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WINNING THE HOUSE: RE-ELECTION STRATEGIES, CHALLENGER CAMPAIGNS, AND MOBILIZATION AGAINST INCUMBENTS

by

JOEL KENNETH LEFKOWITZ

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Political Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1999

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Abstract

WINNING THE HOUSE:
RE-ELECTION STRATEGIES,
CHALLENGER CAMPAIGNS, AND
MOBILIZATION AGAINST INCUMBENTS

by

Joel Kenneth Lefkowitz

Adviser: Professor Frances Fox Piven

In this dissertation, I provide a theoretical account of the importance of mobilization against incumbents, and empirical estimates of its impact in the congressional elections of 1994 and 1996.

Through multivariate probit analysis of individual vote decisions reported in the National Election Studies, I find that in 1994 mobilization by the Republican Party mattered more than it had previously and more than other variables. Republican mobilization efforts increased the probability of voting Republican for Congress by 28 percentage points.

Mobilization is one element of a model that I derive from the work of Gary Jacobson and David Mayhew. The model also includes the quality of challengers and their campaigns as well as incumbent efforts to secure pork barrel projects for their districts, the positions they take, and the resources they use to win re-election.

Through multiple regression analysis on district level data for the 200 Republican incumbents running for re-election against Democratic opponents in 1996, I estimate that at their most extensive AFL-CIO mobilization efforts cost Republicans about 7 percentage points. I also find that moderation contributed modestly to Republican re-election efforts: for each 25 partisan votes on which they defected from the Republican Party position, these candidates gained about 1 additional percentage point of the district's vote.

I examine in detail the districts of Republican freshmen running for re-election through a content analysis of 2,294 articles in newspapers circulating in their districts. I confirm a modest increase in the vote for Republican incumbents as a result of policy moderation. I find that Republican incumbents increased their vote share by about .8 percentage points for each of their pork projects reported in the local press. I develop a new measure of challenger campaign quality, which I find reduced the incumbents' share of the vote by as much as 3 percentage points. With such campaign effects taken into account, I estimate that the separate impact of the mobilization efforts by the AFL-CIO and environmental groups reduced the share of Republican votes by about 4 percentage points.

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Preface

Towards the end of the Fall 1994 semester, after the Republicans suddenly won control of the Congress, the class I was teaching on political parties and elections at Hunter College considered the readings for the course in light of the election results in two separate rounds. First came sharp criticism of the obvious failings of the literature to predict the results, then, a reconsideration of the elements of an explanation that could be derived from the literature. Those events and those discussions began the work on this dissertation.

I was told often as a child that a Ph.D. was "a license to learn." As a child, I found this incomprehensible, but now, as I consider myriad improvements for the next version of this text, I finally understand.

Joel Lefkowitz

New Paltz, New York

"my imagination will not attempt to set bounds to the daring depravity of the times. The stock-jobbers will become the praetorian band of the Government, at once its tool & its tyrant; bribed by its largesses, & overawing it by clamours and combinations"

-- James Madison, 1791

"Come Senators, Congressmen, please heed the call…
There's a battle outside and it's raging
It'll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls
For the times they are a-changin'"

-- Bob Dylan, 1963

Acknowledgments

None of this would have been possible without the love and support of my mother, Fay Marks; my uncle, Jean Lemberger; and my brother Robert Lefkowitz, and all my family, to whom I am eternally grateful.

I appreciate the contributions of many friends to my education in politics as an undergraduate at Wesleyan University. I thank especially John Houston, who taught me a great deal about politics, not only at Wesleyan, but also through his successful insurgent campaign against the incumbent majority leader in the Massachusetts State Senate. I feel fortunate to have been able to participate in his campaign as well as to observe it. That is where I first learned the difference that grassroots mobilization can make in an electoral campaign.

I am very grateful to Frances Fox Piven, the model scholar, for teaching me politics and political science, and providing an ideal toward which to aspire. I am grateful as well to other members of the City University of New York Graduate School faculty: Ned Schneier for sharing some of his vast knowledge of Congress with me; Asher Arian, for the encouragement so necessary to completing this work; John Mollenkopf for the data on union membership by congressional

districts, and Professor Bernard E. Brown for beginning my graduate education by guiding me through the Federalist Papers, and pointing me towards James Madison's later work. I also thank a Graduate School classmate, Margaret Groarke, who, among other efforts to help me through graduate school, sang Bob Dylan songs with me in the predawn hours on the road to one political science conference after another. I am indebted to Andy Polsky for the opportunity to teach at Hunter College, especially the classes on Parties and Elections in which I began to address many of these issues. I am also grateful to my students, especially Hannah Arnold for her outstanding presentation at the 1997 New York State Political Science Association panel on Congressional Elections.

Thanks also for help in thinking about politics, political science, teaching, writing, and more from my friends Jon Bailey, Peter Davis, Dick Dialectic, Jeff Jones, Alex Kotlowitz, Julie Light, Lisa Miller, Bob Ostertag, Dan Perlstein, Sarah Plotkin, Debbie Schneider, Eleanor Stein, Paul Wessel, and Dan Zegart, and my sisters, Mia and Liz.

Last, but not least, I thank Elaine for "the line that only you could see," and Marley and Zoe, for "more than you can imagine."

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Chapter 1

"THE HARDEST PROBLEM IN AMERICAN POLITICS": MOBILIZATION AGAINST INCUMBENTS

"Newt Gingrich called winning the House 'the hardest problem in American politics'" (Pitney and Connelly, 47). Gingrich explained, "You have to have a national tide, with candidates, with campaigns, with resources. The House is the hardest place in American politics to win because you have to have so many parallel races simultaneously" (*New York Times,* January 22, 1996). For the opposition party, most of these races are waged at a disadvantage, as challengers face more experienced candidates, usually with far more resources. In the 1990s, Gingrich dealt with the problems of winning the House, first as the leader of the opposition party, and then as the leader of the governing party.

Two hundred years earlier, the leader of the congressional opposition addressed the advantages of incumbents and the problems facing insurgents. James Madison is best known among political scientists for his discussion of majority tyranny and the solution he proposed in the *Federalist Papers*. But Madison's essays in the

1790s, as well as his letters and speeches, also deserve attention for their discussion of minority tyranny and his discovery of the political party as a solution to that problem.

After reviewing Madison's ideas, I will briefly discuss Gingrich's leadership of the insurgent campaign in the 1994 election, and the Republican re-election campaign of 1996, describing the elements of a model of congressional elections. I will then outline the analysis that will follow.

Madisonian Theory in the 1790s

Madison perceived in 1790 a dangerous turn toward what he had condemned in *Federalist 62:* "the unreasonable advantage [unstable government] gives to the sagacious, the enterprising, and the moneyed few over the industrious and uninformed mass of the people" (380-381). Worried by Alexander Hamilton's economic program, Madison wrote to Thomas Jefferson

> my imagination will not attempt to set bounds to the daring depravity of the times. The stock-jobbers will become the praetorian band of the Government, at once its tool & its tyrant; bribed

> by its largesses, & overawing it by clamours and combinations" (1791, 58).

In contrast to the success of the wealthy at turning the government to their advantage, Madison observed that "Many of the sufferers were poor and uninformed . . . . so dispersed, that their interests and efforts could not be brought together" (1790, 52).[1] Similarly, in 1793 Madison worried that "The Country is too much uninformed, and too inert to speak for itself" (256).

Madison in the 1790s confronted with dismay the obstacles to majority action that he had viewed with favor in *Federalist 10*. In the most famous of the *Federalist Papers,* Madison declared that "the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property" (79) and noted many other sources of faction. In addition to differing economic interests, people had "zeal for different opinions concerning religion," and "attachment to different leaders" (79). Further, Madison suggested, people were so "disposed to vex

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[1]Or, as John Dewey put the same point, "The prime difficulty . . . is that of discovering the means by which a scattered, mobile, and manifold public may so recognize itself as to define and express its interests (146). Aptly (although he seems to apologize for his vocabulary by terming it "a bit of Marxist jargon") Robert Westbrook summarizes the problem as "the 'public-in-itself' had to become a 'public for itself'" (309).

and oppress each other" that, where they had no good reason to quarrel, "the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts" (79). That, Madison thought at the time, was the good news: all those crosscutting cleavages would disrupt efforts by the poor majority to render the distribution of property less unequal. "Extend the sphere," that is, the size of the country, Madison realized, "and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority . . . will . . . discover their own strength and . . . act in unison" (83).

Concerned in *Federalist 10* with majority tyranny, Madison had dismissed the problem of minority tyranny in a sentence, unconcerned with the problems that a majority unaware of its own interests and strength would face. A few years later, however, he observed that "experience shows that in politics, as in war, stratagem is often an overmatch for numbers" (1792b, 248).

In short, in the 1790s Madison perceived an asymmetrical conflict. On the one hand, a self-aggrandizing tyrannical minority controlling the government sought to secure its position exchanging rewards and support with a favored class. Today political scientists call something of

this sort the incumbency advantage. On the other hand, Madison saw the difficulties of creating an informed public and coordinating an effective challenge, what political scientists today call information costs and collective action problems.

The solution to these impediments to effective expression of majority interests, which Madison discovered in both theory and practice, was the creation of a political party to mobilize opposition to incumbents. Madison urged that "the people ought to be enlightened, to be awakened, to be united, that after establishing a government they should watch over it" (1792c, 120) "By making one party a check on the other" (1792a, 86). Today political scientists call this mobilization.

E. E. Schattschneider summed this process up in a memorable parenthetical observation: "Jefferson, defeated within the Washington administration, went to the country for support" (16). Schattschneider focused on the dynamics of political change: losers in social conflicts, at least those with the hope that things could be different, seek to expand the scope of conflict, mobilizing new participants (2-16).

Gingrich and the Creation of a Formidable Challenge, 1994

Gary Jacobson, the most astute contemporary analyst of congressional elections, suggests that "Three elements create a formidable challenge: a good reason for voters to desert the incumbent, an acceptable alternative to the incumbent, and sufficient resources to acquaint voters with the first two" (1992, 115).

No one understood Jacobson's insights better than Newt Gingrich, who put each of these three ideas into practice.

To provide voters with reasons to defect from Democratic members of Congress, Gingrich orchestrated interest group mobilization against incumbents, and developed and disseminated the rhetoric challengers used. Fred Barnes reports that

> To bolster Republican strength . . . . Gingrich recruited a dozen groups to back the full contract in exchange for special access . . . . the National Federation of Independent Business, the Christian Coalition, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Restaurant Association, Americans for Tax Reform, the National Association of Realtors and the National Association of Homebuilders, among others. "All are muscle groups which can instantly mobilize members," says a Republican official (27).

Interest group mobilization against incumbents is a major indicator of, as well as a major cause for, reason to defect from incumbents. "No single factor in the Republican revival after Bush's defeat," write Dan Balz and Ronald Brownstein, "has been more important than the party's success at reconnecting with and invigorating the profusion of anti-Washington and antigovernment movements sprouting in every state" (162). Many of these groups were closely linked to the Republican Party. Grover G. Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform and Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition had worked together at the Republican National Committee (RNC) (Balz and Brownstein, 318). Norquist's group received millions of dollars from the RNC (Drew, 223). In their mobilization efforts, Republican activists "read the works of Saul Alinsky and Tom Hayden and fancied themselves shock troops for the Right. 'We viewed ourselves as the mirror image of the leaders of the New Left of the '60s,' Reed said" (Balz and Brownstein, 318).

Gingrich also sought to incite defection from Democratic incumbents with an aggressive vocabulary, urged on Republican candidates in a series of tapes, memos, and lectures, fashioning, "literary stilettos for attacking Democrats" (Balz and Brownstein, 145). Michael Kranish reports that Gingrich "advised GOPAC trainees that

inflammatory language was a key to winning races. He suggested describing Democrats with words such as 'sick'; 'pathetic'; 'lie'; 'traitors'; 'greed'; 'antifamily'; and 'disgrace'" (*Boston Globe* November 20, 1994).[2]

To groom the candidates to carry these messages, Gingrich found the ideal tool in GOPAC, a political action committee "established to aid Republican candidates seeking state legislative seats, with the idea that they would make a healthy 'farm team' of future congressional candidates" (Sabato and Simpson, 78). In a GOPAC fundraising letter, Gingrich described his plans to "gain a Republican majority in the House of Representatives" (quoted in Sabato and Simpson, 90). They would, he explained in another letter, "groom promising future congressional candidates . . . where voting demographics show there is a Republican voting strength" (quoted in Balz and Brownstein, 146).

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[2]In October 1994, Gingrich suggested that Susan Smith "the mother killing her two children . . . vividly reminds every American how sick society is getting . . . . and the only way you get change is to vote Republican" (quoted in *San Francisco Chronicle,* November 28, 1995). Noting Smith was sexually abused by her stepfather, "a leader in the Christian Coalition and member of the state Republican executive committee," Molly Ivins describes Gingrich's rhetorical strategy as "the Big Lie technique. If he keeps associating horrible tragedies with liberalism or welfare, some people are bound to accept the association without thinking about it" (*San Francisco Chronicle,* November 28, 1995).

To provide the funds these candidates needed, Gingrich strategically reallocated resources from Republican incumbents to challengers. Barnes reports that "In 1992 only a dozen Republican incumbents steered money to challengers. In 1994, 140 gave" (26). Carlos Moorhead and John Myers, who were not among the contributors, soon found that Gingrich would ignore their seniority in selecting committee chairs (Barnes, 26). In the end, Balz and Brownstein report, Gingrich's "ingenious device to funnel incumbent-raised money into nonincumbent races . . . . raised another $5 million to $6 million for [Republican] challengers" (48).

Republican Re-Election Efforts, 1996

In 1996, as Speaker of the House, Gingrich turned his attention to the problem of re-electing incumbents rather than defeating them. Republicans turned to traditional pork barrel politics, fashioned their supporters into a modern praetorian band, and sought to regain support by moderating their positions. In effect, they adopted the usual incumbent re-election strategies described by David Mayhew in *Congress: The Electoral Connection*.

Gingrich instructed Appropriations Subcommittee Chairs to consider whether there were "any Republican members who could be severely hurt by the bill or who need a specific district item in the bill" (*Wall Street Journal*, May 29, 1996). As they got what they needed, Dan Morgan reports, "conservative Republican House freshmen seeking reelection brag about the highway, water and research projects they have brought home to their states and districts" (*Washington Post,* October 20, 1996).

David Maraniss and Michael Weisskopf note that "The Republican takeover of Congress . . . set in motion a historic shift in campaign giving" (112). They report "an obvious quid pro quo . . . almost went unnoticed. From House Republicans came measures that gratified industry . . . . From the beneficiaries of that legislation come millions of dollars in campaign contributions" (111). Republican leaders, especially Gingrich's successor as Republican whip, Tom Delay, demanded those contributions, as Richard Berke described it, by "putting the squeeze on potential donors with a raw aggressiveness unusual even by Washington standards" (*New York Times,* June 17, 1995). Delay explained "We're just following the old adage of punish your enemies and reward your friends" (quoted in Killian, 125).

"Republicans proposed," Jacobson reports,

> a budget that would impose as much of the cost as possible on people who usually vote Democratic (if indeed, they vote at all) . . . . half the spending cuts in the Republican plan . . . were to be borne by families in the poorest fifth of the population, with 75 percent coming from the poorest two-fifths" (1997a, 144-145)

Marjorie Randon Hershey notes that "some of the Republican initiatives . . . could have been scripted by the Democrats to play into traditional public concerns about Republicans as the party of privilege" (216). She quotes a frequently stated view: the Republicans "dramatically overreached" (216).

But, she adds, "After the negative public reaction . . . congressional Republicans moved reluctantly toward compromise, led by the small group of moderates" (216).

The Republican victory, the mobilization efforts on which it relied and the policies that followed, had already spurred countermobilization by labor unions, environmentalists and abortion rights activists. At the same time, even though they received less attention, the Christian Coalition, National Rifle Association, and other groups vigorously mobilized on behalf of republican candidates (Jackson, 43).

Concerted efforts to influence electoral outcomes have received relatively little attention from congressional scholars. Political scientists have compiled a large enough body of research denying the significance of campaigns that researchers conventionally refer to it as the "'minimal effects' school of campaigns and political communication" (Finkel, 18). In this dissertation, I show that, at least in the 1990s, mobilization deserves more attention.[3]

An Overview

In chapter 2, I examine the normal political science of congressional elections, which did not predict or explain why Republicans won the House in 1994. I apply previously successful formulae, in which mobilization

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[3]Despite the importance of mobilization, it is an occasional rather than regular feature of political life. Martin Shefter points out that political "parties will mobilize and organize an extensive popular following *only if* they must overcome substantial opposition to gain or retain power and *they lack other means* of accomplishing this end" (141, emphasis added). Shefter notes that excluded groups that can do so rely on powerful allies rather than mobilization of their constituency (141). Incumbent elites, he suggests, prefer collusion with rival party leaders much as "business firms [collude] to restrict price competition" (143). Incumbent leaders are less interested in mobilization, he argues, because they "fear that pursuing such a strategy will lead them to lose control over their own party" (143).

efforts are not considered, and show that they were inoperative in 1994. In addition, I review discussions of the literature's central concept, the incumbency advantage, which failed to explain the most crucial aspect of the 1994 results.

In chapter 3, I show the importance of attention to mobilization in explaining the 1994 elections. I perform a probit analysis on individual level data from the American National Election Study to understand the factors influencing the 1994 vote, which I compare with other recent midterm years. I find that in 1994, mobilization mattered more, more than other factors, and more than in previous years. In addition, I find that voters who switched to the Republican Party in 1994 remained closer to Democrats in their policy preferences, and that non-voters disproportionately favored the Democrats.

In chapter 4, drawing on the importance of mobilization established in chapter 3, and the excellent work of Gary Jacobson and David Mayhew, I derive a model of congressional elections that I apply in the chapters that follow. As suggested above, the model draws on Jacobson's emphasis on the previous experiences of challengers and their resources. I develop an understanding of mobilization against incumbents as both cause and indicator of what

Jacobson terms "reason for voters to desert the incumbent." To explain incumbent re-election strategies, I rely on Mayhew's attention to credit claiming, position taking, and advertising, reinterpreting advertising in terms of the resources need to advertise.

In chapter 5, I estimate the model developed in chapter 4 with district level data from the 1996 congressional elections. I test hypotheses derived from the model about the electoral impact of moderation, pork barrel projects, and fundraising by Republican representatives, as well as the effects of mobilization against incumbents, the quality of challengers, and the resources those challengers command.

In chapter 6, I supplement this analysis, using the same model, and testing the same hypotheses, with a new data set. I examine in detail the districts of Republican freshmen through a content analysis of 2,294 articles in newspapers circulating in their districts. I document further the benefits to Republican incumbents of ideological moderation and pork barrel politics, as well as the significant impact of mobilization against Republican incumbents and challenger campaigns.

In chapter 7, I briefly summarize the findings of this dissertation, noting both the limits and possibilities of mobilization.

In sum, in this dissertation, I provide a theoretical account of the importance of mobilization against incumbents, and empirical estimates of its impact, in the context of a model that takes into account the re-election strategies of incumbents and the campaigns of their challengers.

Chapter 2

THE NORMAL SCIENCE OF CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS AND THE 1994 ANOMALY

Political scientists have developed a number of concepts to explain -- and formulae to predict -- congressional election results. But, as John Ferejohn, Brian Gaines, and Douglas Rivers observe, "no one familiar with the literature would have accurately predicted what happened in 1994" (2). Focused on the advantages of incumbents, political scientists were unprepared for their defeat.

For forty years, elections had not changed the partisan control of the House of Representatives. "For decades," one journalist comments, "congressional contests . . . were about as exciting as watching the corn grow" (*Des Moines Register,* April 28, 1996). So routine had congressional elections become that Ronald Reagan famously observed that "there is less turnover in the House than in the Supreme Soviet" (*Washington Post,* December 14, 1988). So routine had congressional elections become that political scientists had reduced them to formulae.

After calculating four of these formulae with 1994 data, I consider three approaches to the central explanatory concept in the congressional elections literature: the incumbency advantage.

Forecasting Congressional Elections: Four Formulae

Arguing that "the vote cast in midterm congressional elections is a referendum on the performance of the president and his administration's management of the economy" (1975, 824), Edward Tufte developed a formula for predicting midterm losses based on public opinion of the president's performance and economic change.[1]

Tufte used a fall Gallup poll question on presidential approval to measure popularity and the percent change in real per capita disposable income in the year before the election as a measure of economic performance. These variables were combined in a formula that measured midterm losses in terms of the change in the party's share of the

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[1]The referendum conception dates back at least to 1913, when James Bryce explained that a midterm election "enables the people within two years to express their approval or disapproval of [the president's] conduct by sending up another House of Representatives which may support or oppose the policy he has followed" (128).

nationwide congressional vote compared to the "normal" share, taken to be the average of the last 8 midterms. Tufte's formula is

$$(1) \qquad V_i = N_8 + B_0 + B_1(\Delta E_i) + B_2 P_i$$

where V refers to the vote nationwide for the incumbent president's party; N_8 to the average vote for that party in the previous 8 elections; ΔE_i to economic change in each specified midterm year, measured as "Yearly Change in Real Disposable Income Per Capita"; and P_i to "the president's approval rating (in the Gallup Poll) in September-October of the midterm year" (1978, 111, 114). B_0 is a constant term; Tufte calculated the constant the last time the Democrats were in power during a midterm election, 1978, as -10.74, (43.66 - 54.40) (1978, 114).

The Democratic Party's share of the vote over the previous eight midterm elections is 54.99 percent. The November 1994 *Survey of Current Business* cites preliminary figures for October 1994 (in constant 1987 dollars) as $14,910, a 3.56 percent increase over the $14,398 recorded for October 1993 (35). In September and October 1994, Gallup reported approval ratings for President Clinton of

39, 44, 42, and 48 percent; the average of these four ratings is 43.25 percent.

Substituting the data in the formula:

1994 Nationwide Congressional Democratic Vote = 54.99 - 10.74 + (.622 * 3.56) + (.132 * 43.25) = 52.17.

Tufte reports that more than 90 percent (R^2 = .912) of the variance in the nationwide distribution of the congressional vote is explained by the two variables he employs in his parsimonious model (1975, 818). This is an extraordinarily powerful result, yet applied to 1994, Tufte's formula predicts a Democratic vote share of 52.2, 6.7 percentage points higher than the actual result, incorrectly forecasting continued Democratic control of Congress. Even taking the lowest of the Clinton approval ratings (39 percent) would yield a predicted Democratic congressional vote of 51.61 percent.

Michael Lewis-Beck and Tom Rice claim to have improved upon Tufte's work by directly predicting seat loss rather than distribution of the national vote, and also by specifying indicators that can be used to make earlier predictions. Like Tufte, they seek to measure presidential popularity and economic performance, but they use the

Gallup poll 6 months before the elections and the change in real per capita GNP in the quarter six to nine months before the election. Lewis-Beck and Rice's formula is

$$(2) \qquad \text{Seat Loss}_t = -70 + .84\ P_{t-6} + 5.37\ G_{t-6}$$

In the formula *t* refers to election time, *t-6* to 6 months before the election, P represents presidential popularity, G represents growth in GNP. President Clinton's approval rating in the May 1994 Gallup poll was 51 percent. GNP per capita grew 1.39 percent from the first to second quarters of 1994, from $25,266.54 to $25,617.97 (*Survey of Current Business*, November 1994, 14, 35). Substituting the data in the formula,

$$1994 \text{ Democratic seats} = -70 + (.84*51) + (5.37*1.39) = -20.$$

Reporting $R^2 = .80$ over the elections they analyzed, Lewis-Beck and Rice call their equation "an excellent forecasting tool," but their formula predicted 1994 would not be a "bad year" for Democrats (479-481), with an estimated loss of 20 seats, 32 fewer than the actual result.

Richard Brody sets aside economic factors to focus directly on presidential popularity, and suggests this formula (reported by Witt):

(3) Seat loss = -.92 * change in presidential popularity

Brody measures the change in presidential popularity from the first poll of the presidency to the poll in March of the midterm election year. Two Gallup polls in March of 1994 reported Clinton's approval rating, the first at 50 percent the second at 52 percent, representing a one percentage point decline or increase from the 51 percent recorded in the first poll of the Clinton presidency. The Washington Times reported approval "down to 50 percent" in the first March 1994 poll under the headline "Clinton Takes a Nose Dive in Polls" (March 13, 1994). Headlined "President Is Winning Back Public Support," a USA Today article reported approval "up slightly to 52 percent" in the second March 1994 poll (March 29, 1994). (With a 3 percent margin of sampling error in this poll, the results might not indicate an increase at all.) Brody's formula did best in 1982 by reporting the smallest loss; for 1994 it also predicted a small loss, this time far from accurate: 14 seats.

For Robert Erikson, the constant losses suffered by the president's party in midterm elections make it unrealistic to think in terms of referenda - the voters never express approval. Instead, Erikson suggests that the midterm results should be seen simply as a "presidential penalty," and offers a formula to calculate both the distribution of the midterm vote and the expected loss of seats. His formula for seat loss:

(4) $$\text{Midterm seats}_t = 19.10 + .76 * \text{Presyear seats}_{t-2} + 11.42 * \text{Party}$$

Presyear seats_{t-2} refers to the number of seats won by the president's party in the election 2 years before the midterm election at time t. Party is a dichotomous variable with the value 1 when Democrats occupy the White House, 0 when a Republican is president.

Substituting the data in the formula:

1994 Midterm seats = 19.10 + (.76*256) + 11.42 = 225.

In short, the formula predicts a loss of 31 seats.

Angus Campbell and James Campbell have also emphasized the centrality of the presidential year vote for

understanding midterm losses, developing and revising the concept of a presidential year surge and a midterm decline. The application of this approach to the 1994 election is limited by the lack of presidential coattails in a three-major candidate race in which the president's party lost seats in Congress.

James Campbell's "revised theory of surge and decline . . . expected Democrats to lose only about half as many seats as they actually did" (830). As a result, he considers several alternate re-specifications of the surge and decline model. For example, he considers recalculating the presidential vote "surge" in elections with three major candidates by combining the anti-incumbent vote instead of the more usual consideration simply of the two-party vote. Adding together Bill Clinton and Ross Perot's share of the vote inflates the presidential surge, thereby increasing the expected midterm decline (838-841). While successful for 1994, this approach does not improve the understanding of other three-major-candidate presidential elections. Instead, Campbell argues that a "staggered Republican realignment explains both the apparent flattening of surge and decline and the results of the 1994 midterm" (853). To produce this result, Campbell inserted an additional term

in the equation coded 0 for years before 1980, -1 for the years through 1992, and +1 for 1994 (845).

The formulae described do not take into account district level variables. They seek to predict *how many* seats will be lost without specifying *which* seats will be lost. Even if these formulae had remained accurate, then, their utility would remain limited.

The Incumbency Advantage: Three Approaches

Efforts to explain congressional elections at the district level have fastened on the advantages of incumbency. Since the early 1970s political scientists have tried to measure the incumbency advantage precisely, and to explain its operation.

Andrew Gelman and Gary King assert that previous measurement efforts underestimate the incumbency advantage, and offer a correction. In an article titled "Estimating Incumbency Advantage Without Bias," Gelman and King remark parenthetically that they "ignore the rare occasions that a freshman victory is obtained by beating an incumbent" (1146).

This procedure, however, introduces a bias in the opposite direction. In plain English, they are ignoring inconvenient cases. In technical terms, they have introduced a selection bias by truncating values of the dependent variable. King, writing with Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba, warns specifically against this error in *Designing Social Inquiry*: "Artificial limits on the range or values of the dependent variables produce . . . selection bias" (109).

Theodore Lowi's 1992 American Political Science Association presidential address may hold the explanation for the source of Gelman and King's error, which is evidently not a technical one. Political scientists, Lowi warns, have adopted the perspective of those in power, are "following Leviathan too closely" (1). Gelman and King are, quite literally, taking power for granted.

The assumption that incumbents will continue to hold office is widely shared among political scientists, but explained in different ways. The conception of political parties made famous by V. O. Key helps distinguish among various kinds of explanations for the incumbency advantage. One approach focuses on the party-in-the-electorate, i.e., voter behavior. A second approach focuses on the contribution of the party-in-government, i.e.,

congressional behavior. A third, and more recent, approach, focuses on the party organization, especially challenger behavior.

"Possibly the electorate's decreasing partisan loyalty," Robert Erikson writes, "is the cause of the apparent boost in the incumbency advantage" (1972, 1240). Similarly, seeking to explain "the Decline of Competition in Congressional Elections," John Ferejohn suggest that "voters seem to be shifting away from the use of party affiliation as a decision rule and toward increased utilization of incumbency" (174).

Morris Fiorina considers such explanations "correct . . . . But . . . incomplete" (1989, 48). "The incumbency effect," Morris Fiorina suggests is the product of "increasing numbers of citizens com[ing] to regard their congressman as a troubleshooter in the Washington bureaucracies" (1989, 49). Because Fiorina thinks that "For every voter a congressman pleases by a policy stand he will displease someone else," he finds it logical that "incumbents . . . de-emphasize controversial policy positions and instead place heavy emphasis on nonpartisan, nonprogrammatic constituency service (for which demand grows as government expands)'" (1989, 35-36). This locates

the source of the incumbency advantage in the activities of the party-in-government.

Some recent studies reconceptualize the growth of an incumbency advantage as a growing challenger disadvantage, a failure of the opposition parties to recruit serious opponents to run against the incumbents. In "Decomposing the Sources of Incumbency Advantage in the U.S. House," Steven Levitt and Catherine Wolfram conclude that "virtually all of the growth in the incumbency advantage since the 1960s appears to be attributable to a reduction in the relative quality of challengers" (56). Similarly, Gary Cox and Jonathan Katz conclude that "the bulk of the increase in the overall incumbency advantage, at least down to 1980, can be traced to increases in the quality effect" (493). By this, they mean that "a given quality differential between candidates mattered more to the final outcome" (479).

All of these developments may be taking place simultaneously, all to the benefit of incumbents.

But for all the emphasis on the incumbency advantage, a large number of incumbents were unexpectedly defeated in 1994. I turn, in the next chapter, to an explanation of why that happened, once again taking advantage of V. O. Key's tripod.

Chapter 3

MOBILIZATION MATTERED MORE: EXPLAINING 1994

"Nothing in the extensive literature since 1978 quite prepared us for the Republican takeover of the House of Representatives," a leading political scientist concedes; "no forecasting model came close" (Abramowitz, 874).

With a probit analysis of National Election Study (NES) data, I document how much more mobilization by party organizations mattered in 1994 -- more than other factors, and more than before.

Through a series of paired comparisons of electoral blocs, I also find that there has not been a realignment in the public's preferences for government policies. Instead, the Democratic Party's governing decisions, and failures to decide, as well as Republican mobilization, spurred turnout of the Republican base, while demobilizing part of the Democratic base. In the end, differential turnout proved decisive.

Asymmetrical Mobilization

Since the landmark work of Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, political scientists have compiled a large enough

body of research denying the significance of campaigns that researchers conventionally refer to it as the "'minimal effects' school of campaigns and political communication" (Finkel, 18). In a classic statement of this view, George Gallup once declared that

> Virtually all elections are won or lost before a single word has been uttered in a campaign.... Nine times in ten, election results would be no different if the candidates stayed home, saved their money, their time, their voices and their self-respect (quoted in Gosnell, 413).

Writing more recently, Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba suggested that "if we can predict the election before the campaign, the campaign can hardly be said to have much of an impact" (102). Such forecasts, they insist, "can be made very accurately . . . before the campaign" (102).

Dissenting from this orthodoxy, Stephen Salmore and Barbara Salmore argue for a "revised view [of] campaigns as a major factor" (6), which has received some empirical support. In one early case, William Murphy and Edward Schneier assert that "The 1970 elections proved that volunteer activists could play important roles in the American elections," crediting an estimated 75,000 student opponents of the war in Southeast Asia with victories in both Democratic primaries and the general election (66-67). Particularly with regard to congressional elections,

scholars have begun to conclude that campaigns matter (see Herrnson).

New research has also pointed to the importance of mobilization in political participation (see, especially, Rosenstone and Hansen). As Jan Leighley wrote reviewing recent literature in that subfield, increasing attention to the role of strategic mobilization in explaining participation has modified the traditional emphasis on socioeconomic status. Leighley suggests that "high socioeconomic status is associated with political participation because it places the individual in a social context where participation opportunities are abundant" (191). Moving beyond explanations in terms of resources and culture, Leighley argues that people participate in politics not simply because they can, or they want to, but also because they are asked, that is mobilized.

To assess the impact of electoral mobilization in the 1994 congressional elections, I performed a probit analysis using NES data, the results of which I display in Table 1. The dependent variable is the party of the candidate for whom the respondent voted in elections for the House of Representatives, coded 0 if Democratic, 1 if Republican. Following the procedure utilized by Jacobson, party identification is coded 1 if the respondent is a strong, weak, or independent Republican; 0 for independents; -1 for

a strong, weak, or independent Democrat (127). Similarly, ideology (self-rating on a liberal-conservative scale) is coded 1 if conservative, -1 if liberal, and 0 if neither. Presidential evaluation is coded in the same way, 1 if approving of Republican or disapproving of Democratic Presidents, -1 if disapproving of Republican or approving of Democratic presidents, and 0 if neither. The other variables are coded 0 or 1, indicating the absence or presence of a Democratic or Republican incumbent running for reelection and Democratic or Republican mobilization effort. I operationalize mobilization by respondents' report of party phone or personal contact or mail from candidates. These variables measure the party-in-the-electorate (partisan identification and ideological placement), the party-in-government (presidential evaluation, incumbency status), and party organization (mobilization by each of the parties). The model performs well, correctly predicting more than 80 percent of the cases each year. The coefficients shown in Table 1 are maximum likelihood estimates of change on the cumulative normal distribution.

Table 3.1 reveals the dramatically increased importance of Republican mobilization in 1994. Republican mobilization has the largest coefficient for 1994, even though in the three previous elections Republican mobilization was not statistically significant at the conventional 95 percent

confidence level. Democratic mobilization was also not statistically significant in 1986 and 1990. In addition, Table 3.1 reveals the asymmetrical impact of mobilization in 1994: Republican mobilization had one and a half times the impact of Democratic mobilization.

In short, in previous years ignoring mobilization was reasonable, but not in 1994. Republican mobilization in 1978 and 1994, but not in the elections in between, underlines an important point made by E. E. Schattschneider: losers mobilize (16). Unlike the other elections for which extensive survey data is available, these were the only two elections following presidential contests the Republicans lost.

To facilitate interpretation of the probit coefficients, Table 3.1 displays a pair of calculations of probabilities of voting Republican. First the calculation is made with the variable of interest present, that is x=1, with all other variables set at their means. Then the calculation is made with the variable of interest absent, that is x=0, again with all other variables set at their means. The difference in these probabilities measures the marginal effect of that variable. For example, in 1994 the probability of voting Republican without Republican mobilization effort, with all other variables held constant at their means, was 40 percent. The probability of voting

Republican with Republican mobilization effort, and with all other variables held constant at their means, was 68 percent. In other words, controlling for other variables, mobilization by the Republican Party increased the probability of voting Republican for Congress by 28 percentage points, from less than half to two-thirds. This is the largest impact on the vote of any of the variables for 1994, and much larger than it had previously been, as can be seen in Table 3.1.

Following a procedure used by Ferejohn, Gaines, and Rivers, Table 3.2 presents a decomposition of the sources of change in congressional voting, comparing the midterm elections of 1990 and 1994, averaging the effects over the samples.

The change in probability over time is

$$\Delta P(Y_{it}=1) = \Phi(B'_t x_{it}) - \Phi(B'_{t-1} x_{i,t-1})$$

(Φ is the standard normal cumulative distribution function) which Ferejohn, Gaines, and Rivers show (17) is approximately equal to

$$\phi((B'_t x_{it} + B'_{t-1} x_{i,t-1})/2)(x_{it}\Delta B_t + B'_{t-1}\Delta x_{it})$$

(ϕ is the standard normal probability density function).

This procedure allows a separate estimate of the consequences of the changing level of the variable and its changing impact, as displayed in Table 3.2.

The largest change, as Ferejohn, Gaines, and Rivers also report, is that incumbency no longer offers as much of an advantage as it once did. The declining value of incumbency for Democrats accounts for 13 percent of the increased Republican vote. Republican mobilization efforts accounted for 9 percent of the increase in their vote, largely due to the stronger impact of mobilization, rather than its increasing level. Table 3.2 also indicates that a turn toward the Republican Party among voters accounted for about 3 percent of the additional Republican vote in 1994. Growing conservatism among voters accounts for about 1 percent of the increase in Republican voting, and the increased significance of ideology contributes an additional one-half of 1 percent. In the context of these other variables, the change from a somewhat favorable view of George Bush in 1990 to a somewhat unfavorable view of Bill Clinton in 1994 does not appear to contribute to increased Republican congressional voting in 1994.

Thus, the data do not show a negative reaction to Clinton or much change attributable to either the growing level or significance of conservatism. Instead, the data point to the declining value of incumbency and the

increasing importance of mobilization.

In addition to party and candidate campaign efforts, the 1994 elections featured Christian Coalition efforts to mobilize voters. Ralph Reed claimed his organization was "a huge contributing factor" in the Republican victory (quoted in Sabato and Simpson, 140). Analysis of NES data confirms Reed's claim. In 1994, as indicated in Tables 3.3 and 3.4, NES respondents contacted by religious groups were 22 percentage points more likely to vote, and 21 percentage points more likely to vote Republican, than those who were not. (For an account of the manipulation of the content of the voter guides that were the Christian Coalition's major organizing tool, and misrepresentations in them, see Sabato and Simpson, especially 138-139.)

Not Realignment Yet

Politicians and pundits regularly assert that voters sent a message about their policy preferences in the 1994 elections, but election results alone do not reveal how voters evaluate government policy. I use NES data to gain some additional information on voter preferences. By comparing electoral blocs, mapped with NES data, I try to answer V.O. Key's famous question: "How did the standpatters differ from the switchers?" (8) specifically in terms of the

policies they sought from government. I then compare groups of voters and nonvoters.

Comparing Switchers and Standpatters

Categorizing voters according to their 1992 and 1994 votes, I compare the policy preferences of those who voted for Clinton in 1992 and a Republican for Congress in 1994 with those who voted for the same party in the 1992 presidential and 1994 congressional elections.

I measure policy preferences using a series of NES questions about increasing, maintaining, or decreasing federal spending for 11 different purposes. The three choices offered to respondents have been reduced for analytic purposes to two categories by combining the smallest category (invariably increase or decrease) with maintaining spending at the same level. For 7 of the 11 questions, the smallest category had less than 10 percent of valid responses, three other questions had less than 15 percent of respondents in the smallest category.

As indicated in Table 3.5, the policy preferences of Democratic defectors differ at statistically significant levels from Republican standpatters on 9 of the 11 issues examined by the National Election Study. For example, 71 percent of those who had voted for Clinton in 1992 and Republican for Congress in 1994 favored increasing federal

spending on health care, while only 34 percent of those who voted for Bush in 1992 and Republican for Congress favored such an increase. Similarly, twice as large a proportion of switchers as Republican standpatters wanted increased federal expenditures for the environment and AIDS research. At the median difference on these 11 issues, 21 percent more of switchers than of Republican standpatters wanted to increase federal spending.

In contrast, at the traditional 95 percent confidence level, on 9 of these issues we must accept the null hypothesis that Democratic defectors did not differ in policy preferences from Democratic standpatters. Only on food stamps and welfare did the defectors from the Democratic Party favor less federal spending at statistically significant levels, albeit on a number of other issues defectors preferred less spending at levels that approached statistical significance. At the median difference on policy preferences on these 11 issues, 6 percent fewer of switchers than of Democratic standpatters wanted to increase federal spending.

These data suggest there has not been a realignment in the policy preferences of those who defected from the Democrats in 1994.

But if Democratic defectors did not prefer Republican policy positions, or share Republican attitudes and

antipathies, why did they vote Republican? Table 3.6, which summarizes the answers to open-ended NES questions about what respondents liked and disliked about the Republican candidates, confirms that switchers to the Republican party did not defect primarily on policy grounds. Switchers to the Republicans cited both personal characteristics ("honesty," "appearance") and incumbency factors ("done a good job so far," "helps district") more than policy, partisan, or philosophical themes. In contrast, consistent Republican voters expressed what they liked about the Republican candidates in policy, partisan or philosophical terms as often as personal characteristics and incumbency factors combined.

Republican mobilization efforts mattered in gaining the support of switchers, as indicated in Table 3.7. Without such efforts, only 13 percent of Clinton voters in 1992 voted Republican for Congress in 1994; with such efforts, 41 percent of Clinton voters defected. Or, to put the point differently, two-thirds of 1992 Clinton voters who voted Republican in 1994 were wooed by the Republican Party.

Comparing Democratic Standpatters and Abstainers

"The distinction between the people who exercise their franchise and those who do not," E. E. Schattschneider observed, "is by a wide margin the most important feature of

the whole system, the key to understanding . . . American politics" (1975, 95, 101). Accordingly, I compare the policy preferences of groups of voters and nonvoters.

Comparing Clinton voters in 1992 who abstained in 1994 with those who voted Democratic for Congress in 1994, I find these groups differed to a statistically significant degree on 5 of the 11 NES issues, as indicated in Table 3.8. On all 5 of these issues the abstainers preferred greater federal spending. This is consistent with Schattschneider's assertion that "Abstention reflects the suppression of the options and alternatives that reflect the needs of the nonparticipants" (102).

This pattern represents a change from the previous election cycle. Abstainers in 1990 who had voted Democratic in 1988 did not differ in their policy preferences in a statistically significant way from regular Democratic voters on any of the 11 NES issues.

The same pattern can be seen by comparing nonvoters who expressed a preference for the Democratic candidate with those who voted Democratic for Congress, as displayed in Table 3.9.

Table 3.10 shows that greater mobilization would have brought more of the abstainers to the polls. Half of the abstainers who were not mobilized did not vote, but only 20

percent of Clinton voters whom the party worked to mobilize abstained.

In short, the Democratic Party failed to win the votes of people who would have been responsive to more government action or more Democratic mobilization efforts.

But while Democratic failures demobilized part of their base, antagonism to Democratic governance stimulated turnout among their critics. Developing the concept of "negative voting," Samuel Kernell "hypothesizes that citizens displeased with a president's performance are more likely to vote against his party's congressional candidates than are satisfied voters likely to vote for them" (52). NES data for 1994 confirm this view. Those who disapproved were 7 percentage points more likely to vote than those who approved of the President, as indicated in Table 3.11.

Republican leaders typically paint their victory in the 1994 congressional elections as a rejection of the Democrats' governing proposals, especially on health care and crime. Thus, John Boehner (R-OH) declared

> something was burning in America. Health care framed the mindset of the people about this Administration. But the last straw was the crime bill. This was the first time I really saw public opinion race right by the majority in Congress. People were saying "here they go again on the crime legislation, enacting more big social welfare programs." At that point, the smoldering fire became a raging fire (quoted in Gimpel, 16).

NES data, however, shows that three-quarters of those surveyed supported rather than opposed the crime bill. Despite attacks on the crime bill as wasteful spending, even two-thirds of Republicans held the view that the Federal government ought to spend more money to deal with crime.

Of voters among NES respondents, 60 percent of those who said they could not afford health care voted for Democrats, while about 60 percent of those who could afford health care voted Republican. However, while 60 percent of those who could afford health care voted, only 40 percent of those who could not afford health care voted, underlining once again the critical importance of turnout.

Similar findings result from an analysis of a 1994 exit poll. Mitofsky International found that concern with crime increased the Democratic vote by about 5 percentage points. Among those who concerned with health-care, two-thirds voted Democratic.

Differential Turnout

Walter Dean Burnham perceived in the 1994 elections "a very asymmetrical energizing and consolidation of the Republican, but not the Democratic, base" (1995, 384-385). Turnout differed more on partisan lines in 1994 than in earlier years, as indicated in Table 3.12.

An energized Republican base in 1994 also showed itself in greater efforts to influence the vote choice of others, and greater participation in campaigns, such as contributing money or labor, attending meetings, and displaying buttons, stickers, and signs, as indicated in Tables 3.13 and 3.14.

Most political scientists who have examined the issue have asserted that turnout was not a factor. Examining aggregate turnout data before the 1994 National Election Study was available, Brady, Cogan, and Rivers concluded "voter turnout in 1994 was by itself an unimportant factor in influencing the House elections" (18).

Survey data, however, suggests that the aggregate data masks differences among the voters who turned out in 1994 compared to earlier years. As noted above, critics of the president were more likely to vote than supporters; Republicans more than Democrats; those with health insurance more than those without; and, as detailed below, the disparity between turnout by the wealthy and by the poor increased in 1994.

Crucially, the National Election Study asks respondents who did not vote if they had a preference, and what that preference was. The results, displayed in Table 3.15, show that the "vote intent" of non-voters in the 1994 House elections was about 58 percent Democratic, in contrast to the 47 percent of voters who chose the Democrats. This 11-

point difference between the preferences of voters and nonvoters is the largest recorded in the National Election Studies, and shows that differential turnout was decisive. Adding the preference of nonvoters who had one to the preferences expressed by voters yields a slight majority of the NES sample, 50.2 percent, favoring Democratic candidates. Republicans won, then, not because more potential voters preferred their party, but because more of those who preferred Republicans voted.

Nonvoters who preferred Democrats were concentrated in competitive districts, while nonvoters who preferred Republicans were concentrated in safe Republican districts, as indicated in Table 3.16.

At a GOPAC meeting in 1989, in a speech titled "Driving Realignment from the Presidency Down to the Precincts; How Realignments Occur: Six Historic Principles," Newt Gingrich described the distinctive features of realigning elections as:

> 1. Achieving a Significant Increase in Turnout
> 2. Creating a Positive Organizing Vision That Arouses Support
> 3. Delegitimizing the Opposition
> 4. Creating a Civil War Within the Opposition
> 5. Increasing the Scale of Resources
> 6. Applying Cutting-Edge Technology
> (quoted in Sabato and Simpson, 85)

Sabato and Simpson point out that while the historical accuracy of point 3 is debatable, there is no doubt Gingrich presented a strategy to mobilize the party's base and demobilize the opposition (85-88).

Losing parties, Kenneth Finegold and Elaine Swift have argued, choose among a range of responses to electoral defeat: parties may persist, innovate, cease, or accommodate. Each account of the 1994 elections contains not only an explanation for the results but implications for future political strategy as well.

Attributing the election results to party organizational effort points to a strategy of countermobilization, which may combine elements of persistence and innovation.

The impact of governance on the 1994 elections has been interpreted in two sharply different ways. Some see the failure of Democratic governance as sins of omission, failure to deliver for the base. Others see the failure of Democratic governance as sins of commission, too much liberalism. The former view implies a call for innovation; the latter implies accommodation. Those who claim government policy had no impact on the elections might argue for persistence.

Attributing the results to a growing conservatism among the public suggests the inevitability of a strategy of

accommodation. Political scientists often deem this strategy the most, or the only, rational one. Thus Ferejohn, Gaines, and Rivers write "The optimal electoral strategy, of course, would be for candidates of both parties to locate at the median" (12). Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde observe that it "can easily be demonstrated [that] each convert from your opponent is worth as much as two new voters" (128). This logic underlies the political strategy of the Democratic Leadership Council and Dick Morris's "triangulation" approach. Cokie Roberts expressed this view succinctly the morning after the 1994 elections, explaining the lesson she thought the President should draw from the results: "if I were he I would move to the right. I don't think that's very complicated" (*NPR Morning Edition,* November 9, 1994).

The probit analysis presented above, however, shows that mobilization mattered more in 1994, more than factors such as ideology, as well as more than previously. Similarly, the finding that switchers to the Republicans did not differ from loyal Democrats in their policy preferences suggests that there has not been a realignment in policy preferences. That abstainers wanted more federal activity is consistent with the view that Democrats' failure to deliver such policies demobilized their base. On the other hand, confirming Kernell's expectations, policies proposed and adopted stimulated turnout by critics of the president. In

short, the Democratic base was demobilized, the Republican base mobilized, and Democratic defectors were more likely to have been won over by Republican mobilization efforts than disillusionment with Democratic governance. Differential turnout proved decisive, since participation by nonvoters with a preference would have given the Democrats a slim majority.

As Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward have argued

> there was a natural [constituency] that Democratic party leaders did not mobilize and did not lead. They did not try to bring greater numbers of the worse off into the electorate. . . . And they did not campaign for the votes of those among the worse off who were in the electorate by framing the issues, generating the denunciatory rhetoric, and advancing the bold proposals that might have allayed popular economic anxieties (22).

Finegold and Swift's treatment of losing parties' strategies focuses solely on policy positions, rather than on mobilizing efforts. On the basis of party platforms, they describe the Republican Party of 1896 as accommodating. Yet, as Newt Gingrich among others has noticed, the election of 1896 marked an extraordinary innovation in campaign techniques and growth in campaign resources (Sabato and Simpson, 86; McGerr). Mobilization efforts are not mere froth on the crest of a wave of realignment, but a central part of the process of political change.

Table 3.1:

Probit Analysis of Republican Congressional Voting, 1978-1994

	Coeff.	s.e.	Coeff. /s.e	Mean	if x=1	if x=0	effect
1994 N=942 84.29% correct							
Partisan Identification***	.705	.070	10.13	-.048	.781	.528	25%
Ideology***	.287	.085	3.39	.202	.604	.491	11%
Presidential Evaluation***	.209	.064	3.24	-.021	.598	.516	8%
Incumbent Democrat***	-.526	.148	-3.54	.505	.411	.618	-21%
Incumbent Republican***	.537	.161	3.33	.338	.652	.442	21%
Republican Mobilization***	.725	.118	6.12	.387	.684	.403	28%
Democratic Mobilization***	-.464	.121	-3.83	.439	.411	.595	-18%
Intercept	.023	.151	0.16				
1990 N=801 85.89% correct							
Partisan Identification***	.683	.071	9.65	-.152	.603	.337	27%
Ideology*	.211	.095	2.23	.091	.369	.293	8%
Presidential Evaluation	.122	.073	-1.67	.285	.331	.288	4%
Incumbent Democrat***	-1.013	.198	-5.12	.613	.179	.538	-36%
Incumbent Republican***	.729	.210	3.47	.297	.495	.229	27%
Republican Mobilization	.182	.152	1.2	.234	.350	.285	6%
Democratic Mobilization	-.123	.143	0.87	.393	.274	.317	-4%
Intercept	-.065	.199	-0.33				
1986 N=981 82.16% correct							
Partisan Identification***	.589	.063	9.36	-.146	.589	.358	23%
Ideology*	.190	.079	2.39	.119	.389	.318	7%
Presidential Evaluation**	.190	.072	2.64	.372	.370	.301	7%
Incumbent Democrat***	-.986	.176	-5.61	.563	.189	.542	-35%
Incumbent Republican***	.736	.172	4.27	.355	.510	.238	27%
Republican Mobilization	.179	.125	1.44	.316	.371	.306	7%
Democratic Mobilization	-.030	.130	-0.23	.405	.320	.330	-1%
Intercept	-.209	.164	-1.28				
1982 N=712 83.01% correct							
Partisan Identification***	.748	.080	9.32	-.232	.734	.451	28%
Ideology	.108	.102	1.06	.123	.420	.379	4%
Presidential Evaluation***	.269	.076	3.56	.019	.487	.382	11%
Incumbent Democrat***	-.832	.190	-4.37	.480	.233	.541	-31%
Incumbent Republican***	.684	.191	3.59	.397	.546	.285	26%
Republican Mobilization	.255	.156	1.64	.195	.464	.365	10%
Democratic Mobilization*	-.332	.147	-2.25	.231	.291	.413	-12%
Intercept	.014	.182	0.08				
1978 N=1009 81.57% correct							
Partisan Identification***	.670	.064	10.43	-.234	.648	.386	26%
Ideology*	.168	.081	2.07	.077	.385	.323	6%
Presidential Evaluation	.103	.060	1.72	-.273	.376	.338	4%
Incumbent Democrat***	-.877	.153	-5.73	.543	.198	.512	-31%
Incumbent Republican***	.891	.161	5.55	.337	.557	.227	33%
Republican Mobilization***	.490	.113	4.35	.338	.451	.270	18%
Democratic Mobilization*	-.253	.115	-2.2	.443	.278	.369	-9%
Intercept	-.152	.150	-1.02				

Table 3.2:

Sources of Change in the Republican Vote for Congress, 1990-1994

Variable	B_t 1994	X_t 1994	B_{t-1} 1990	X_{t-1} 1990	Change in Coeff.	Change in Variable	Total Change
Partisan Identification	.7052	-.048	.6834	-.152	.000	.028	.028
Ideology	.2869	.202	.2112	.091	.006	.009	.015
Presidential Evaluation	.2089	-.021	.1223	.285	-.001	-.015	-.016
Incumbent Democrat	-.5262	.505	-1.0134	.613	.089	.040	.129
Incumbent Republican	.5365	.338	.7292	.297	-.025	.012	-.014
Republican Mobilization	.7251	.387	.1812	.234	.083	.011	.094
Democratic Mobilization	-.4639	.439	-.1235	.393	-.059	-.002	-.061
Intercept	.0234		.0655				

Table 3.3:		
1994 House Turnout by Contact by Religious Groups		
	No Contact	Contact
	N=1586	N=177
Didn't Vote in House Election	45%	25%
Voted in House Election	54%	75%
Missing Observations: 32.		
Somers' D: .22.		
T-value: 5.76.		
$p < .001$.		

Table 3.4:		
1994 House Vote by Contact by Religious Groups		
	No Contact	Contact
	N=810	N=128
Voted Democratic	50%	29%
Voted Republican	50%	71%
Missing Observations: 857.		
Somers' D: .21.		
T-value: 4.55.		
$p < .001$.		

Table 3.5: Policy Preferences of Switchers and Standpatters, Percent favoring change in Federal Spending indicated.				
	Switchers to Republicans	Republican Standpatters	Difference	T-Value
	N=95	N=294		
Increase environment***	47	21	27	4.55
Decrease foreign aid*	44	57	14	2.27
Increase social security	39	36	3	0.59
Decrease welfare***	53	74	21	3.57
increase AIDS research***	53	25	28	4.73
decrease food stamps***	43	64	21	3.46
Increase education**	68	52	17	2.89
increase child care***	60	32	28	4.66
increase crime fighting	73	67	6	1.07
increase health care***	71	34	37	6.33
decrease military***	37	14	-22	4.05

Table 3.5 (continued)

Policy Preferences of Switchers and Standpatters, Percent favoring change in Federal Spending indicated.

	Switchers to Republicans N=95	Democratic Standpatters N=289	Difference	T-Value
increase environment	47	48	-1	0.12
decrease foreign aid	44	50	7	1.09
increase social security	39	50	-11	1.89
decrease welfare*	53	40	-13	2.19
increase AIDS research	53	55	-3	0.45
decrease food stamps**	43	28	-15	2.61
increase education	68	77	-9	1.59
increase child care	60	71	-11	1.88
increase crime fighting	73	74	-2	0.28
increase health care	71	77	-6	1.14
decrease military	37	46	10	1.63

The first page of the table compares Switchers to Republicans (those who voted for Clinton in 1992 and Republican for Congress in 1994) with Republican Standpatters (who voted for Bush in 1992 and Republican for Congress in 1994). The second page of the table compares the Switchers to Republicans with Democratic Standpatters (who voted for Clinton in 1992 and Democratic for Congress in 1994). A minus sign in the difference column indicates that switchers favored less spending than standpatters of either party.
statistically significant at $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 3.6: What Respondents Like About Republican Candidates (N=543 open ended comments)		
	Switched to Republican	Republican standpatters
Personal Characteristics	33%	27%
Incumbency	31%	18%
Policy, Partisanship, Philosophy	28%	45%
Miscellaneous Other	9%	10%

Table 3.7: Republican Mobilization of 1992 Clinton Voters		
	No Republican Effort	Republican Mobilization Effort
	N=222	N=162
1994 Republican Voters	13%	41%
1994 Democratic Voters	87%	59%
Missing Observations: 1411.		
Somers' D: .28.		
T-value: 6.16.		
p. < .001.		

Table 3.8:

Policy Preferences of Abstainers and Democratic Standpatters, Percent favoring change in Federal Spending indicated

	Abstained	Democratic Standpatter		
	N=144	N=289	Difference	T-Value
increase environment	42	48	6	1.16
decrease foreign aid	53	50	3	0.62
increase social security**	62	50	+12	2.45
decrease welfare	37	40	+3	0.50
increase AIDS research*	66	55	+11	2.23
decrease food stamps	30	28	2	0.44
increase education	82	77	+5	1.28
increase child care	71	71	0	0.14
increase crime fighting*	83	74	+9	2.19
increase health care*	86	77	+9	2.20
decrease military**	34	46	+13	2.51

A plus sign in the difference column indicates that abstainers favored more spending than standpatters.
* statistically significant at $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3.9:

Policy Preferences of Nonvoters Preferring Democrats and Respondents Voting Democratic for Congress, Percent favoring change in Federal Spending indicated

	Nonvoters Who Preferred Democrats	Voted Democratic for Congress	Difference	T-Value
	N=206	N=444		
increase environment	47	42	+5	1.12
decrease foreign aid	61	52	9	1.94
increase social security***	70	52	+18	4.4
decrease welfare*	38	47	+9	2.17
increase AIDS research	60	53	+7	1.69
decrease food stamps	29	34	+5	1.21
increase education	76	75	+1	0.19
increase child care	67	64	+3	0.74
increase crime fighting**	85	75	+10	3.2
increase health care*	82	74	+8	2.11
decrease military*	31	40	+9	2.16

A plus sign indicates abstainers favored more spending than standpatters.
statistically significant at $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 3.10: Democratic Mobilization of 1992 Clinton Voters		
	No Democratic Effort	Democratic Mobilization Effort
	N=201	N=232
Abstain 1994	49%	19%
Democratic Vote 1994	51%	81%
Missing Observations: 1362.		
Somers' D: .30		
T-value: 6.81.		
$p < .001$.		

Table 3.11: Presidential Evaluation and Turnout, 1994		
	Approve	Disapprove
	N=861	N=824
Did Not Vote	44%	37%
Voted	56%	63%
Missing Observations: 110..		
Somers' D: .07.		
T-value: 3.00.		
p < .01.		

Table 3.12:

Turnout and Partisan Identification, 1978-1994

	Democrat	Republican	Difference	N	T-value
1978	44%	54%	10	1912	4.15***
1982	53%	57%	4	1227	1.39
1986	49%	50%	2	1870	0.62
1990	45%	43%	-2	1730	0.87
1994	48%	61%	13	1772	5.46***

*** statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Table 3.13:

Attempts to Influence the Vote of Others, 1978-1994

	Democrat	Republican	Difference	N	T-value
1978	21%	30%	9	1907	4.35***
1982	24%	26%	2	1216	0.70
1986	22%	24%	2	1868	1.21
1990	18%	21%	3	1730	1.50
1994	19%	29%	10	1768	4.62***

*** statistically significant at p < .001.

Table 3.14:

Campaign participation, 1978-1994

	Democrat	Republican	Difference	N	T-value
1978	20%	29%	9	1912	4.13***
1982	20%	21%	1	1227	0.60
1986	19%	21%	2	1870	1.12
1990	14%	14%	0	1730	0.16
1994	13%	19%	6	1763	3.61***

*** statistically significant at p < .001.

Table 3.15: Preferences in the 1994 House Elections		
	Nonvoters	Voters
Democrat	58%	47%
Republican	42%	53%

Table 3.16: Distribution of Nonvoters with Preferences in the 1994 House Elections		
	Prefer Democrats	Prefer Republicans
	(N=206)	(N=148)
Democrat won > 60%	35%	14%
Competitive: 40%-60%	55%	27%
Republican won > 60%	10%	60%

Chapter 4

CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION THEORY AND A MODEL OF CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

The emphasis in the congressional election literature on the incumbency advantage is rooted in a simple fact: most incumbents win. They do so, David Mayhew theorized, by utilizing three reelection strategies, which he termed credit claiming, position taking, and advertising (49-73).

But, as the 1994 elections demonstrated dramatically, incumbents do not always win. To explain why they do not, as I noted earlier, Gary Jacobson theorized that "Three elements create a formidable challenge: a good reason for voters to desert the incumbent, an acceptable alternative to the incumbent, and sufficient resources to acquaint voters with the first two" (1992, 115).

The conflicts between challengers and incumbents unfold in the context of the socio-economic and political character of particular congressional districts.

These are the variables in the model of congressional elections depicted in Figure 4.1. The dependent variable is the share of the vote received by the incumbent candidate for re-election.

District Characteristics:
The Terrain of Electoral Conflict

District partisanship

The normal vote for a party in a district influences the share of the vote that party's congressional candidate can expect. Consider, for example, New York's 15th Congressional District, where I live, the most Democratic district in the country. Michael Dukakis in 1988 and Bill Clinton in 1992 received an average of 88 percent of the two-party presidential vote averaged.[1] At the same time, Representative Charles Rangel has won with more than 90 percent of the vote each time he has run for reelection in the last 25 years.

The most Republican district is TX-7, where George Bush lives, and where he won 75 percent of the two-party presidential vote in 1988 and 1992. Bush represented this west Houston district in the House of Representatives for two terms in the late 1960s, and was succeeded by the current Representative, Bill Archer, in 1970. Archer was reelected without opposition in 1990, 1992, and 1994, and with 81 percent of the vote in 1996 (Barone and Ujifusa, 1355-1356).

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[1]Hereafter districts are simply designated by state and district number, e.g., NY-15.

Consistency between the congressional and presidential vote is not assured. Indeed, Walter Dean Burnham observed in 1975 that "electoral coalitions are increasingly diverging on office-specific lines," noting the sharp decline in the correlation between the congressional and presidential vote, and an accompanying decline in differences between the parties in the House of Representatives (435, 427-428). The trend Burnham noted reached its nadir in 1984, when almost half the congressional districts in the United States favored different parties in the presidential and the congressional elections.

Consistency increased quickly. In 1988, two out of three districts had the same result, and in 1992 about three of four districts had congruent results, reaching a 40 year high (Jacobson, 1997b, 130). Still, one in four districts had anomalous results. For example, George Bush received only 39 percent of the two party presidential vote (averaged over 1988 and 1992) in NY-30 (Buffalo), but the district elected Republican Representative Jack Quinn.

In addition to such split decisions, district-level vote shares for presidential and congressional candidates fluctuate. For example, AZ-5 and MD-6 are Republican districts, with a Republican presidential vote averaged over the 1988 and 1992 elections respectively of 52 and 62 percent. Yet in 1992 in the former district Jim Kolbe

received 69 percent of the two-party congressional vote, while in the latter district, Roscoe Bartlett received 54 percent. These fluctuations - 17 percentage points more, 8 percentage points less - for congressional candidates compared to presidential candidates, as well as different outcomes, suggest that there are other significant variables which affect the congressional vote.

Following Jacobson's method, I measure district partisanship by the Republican share of the two-party vote in the congressional district in the presidential elections of 1988 and 1992. Like Jacobson, I use the calculations of the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC) reported in *The Almanac of American Politics*. Because many district lines changed between 1988 and 1992, reporting the 1988 vote measure requires applying the new district lines to the old precinct data. Calculations by NCEC occasionally differ slightly from those by Polidata reported in *Congressional Quarterly's Politics in America*.

In about 40 percent of the districts, the normal vote ranges between 45 and 55 percent, a frequent definition of the competitive range. Expanding the conception of the competitive range to 40 to 60 percent would include 63 percent of congressional districts.

District Socio-economic character

Most Americans do not vote. The likely political preferences of the inactive electorate may vary by district. In an early article, Duncan MacRae used the percentage of owner-occupied dwellings as a predictor of the likely Republican vote. Jon Bond, Cary Covington, and Richard Fleischer use other district level data as proxies for district ideology: "residence patterns (proportion central city, suburban, and rural), income [the percentage in each of three categories] . . . employment (proportion white collar, blue collar, service, and farm), race . . .[and] (proportion foreign born and native born)" (519).

Instead of this plethora of interesting data, I rely here on union membership to provide a single, summary statistic describing the socio-economic character of a congressional district.

Newspaper accounts in a number of seriously contested districts in 1996 also relied in part on union density as an explanatory factor. For example, seeking to explain the re-election of a Republican incumbent in OK-2, the *Tulsa World* observed that "the AFL-CIO . . . has a low membership in the district" (November 6, 1996). To explain the success of a Democratic challenger in TX-9, the *Houston Chronicle* noted that "More than half the vote in the clash between Lampson and Stockman came from Jefferson County, a Democratic

stronghold that is one of the most unionized parts of Texas" (December 12, 1996).

Congressional district union density varies widely, from a low of 3,564 union members in SC-4 to 72,027 in PA-12. The median number of union members is 25,203 (MN-1). Of the 35 districts with less than 10,000 union members, 33 are southern states (Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia; the other 2 districts are in Kentucky and Nebraska). Only four southern districts are above the median in union membership - three in Alabama, and TX-9.

Re-Election Strategies

Credit claiming

Mayhew defines "credit claiming . . . as acting so as to generate a belief . . . that one is personally responsible for causing the government . . . to do something . . . consider[ed] desirable." Credit claiming means providing "particularized benefits": "casework" and "the traditional role of supplier of goods to the home district" (52-55).

Jacobson reports that "The value of the pork barrel has also been called into doubt, though the latest research suggests that Democrats, at least, have benefited from delivering local projects" (1997b, 32). Patrick Sellers

suggests that "a legislator's fiscal consistency determines how pork influences electoral support" so that liberals benefit from providing pork and conservatives from not doing so (1997, 1032, 1034). Steven Levitt and James Snyder conclude that "the pattern of federal domestic outlays is skewed in favor of districts with a large share of Democratic voters" (973). These studies were undertaken before the Republicans won control of the Congress. Levitt and Snyder place their argument explicitly in the context of "control of both the House and Senate" (961). Once in the majority, did Republicans seek pork to secure their positions in the 1996 elections?

Anecdotal evidence of allocations to districts represented by Republicans has appeared under such headlines as "Pork Goes Republican," "The Freshmen Go Native: Despite Their Reformist Zeal the G.O.P. Hard-Liners Are Cutting Deals and Bringing Home the Pork," and "GOP Pet Projects Give Boost To Shaky Incumbents" (*Newsweek; Time,* November 20, 1995; *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report,* August 3, 1996). These anecdotal accounts suggest the utility of seeking systematic data, a search that must begin with a definition of pork.

Kenneth Shepsle and Barry Weingast define pork as "inefficient projects - those for which benefits do not exceed costs" (107). Sometimes such inefficiency can be

determined. Consider Randy Tate (WA-9) who sought "$8 million for Puyallup River levee repairs" to be made by the Army Corps of Engineers: "In several places, the Corps . . . found the cost of repairs would exceed the value of the property protected" (*News Tribune*, July 17, 1996). But, as William Greider has pointed out, sometimes "To construct cost-benefit equations . . . [requires] decid[ing] how much a human life is worth - since the supposed economic benefit of saving a life will be measured against how much it costs to do so." Greider reports, for example, that

It is also unlikely that experts could agree as to whether $3 million allocated for drug interdiction in Washington state (for which Tate also claimed credit) would have a net benefit.

In recent studies, scholars have defined pork as "any discretionary federal resources in a district or state for which a legislator can claim credit" because "the distinction between desirable and undesirable spending is often subjective" (Sellers, 1997, 1024n).

Recent operational definitions of pork have measured the number or value of grants, usually new grants, awarded within each congressional district. The main source for such information is the U.S. Census Bureau's Federal Assistance Awards Data System (FAADS) (Bickers and Stein; Stein and Bickers; Sellers, 1997; Levitt and Snyder). Working before

compilation of the FAADS, Feldman and Jondrow used a measure of actual expenditures obtained from the Community Services Administration of the Department of Commerce (161).

Operationalizing pork in terms of actual expenditures faces two kinds of problems, alternately too inclusive, and not inclusive enough. On the one hand, potentially large differences in public awareness, and the electoral consequences, of the expenditures are ignored. On the other hand, high profile efforts to seek new, or defend old projects are also ignored.

"Between the provision of pork and the votes cast for incumbents," Bickers and Stein remark, "lies a 'black box' that has not been carefully examined" (1394). The simple fact of a government project does not provide information about that project except to those, often relatively few, constituents directly affected, and even they may not know of the role of a particular member of Congress in securing the funds for the project.

To specify the black box requires solving what Mayhew refers to as the "overwhelming problem of information costs" (59) by tracing the flow of information about the project.

The flow of information about a project often begins with the member of Congress. For example, Zach Wamp (TN-3) participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for a new weather radar. The event received front-page coverage in the

Chatanooga Free Press (September 23, 1996). The newspaper, a fervent booster of Wamp's, also featured an editorial the following day: "It was Mark Twain who said everybody talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it. Well, that's not quite right. Rep. Zach Wamp, R-Tenn., and Rep. Bud Cramer, D-Ala., have done something about it" (*Chatanooga Free Press,* September 24, 1996). Wamp praised the efforts of "weather forecasters at our local television stations and other people in the media" (*Chatanooga Free Press,* September 23, 1996), and perhaps they reciprocated, giving more coverage to the Congressman's efforts. Articles describing each of the other projects for which Wamp received credit all cite the Congressman as a source of information (*Chatanooga Free Press,* October 27, July 27, April 22, February 28, 1996). Profiles of Wamp in *The Almanac of American Politics* and *Politics in America* both mention his efforts to secure funding for the weather radar (Barone and Ujifusa, 1315; Duncan and Lawrence, 1339).

The influence of pork may not be limited to that which has been delivered. Members may receive credit for seeking benefits as yet undelivered. For example, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* reported:

> Against a backdrop of duck calls, blues music and modified hog calls, about 700 people rallied Wednesday in support of the proposed Interstate 69 highway

> project. Rep. Jay Dickey, R-Ark., wanted the rally to demonstrate to visiting Rep. Bud Shuster, R-Pa., chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, how much support there is in Arkansas for the project . . . . [which] would cost about $6 billion. The Arkansas part would cost about $1 billion (October 17).

In an editorial endorsing "Jay Dickey, of course," the *Democrat-Gazette* declared that the incumbent "has fought hard to secure a route for Interstate 69 through South Arkansas" (November 4, 1996). Measuring only actual awards would exclude credit for such efforts despite their potential electoral impact. Dickey's efforts on behalf of I-69 are also reported in *The Almanac of American Politics* (Barone and Ujifusa, 124).

Stein and Bickers focus, as is often the case, on new awards (386, 380). Nevertheless they acknowledge that if "highly visible projects that already exist in a district . . . are threatened with elimination, as in the proposed closure of a military base . . . . legislators may derive high levels of publicity from their efforts to retain the existing federal benefits" (382-383n). For example, in a profile of Saxby Chambliss (GA-8), Barone and Ujifusa report

> Newt Gingrich saw that Chambliss had the committee assignments he needed most - National Security to look after Robins Air Force Base near Macon, and Agriculture to protect subsidies for peanut farmers in the counties to the

> south . . . . Chambliss toured every military base in Georgia . . . and worked with locals to remove Robins, an air logistics center, from the final Base Closing Commission list in 1995 (427).

Simply examining new dollar outlays per district ignores the potential electoral value of efforts to gain projects not yet delivered, or protect established projects from cuts.

In chapters 5 and 6 I develop measures of pork reputation and reported pork which focus precisely on the efforts that receive the most attention. These are mostly new, sometimes as yet undelivered, occasionally protection of ongoing projects.

Position Taking

Mayhew defines "position taking . . . as the public enunciation of a judgmental statement on anything likely to be of interest to political actors (61).

In 1950 Samuel Huntington outlined two approaches to the kinds of positions that incumbents take: that electoral competition moderates the positions of the contestants, and that it produces greater conflict.

Elaborating on the former view - generally termed the "marginality hypothesis" - Robert Erikson hypothesized that "moderate Congressmen [will] be better vote getters than

those representing their party's ideological extreme," and found that "the degree of conservatism of Republican Congressmen has a considerable negative effect on their vote margins" (1971, 1032). Erikson and Gerald Wright argued that "Although representatives from safe districts have no strong incentive to engage in ideological moderation, this is not true for representatives of districts with marginal or adverse partisanship" (104).

Anthony Downs elaborated the theory underlying the marginality hypothesis, utilizing Harold Hotelling's concept of spatial competition: "competition in a two-party system would cause each party to move towards its opponent ideologically. Such convergence would occur because each party knows that the extremists at its end of the scale prefer it to the opposition, since it is necessarily closer to them than the opposition party is" (116).

Disputing what he terms "the myth of the moderate marginal representative," Morris Fiorina argues that "huge shifts . . . occur when marginal seats change party control," indicating that "marginal representatives show a definite proclivity for the extremes of constituency preference distributions" (1973, 495).

A number of interest group ratings such as those of the American Conservative Union or the Americans for Democratic Action are used as measures of member ideology. In addition

Congressional Quarterly calculates party unity, presidential opposition or support, and opposition or support for the conservative coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats.

Advertising

Mayhew defines advertising as "any effort to disseminate one's name among constituents in such a fashion as to create a favorable image but in messages having little or no issue content" (49). Mayhew cites the story of one member of Congress, reported by Charles Clapp, that "he has never lost a precinct in a town where he has made a commencement speech," and recounts other public appearances, publicity stunts, the sending of congratulatory messages. Perhaps most important for Mayhew, the franking privilege -- mail members of Congress send at taxpayer expense (50-52).

In 1996, "five challengers have complained about incumbents' franked mailings, 'which is fairly low in an election year.'" One of the complaints was against Martin Hoke (R-OH10), who "dismissed [the] charge as 'one more page out of the challenger textbook,'" without apparent acknowledgment that as a challenger four years earlier, he had "accused [the incumbent] of abusing her franking privilege and promised to use mailings sparingly" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer,* November 2, 1996).

Hoke's advertising activities included not only $107,282 in taxpayer funded mailing, but also having campaign volunteers waving banners from highway overpasses, and the candidate himself "campaigning at high school football games" and "kissing babies and pumping hands with enthusiasm" at a parade (*Cleveland Plain Dealer,* November 2, August 25). Whatever benefits these advertising activities may have provided, they also involved some costs: negative publicity about Hoke's hypocrisy in using the frank, reported in the local press under such headlines as "Hoke Takes First Place in Using Free Mail Perk," "Kucinich Says Hoke Misused His Mailings," and "Hoke Bulks Up on Congressional Mail." In addition, Hoke's public appearances provided an opportunity for opposition to be expressed, such as when his presence at a parade drew "a chant of 'No Hope for Hoke' from a Little League contingent with a steelworker coach" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer,* June 7, 1996; August 27, 1996; November 2, 1996; August 25, 1996).

Compared with poorly financed Democratic challengers, Hoke's $107,282 in franked mail is an enormous sum -- more than 70 Democratic challengers raised. But, Hoke's use of the frank represented less than 10 percent of the $1.3 million he spent on his campaign, much of it for television ads. "Hoke ads ran so often that local television audiences found them inescapable" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer,* November 7,

1996). Because paid campaign advertising now dwarfs other "efforts to disseminate one's name among constituents," and the increased negative publicity attendant upon abuse of the frank, I reconceptualize advertising in terms of the resources for advertising.

Challengers and Their Campaigns

Reason to Defect: Mobilization Against Incumbents

R. Douglas Arnold suggests a way to theorize the role of mobilization against incumbents, and a solution to the difficult question of whether reason to defect from an incumbent can be objectively measured. Arnold observes that "few citizens know where the candidates stand on the issues or what their representatives have done in office" (405). He then presents a classic "rational choice" argument that "A single citizen can do so little to reward or punish an individual legislator that it hardly makes sense for that citizen to invest a lot of time and energy in acquiring information about legislators' actions in office" (410-411).[2] Arnold draws on the work of Matthew McCubbins and Thomas Schwartz to suggest that such limits on public

[2] This point was argued most famously by Anthony Downs: "Because nearly every citizen realizes his vote is not decisive in each election, the incentive of most citizens to acquire information before voting is very small" (298).

attentiveness do not necessarily prevent the exercise of democratic control (407). In "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols Versus Fire Alarms," McCubbins and Schwartz contrast the "active . . . surveillance" of "police patrols" with "intervening . . . in response to an alarm" (166). Following that distinction, Arnold suggests that "Even passive citizens . . . can acquire a great deal of politically relevant information" when "groups that bear major costs under a particular governmental policy . . . help publicize what incumbent legislators have done to contribute to their plight" (411, 409-410). Like fire-alarm oversight for members of Congress, for citizens, reliance on activists is "more efficient and more effective than . . . themselves gathering information" (407). Arnold concludes that "Citizens act more like spectators who register their approval or disapproval at the end of a performance" (410). In short, mobilization against an incumbent is the fire alarm that reveals that there is a reason to defect from the incumbent.

In short, I reconceptualize Jacobson's "good reason for voters to desert the incumbent," in terms of mobilization against incumbents.

In addition to deriving the role of mobilization against incumbents deductively from the work of these theorists, and empirically from the analysis in chapter 3, I

draw on journalists and scholars who have emphasized the importance of mobilization working inductively, examining the 1996 elections.

Jacobson, for example, reports that "the independent campaigns against Republican incumbents financed by labor, environmental, and women's groups . . . were a notable feature of the 1996 House elections" (1997a, 156). Thomas Edsall, under the headline "Issues Coalitions Take On Political Party Functions; Alliances on Left, Right Gain Power," writes:

> Tim Allison's job is to make sure that the voters of the 22nd Congressional District know that Republican Rep. Andrea Seastrand's voting record is one of the most conservative in Congress, out of step, he says, with the views of this coastal community's residents. Evelyn Jerome concentrates on women; she tries to convince them that Seastrand is a threat to their rights. Pat Veesart's responsibility is environment, telling voters and the media that Seastrand belongs "to the hardest core of the most anti-environmental clique in the most anti-environmental Congress of our century." Allison, Jerome and Veesart are working round the clock to try to ensure that Seastrand's first term in Congress is her last; what's unusual is that their employer is not Seastrand's opponent, Democrat Walter Capps, or even the Democratic Party. Instead, they represent, respectively, a coalition of unions and consumer groups, the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) and the Sierra Club (August, 8, 1996).

In the 1996 elections, the AFL-CIO mobilized against Republican incumbents in districts across the country, with television ads, protests and pickets, and rank-and-file organizing. While much of the attention has been on the labor advertising campaign, "Even harder to measure, but potentially more significant, is the greatest get-out-the-vote-effort unions have mounted in years" (*New York Times*, October 31, 1996). In Michigan's 8th District, AFL-CIO organizer Barbara Smith "said she expected to make contact with 50,000 of the 65,000 union members in the district by Election Day. Ms. Smith said 450 members had pledged 5,000 hours of work" (*New York Times*, October 31, 1996).

Challenger Experience

Dismissing the Democrats prospects for taking back the House in 1996, Newt Gingrich asserted "they don't have the horses" (*New York Times*, January 22). Did Democrats fail to take back the House in 1996 because they did not field sufficiently experienced challengers?

Jacobson's dichotomous measure is a simple, straightforward, and serviceable measure of challenger quality: has the challenger won a previous election.

Green and Krasno have created an ordinal scale which considers "Challenger Political Quality" in terms of the "type of office; [previous winners have held, whether they

are] currently in office; [have undertaken a] previous congressional run; [or have] celebrity status" (902). They also consider whether a candidate who has not held office has been a "previous candidate for political office; [undertaken a] previous congressional run; [held] nonelective office; [been a] political activist, [had] party connections, [or served as a] political aide; [or have] professional; [or] celebrity status" (902). Green and Krasno create a scale from 0 to 8 by assigning one point for each of these characteristics.

Green and Krasno have identified many important attributes necessary for a more nuanced specification of challenger quality. However, adding these attributes may sometimes be misleading. A candidate who has held non-elective office and run unsuccessfully for Congress may not be twice as good a candidate as a celebrity.

I construct a different scale, which takes into account many of the points raised by Green and Krasno. First, which office and when it was held seems relevant. Having served on a city council thirty years earlier, Robert Unruhe, the challenger in CA-23 is not, in my view, equivalent to currently serving as a state legislator. I assign the value of 1 to anyone currently serving in the state legislature. I assign a value of .5 to anyone who meets several of the characteristics noted by Green and Krasno: having been

elected or appointed to any political position, including serving as a congressional aide, celebrity status, and one specific group of previous candidates for Congress - those who came very close to winning. Not all previous political campaign experiences are equivalent. Losing, but doing better than expected can boost a career: Christine Todd Whitman's Senate campaign against Bill Bradley is a classic case of building a political career by losing in a close contest. On the other hand, perennial losers are not good candidates.

A scale that adds points for each relevant item on a candidate's resume assumes that all the available information is positive, but additional information may be negative. Losing an election in a smaller jurisdiction is a sign that one is not likely to win a congressional race. Endorsing one incumbent "Without enthusiasm," the *Chicago Tribune* remarked of the challenger's defeat after a single term in the state legislature: "Voters tossed her out of the statehouse in 1994, hardly a recommendation for promotion to Congress" (October 15, 1996). In addition, a number of congressional candidates have run for the House before and lost by large margins. For example, having gotten 28 percent of the vote in 1994, Rita Tamerius, once again the Democratic challenger in California's 51St District in 1996, told one interviewer "We're more likely to be hit by

lightening here than I am to win" (*San Diego Union-Tribune*, October 26). She won 29 percent of the vote in 1996.

I code as -.5 candidates who have lost contests for the House by a large margin (receiving less than 35 percent of the two-party vote) and candidates who have lost contests in smaller jurisdictions. (Candidates who score both -.5 and .5, i.e., a congressional staffer who lost a previous election in a smaller jurisdiction, are rated 0.) I test both the standard dichotomy and this revised scale, and describe a new scale based on content analysis in chapter 6.

Challenger Resources

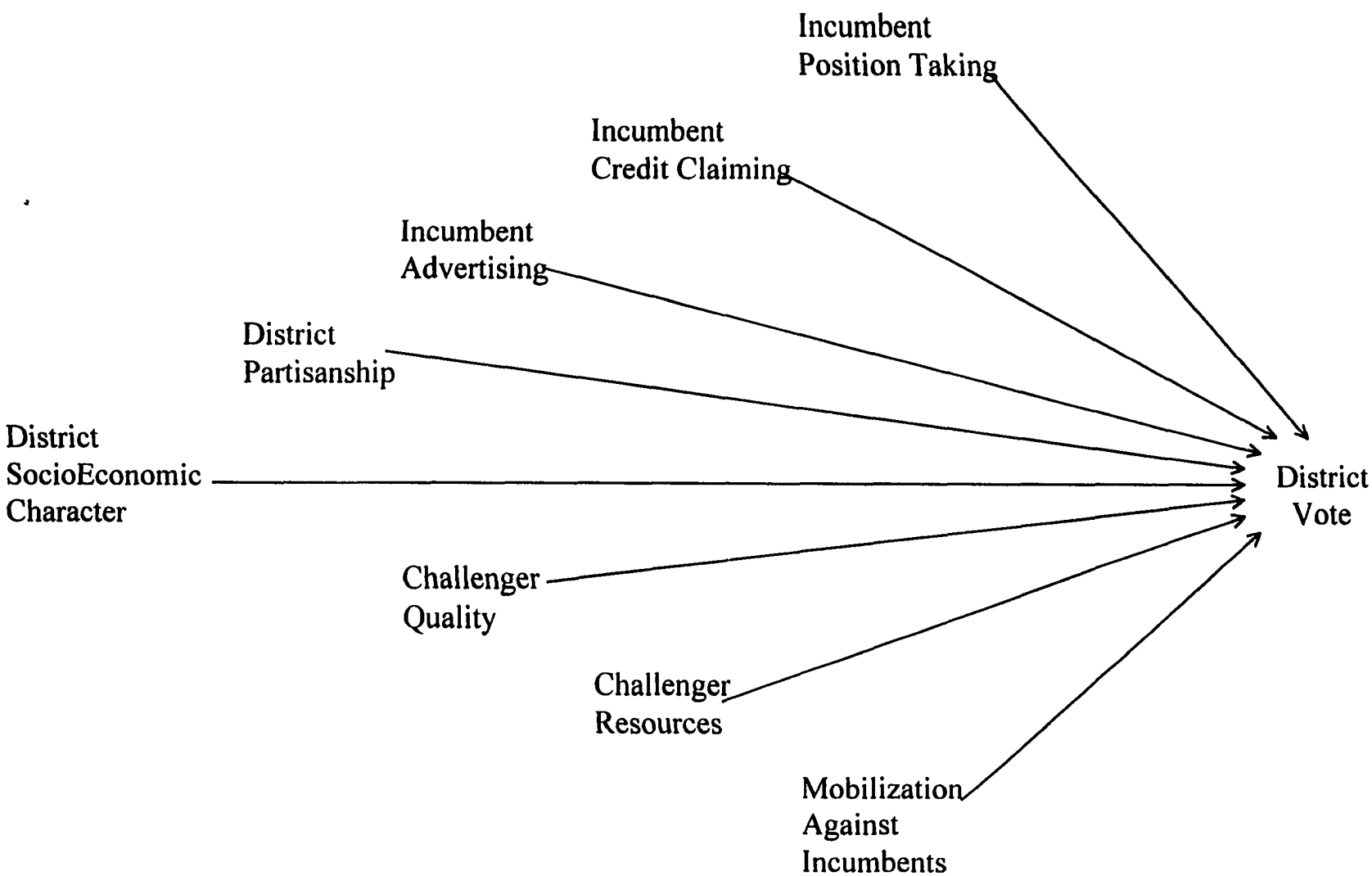
Many politicians, pundits, and scholars have attested to the importance of money for congressional challengers. I measure challenger resources with Federal Election Commission data.

Jacobson estimates that "$400,000 (in 1994 dollars) is a plausible estimate for the threshold" needed by congressional candidates in recent elections, and that "the minimum price tag for a competitive House campaign under average conditions today is probably closer to $600,000" (40). In 1996, all 18 of the Democrats who defeated Republican incumbents raised more than $600,000; 23 who raised that much lost. Setting the threshold at $725,000, Democratic challengers won 16 and lost 10.

Estimating the Model

These are the elements of the model I will estimate in the next two chapters. In each chapter I also consider modifications of the model based on relevant data. In chapter 5, examining all Republican incumbents challenged for re-election by Democrats, I examine why the Republicans maintained their majority in 1996. In chapter 6, I use content analysis of local newspapers in the districts of Republican freshmen running for re-election, to examine more carefully the aggregate level data.

Figure 4.1: A Model of Congressional Elections



Chapter 5

REPUBLICAN RETREAT:
EXPLAINING THE 1996 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

With the Republican victory in 1994, came talk of a realignment, a new era of Republican rule. The victors, especially the new freshman class, prepared to move forward with sweeping policy changes. In an orientation session for new members, for example, "a freshman suggested OSHA be eliminated, immediately. That got a round of applause. The mood of the freshmen was, 'Let's do it all right now'" (Killian, 26-27).

As Edward Carmines and James Stimson argue, "it takes two changes to alter the equilibrium level [of American politics], one to move the system . . . to a new level and a second permanent redefinition of the grounds of party cleavage" (137). If there had been the beginning of a realignment in 1994, it needed ratification and extension in the 1996 election.

Here, I examine what happened in 1996, and find that Republicans faced a powerful, partially successful counter-mobilization by labor unions, and retreated from what they had once described as their revolution. I document this

view by estimating the model explained in chapter 4 with district level data for 1996. I focus on the 200 districts in which Republican incumbents ran for re-election against Democratic challengers.

District Characteristics

As explained in chapter 4, I measure the district socio-economic character by the number of union members. In this set of districts, the least unionized is SC-3 (represented by Lindsay Graham), with 3,564 union members; the most unionized is NY-13 (represented by Susan Molinari), with 67,122 union members. The median district is CA-45, with 23,879 (represented by Dana Rohrabacher). The average number of union members in this set of districts is 26,371.

To measure the partisan character of districts I use, as explained in chapter 4, the average two-party presidential vote in 1988 and 1992. The most Democratic of these districts is NY-30, (represented by Jack Quinn) only 39 percent Republican; the most Republican is TX-7 (represented by Bill Archer). The median (and the mean) district is 57 percent Republican. Republican congressional incumbents won re-election in every district in which

George Bush received more than 57 percent of the two-party presidential vote in 1988 and 1992.

Challengers and Their Campaigns

Reason to Defect: Mobilization Against Incumbents

Describing the election in Iowa's Fourth Congressional District, the *Des Moines Register* reported that

> the ads attacking [incumbent Greg] Ganske's record show, [according to challenger Connie McBurney] that 'there are many people and many organizations and many concerned citizens who do not like your votes. And they would like to see you replaced by someone who will vote for their interests'" (October 31, 1996).

These ads were part of a series sponsored by the AFL-CIO on such issues as Medicare, student loans, and the minimum wage, which culminated in "the [first] use of televised 'voter guides' that . . . offer . . . pointed comparisons between Republican and Democratic candidates" (*Washington Post,* October 17, 1996).

Jacobson, using data from *Congressional Quarterly,* created two measures of mobilization in the 1996 election. He identified districts in which "the Republican incumbent was the target of at least one AFL-CIO advertisement," and

those in which "the AFL-CIO ran video voter guides attacking the Republican incumbent" (1997a, 158). To avoid multicollinearity, Jacobson omitted the latter districts from the former group. He estimates that in the districts with extensive ad campaigns union efforts reduced the share of the vote of Republican incumbents by about 5 percentage points. In the districts with some, but less intense advertising, Jacobson estimates the AFL-CIO cost the Republican incumbents about 3 percentage points.

Since these are measures of different intensity of the same variable, I believe it is more appropriate to use a single, scaled variable than multiple measures.

While much of the attention has been on the labor advertising campaign, the AFL-CIO also undertook extensive grassroots efforts. These efforts were described well in a *New York Times* article headlined "Labor Musters Infantry For Long Island Race" reporting on support for challenger Carolyn McCarthy in NY-4 orchestrated by the AFL-CIO's Julie Dade Howard:

> While Republicans direct their anger at a $25 million-plus broadcast campaign by labor, Ms. Howard, one of the 160 full-time coordinators the AFL-CIO has placed in 99 Congressional districts, insists it is labor's ground forces who are quietly winning the war this autumn. Even many Republican leaders

> acknowledge that labor's legions -- tens of thousands have volunteered for campaigns nationwide -- could do far more damage than the AFL-CIO's commercials . . . . Every night of the week, a union from a different industry -- the electrical workers, the steamfitters, the food and commercial workers -- supplies at least 20 members to make phone calls (sometimes 2,000 in one night), while 500 teachers have volunteered at their union's phone bank. In the "labor to neighbor" campaign, union members have knocked on the doors of 2,000 union households, hoping to seal support for Mrs. McCarthy by having one union member talk to another. All told, labor has distributed at least 130,000 pro-McCarthy pieces of literature and made more than 150,000 phone calls on her behalf. . . . . Labor volunteers say Mrs. McCarthy is a sister in arms . . . her late father belonged to the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and her brother still does. She supports safety regulations, favors banning permanent striker replacements and opposes Republican plans to reduce projected Medicare spending . . . . For the two weeks before Election Day, international unions have lent . . . 10 people to work full-time. . . . organizing leafletting at supermarkets. . . . calling locals to beg them to lend . . . 20 vans and 20 cellular phones to help ferry volunteers and voters on Election Day. Some Election Day volunteers will phone or visit pro-McCarthy union members to make sure they vote. Others will drive retired . . . workers to the polls. And . . . serve as poll watchers (November 2, 1996).

Most district level AFL-CIO organizers did not receive this much attention. To measure grassroots effort by the AFL-CIO, I relied on someone familiar with the districts in which such efforts took place. This source identified 53 districts with a Republican incumbent running for re-election identified as sites of active, grass-roots effort by the AFL-CIO. (The union was also active in other districts with a Democratic incumbent or open seat.)

I create a single, ordinal scaled variable, including grassroots organizing efforts and the intensity of the advertising campaign. I code as 1 those districts in which the AFL-CIO organized at the grassroots and advertised extensively. Here, I use the same criterion as Jacobson to distinguish between districts with intense advertising campaigns and districts where there were some ads, that is, the use of the "video voter guides" distinguish the former. Where there were some ads and grassroots efforts, districts are coded .67. Where there were either some ads or some grassroots effort but not both, districts are coded .33.

The AFL-CIO's most extensive efforts took place in 24 of the districts, which are coded 1. Twenty-two districts are coded .67 and the same number are coded .33; the remaining 132 districts are coded 0.

Challenger Quality

"Experience in elective office," Gary Jacobson writes, "is a useful, albeit crude indicator of a challenger's quality" (1992, 116). I use both this dichotomous measure, and a revised four-point scale described in chapter 4. To sum up briefly, the four-point scale places only current state legislators as the highest quality challengers. Challengers who have held other elective office, or appointed office, or who have run close, or enjoy celebrity status, are coded .5. Candidates who have lost previous contests in a smaller jurisdiction, or for Congress by a large margin (winning less than 35 percent of the vote) are coded -.5. Others are coded 0.

Fifty-three of the Democratic challengers had won a previous election, and are considered quality challengers in the dichotomous measure. Of these, 15 were serving as state legislators in 1996, and are scored 1 on the four-point scale; 37 are scored .5, 105 are scored 0, and 43 are scored -.5.

Challenger Resources

Many politicians, pundits, and scholars have attested to the importance of money for congressional challengers. I

measure challenger resources with Federal Election Commission data.

Jacobson estimates that "$400,000 (in 1994 dollars) is a plausible estimate for the threshold" needed by congressional candidates in recent elections and that "the minimum price tag for a competitive House campaign under average conditions today is probably closer to $600,000" (40). In 1996, all 18 of the Democrats who defeated Republican incumbents raised more than $600,000; 23 who raised that much lost. Setting the threshold at $725,000, 16 Democratic challengers won and 10 lost. About half of the Democratic challengers raised less than $100,000 (97), another 62 raised between $100,000 and $600,000. None of the candidates who raised less than $600,000 was successful.

Re-Election Strategies

Credit claiming

As noted earlier, Mayhew defines credit claiming as providing "particularized benefits": "casework" and "the traditional role of supplier of goods to the home district" (52-55).

To determine which members of congress fulfill this traditional role, I used the biographies of in National Journal's *Almanac of American Politics* (Barone and Ujifusa) and *Congressional Quarterly's Politics in America* (Duncan and Lawrence) to create a measure of *pork reputation*.

As I suggested in chapter 4, I focus on reputation rather than actual expenditures, because it is closer to voter decisions. Consider a typical description of New York's Alphonse D'Amato as having "establish[ed] a reputation as 'Senator Pothole' with manically aggressive constituency service and shameless devotion to causes dear to New York constituencies" (Barone and Ujifusa, 966). Despite that reputation, "New York regularly ranks . . . . consistently below the national average in the amount of Federal spending it receives for each resident" even though it "ranks among the top states in Federal tax payments" (*New York Times,* October 8, 1996). Potential voters are more likely to be familiar with the reputation rather than the actual allocations. Members often assiduously cultivate these reputations.

Barone and Ujifusa write of Phil Crane (IL-8) in 1996:

> Crane also tended, as he had not much in the past, to local projects. He boasted that he called Appropriators Bob Livingston and Bill Young and got

> money for ALQ-135 radar jammers for F-15s restored; they account for 1300 jobs at the Rolling Meadows Northrop plant. He worked . . . to get reauthorization for the Des Plaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project and . . . to get more floodgates in the Fox River region. All of which didn't hurt and might have helped in 1996 (491).

Congressional Quarterly's Politics in America describes Ron Packard (CA-48) as having "nursed his habit of dipping into the federal cookie jar to procure goodies for his district . . . . including $113 million for Camp Pendleton and $39 million for bachelor enlisted quarters at Miramar Marine Corps Air Station" (224).

Madison, Wisconsin's *Capital Times* also made use of the cookie jar metaphor for pork projects, headlining an article about Mark Neumann (WI-1), who represents the southeastern part of the state, "Neumann's Hands Not in the Cookie Jar" (August 7, 1996). The article reports that

> Neumann recently said no to constituents who begged him to use his influence to earmark federal funds for a desperately needed sewage system in a low-income community in his district. "I can't go to pork-barrel spending knowing that it's pork-barrel spending that has led to $5 trillion in (national) debt," he said . . . . He gets visibly angry when asked why he won't seek earmarks for his district when the money is going to be spent

> anyway . . . . Can Neumann win re-election by sticking to his principles and saying no to federal projects? . . . . "I find it morally and ethically unacceptable to suggest that I have to spend my children's money to get elected," he said (*Madison Capital Times,* August 7, 1996).

But despite Neumann's passionate denunciations of pork, "In a subcommittee meeting closed to the public, Neumann asked for a provision in the Pentagon spending bill . . . to benefit the largest employer in the 1st District city of Beloit, the Fairbanks Morse Engine Division of Coltec Holdings" (Duncan and Lawrence, 1572).

Denunciations of pork do not indicate that a member has forsworn its pursuit. After "Campaigning on an anti-pork platform," and bemoaning "'folks back home whose expectations reflect the old way of doing business,'" Ernest Istook (OK-5) "got in line" so that his district would "get its share" (Duncan and Lawrence, 1187). He sought "$5 million for an oil research project in his district . . . [and] earmarking funds for bus facilities . . . . secured $1 million for his district" (Duncan and Lawrence, 1187).

Similarly, *Politics in America* reports that Ed Royce (CA-39), "co-chairman of the so-called Porkbusters Coalition," while opposed to dubious projects in other

districts "ask[ed] the chairman of the House National Security Military Research and Development Subcommittee to add $34 million for a local California project the Pentagon had not requested" (Duncan and Lawrence 198). *The Almanac of American Politics* also notes Royce's role as "co-chairman . . . of the House 'porkbusters'" and reports criticism of him "for seeking $12 million for the Los Alamitos Reserve Center" (Barone and Ujifusa, 241).

Less space is given in these sources to representatives defeated in the previous election, but salient instances of pork seeking are nevertheless recorded. Barone and Ujifusa note, for example, that Jim Bunn (OR-5) "worked on Appropriations to get money for the Oregon Health Plan and Portland light rail" (1192).

The pork projects mentioned in these sources are offered as illustrations, not as a complete catalog, and are reported in less detail on incumbents defeated for re-election. As a result, the measure of pork reputation that I create is simply dichotomous. If either the *Almanac of American Politics* or *Congressional Quarterly's Politics in America* includes reference to a pork project for which the member sought or received credit, that member is considered to have a reputation for seeking or bringing home pork. Using this measure, 125 of the Republican incumbents

running contested campaigns for re-election in 1996 had such a reputation, 75 did not.

Advertising

As noted earlier, Mayhew defines advertising as "any effort to disseminate one's name among constituents in such a fashion as to create a favorable image but in messages having little or no issue content" (49). Mayhew draws attention to public appearances at nonpartisan events and publicity stunts, but emphasizes the franking privilege -- mail members of Congress send at taxpayer expense (50-52).

For example, typifying the kind of non-political speech Mayhew terms advertising, Steve Chabot (OH-1) spoke to "more than 200 firefighters and supporters gathered to remember fallen comrades" (*Cincinnati Enquirer,* October 10, 1996).

While rather drab compared to Mayhew's description of a representative who dived to retrieve the bodies of drowning victims as a way of getting extra attention in the press (51n), the most notable publicity stunt by Members of Congress in 1996 were press conferences announcing drug tests (*Tulsa World,* September 27). One member who participated in a congressional drug test, Ohio's Bob Ney "said he'll go through with the test even though he called

it 'showboating' and 'just a bunch of political B.S.'" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 18, 1996).

Although Mayhew emphasizes the frank as the core of "advertising," as explained in chapter 4, I reconceptualize advertising in terms of the resources needed to advertise.

Here I use FEC data on incumbent campaign receipts to operationalize "advertising."

I use funds raised rather than funds spent because funds raised not only purchase advertising, they are themselves advertised. Killian reports that Republican freshmen received detailed instructions in 1995 on "Marketing Your FEC Report" (312). These instructions included advice to "freshmen who had raised a lot of money to . . . [emphasize] 'what a formidable opposition you will be in the election and whoever is considering running against you should think twice about it'" (313).

The pressure to advertise fundraising success has caused errors by both Republicans and Democrats. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* explained the widely publicized scandal in which Republican John Boehner (OH-8) handed out tobacco political action committee checks on the floor of the House of Representatives this way: "The six-month contribution reporting deadline was at hand, so Rep. Boehner simply handed out the checks to save time" (May 23, 1996). In

Nevada, Democratic challenger Bob Coffin "pulled off one of the more deceptive stunts in campaign fund-raising annals" by arranging a three-day loan "the day before the first quarter reporting period ended" in order "to fool potential contributors and anyone else looking at his report into thinking he had an extra $50,000, which would have nearly doubled his actual total contributions" (*Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 1, 1996).

Political scientists have struggled with efforts to assess the impact of campaign spending by incumbents. Jacobson finds that "the incumbent's spending makes little apparent difference in the outcome" (40).[1] In "Salvation for the Spendthrift Incumbent," Green and Krasno dispute Jacobson's conclusion, estimating that "an incumbent who would otherwise win by three percentage points increases his or her margin of victory to a decisive 60 percent by spending an additional $180,000" (900).

This dispute defies easy resolution because of the possibility of varied patterns of reciprocal causation in the relationship between challenger and incumbent campaign

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[1]"In fact," Jacobson writes, "the more money they spend on the campaign, the worse they do on election day. . . . Spending money does not cost them votes, to be sure; rather, incumbents raise and spend more money the more strongly they feel themselves challenged" (40).

funds. In one set of districts, incumbents gather large war chests to reduce the anticipated challenger resources, in another set of districts, extensive fundraising by challengers impels defensive fundraising by incumbents.

In addition, Gary Jacobson describes searching for the appropriate functional form for campaign finance, and after using the Box-Cox procedure finds most effective "a model that assumes that every candidate spent a minimum of $5,000 and then uses the natural log transformation of campaign spending" (1990, 338). The $5,000 minimum is reasonable since funds below that level do not need to be reported. The log transformation captures mathematically the expectation of diminishing returns. Green and Krasno, however, report they "observed no evidence of diminishing marginal returns for incumbents in 1978 . . . . [because] few incumbents spent to the point where the productivity of spending is seriously attenuated" (365).

Krasno, Green and Cowden disaggregate FEC data on fundraising into the Commission's eight reporting periods (461-462). They find that incumbents respond to July through September fundraising by challengers virtually dollar for dollar in the first two weeks in October (469). They also conclude that "Challenger fundraising . . . is unaffected by the contributions incumbents collect" (469).

I test both actual campaign funds and the log transformation as described by Jacobson.

Position Taking

Mayhew suggested that "position taking . . . may take the form of a roll call vote" (61).

Jacobson and Hershey both emphasize votes at the beginning of the first session of the 104th Congress on the Contract with America. I focus instead on the second session of the Congress. The central question I explore is the extent to which incumbent Republicans running for re-election sought to present themselves as moderates.

In "Party Line Vote Rate Soars," *Congressional Quarterly* reports that the first session of the 104th Congress, had the highest level of partisan voting "since CQ began compiling data in 1954," reaching for comparison back to the 61st Congress (1909-1911) (*1995 CQ Almanac*, C-8). But, in the second session, CQ reported "A majority of Republicans in the House voted against a majority of Democrats on 56.4 percent of the votes cast in 1996. This was a 17-percentage point slide from the record score of 73.2 percent set in 1995" (3432).

Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report explained these scores this way: "The heated partisan rancor that scorched

the first half of the 104th Congress cooled dramatically [in 1996] - reflecting a move to the center by Republican freshmen worried more about political survival than party unity" (3432).

I use the party unity ratings of individual Republican incumbents as a measure of position taking, of movement to the center. These party unity scores are not only measures of the extent of partisan conflict inside the 104th Congress, but were a staple of the campaigns in the districts. Democratic challengers consistently attacked Republican incumbents for "voting with Newt Gingrich," citing the percentage of party unity votes.

Underlining the importance of Republican party unity scores, *States News Service* reported that "Republican freshmen have been accused of voting against the minutes in order to lower their 'Newt Factor' -- the percentage of times that House freshmen vote with Gingrich and the GOP leadership" (July 8, 1996). This ruse could only have worked had it gone unnoticed. A few tried lawyerly evasions: Steve LaTourette (OH-19) "dismissed allegations that he often votes with Gingrich as 'nonsense.' He cast 1,375 votes, he said, while Gingrich cast 89" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer,* October 31, 1996). Others tried to laugh it

off: Gil Gutknecht (MN-1) said he voted against the minutes as a joke (*States News Service,* July 8, 1996).

Among the most revealing reactions was that of John Ensign (NV-1). Claiming that Ensign "was 'surprised' by such accusations," his press secretary asserted that he voted against the minutes because "Ensign never votes for anything he hasn't read" (*States News Service,* July 8, 1996). In a televised debate later in the campaign, however, Ensign admitted "I don't read hardly any of the bills because they're written in legal language" (quoted in *Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 6, 1996).

Such efforts provide a caution that the data may be subject to manipulation. However, as Mayhew makes clear, position taking may be manipulative. He emphasizes "waffling" and "versatility" - that is, the ability to appear to be on several sides of an issue (64-65).

Those members of Congress who sought to manipulate their party unity scores also engaged in other efforts to manipulate their image. Thus Gutknecht, while in fact a conservative Republican, with a Republican Party unity score of 89, not only tried to manipulate his party unity score, but also postured as a Democrat. Gutknecht "emphasized environmental accomplishments, stressing that his record isn't so different from that of Tim Penny, the

popular six-term Democrat who held the seat previously" (*Minneapolis Star Tribune,* October 25, 1996).

Similarly, Ensign aired an "ad, which unfairly yet effectively implies that because some of the challenger's contributors support a nuclear waste dump, so does the candidate" (*Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 1, 1996) thus positioning himself to the left of his Democratic opponent on a major environmental issue.

Results

I display regression statistics for an initial test of the model in Table 5.1. The adjusted R^2 of .73 indicates that the independent variables in the equation explain almost three-fourths of the variation in the dependent variable. On average, controlling for other factors, this analysis suggests that extensive labor mobilization cost incumbents about 7 percentage points. Facing an experienced challenger cost the incumbent about 2.3 percentage points; each $100,000 raised by Democratic candidates bought them an additional .88 percent of the congressional vote. Or to put it slightly differently, on average each $115,000 or so raised by challengers cost the incumbent one more percentage point of the vote.

Republicans bought votes by raising money and moderating their policy positions. As Jacobson has noted, "challengers evidently get more bang for the buck" (40). Each $100,000 Republican incumbents raised gained only an additional .22 percent of the vote, or in other words, they needed almost half a million dollars to gain an additional percentage point. Defections from Republican Party positions on average yielded a slight gain for Republican incumbents, .1 percent of the vote for a percent lower in the party unity score. Or in other words, departing from the Republican Party position on an additional 10 percent of the votes would gain, on average, an additional percentage point. Since there were 256 party unity votes in the second session of the 104th Congress, that 10 percent means 25 seriously contested votes.

The direct impact of district partisanship shows that for each additional percentage point of Republican presidential voting, Republican congressional incumbents could expect about an additional one-third of one percentage point of the vote.

In the initial equation, neither district labor union membership nor pork reputation are statistically significant.

Following the initial equation, I compared the four-point challenger quality scale with the standard dichotomous measure of challenger experience. The latter proved to have a smaller (-1.6), but still significant effect.

I also tested an equation substituting the log of campaign revenues rather than the actual campaign funds. The results, with a slightly higher R^2 (.79) are displayed in Table 5.2. Notably, the log of incumbent funds raised does not yield a statistically significant result, a point to which I return below. However, in this equation both district labor union membership and pork reputation showed a small but statistically significant impact. For each 10,000 union members in a district, Democratic challengers received an additional half of one percent of the vote. Republican incumbents with a reputation for seeking pork received about an additional percentage point of the vote for their efforts.

Discussion

The results described above show the importance in 1996 of mobilization against incumbents, campaign spending by

both challengers and incumbents, challenger experience, and policy moderation by incumbents.

Immediately after the election, Republican Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman Bill Paxon declared "I don't think [the AFL-CIO] got a thing for their investment [in the campaign]" (*New York Times,* November 7, 1996). This study calls that view into question. Where the AFL-CIO was most active, it appears to have cost the Republican incumbents about 7.25 percent of the vote, a figure much larger than the margin of victory in many of the contests.

That the logged fundraising for Republican incumbents was not statistically significant suggests that they were not subject to diminishing returns, as may have been the case in some earlier years. An illustration may help explain why. Setting aside the Speaker, the top spenders in the majority party in 1994 and 1996 were Dan Rostenkowski and Greg Ganske, who spent about $2.5 million each. Carmines and Stimson's conception of easy and hard issues is useful here. Perhaps additional spending by Rostenkowski yielded no additional benefits because the charges of corruption against him were well known and relatively easy to understand. In contrast, in 1996 Greg Ganske spent nearly as much, but the contest focused largely on the loud

and confusing argument about whether Republican policies constituted a cut in Medicare or an increase in spending at a slower rate of growth. Sorting out the contending claims make this a hard issue, and therefore one in which additional spending seems to have been useful.

That moderation by Republicans incumbents yielded greater electoral support suggests that 1996 did not move us closer to a new realignment. Rather than pressing the ideological offensive with which they entered the 1994 elections, Republicans retreated in 1996.

Table 5.1:				
Effects on the Vote Share of Republican Incumbents, 1996				
	B	s.e.	Beta	T-Test
Constant	50.68	6.40		9.02
District Republican Presidential Vote***	0.43	0.06	.350	6.94
District Labor Union Membership	-0.04	0.00	-.068	1.57
Republican Incumbent Funds Raised**	0.22	0.08	.147	2.75
Incumbent Moderation*	0.11	0.05	.109	2.45
Pork Reputation	0.76	0.67	.043	1.13
Democratic Challenger Funds Raised***	-0.88	0.12	-.447	7.42
Challenger Quality**	-2.31	0.84	-.112	2.75
Mobilization against the Incumbent***	-7.26	1.17	-.305	6.23
Adjusted R2=.73				
N=200				
* p < .05				
** p < .01				
*** p < .001				

Table 5.2: Effects on the Vote Share of Republican Incumbents, 1996				
	B	s.e.	Beta	T-Test
Constant	71.84	9.05		7.94
District Republican Pres. Vote***	0.41	0.06	.328	7.39
District Labor Union Membership*	-0.06	0.00	-.090	2.37
Log Republican Incumbent Funds Raised	2.44	1.52	.069	1.61
Incumbent Moderation**	0.13	0.04	.126	3.19
Pork Reputation*	1.16	0.58	.066	1.98
Log Democratic Challenger Funds Raised***	-6.65	0.59	-.545	11.3
Challenger Quality	-0.96	0.76	-.046	1.26
Mobilization against the Incumbent***	-5.39	1.07	-.226	5.03
Adjusted R2=.79				
N=200				
* p < .05				
** p < .01				
*** p < .001				

Chapter 6

SOPHOMORE SLUMP?

REPUBLICAN FRESHMEN IN THEIR DISTRICTS, 1996

In 1994, the newly elected Republican class labeled itself the "majority maker" (Killian, 24). Linda Killian reports that "The House Republicans set up the Incumbent Retention Committee to make sure that all of the Republicans got reelected. Since the freshmen were perceived as the most vulnerable, they got the most attention" (311). Here, I focus attention on them as well, in order to examine the argument developed in the last chapter with a closer look at a smaller set of cases.

Even before the elections, in their second year in office, something happened to the freshmen. Many of them turned away from the ideological and ethical stance which they rode into office, moderating their votes and their rhetoric, while helping themselves to the benefits of incumbency they had once condemned. They derived some advantages from this transformation. But their electoral success in 1994, and their actions in office in 1995, spurred mobilization against them in 1996, which cost them a significant share of the vote.

After summarizing the model of congressional elections presented in chapter 4, I describe the data I have collected at the district level to estimate the model. I then define, illustrate, and operationalize the variables of interest, and present and discuss the results of multiple regression analysis. With some new, district-level measures of the variables of interest, I show the impact of re-election strategies, challenger campaigns, and mobilization against incumbents. Republican freshmen helped themselves by seeking special benefits for their districts, moderation, and campaign spending; but mobilization against them, the quality of their challengers, and the quality of the campaigns those challengers ran, reduced the Republican share of the vote.

A Model of Congressional Elections

As noted previously, David Mayhew theorized incumbents utilize three strategies to win reelection, which he termed credit claiming, position taking, and advertising (49-73). Incumbents usually win. Still, challengers sometimes defeat incumbents. To explain those cases, Gary Jacobson argued that "Three elements create a formidable challenge: a good reason for voters to desert the incumbent, an acceptable alternative to the incumbent, and sufficient resources to

acquaint voters with the first two" (1992, 115). The socio-economic and political character of specific congressional districts provides the particular context in which conflicts between incumbents and challengers unfold. These are the variables in the model, explained in greater detail in chapter 4, which are depicted in Figure 4.1.

Hypotheses

The model allows for an assessment of six hypotheses:

(1) Republican incumbents used pork barrel projects to increase their share of the vote.

(2) Moderation of their ideological position helped Republican incumbents increase their share of the vote.

(3) The more Republican incumbents spent, the larger their share of the vote.

(4) Facing experienced or admired challengers cost Republican incumbents a significant share of the vote.

(5) Well-funded and well-run challenger campaigns cost Republican incumbents a significant share of the vote.

(6) Mobilization by the AFL-CIO and environmental groups cost Republican incumbents a significant share of the vote.

Each of these hypotheses is controversial. Others hypothesize that: pork tends to benefit liberal members of Congress or Democrats, that moderate rather than conservative Republicans suffered electoral retribution, and that incumbent spending is subject to diminishing returns. Other counter arguments include the claims that local factors such as challenger quality have been overemphasized, that campaigns have only "minimal effects," and that labor mobilization was ineffective.

Data and Methods

To explain the share of the vote received by first term Republicans running for reelection in 1996, I collected articles in newspapers circulating in their districts using the Nexis database. I coded these articles for the presence, in positive or negative form, of each of the incumbent variables and each of the challenger variables. The Nexis database included newspapers circulating in 59 of the districts of the 69 Republican freshmen running contested campaigns for reelection to the House of Representatives.[1] Data were unavailable for ten districts in Nexis, and those

[1]Seventy-three Republicans were elected in 1994. Scandals led to the retirement of Enid Greene (UT-2) and Wes Cooley (OR-2) (see Killian, 198-234, 363-366). Sam Brownback (KS-1) ran for Bob Dole's Senate seat; Mark Sanford (SC-1) ran unopposed.

districts are excluded from this study. The remaining 59 districts are representative of the larger set of freshmen districts.[2]

Table 6.1 lists the 45 publications used in this study, noting the circulation (total circulation is over 10 million) and the number of relevant articles collected from each publication, 2,294 in all.[3] Using the Nexis search term "Hlead," I located articles with the incumbent's name in the headline or lead paragraphs of articles published in these newspapers from January 1, 1996 through election day (November 5, 1996, except in TX-9, where a runoff election was held December 10, 1996).[4]

I use newspapers to examine local media coverage of Congress because there is so little coverage of the House of

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[2]Republicans averaged 56 percent of the vote in the 59 districts included, of which they won 83 percent. They won 80 percent of the excluded districts, averaging 57 percent of the vote. I provide further evidence that the 59 districts are fundamentally similar to the set of all 69 districts in Appendix 6.1.

[3]Ten of these newspapers served two of the congressional districts in this study; two newspapers served three districts.

[4]Some articles captured by the Nexis search term are irrelevant, for example, articles about former Baltimore Oriole pitcher Mike Flanagan collected in a search for information about the representative from IL-5 with the same name. These articles, along with duplicates, and letters to the editor are not coded. In addition, a handful of articles are omitted in which no possible coding was discerned. Inter-coder reliability will be tested as soon as resources to do so are available.

Representatives on television or radio. Marjorie Hershey reports that "One study of fifty-two local television stations' newscasts found that only thirty-seven carried any election coverage on a particular evening, of which only 1 percent of the reports deal with House races and 9 percent with Senate contests" (218).

Similarly, in their study of the media and congressional elections, Peter Clarke and Susan Evans decided to "examine newspaper journalism and not broadcast reporting because print is where the coverage is" (11-12).

District Socio-Economic and Political Character

I use two background variables. To measure the district's political character, I use an average of the Republican share of the two-party presidential vote in the district in 1988 and 1992. In these districts, the Republican vote ranged from 43 percent (CA-1) to 70 percent (FL-1).

Incumbent Credit Claiming

Mayhew defines "credit claiming" as providing "particularized benefits," noting "the traditional role of supplier of goods to the home district" (52-55). "How much particularized benefits count for at the polls is extraordinarily difficult to say," Mayhew observes. "But it

would be hard to find a congressman who thinks he can afford to wait around until precise information is available" (57).

In 1995, however, Republican freshmen trumpeted a vastly expanded time horizon. Tom Latham (IA-5) declared: "It's a class that honestly believes this debate has nothing to do with the next election and everything to do with the next generation" (*Des Moines Register,* February 19, 1996). Newly elected Republican members asserted continued pork barrel politics, rather than electoral uncertainty, was unaffordable. Richard Burr (NC-5) proclaimed "we are saying it's time to cut the pork. In the past there has been an institutional disease in Congress - wasteful, irresponsible, pork barrel spending" (quoted in *News and Observer,* July 6, 1996). In August 1995, Fred Heineman (NC-4) explained that he was not supporting a new EPA building complex in his district because "it would have been hypocritical to call for reducing the deficit, then vote for EPA funding just to help his district" (*News and Observer,* October 13, 1996).

They soon changed their tune. The *News and Observer* reported "this year, Heineman pushed to win money for the EPA project, and Congress approved $50 million . . . . Heineman now touts . . . as a major achievement" (October 13, 1996). By the summer of 1996, Burr was "persuading appropriators to put $1 million into a funding bill for a nutritional center . . . in his district" (July 6, 1996).

Recent studies have measured pork by grants awarded within each congressional district as reported in the U.S. Census Bureau's Federal Assistance Awards Data System. Robert Stein and Kenneth Bickers note, however, that "many awards are not the subject of daily newspaper accounts or featured prominently on the evening television news, making it difficult for even the most informed voters to know what types of benefits flow to their district" (383).

I focus precisely on reports in the district press, creating here a measure of *reported pork*. As I did earlier, I define pork to mean seeking federal expenditures or tax expenditures to particularly benefit a member's district. I count the number of pork projects reported for each incumbent in the articles in the Nexis data set.

For example, in an article that begins "The revolution, this is not," the *Commercial Appeal* reported that

> Roger Wicker, the president of the controversial Republican freshman class . . . . has not abandoned federal help for local projects - 'pork' as it's known when it goes into somebody else's district - be it the development of the Civil War battlefield site at Corinth, a road project for DeSoto County or the grant for the Snow Lake Shores fire station, or a program to place 900 smoke detectors in Benton County homes (October 21, 1996).

This article includes four pork projects, more in this single article than were found for most members in all of the articles about them.

"How many congressmen, after all, really can 'produce' for their districts?" John Johannes and John McAdams ask rhetorically (533). As seen through the local press, about 3/4 -- 45 of the 59 Republican freshmen studied here -- received credit for district projects.

Members may seek pork projects that are not reported in the district press. Killian recounts, for example, the efforts of Van Hilleary (TN-4) for "$2.6 million in funding for a new outdoor shooting range for the Army National Guard in Tullahoma, Tennessee" (104):

> Tullahoma already had an indoor shooting range and the Army National Guard had not even requested the funding. . . . [Hilleary] called it a vital project that would maintain the readiness of the National Guard troops . . . . [However, when asked] how old the existing shooting range was and what was wrong with it, Hilleary had to admit he didn't know . . . . asked how big the new shooting range would be, Hilleary didn't know that either (105).

The *Knoxville News-Sentinel* printed six articles -- four on the front page -- about Hilleary's successful efforts to defeat "a TVA proposal to require lakefront landowners to put up a $ 1,000 damage deposit on each boat

dock" (September 6, 1996). But none of the newspaper's 21 articles about Hilleary mentioned the shooting range.[5]

While it is possible that some constituents knew of what happened on the floor of the House even though it was not reported in the press, I assume that projects reported in the press are the ones likely to be known. That is, I expect that more potential voters know about the projects reported in the district press for Roger Wicker than this project not reported in the district press (that is, the district press in this sample). Here, Hilleary is coded 0 for pork. (I code the dock proposal as casework, rather than pork).

Mayhew distinguished between pork and casework, another credit claiming activity. In Morris Fiorina's definition of casework "each congressman is a monopoly supplier of bureaucratic unsticking services for his district" (1989, 41).

Because casework is perceived differently than pork, I measure separately the evidence of casework that appears in the district press. Walter Jones (NC-3) provided an excellent example of casework credit: "His most gratifying moments as a legislator come in forms less glamorous than a Republican Revolution," reported the *Virginian-Pilot* (October 20, 1996). "I saw a veteran in Goldsboro who was

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[5]The firing range is reported in *Politics in America*.

having trouble getting a wheelchair through his veteran benefits. Through the work of our staff, we were able to help him get that wheelchair. Those are the things that matter to me" (quoted in *Virginian-Pilot*, October 20, 1996).

To construct an aggregate measure of casework, I create a scale to measure the reputation of members for such constituent service, as reported in the district press. The numerator is the number of articles reporting casework positively in the district press minus the number of articles with negative reports of casework; the denominator is the total number of newspaper articles about that district.

Readers of Riverside, California's *Press-Enterprise*, for example, received frequent notice of the constituent services of Representative Sonny Bono (CA-44). In a typical article, the newspaper reported that

> A representative of Congressman Sonny Bono, R-Palm Springs, will be available to help constituents and take U.S. flag orders . . . . The 'mobile office' days are scheduled at various locations around the 44th Congressional District so aides can help people who have encountered difficulties with federal agencies, hear opinions about federal legislation and handle Washington, D.C. tour requests (January 25, 1996).

Since voters expect service representation, failure to meet such expectations may harm incumbents. For example, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported that one voter

> Janet Caples of Beloit said she favored [challenger Lydia] Spottswood, but that she was motivated out of irritation with Neumann rather than anything specific for which Spottswood stood. Caples said she had thought Neumann was doing a good job in Congress, but that she became upset when he failed to respond to a call she made to his office over a nursing home issue. (October 29, 1996)

In all, 11 articles reported casework negatively, 167 did so positively.

Incumbent Position Taking

Mayhew defines "position taking . . . as the public enunciation of a judgmental statement on anything likely to be of interest to political actors. The statement may take the form of a roll call vote" (61).

Roll call data, while relatively easily available, and conveniently reduced to a variety of summary ratings by a number of interest groups, may not be the most important information about the positions members of Congress take. Most people have little idea how their member of Congress has voted on any particular issue.

As with pork, I focus here on the flow of information through the district press. I use three kinds of information

from the district press to determine which freshmen to classify as moderates in a dichotomous measure: general descriptions of the voting records of incumbents, the specific explanations they offer for their votes, and the particular votes reported in the local press.

An editorial endorsement in the *Palm Beach Post* headlined "Reelect 'Moderate' Foley" begins: "'Moderate, moderate, moderate.' That's how Mark Foley describes his record during his first term in Congress" (October 10, 1996). Thomas Davis III (VA-11) "recites the word 'moderate' over and over. He frequently cites the number of times he has sided with Democrats on the House floor" (*Washington Post,* September 13, 1996).

David Funderburk (NC-2) offers a sharp contrast to the moderates. "While other first-term Republican congressmen mute the anti-Washington message they brought to office, Funderburk remains a strident conservative," Raleigh's *News and Observer* reports. "Funderburk is not seeking cover from controversial votes such as opposing an increase in the minimum wage . . . or supporting a repeal of the assault-weapons ban. He does not try to explain away his party's failed attempt to rewrite the country's major environmental and labor laws" (October 3, 1996).

As Richard Fenno has suggested, I also consider how members explained their votes (141), examining those

explanations that are presented in the articles in the Nexis data set.

Republican incumbents most frequently felt compelled to explain the votes they cast on Medicare and student loans. Most often, their explanation asserted that they favored increasing, rather than cutting, spending. For example, Helen Chenoweth (ID-1) asserted "My record will show that I've voted to increase student loans" (*Idaho Statesman,* October 8, 1996). Similarly, "Chenoweth said she supported [Medicare] legislation that actually increased spending from $4,800 to $7,100 per beneficiary during the next seven years" (*Idaho Statesman,* October 7, 1996). Echoing this explanation, "At every opportunity," John Ensign (NV-1) "addresses the AFL-CIO ads about cutting Medicare, explaining that he voted to slow the growth, not cut the program. Medicare funding at $4,800 per senior annually will be $7,100 by 2002. That's not a cut, Ensign repeats again and again" (*Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 27, 1996).

In contrast, George Radanovich (CA-19) asserted "there is no way to achieve a balanced budget without slashing government programs and turning them over to private entities" (*Fresno Bee,* April 12, 1996). None of the 59 articles in the *Fresno Bee* about Radanovich's campaign includes a claim of increased spending. Instead, Radanovich consistently emphasized cutting the budget and rejecting

government intervention in the economy, asserting that "government shouldn't be in the business of helping the poor and needy . . . . The poor and needy are not in the Constitution" (quoted in the *Fresno Bee,* May 31, 1996).[6] Similarly, Burr declared that "Congress should stay on same course set during the last session . . . which trimmed some $53 billion in federal spending and eliminated more than 300 federal programs" (*News and Record,* October 27, 1996).

I code as moderates those who explained their votes as increasing spending for liberal programs, an explanation of the vote vastly different from the conservative position, as articulated by Radanovich and Burr.

As to which side is correct in the high volume acrimony over whether the 104th Congress had cut popular programs, perhaps the most revealing comments came from Nebraska's Jon Christensen. In 1996, Jon Christensen declared he "'didn't think it was possible that anything could be more misleading than the [AFL-CIO] attack ads on Medicare'" which charged Republicans with cutting Medicare rather than slowing the program's rate of growth (*Omaha World Herald,* August 8, 1996). However, when "Christensen himself . . . two years

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[6]Does the preamble to the Constitution refer to the poor and needy when proclaiming a commitment to "establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility . . . [and] promote the general Welfare"? James Madison argued for "the silent operation of laws, which, without violating the rights of property, reduce extreme wealth towards a state of mediocrity, and raise extreme indigence towards a state of comfort" (86).

ago . . . accused [former Representative Peter] Hoagland of voting . . . to 'cut' Medicare . . . . The 'cut' referred to . . . was a similar reduction in the rate of annual spending growth" (*Omaha World Herald,* July 16, 1996).[7]

I also code as moderates those reported in the district press to have voted for raising the minimum wage and government regulation of health care, those who describe themselves as environmentalists, as pro-choice, or as favoring gun control. In addition, those who support cutting military spending or raising taxes are coded as moderate.

Incumbent Advertising

Mayhew defined advertising as "any effort to disseminate one's name among constituents in such a fashion as to create a favorable image but in messages having little or no issue content," referring to public appearances, publicity stunts, and various kinds of mailings, especially the frank (49-52).

Because the campaign resources of incumbents now often dwarf the value of the frank, I use Federal Election Commission reports of fundraising by incumbents as a summary

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[7]Similarly, the *Seattle Times* reported that "Slade Gorton in his 1994 senatorial race . . . . attacked Democrat Ron Sims for supporting President Clinton's 1993 . . . Medicare cut (Gorton called it a 'cut,' though like the proposed Republican 'cut,' it was a reduction in future cost growth)" (October 18, 1996).

measure of their advertising activity, primarily their ability to pay for television ads.

In addition, I develop a separate measure of advertising by coding newspaper reports of appearances at events, fundraising visits by celebrities, television ads, endorsements, and the like.

Not all press accounts are positive. The *Houston Chronicle,* for example made repeated references to "[Steve] Stockman's image . . . as a bumbler . . . 'Congressman Clueless'" (November 6, 1996). I code such articles -1. In contrast to Tom Coburn (OK-2), frequently praised as a doctor and "citizen legislator," for whom all advertising references were positive, for Stockman (TX-9) positive articles barely outnumbered negative ones. From the Nexis data set I develop a measure of incumbent advertising on a scale ranging from -1 to +1. Simply examining campaign contributions (Stockman, $1.9 million; Coburn, $1.3 million) ignores such distinctions. I test whether this kind of qualitative assessment of incumbent advertising helps explain election results.

Reason to Defect: Mobilization Against Incumbents

I create a four-point scale to measure the intensity of mobilization efforts. In addition to distinguishing between some and many AFL-CIO ads, I consider mobilizing efforts by

methods other than television advertising campaigns, and by groups other than the AFL-CIO.

I use the Nexis data set to distinguish between districts with low and high intensity AFL-CIO television advertising campaigns, and to identify the districts in which environmental groups mobilized. The League of Conservation Voters, Sierra Club, and the Natural Resources Defense Council make repeated appearances in this set of districts.

The "ground war" proved harder to observe than the "air war," although the press occasionally reported on grass roots mobilizing efforts.

In southeast Texas, for example, the *Houston Chronicle* reported that "Local union members in the oil refineries and chemical plants that dominate much of the district were already pledging Wednesday morning to join phone banks, put up signs and to work plant gates for [Nick] Lampson," the challenger in TX-9 (November 7, 1996).

In Maine, an activist named Vaughn Thompson orchestrated a series of high-visibility demonstrations. Near Christmas, 1995, for example, dressed in costumes including Santa Claus and an elf, a group of protesters dumped coal at James Longley's office to dramatize for the local television news the incumbent's vote to cut the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (*Portland Press*

Herald, March 24). But, as a reporter noted, "Thompson has deliberately kept a low profile. He declined to be photographed for this article. During one interview, he asked a reporter, 'So how'd you find me?'" (*Portland Press Herald*, March 24, 1996).

The reason for this low profile was made clear in one of the few other districts in which the presence of AFL-CIO rank-and-file organizers was reported. Identifying a labor organizer in Chattanooga "the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission charging . . . . that an AFL-CIO 'political operative . . .' used the local Teamsters' office to work against the re-election of Rep. Wamp" (*Chattanooga Free Press*, September 14, 1996).

Because these organizers sought to avoid attention to their presence, the press is not a good guide to their activity. I have relied on an informant with detailed knowledge of the districts in which the AFL-CIO organizers operated to code districts for the presence of grassroots mobilizing.

Challenger quality

"Experience in elective office," Gary Jacobson writes, "is a useful, albeit crude indicator of a challenger's quality" (1992, 116). I refine this simple dichotomy in two

ways. First, I create a four-point scale. I code as 1 current members of the state legislature. I code as .5 holders of other elective office, such as city council members, former state legislators, celebrities, those appointed to political office, including congressional staff, and candidates who received more than 45 percent of the vote in the previous congressional election. I code as -.5 candidates who received less than 35 percent of the vote in a race for Congress and candidates who have lost contests in smaller jurisdictions. Others are coded 0.

Using the simple dichotomy, both Carolyn McCarthy, the challenger in NY-4 and Randolph Amen, the challenger in OK-1 would be coded as 0. But Carolyn McCarthy, who had not previously run for office, became a celebrity through her opposition to gun violence after the Long Island Railroad shootings, and received a great deal of favorable press. Randolph Amen, the challenger in OK-1

> made an unsuccessful race for a Tulsa City Council seat . . . . [Amen] gained extra notice because of a lawsuit he had filed against federal officials who, he said . . . attempted to keep him "drugged and silenced forever" because he had "insider" knowledge related to the Kennedy assassination. The 1995 civil rights suit named a host of defendants including the Central Intelligence Agency, Los Angeles County and the Bar Association in Hawaii (*Tulsa World*, November 6, 1996; September 22, 1996).

The four-point scale treats these candidates differently: Amen is coded -.5, McCarthy is coded .5.

A second modification involves use of the Nexis data set for a more nuanced portrait of the challengers. I coded all references to such qualities as intelligence, honesty, fame, spunk, and ties to the community as positive or negative, creating a scale from -1 to +1.

Amen, about whom there were only negative articles is coded -1 on this scale. McCarthy, invariably praised for "her candor and common sense," her "resemblance to all the best next-door neighbors you ever had" (*Newsday,* October 24, 1996, July 16, 1996), is coded +1.

Michaela Alioto was a top Democratic challenger, invited to speak, along with McCarthy, at the Democratic National Convention. Having served in an appointed political position on Vice President Gore's staff, Alioto is coded .5 on the four-point scale. In the campaign, Alioto suffered relentless criticism as a carpetbagger who failed to vote or pay taxes and other bills on time, and a hypocrite who talked about being an environmentalist while holding tens of thousands of dollars of stock in egregiously polluting companies.

Since both the four-point challenger quality scale and the scale based on content analysis measure the same concept, albeit in different ways, I combined them into a

single measure. Combining McCarthy's .5 rating on the four-point scale with the 1.0 rating based on newspaper assessments yields a revised measure of .75. Amen's combined rating is -.75; Alioto's is .04.

This revised measure also provides a more nuanced assessment of elected officials. Consider three state legislators challenging incumbent members of Congress: Bob Coffin (NV-1), Glenn Johnson (OK-2), and Adam Smith (WA-9). On both the simple dichotomy and the four-point scale, all three are rated as the highest quality challengers. But examination of assessments of them in the press in their districts reveals major differences.

Coffin, as the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* put it, "is not widely known, is not well-funded and was hardly the party's first, or even 10th choice" (October 4, 1996). The state's leading Democrats "have little affection for Coffin, most of them believe he has done much to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory" (*Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 31, 1996). Although he was a state legislator for 14 years, "He has introduced relatively few bills during his four years in the Assembly and his 10 years in the Senate. In the Senate, he has introduced 15 bills; six became law. In 1995, he introduced only one bill (*Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 27, 1996). He became much better known for his "travel-for-profit baggage (seen everywhere on TV these days)" in ads

attacking him as dishonest (*Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 15, 1996). The *Review-Journal* explained the travel scandal this way: "it cost Las Vegas lawmakers $80 to fly home during the 1989 session and Coffin and other legislators asked for three times that . . . . to get reimbursed based on mileage, not actual cost" (October 1, 1996). Further, the hapless Coffin was caught attempting to manipulate Federal Election Commission reports, which brought him yet another round of bad publicity (*Las Vegas Review-Journal,* October 17, 1996). Every article that could be coded for presenting information about Coffin's quality as a challenger was negative.

Glen Johnson appeared to have been the best of the Democratic challengers, not only a state legislator but the Speaker of the Oklahoma House. But, as articles in the district press noted, "Johnson's state House district covers all or part of only three counties in the 18-county 2nd District" so that he had little name recognition in most of the district (*Tulsa World,* August 11, 1996; October 26, 1996). Overall, Johnson's quality as a challenger was presented slightly more favorably than unfavorably.

Democratic challenger Adam Smith was described this way: "serious, tenacious, intellectual and competitive . . . . the ranking Republican on [his state Senate] committee, said Smith is fair, allows opposing viewpoints to

be aired - including her own - and has seen his wry wit" (*News Tribune,* September 30, 1996).

On the combined scale, rather than three challengers with the same rating, Coffin is rated 0, Johnson .57, and Smith 1.

Challenger Campaigns

I measure challenger resources through Federal Election Commission reports of the funds they raised.

I also create an additional measure of campaign quality, as distinct from candidate quality and the resources of the campaign, from the Nexis data set. I code all reference to the quality of the campaign -1 or +1.

The Springfield, Illinois *State Journal Register* observed, for example, that "Mike Curran (IL-18) has been virtually silent in his campaign for Congress" reporting his "cancellation of a [televised] debate" and that he "hasn't been visible in other traditional ways. News conferences and advertising have been almost nonexistent" (October 10, 1996). In contrast, Steve Owens running against Representative J.D. Hayworth (AZ-6) not only participated in frequent news conferences and debates, but the day after a debate drew additional attention when his "campaign announced a 'Hayworth hotline'" providing callers with a

recording of what Owens considered a debate gaffe by his opponent (*Arizona Republic,* October 18, 1996).

Further differences in campaign quality were revealed when Republicans attacked contributions from those they termed "mob-related unionists." The bewildered Jonathan Weinzapfel (IN-8) "wonder[ed] why he's having to spend so much time responding" to the charge, which he wanted to ignore (*Indianapolis Star,* October 2, 1996). In contrast, Owens promptly called a press conference where he "brandished documents saying that the group targeted by Hayworth, the Laborers International Union of North America, also has given thousands of dollars in campaign funds to several Republican candidates, including Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, national chairman of Bob Dole's presidential campaign" (*Arizona Republic,* October 2, 1996).

Simply examining finances, Alioto's campaign, having raised over $1 million, was one of the most successful. In the campaign quality scale based on district press accounts, however, the quality of Alioto's campaign is at the median level. Balancing such campaign boosts as speaking at the Democratic National Convention, one report noted that "Her campaign also has been pocked by a series of amateurish scandals" (*San Francisco Chronicle,* October 25, 1996). A headline summed up the problem: "Alioto Campaign Admits

Dirty Tricks" (*San Francisco Chronicle,* July 27, 1996). In short, a well-funded campaign can be poorly run.

Because campaign resources and campaign quality are conceptually distinct, I do not combine these measures, but test them separately.

RESULTS

The dependent variable in this study is the Republican share of the two-party congressional vote in the selected districts in 1996. The independent variables are those described above.

The initial regression equation is

$$\text{Republican Congressional Vote} = B_0 + B_1\text{District Unionization} + B_2\text{District Partisanship} + B_3\text{Reported Pork} + B_4\text{Moderation} + B_5\text{Advertising} + B_6\text{Mobilization} + B_7\text{Challenger Quality} + B_8\text{Challenger Resources} + u$$

I also tried adding the measures described for challenge campaign quality, the qualitative advertising rating, and casework. I also tested modifying the original equation by testing the dichotomous challenger experience measure and the four-point scale.

The regression statistics are displayed in Table 6.2. This model explains 83 percent of the variance of the Republican vote in the selected districts, a notable improvement over the best previous study. Jacobson explained 60 percent of the variance in the vote for Republican freshmen (1997a, 158). (Table 6.3 provides further details on Jacobson's findings.)

Each reported pork barrel project gained Republican freshmen about .8 percentage points of the vote in their reelection campaigns. For active pork seekers, such as Jerry Weller (IL-11) or Roger Wicker (MS-1) with five reported projects each, these credit-claiming activities were worth about 4 additional percentage points.

Republicans who cast moderate votes, who explained their votes with moderate rhetoric, or who labeled themselves moderates, gained about an additional 2 percentage points by doing so.

Approximately each $325,000 freshmen raised bought them an additional percentage point of the vote. For the head of the class in fundraising, Greg Ganske (IA-4), $2.3 million was worth an estimated 7 additional percentage points.

Challengers, as analysts have long thought, got a bigger bang for the buck, gaining almost an additional percentage point for each $100,000 raised.

The quality of challenger campaigns, as measured through activities and assessments reported in the local press, proved statistically significant. Quality campaigns gained challengers about 3 additional percentage points.

The AFL-CIO and environmental groups, through intensive advertising and grassroots mobilizing campaigns, cost the freshmen about 4 percentage points.

A quality challenger was able to win about 2.7 additional percentage points, compared to an undistinguished challenger. Neither the standard dichotomy nor the 4-point challenger quality scale proved statistically significant. Only the revised scale incorporating assessment of challenger quality from the local press was significant.

The additional casework variable did not prove to be significant, nor did the alternative measure of incumbent advertising based on media assessments.

Only one of the background variables proved statistically significant. Union density was associated with lower vote totals for the freshmen; each ten thousand union members in a district meant one percentage point less for the incumbent. The district's partisan character as measured through the presidential vote did not have a direct, statistically significant impact on the congressional vote.

DISCUSSION

Some political scientists have argued recently that liberals benefit from providing pork and conservatives from not doing so because "a legislator's fiscal consistency determines how pork influences electoral support" (Sellers, 1997, 1032, 1034). This study calls that view into question. Now that the Republicans have a majority in the House of Representatives, they appear to have sought pork, and marketed it successfully.

In the aftermath of the 1996 election, Representative Helen Chenoweth (ID-1) claimed that "conservative Republicans who stood up for [their] principles . . . survived the election. Those who tried to moderate lost" (quoted in Barone and Ujifusa, 459). But Chenoweth herself adopted the language of moderation in a successful effort to stave off a concerted mobilization campaign and a mediocre challenger. Most of the Republican freshmen took moderate positions, in their votes or their explanations of their votes, to win greater electoral support.

This combination of seeking pork and moderation represents a retreat from the positions the Republican freshmen had articulated when they were elected.

Since the mid-1960s, there has been a pronounced sophomore surge. But in their reelection campaigns the

Republican class of 1994, on average, did no better than they had the first time around.

The incumbency advantage, Jacobson suggests, "depends not so much on what incumbents do but on what potential opponents do" (1997b: 37). These findings confirm Jacobson's view. An examination of the standardized coefficients in Table 6.2 shows all of the challenger variables are stronger than the incumbent variables. However, many of the actual challengers and their campaigns were weak. Mobilization against incumbents undertaken by the AFL-CIO and environmental groups could compensate for some of these weaknesses, but not enough to swing control of the House to the Democrats.

Table 6.1:

Local Newspapers in the Nexis Data Base Covering the Districts of Republican Freshmen

St	CD	Publication	Circulation	N Articles
AZ	4	Arizona Republic/Phoenix Gazette	445214	13
AZ	6	Arizona Republic/Phoenix Gazette		44
CA	1	San Francisco Chronicle	692424	20
CA	19	Fresno Bee	149933	59
CA	44	Riverside Press Enterprise	158521	51
CA	49	San Diego Union Tribune	385197	28
FL	1	Pensacola News Journal	59139	15
FL	15	Florida Today	82494	19
FL	16	West Palm Beach Post	178030	26
GA	7	Atlanta Journal and Constitution	494556	22
GA	8	states news service		9
GA	10	Atlanta Journal and Constitution		12
IA	4	Des Moines Register	193358	99
IA	5	Des Moines Register		22
ID	1	Idaho Statesman	60678	80
IL	5	Chicago Tribune	721559	17
IL	11	Chicago Tribune		21
IL	18	Springfield State Journal Register	68004	31
IN	2	Indianapolis Star and News	328936	21
IN	8	Indianapolis Star and News		9
KY	1	Louisville Courier Journal	235144	28
MD	2	Baltimore Sun	391415	55
ME	1	Portland Press Herald	73391	45
MN	1	Minneapolis Star Tribune	408869	22
MS	1	Memphis Commercial Appeal	193211	10
NC	2	Raleigh News and Observer	142433	33
NC	3	Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk)	223461	12
NC	4	Raleigh News and Observer		49
NC	5	Greensboro News and Record	112897	13
NE	2	Omaha World Herald	221762	157
NH	2	Manchester Union Leader	70806	61
NJ	8	Record	164181	104

Table 6.1: (continued)

St	CD	Publication	Circulation	N Articles
NJ	11	Record		8
NV	1	Las Vegas Review Journal	168896	27
NY	1	Newsday	788998	28
NY	4	Newsday		37
OH	1	Cincinnati Enquirer	162669	56
OH	6	Chillicothe Gazette	15175	23
OH	18	Marietta Times	12920	7
OH	19	Cleveland Plain Dealer	409749	43
OK	1	Tulsa World	192748	68
OK	2	Tulsa World		68
OK	4	Tulsa World		39
OR	5	Bend Bulletin		16
PA	13	Allentown Morning Call	136293	53
PA	21	Pittsburgh Post-Gazette		6
SC	3	states news service		11
TN	3	Chattanooga Free Press	89205	179
TN	4	Knoxville Sentinel	123125	21
TN	7	Memphis Commercial Appeal		70
TX	9	Houston Chronicle	421140	58
VA	11	Washington Post	810904	21
WA	1	Seattle Times	238176	36
WA	2	Seattle Times		14
WA	3	Vancouver Columbian	51490	64
WA	5	Lewiston Morning Tribune	28179	31
WA	9	Tacoma News Tribune	122007	52
WI	1	Milwaukee Journal	239944	42
WY	AL	states news service		9

Table 6.2: Effects on the Vote Share of Republican Freshmen, 1996				
	B	s.e.	Beta	T-Test
Constant	57.74	6.40		9.02
District Republican Presidential Vote	-0.06	0.10	.046	0.59
District Union Membership***	-0.12	0.00	-.237	3.68
Democratic Challenger Funds Raised***	-0.92	0.20	-.457	4.67
Republican Incumbent Funds Raised*	0.31	0.13	.172	2.36
Challenger Quality**	-2.68	0.94	-.178	2.85
Challenger Campaign***	-3.09	0.76	-.273	4.05
Mobilization against the Incumbent*	-4.24	1.86	-.220	2.28
Reported Pork**	0.81	0.29	.162	2.82
Incumbent Moderation*	2.14	1.10	.115	1.95
Adjusted R2=.83				
N=59				
* p < .05				
** p < .01				
*** p < .001				

Table 6.3:

Jacobson's Equation for Effects on the Vote Share of Republican Freshmen, 1996

	for all 69 Districts		applied to 59 Districts	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Intercept	58.72	30.61	55.50	32.43
Republican House Vote, 1994	0.22	0.16	0.22	0.18
Avg. Republican Pres. Vote, 88-92	0.36**	0.13	0.36*	0.14
Experienced challenger	-2.66*	1.29	-2.98*	1.36
AFL-CIO target (at least one ad)	-6.33***	1.55	-6.61***	1.69
AFL-CIO target (video voter guide)	-8.03***	1.68	-8.29***	1.80
Support for Contract with America	-0.30	0.29	-0.25	0.30
Adjusted R2	.60		.59	
N	69		59	
* p < .05				
** p < .01				
*** p < .001				

This table shows there is little difference between the set of 59 districts for which local newspaper information is available through the Nexis data base and the full set of 69 districts in which Republican freshmen ran contested campaigns for reelection in 1996. All the coefficients are quite similar. Jacobson's equation is reported in "The 105th Congress" (1997a, 158). Perhaps because he made these calculations so soon after the elections, and campaign finance data may have been as yet unavailable, Jacobson did not use those variables. As a result, Jacobson's findings for the impact of labor mobilization are higher than the finding reported in Table 6.2. Without the campaign quality and campaign finance variables, the coefficient for mobilization in Table 6.2 would be greater than 10.

Chapter 7:

"THE WINNING TEAM FEELS DEFEATED": THE FAILURE AND SUCCESS OF MOBILIZATION

"In Speaker Gingrich's words, 'The winning team *feels* defeated'" (quoted in Fenno, 1997, 52). That statement encapsulates both the failure and the success of the mobilization against majority party incumbents I have described.

To summarize the findings briefly: Campaigns matter, leading to some challenger victories, changed incumbent behavior, and a transformed political agenda. But there are limits to campaign mobilization; it does not often compensate for the absence of a credible challenger. There has not been a policy realignment, yet. Campaign resources for both incumbents and challengers, and incumbent efforts to secure their position through pork barrel politics, are also significant. To understand the story of the 104th Congress, it must be seen in the context of both the election that preceded it and the one that followed.

Campaigns matter

Rosenstone and Hansen showed that mobilization spurred turnout. Through multivariate probit analysis of individual vote decisions, and a series of cross-tabulations, I

document in chapter 3 that mobilization also affects vote choice. Despite the long-standing "minimal effects" school deprecating the value of campaigns (Finkel), I show in chapter 5 that mobilization by the AFL-CIO cost Republican incumbents about 7 percentage points in 1996. Using content analysis to develop a new measure of campaign quality, I demonstrate in chapter 6 that in addition to the contribution of independent mobilization efforts, the challenger's personal characteristics and campaign resources, campaign quality makes a significant contribution to the results.

Mobilization is not enough

In chapter 2, I drew attention to the recent literature that reconceptualizes the incumbency advantage as challenger disadvantage (Levitt and Wolfram; Cox and Katz). Mobilization helped strong challengers win close elections. But mobilization does not appear to be sufficient to defeat incumbents without an effective challenger. As Jacobson puts it, "You Can't Beat Somebody With Nobody."

Piven and Cloward observe that "protest is usually structurally precluded" (1977, 7). The socio-economic and political character of many districts, and the limits of the infrastructure of both the labor movement and the Democratic Party, mean that mobilization or quality challengers are unlikely to emerge in many areas. Nevertheless a shift in

only a small number of districts can change partisan control of the House of Representatives.

No policy realignment, yet

Thirty years ago, Lloyd Free and Hadley Cantril described Americans as "liberal' with respect to [specific] . . . Government programs," while at the "ideological level" the "abstract concepts Americans tend to hold . . . are . . . pronouncedly conservative" (17, 24-26). Both the National Election Study data on individual policy preferences reviewed in chapter 3 and the description of position taking by Republican freshmen in chapter 6 suggest that this remains the case. In chapter 3, following V.O. Key's famous advice to compare switchers and standpatters, I found that voters who switched to the Republicans in 1994 remained far closer in their policy preferences to Democratic standpatters than to Republican loyalists. In 1995 Republicans pressed forward an agenda which they hoped would move popular policy preferences. But in 1996, as I show in chapter 6, they moderated their votes and the way they explained their votes, and won electoral support by doing so.

Richard Fenno points out the "discover[y] [of] a political label more politically punishing even than the label 'liberal.' That label was 'extremist'" (1997, 47).

Following Free and Cantril, the liberal label is punishing at the ideological level, while the extremist label is punishing at what they term the "operational level," the support for specific government programs. The result of popular support for government programs and the power of the extremist label was Republican moderation. A powerful, albeit indirect, indicator of Republican moderation in 1996 was their appeal to what Everett Carll Ladd calls "cognitive Madisonianism" (2-7). In a widely used advertisement known as the "Crystal Ball," the Republican National Committee asked voters to consider "What would happen if the Democrats controlled Congress and the White House?" The Republican argument for re-election in 1996 rested on stopping the Democratic agenda, rather than pursuing their own agenda, as they had in 1994.

Campaign resources and pork projects are also significant

In addition to mobilization, challenger quality, and policy moderation, the other variables in the model pictured in Figure 4.1 also proved to be statistically significant.

Unlike previous findings, the multiple regression analysis in chapter 5 shows that Republican incumbents benefited significantly from the vast resources they invested in their campaigns.

Beyond anecdotal evidence that Republicans sought pork, multiple regression analysis in chapter 6 suggests that for

each pork project reported in the district press, Republican incumbents were able to add .8 additional percentage points to their share of the vote. This too may have felt like defeat for those incumbents who abandoned their promises not to pursue pork.

Two Elections Shaped the 104th Congress

In its first session, the 104th Congress looked back at the 1994 election; in the second session, members of Congress looked ahead to the 1996 elections.

The influence of 1994 is captured well by David Maraniss and Michael Weisskopf in a chapter titled "Revenge of the Business Class" (53-71). They report the blunt language of Republican Representative Cass Ballenger (NC-10): "This was my sales pitch: 'Businessmen, wouldn't you like to have a friend overseeing OSHA.'" While Ballenger was making his "sales pitch" for re-election, Lindsay Graham (SC-3) had "an epiphany" after a "tepid response" from a "small-town Rotary Club." When an exasperated "textile . . . plant manager" raged at the "damn Democrats" and their "crappy regs," Graham "picked up the theme of government deregulation." Others picked up campaign contributions from companies subject to large fines for violating health and safety standards.

Similarly, Balz and Brownstein describe the "enormous pressure on Democrats in competitive seats" brought to bear by the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) (183). In the same vein, Elizabeth Drew reports that "In 1994 . . . the NFIB . . . was one of the major forces behind the Republicans' gaining control of the House" (30). In short, 1994 was marked by a business mobilization against the incumbent majority party.

In 1995, following the Republican victory, the "House subcommittee on workforce protections . . . . [which] for years had been controlled by the son of a Michigan auto worker killed in an industrial fire, was now headed," Maraniss and Weisskopf observe, by Ballenger, who was fond of "boasting that he was the only member [of Congress] who had been cited for workplace violations." Ballenger stacked his subcommittee with others who "hated OSHA with a passion" and put forward "pro-business" legislation, largely written by a well-connected lobbyist for a firm seeking to avoid OSHA regulations. But, as Maraniss and Weisskopf conclude, "the anti-OSHA effort backfired on the Republicans. Unions became revitalized by the threat, and later helped Democrats block initiatives that were even more central to the [Republican agenda]" (54-71).

In the second session of the 104th Congress, when Republicans looked ahead to the 1996 elections, what they saw were AFL-CIO television ads that redefined the agenda.

> The commercial opens with a graph. One line, representing the minimum wage, is flat while a second, rising line is labeled "Corporate Profits" and "Congressional Pay" . . . . Announcer: "In 1991, the minimum wage was just $4.25 an hour. Since then, corporate profits and executive salaries have soared. And Congress gave itself a 30 percent pay raise. But our Congresswoman voted four times to block a minimum wage increase. And that's after she voted to cut Medicare and college loans, all to give a big tax break to the rich" (*New York Times,* May 24, 1996).

Ed Whitfield (KY-1), one of the targets of the ad, declared that "if we were voting on establishing a minimum wage today, I'd probably vote against establishing a minimum wage because I think the market can determine that" (*Louisville Courier-Journal,* April 10, 1996). The next month, though, the *Courier-Journal* reported that Whitfield, like others, "may have defused such attacks this month by voting for a raise in the minimum wage" (May 30, 1996).

"[W]hen people ask skeptically whether labor got its money's worth from its $35-million campaign, it's a no-brainer," Guy Molyneux writes. "10 million low-wage working Americans will get that amount, and more, back in their

paychecks tomorrow, and again the next day" (*Los Angeles Times,* November 17, 1996).

In 1996, mobilization defeated some incumbents, won the votes of others for labor and environmental proposals, and redefined the political agenda. AFL-CIO leaders declared that the 1996 campaign would build a new labor political infrastructure. The next election will test whether they have succeeded.

Appendix

SOME NOTES ON DATA AND METHODS

As in much of the political science literature, at several points in this dissertation, I take for granted familiarity with standard data sources and analytic techniques. In this appendix, I provide some additional information on both the data sources and the analytic techniques. I address National Election Study data and probit technique used in chapter 3, and the content analysis used in chapter 6.

National Election Study Data

In chapter 3, I performed a probit analysis on National Election Study data. Although I described in some detail the particular coding scheme I used, and the way in which I transformed coefficients into probabilities, because both the data and the technique are conventional, I did not explain them.

Virginia Sapiro and Larry Bartels report that "the (not entirely complete) bibliography of publications, papers, and dissertations (in English) making use of NES data lists works by about 1,250 individuals (65). These

works include some of the most prominent in the literature, such as Jacobson's *The Politics of Congressional Elections,* Rosenstone and Hansen's *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America,* and Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde's *Change and Continuity* series. Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde explain "The NES data are the best and most comprehensive source of information about political attitudes and partisan loyalties of the American electorate" (10).

Best, however, does not mean flawless.

In "Errors in Measuring Vote Choice in the National Election Studies, 1952-88," Gerald Wright reports a "clear prowinner bias in the [NES] data" (311). Wright suggests that "faulty recall in these House elections, and its growth with the days between the interview and the election, is unmistakable" (307). That is, more respondents to the NES survey report having voted for the winner than are likely to have actually done so, and that proportion appears to increase as time passes. This prowinner bias in the data, Wright points out, yields results more consistent with prevailing theories of congressional elections (i.e., incumbency advantage) than unbiased data (311-312). Wright warns that "The temptation to acknowledge the problem and then proceed with business as usual . . . . [is] no longer defensible" (312).

While I believe Wright has provided a valuable service by promoting caution in using survey data, I do not agree that the problem is as severe as he suggests. He acknowledges that "a statistically significant [Time of Interview] effect is achieved only when the lopsided elections are excluded and we look at the 1978-99 period" (307) Wright supports this with just a single experiment on 1988 exit polls (312). Taking Wright's analysis into account, Sellers controlled for "the number of days between election day and the survey interview for each respondent" but found that the time of interview was not statistically significant and may not have affected the results (1998, 168-169).

Probit

Logit and Probit are standard methods for dealing with a dichotomous dependent variable. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) use probit, as do Jacobson in *The Politics of Congressional Elections,* and Abramowitz in his analysis of the 1994 congressional elections (1995).

With a dependent variable that can take on only one of two values, ordinary least squares regression techniques are inappropriate for reasons that are rather technical.

A. H. Studenmund identifies "four major problems" in "the use of OLS to estimate the coefficients of an equation with a dummy [i.e., a dichotomous] dependent variable":

> 1. The error term is not normally distributed. . . . 2. The error term is inherently heteroskedastic [i.e., the variance of the error term is not a constant]. . . . 3. R^2 is not an accurate measure of overall fit. . . . [and, 4. The predicted value of the dependent variable] is not bounded by 0 and 1 (503).

Content Analysis

The analysis in Chapter 6 relies in part on a procedure known as content analysis. As Kenneth Bailey explains, "The basic goal of content analysis is to take a verbal, nonquantiative document and transform it into quantitative data" (312). As Karin Dovring showed in "Quantitative Semantics in 18th Century Sweden," content analysis is a venerable technique. In a major study of content analysis, Ole Holsti describes Harold Laswell's *The Language of Politics* as "perhaps the most influential publication of the 1940's on content analysis, representing the high water mark of focus on political documents generally" (21-22). More recent electoral studies using content analysis include Peter Clarke and Susan Evans's, *Covering Campaigns: Journalism in Congressional Elections*

and Michael Robinson and Margaret Sheehan's *Over the Wire and on TV.*

In their textbook *Political Science Research Methods,* Janet Buttolph Johnson and Richard Joslyn describe Robinson and Sheehan's book as "one of the most thorough content analyses ever performed by political scientists" but observe that "The value of the study is weakened, however, by the inadequate explanation of the content analysis procedures" (251). As Johnson and Joslyn suggest, therefore, I present here a brief summary of the procedures used to determine the sampling frame, the categories of analysis, the recording units, and the systems of enumeration employed (245-246; see also Holsti, 95-126).

In this study, the content is not the dependent variable, but rather an alternative way of estimating the values of independent variables.

In Chapter 6, I explain the "sampling frame," the method by which I selected articles for analysis from the Nexis database. The Nexis database allows for a systematic collection of relevant articles rather than relying on samples of news accounts. The sampling frame includes all articles in 1996 through election day in which the incumbent representative's name appeared in the headline or lead paragraphs of an article in the major available

newspaper circulating in each of the congressional districts under study.

The model outlined in chapter 4 defined the categories used for the content analysis. Kenneth Bailey notes that "categories for content analysis are generally not derived from theory" (315) warning that "Only by letting the categories emerge from the documents to be analyzed can the goals of mutual exclusiveness and exhaustiveness be met" (316). The model outlined in chapter 4 provides categories that organize the data well, although examination of the news content allowed for an alternative approach to measurement of some of the variables.

Holsti points out that "Almost all content analysis studies have used one of five units [of analysis, or recording units]" (116). These are "single words . . . . themes . . . . [when studying fiction] characters . . . . grammatical units such as the sentence or paragraph . . . . [or the] item . . . when the entire article, film, book, or radio program is characterized" (116-117). (He notes that the smallest recording unit in a content analysis is the syllable, in a "study of alliteration in Shakespeare's sonnets" [116n]). The recording units in this dissertation are themes, the themes being the categories in the model: incumbent credit claiming, position taking, and

advertising, mobilization against incumbents, challenger experience, and challenger resources. Examples of each from the content analysis are provided in chapter 6.

There are, Bailey points out,

> four chief ways to enumerate or quantify the data in content analysis: (1) simple binary coding to indicate whether or not the category appears in the document; (2) frequency with which the category appears in the document; (3) amount of space allotted to the category; and (4) strength or intensity with which the category is represented (319).

I utilize modifications of most of these systems of enumeration.

In this portion of the research, I have conceptualized moderation as a dichotomous variable, and used the first of the systems of enumeration. I interpret the simple presence of any of the indicators described in chapter 6 as moderation.

For the measure of credit claiming I term reported pork, I use a modified frequency measure, counting the number of different projects mentioned in the set of articles for a district.

For the categories incumbent advertising, challenger quality, and challenger campaigns, I use a variant of the

fourth measure, "the intensity with which the category is represented." I create a scale from -1 to +1 by subtracting negative references from positive references, and dividing that numerator by the total number of references in that category.

The data allowed for an alternative measure of challenger resources. As is usual, I measure challenger resources as financial resources. However, as described in chapter 6, the press accounts allowed for a measure of campaign quality distinct from the quality of the challenger or the financial resources of the campaign. This new measure proved statistically significant. An effort to use a content based measure of incumbent advertising as an alternative to a measure of financial resources did not, however, prove to be statistically significant. This is consistent with the conventional view that because incumbents are so much better known than challengers, variations in the efforts of the latter to make themselves known are more significant than variations in the former.

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IMAGE EVALUATION
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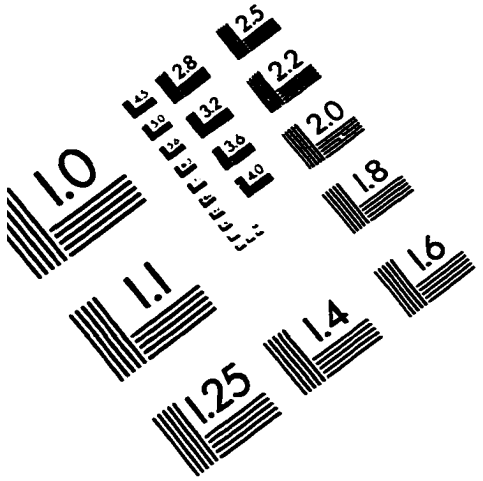

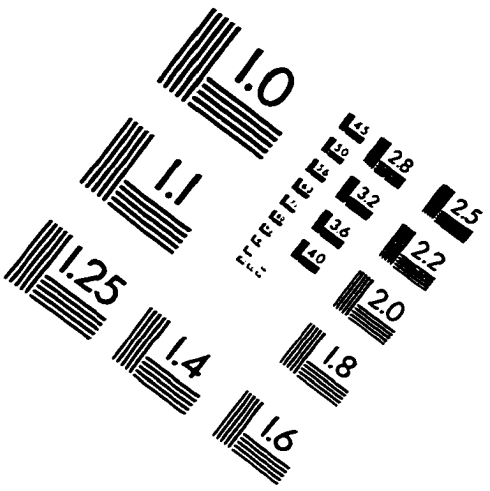

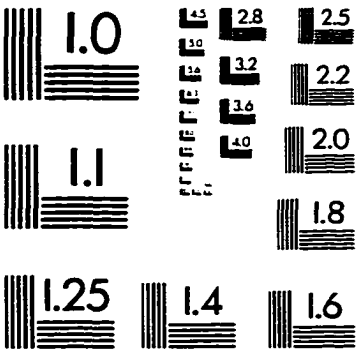

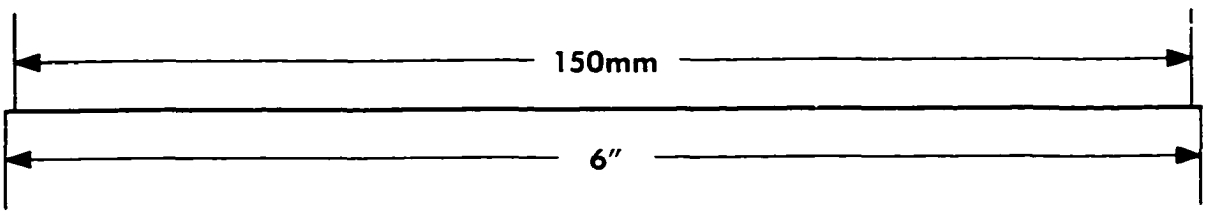

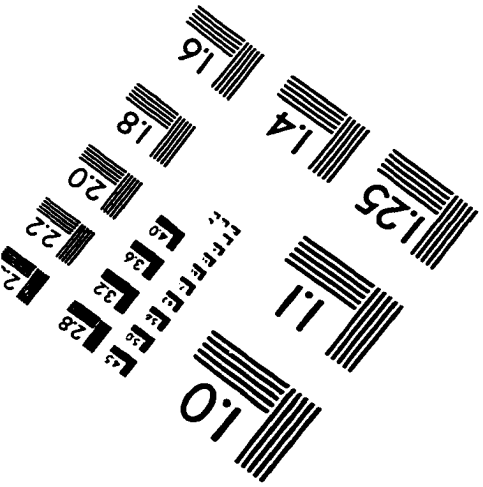

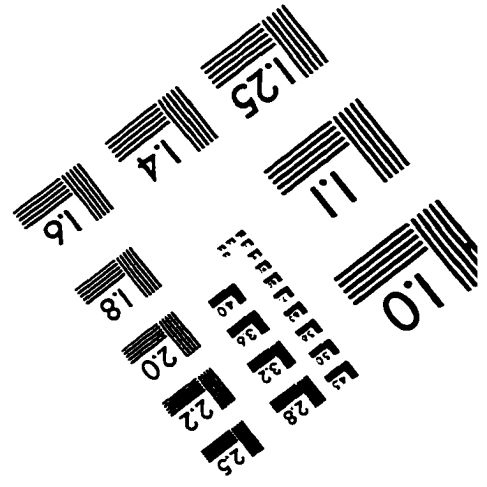

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