Candidates and Candidacies in the Expanded Party

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Do American presidential nomination candidacies run party campaigns, or candidate-centered campaigns? Do the candidates who thrive in the current system run factional campaigns, or do they form broad party-based coalitions? In this study, we look at the campaign organizations of the leading contenders for the 2000 presidential nominations, and find that parties and coalition-building are alive and strong in this area of American politics.

Twenty years ago, Nelson W. Polsby argued that the presidential nominating process ushered in by the McGovern-Fraser reforms had produced a system in which factions, not coalitions, dominated (1983; see also Ranney 1975). Since then, instead of worrying about who might be taking over the party (Kirkpatrick 1976), research focused on *Media and Momentum* and on money (Orren and Polsby, ed., 1987; Bartels 1988; Mayer 1996). Parties were generally seen as bodies that were taken over (Oldfield 1996) as a result of presidential elections, rather than as participants in the selection process.

Recent research by Bernstein (2000) and by Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller (2001) has raised questions about whether accepted conclusions about the nomination process in the 1970s and 1980s still apply to the process in the 1990s and 2000s (see also Steger 2000; Adkins and Dowdle 2002). Students of parties have increasingly recognized the importance of an *Expanded Party* (Bernstein 1999) composed of informal networks of party activists, campaign professionals, consultants, and the staffs of elected officials as well as formal party organizations (Schwartz 1990; Trish 1994; Kolodny and Logan 1998; Bernstein 1999; Monroe 2001). This Expanded Party allows, for example, for the placement of party resources into congressional candidacies without the necessity of a formal endorsement.

The rules of the game remain the same. Formal party organizations are still, for all practical purposes, barred from playing a direct role in the nomination process. What has changed is that robust party networks have found ways to surmount those barriers. For the presidential nomination process, early reports about the Expanded Party focus on two ways parties can influence nomination outcomes: through elite endorsements which provide resources directly and which provide useful signals to other party leaders, and through direct involvement in candidate campaign organizations (Cohen et al. 2001; Bernstein 2000). It is the latter that we look at in this paper. As Cohen, Carol, Noel, and Zaller point out, what is important here is whether there exist a fairly limited group of party activists and political professionals to which candidates for president must turn. For them, the question is whether candidates who seek the nomination must compete for scarce resources; in this case, the resource of interest is people to organize and operate attempts to win the nomination. We concur and add a second important reason why it is important whether candidate campaign organizations are filled with people from the party network. We believe it changes the nature of the candidacies themselves, and subsequently the nature of the presidencies that emerge from those candidacies.

Party-Centered Campaigns

We examine the candidate campaign organizations of the four most successful candidates for the 2000 nominations: Republicans George W. Bush and John McCain, and Democrats Al Gore and Bill Bradley. For each campaign, we identified a total of 17 key leadership positions.[1] For each of the people who occupied these positions, we constructed career histories based on public records, primarily articles available through the LexisNexis database, profiles in the *Federal* and *Congressional Staff Directories,* and Federal Election Commission records, accessed through PoliticalMoney-Line.com. These sources were sufficient to give us at least a good sketch of virtually all of the careers involved. This includes people such as Donna Brazile, Mark Fabiani, Mark Penn, and Carter Eskew from the Gore campaign; Gina Glantz, Anita Dunn, and Will Robinson from the Bradley campaign; Joe Allbaugh, Karen Hughes, Karl Rove, and Fred Steeper from the Bush campaign; and Rick Davis, John Weaver, Bill McInturff, and Mike Murphy from the McCain campaign. We recognize that our professional biographies are apt to be incomplete, but are confident that we have sufficient information about the most important players because the top people in the campaigns are also the ones who attract the most press attention. Beyond that, our coding scheme makes it likely that missing data will hurt, not help, our hypothesis. Our basic concern is whether, for example, Bush staff are primarily loyal to Governor Bush or whether they are Republicans who happen to

be working for Bush at the present time. Most media profiles tend to stress the player's personal connections, since they are part of a natural story line about how the candidate and the campaign operative hooked up together. Therefore, any bias introduced by incomplete biographies will tend to result in false codings for candidate-centered personnel.

Our interest here is in determining whether those within these four candidate campaign organizations are candidate loyalists (that is, loyal to the candidate for whom they were involved in 2000), party loyalists, both, or neither. To that end, we code each campaign official according to three levels of candidate loyalty: whether prior to the 2000 election cycle he or she had any, five years, or ten years of connections to the candidate.[2] Possible connections include positions in earlier campaigns, financial contributions to previous campaigns, or staff positions with that politician.

We define party loyalty as having some connection with a formal party organization or being associated with a series of same-party candidates. We will code campaign personnel as party loyal under this definition if they have worked for, contributed to, or held a position in a formal party organization, or if they have given money to more than five candidates.

Party Loyalty and Candidate Loyalty

Table 1 reports the percentage of each campaign organization that had prior ties to the candidate. It shows that by the time candidates are ready to run for president, they have quite a few people to call on who have supported them in the past. The low number here is Al Gore, and still almost a quarter of his campaign organization had previous ties to the vice president. That number may be artificially low because of the coding decision to omit Clinton-Gore service from the calculation, because Gore's campaign was made up of Clinton-Gore veterans, not strictly Gore people. At the same time, the overall totals indicate a limited role for candidate loyalists. About two out of five people within all the campaigns had some prior experience with their candidate. But when we apply the five- or ten-year tests, that number falls off dramatically, to about one in six (for the five-year test) and one in seven (for the ten-year test). Longtime successful politicians run for president in part by calling on previous supporters for their candidate campaign organization. But personal connections are not enough, and few of these previous supporters are those who have dedicated their political careers—or even a large fraction of their political careers—to that candidate. And, therefore, while candidate connections are common within these candidacies, real candidate loyalty is a small fraction of the operation.

While candidate connections are common, party loyalty is also common. To begin with, only two of the 64 people involved in these campaigns had any record of partisan violation

Table 2
Party Loyalty Among Top Campaign Personnel

Candidate	Party Loyal	n
Gore	77%	22
Bradley	54%	13
Bush	79%	14
McCain	73%	15
Total	72%	64

(such as a Bradley person having previously worked for or contributed to Republicans). People involved in the elite level of presidential campaigns have plenty of political experience, but it is almost always strictly limited to one party or the other. Table 2 reports on our more active version of party loyalty, which involves connections with formal party organizations or multiple party politicians. Bradley's campaign contained the fewest party-connected personnel, but that still accounted for over half (54%) of the people within the Bradley campaign. The other three campaigns contained far more party loyalists. Overall, about seven in 10 of our 64 cases were party loyalists by this definition. Again, we consider these very conservative estimates. Our biographies are not complete, and we think it is far more likely that we would have missed a job with the Arizona Republican Party (for a McCain supporter) than a contribution to a Democrat. Indeed, we have no record here of contributions to state and local candidates; it is quite likely, we believe, that at least some of our campaign personnel might have qualified as party-loyal if we had records of their contributions to state and local candidates.

We can see the limits of candidate loyalty by examining the intersection between the two groups. Table 3 reports these data. The longer the relationship with the candidate, the less likely campaign personnel are to fall into our category of party loyalty. Among those with no prior connection to the 2000 candidate, about three out of four are party-loyal, while those with the longest candidate loyalty are about evenly split between party loyalists and those who do not meet that definition. Indeed, we suspect that the lack of "party loyalty" in some of these cases is simply an artifact of short careers.

With 70% of campaign personnel party loyal, it is clear that candidates do, in fact, turn to the pool of *party* activists and campaign professionals when they put together their campaigns. But the skills needed to conduct a presidential nomination campaign are not found exclusively with those we

Table 1
Candidate Loyalty Among Top Campaign Personnel

Candidate	Any Prior Connection	Five Year Connection	Ten Year Connection	n
Gore	23%	9%	5%	22
Bradley	62%	31%	23%	13
Bush	43%	29%	29%	14
McCain	40%	7%	7%	15
Total	39%	17%	14%	64

Table 3
Party Loyalty and Candidate Loyalty Among Campaign Personnel

Previous Connection To Candidate	Not Party Loyal	Party Loyal
No Previous Connection	9	30
Any Previous Connection	9	16
Five Year Connection	4	7
Ten Year Connection	4	5

Note: entries are total number of campaign personnel, from all four campaigns, within that category, so that all those reported as having a "ten year connection" are also reported under "any previous connection" and so on. See text for definitions.

Ready for 2004? What role will the Expanded Party play in the presidential hopes of these five Democratic candidates? From left to right: Sen. John Kerry, Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, Rep. Richard Gephardt, Sen. Joseph Leiberman, and Sen. John Edwards. Photo: AP/Evan Vucci.

identify here as party loyalists. We agree with Cohen, Karol, Noel, and Zaller that it is wrong to regard presidential campaigns as simply candidate-centered, because these campaigns are closely tied to the Expanded Party. But at the same time each of these campaigns does have an element of candidate loyalty. We would describe these campaigns as *primarily* party oriented but with strong candidate-centered elements.

Factions

When candidates have no need to attract the various groups that make up each of our large, diverse political parties they will be less likely to be able to compromise and govern effectively (Polsby 1983). A candidate-centered campaign is a form of a factional campaign, and a candidate who manages to build a true candidate-centered campaign organization is likely to run a White House that fails to hear groups within the party, regardless of the lessons learned or not learned during the campaign. Because the post-reform system requires that candidates build large organizations in order to contest the nomination, we can see just by observing their candidate campaign organizations many of the party factions (if any) that the candidate intends to represent—as well as whether the candidate is attempting to mobilize a faction or form a broader coalition.

Our unit of analysis here is the campaign: we want to determine whether each of the campaigns appears to be a coalition, a party faction, or simply the organization of an unattached candidate. In order to do that, we examined each individual within the campaigns in order to determine whether he or she appears to be a representative of a particular party faction. Evidence we considered included the politicians and organizations with which he or she has had any involvement.

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We also look at the group as a whole to see whether any common threads emerge.

The Gore Campaign

We were most interested in two aspects of the Gore campaign: the Clinton influence and the extent to which the campaign was a platform for the Democratic Leadership Council.

Almost every one of the 22 people within the Gore campaign had some connection to President Bill Clinton. Less than a quarter of the Gore team, however, appeared to be strongly associated with the outgoing president; only one, for example, had been with Clinton before the 1992 campaign. Gore, like Clinton, embraced many of the policies advocated by the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), but his campaign was not a DLC operation. There were several people from the Gore organization who had connections to the DLC, but only somewhere between one and three of the 22 had a strong DLC-related career background. The DLC provides a list of all current elected officials affiliated with that organization, and a select number of former elected officials (including Gore and Clinton) who were so affiliated. We looked at each campaign contribution made by a member of the Gore campaign in order to assess how closely the campaign was linked to the New Democrats, and found that 17 of the 49 contributions for which we could determine whether or not the recipient was DLC-affiliated went to DLC candidates.[3] Certainly, those within the Gore campaign contributed to many New Democrats—but there were also contributions to liberals such as Senator Ted Kennedy and Congressman Barney Frank.

Overall, then, we find that the Gore campaign is best described as strongly coalition-style. We see little evidence of a factional campaign or a candidate-centered campaign. Several factions are represented within the top levels of the campaign organization, which is exactly what we would look for in a coalition-style campaign. The campaign had surprisingly few people who were candidate loyalists, and a healthy three-fourths of organization personnel had party connections. The Gore campaign did have strong Clinton administration and DLC influences, but these appear to be influences within a coalition, not the point of the campaign.

The Bradley Campaign

Former Senator Bill Bradley's campaign was characterized by two elements: personal loyalty to the candidate and apparent antipathy to President Bill Clinton. As discussed above, Bradley's campaign had both the lowest degree of party loyalty and the highest amount of candidate loyalty, at least by the loosest definition. Few, if any, specific interests within the party appear to be represented by campaign staff and officials. What unites the campaign, however, is an almost complete

lack of connection to the outgoing Clinton administration. Only one person from the Bradley campaign held a job in the executive branch (not the White House) during the Clinton years; one other person gave a donation to Clinton in 1992. None donated to Hillary Clinton's Senate run in 2000.

That may have been a function of the liberal slant of the campaign. While about a third of the candidates who received contributions from members of the Gore campaign were affiliated with the DLC, Bradley campaign personnel contributions to New Democrats were rare. (Only nine of 50 contributions went to DLC members.) Only one person from the Bradley campaign had any other professional tie to any DLC member.

For a Democrat to be liberal is hardly evidence of a factional campaign. But when combined with the absence of connections to the outgoing administration, the relatively small number of party connections, and the high levels of personal loyalty, we consider the Bradley campaign far closer to the model of a factional campaign.
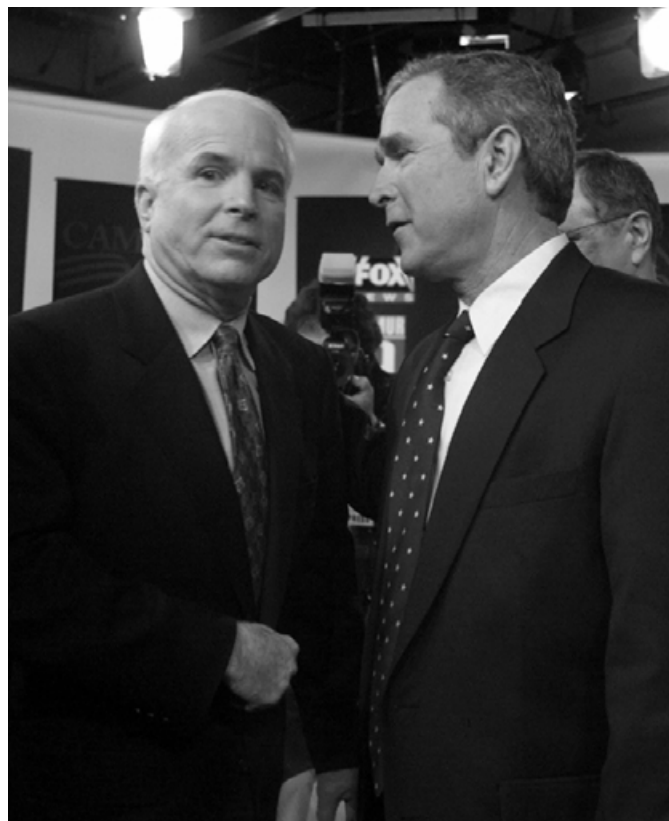
The Bush Campaign

The Bush campaign appears to be divided between those who appear to be national Republicans and a number of individuals who share an overlapping constellation of interests: Texas, energy industries, and the Bush family. Of these, energy appears to be limited to two or three individuals. The Texans appear to be just a subset of the Bush loyalists. This is probably the consequence of a campaign run by a governor; one cannot have worked for George W. Bush for any length of time prior to 2000 without either being or becoming a Texan. As reported in Table 2, this group (Bush loyalists, using the loosest definition) comprises close to half of the organization—but many of those are party-connected activists and campaign professionals for whom Bush may be simply the most recent job. We see no evidence of representatives from other organized interests within the party, but since the Bush campaign has the highest percentage of those we coded as party loyalists, we do not believe that the absence of obvious interest group representatives within the campaign is problematic.

The Republicans do not have an organization comparable to the DLC that we can use to test whether the Bush campaign represented a conservative faction within the party. Instead, we looked at Christian Coalition support scores for members of the 106th Congress (1999–2000) who received contributions from Bush organization personnel. Of the contribution recipients, 58 had Christian Coalition support scores between 90 and 100; five had scores ranging from 80 to 89; and four had scores below 80. This is not particularly lopsided compared to the universe of all Republican members of Congress; for example, within the Texas delegation, only one member of the House falls between 80 and 89, and one falls below 80. The Bush campaign was a conservative campaign, but we find little evidence of ideological factionalism there.

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We do, however, find evidence of a strong Bush family influence on the campaign. Nine of the 14 individuals considered here had connections to former President Bush. We cannot determine to what extent this is a natural consequence of the influence of the most recent Republican presidency or if it indicates domination of the campaign by a family faction. Overall, the Bush campaign has both factional and coalition elements; the former is characterized by Bush family loyalty, while the

Disparate Support. The Bush campaign drew support from state, family, and energy ties. McCain garnered support from the Republican Party's moderate faction. Photo: AP/Elise Amendola-Pool.

latter is indicated by a large party presence within the presidential campaign.

The McCain Campaign

The McCain organization also had a healthy supply of connections to the most recent Republican administration. Half of the people under consideration here had given donations to former President Bush, worked in his campaigns, or worked in his administration. Unlike Bradley's camp, the McCain campaign had a normal concentration of party-centered and candidate-centered elements; that is, it was not substantially different from the Bush and Gore campaigns. All of these are good indications that the McCain campaign was a coalition-style campaign.

However, the evidence when we turn to ideology is striking. McCain's Christian Coalition score during the 106th Congress was a conservative 91. McCain's organization, however, appears to have been far less sympathetic to those ideas. Fewer than half of those receiving contributions from people within the McCain organization received Christian Coalition scores of 90–100; the distribution breaks down as 19 with very high scores, five with scores from 80 to 89, and 17 with scores below 80. McCain organization contributions lean heavily to moderate Republicans, to the extent that it becomes necessary to consider McCain as the candidate of that faction within the GOP.

Discussion

We argue that when examining the nomination process, what goes on within candidacies is as important as what happens outside of them. Thus while Cohen, Karol, Noel and Zaller are certainly right to emphasize the ways in which party networks are activated in endorsements, we would argue that this element alone would be insufficient to reach the conclusion that a party-centered process is "Beating Reform." We also have to show that candidates must organize party-centered candidacies, and furthermore candidates must build party coalitions instead of seeking to be the winning faction. A party that chooses between factions does not control nominations. A party that actively chooses between factions is a step up from a party that turns the choice between factions over to a de facto lottery, but such a party still fails to provide the real benefits of party politics. What happens within campaigns matters not just because it indicates party control of the external process of choosing between candidates, but because it can be part of a process of building party candidacies. The transition from factional, personalized candidates to party-oriented, coalition-seeking candidacies is the hallmark of the Expanded Party.

The present study is still preliminary, but the results are promising. Two of our four campaigns—the two that had a fairly easy march to the nomination—appear to be party-centered, coalition-style organizations. While candidate loyalty is still quite important within these organizations, especially in the Bush campaign, the candidacy is open to party activity. We don't think that this will come as a surprise to anyone who followed the nomination process in 2000. Gore and Bush both seized the center in as many ways as possible; McCain and Bradley occupied the fringes of their parties. But neither of the winning campaigns were simply the largest or the best placed faction; in both cases, the winning campaign was the one that most fully made the transition to coalition politics.

We believe that factions can be found within the organizations of coalition-builders (for it is difficult indeed to build coalitions without factions), but characterizing those factions in anything but very broad terms proved difficult. We suggest that one of the most important foci for further party research is exploration of the types and varieties of faction found within our Expanded Parties, and the development of better tools for identifying these factions and studying their behavior.

Notes

1. Not every position was filled within each campaign, and in some campaigns more than one person held the same position when one person replaced another. In the latter cases, we include both people in our data.

2. We consider those who have been with George W. Bush since his 1994 gubernatorial campaign as passing this toughest test because Bush's political career is so short compared to the other three candidates. We consider veterans of the Clinton-Gore administration or campaigns to be personally loyal to Gore only if there was evidence of a specific connection with the Vice President.

3. We include each candidate-cycle separately, so contribution to the same Member of Congress in 1992 and 1994 would count as two contributions. We do not here include contributions to Gore, Bill Clinton, or Hillary Clinton, since the goal here is to separate the Clinton-Gore team from the DLC influence.

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