forms of mobilization, and new methods of campaign finance. Thus they were able to develop

into something more than organizations merely in service to self-selected candidates.

The parties-as-partners framework makes sense of this enhanced role for parties in American electoral politics. While not the central and dominant force that they were in the first half of the twentieth century, today's political parties are certainly more important players than they were as service parties in the 1980s and 1990s. This does not mean that political parties have abandoned their efforts to provide services to their candidates; instead, it means that in some respects political parties now play independent roles in shaping the outcomes of American elections. The parties-as-partners framework illustrates this dual role that current political parties now play, in service to candidates and as independent forces in elections.

Political parties serve as partners to their candidates (as opposed to being strictly subservient to their candidates as service providers) when they act independently in pursuit of collective party goals. While political parties continue to provide services to candidates such as voter list development, grassroots mobilization, and assistance with various campaign management tasks (Herrnson 1988), they also pursue their own short- and long-term goals. For example, in the short term political parties act as partners when focusing on establishing or maintaining legislative majorities through making independent expenditures in competitive races; while certainly helpful to the candidates lucky enough to receive such expenditures, it is solely a party decision as to whether or not to make these expenditures. Likewise, political parties serve as partners when they make longterm investments in party building. In both cases, political parties are helping candidates by pursuing their own independently established goals, acting as equal partners to their candidates in the pursuit of electoral success.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

In the subsequent chapters I present a picture of the role that political parties currently play in the American electoral system. To reiterate, political parties are important and relevant to modern campaigns, and it is important to document how parties adapted in the late 1990s and early 2000s to remain relevant in spite of dramatic changes (especially campaign finance reform) that would seem to have crippled them. The reforms and technological developments that so radically altered the way campaigns are conducted provide parties with the opportunity to adapt in order to increase their influence in American electoral politics.

The story I will tell about political parties during this period concerns not only what the parties do to influence campaigns, but also how party activity relates to what candidates are doing and what the overall impact of

American political parties is on election outcomes and campaign processes. To that end I will describe how the national political parties make use of greater financial resources not only to provide services to candidates, but also to exert independent influence in competitive races as well as engage in party building in pursuit of both short-term and longer range goals. In doing so, political parties work as partners with their candidates in a joint effort to win office and to strengthen the party for future electoral success.

In the next chapter I develop the theory that parties have evolved past their service role of the 1980s into organizations that should rightly be seen as partners to the candidates. I do not go so far as to suggest that parties are central to elections and campaigns, but likewise it is also no longer the case that the system is strictly candidate-centered. Building on Joseph Schlesinger's (1965) theory of the party nucleus, I offer a theory in which parties as rational actors consider all campaign components (candidates and outside groups, most notably) when making decisions about campaign activity. This theory has implications for the specific behaviors that parties engage in during elections, behaviors that will be explored in the subsequent three empirical chapters.

In chapter 3 I address how parties strategically allocate finances to state and local party organizations. The transfer of funds from national party organizations to state and local party committees presents a puzzle for scholars of elite behavior: why would the national parties take valuable resources and delegate their use to another organization? It turns out there are good reasons to do so, and over the course of the 1990s both political parties transferred significant funds to states based on competitive concerns. Following the BCRA reforms of 2002, however, soft money was gone, and parties had to rethink their distribution of their scarce hard money. While competition was still a key factor, parties also considered longer term goals; Republican sought to continue gains in areas that had been realigning since the 1960s, and Democrats sought to rebuild in areas that had been abandoned in the quest for Electoral College majorities. This chapter describes the process by which the parties allocated funds to their state-level organizations and explains how those allocation strategies changed as a result of reform.

In chapters 4, 5, and 6 I turn my attention to candidates—or more specifically, to how parties view candidates. Parties have multiple candidates to consider for support, and they have multiple functions on which they can spend. Should they give a direct contribution? What about coordinated and/or independent spending as well? Should the party go in with television advertising designed to persuade, or mobilization efforts designed to turn out the party faithful? By looking at data on party resource allocation by function, I describe in these chapters how parties allocate resources to direct contributions to candidates (chapter 4), coordinated expenditures (chapter

5), and independent expenditures (chapter 6). In each chapter I also analyze the factors that go into party resource allocation decisions and how those decision dynamics changed over the course of less than a decade in a way that increased party relevance and power.

I conclude the book with chapter 7, in which I review the findings from the empirical chapters and draw broader conclusions about the role of parties in campaigns, the nature of strategic behavior on the part of elites, and the impact of reforms on the parties. I also offer my assessment on the role parties will play in campaigns—both independently and in support of their candidates—in the near future.