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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT AND CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS IN OKLAHOMA

CAN A SOCIAL MOVEMENT IMPACT CANDIDATE CENTERED ELECTIONS?

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

NANCY L. BEDNAR
Norman, Oklahoma
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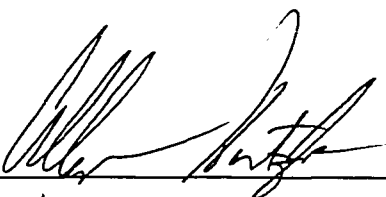
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THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT AND CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS IN OKLAHOMA
CAN A SOCIAL MOVEMENT IMPACT CANDIDATE CENTERED ELECTIONS?

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

BY



David B. Blank

David Ray

M. H. Fagan Gaudin

Ronald M. Putt

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CHAPTER ONE

POSSIBILITIES FOR CHRISTIAN RIGHT ELECTORAL SUCCESS

AN AMAZING CELEBRATION

On Saturday, August 27, 1994, a half page advertisement in the *Daily Oklahoman* announced a celebration on Sunday August 28, at Crossroads Cathedral, a large Assemblies of God church in the Oklahoma City area. Pastor Dan and Bonnie Sheaffer had led the church for twenty-five years. The event celebrated how the Sheaffers took a tiny congregation, dependent on selling hamburgers at the state fair to pay the mortgage, and transformed it into a large, wealthy church.¹ Sheaffer is an excellent example of the entrepreneurial style of leadership that characterizes successful leaders in the Evangelical world, whether the leaders are pastors or leaders of parachurch organizations.² By 1994, Crossroads Cathedral had an auditorium seating 6,000, state-of-the-art audio and video equipment, and a missions budget that exceeded one million dollars annually. In twenty-five years, under the entrepreneurial leadership of

1

The celebration included a video presentation created by the church. The video showed the tiny, old church building at which the church was worshipping when the Sheaffers came. The video detailed the twenty five year history of the church. It showed the early days of Sheaffer's pastorate, the purchase and building of the new facility, various worldwide mission activities, and their vision for the future. There were also video greetings by leaders within the Assemblies of God and other prominent conservative Christian figures, including Oral Roberts.

2

A parachurch organization is an organization that is related to Christianity, but not a part of a particular denomination structure. Evangelist Billy Graham's crusades are run by such an organization. Graham is respected throughout the Evangelical world, but his organization is independent of any particular Evangelical Christian denomination.

Sheaffer, Crossroads Cathedral had been transformed from a small, struggling church into a thriving megachurch.³

What made the celebration notable was the guest list, which included numerous political figures. The most curious attendees had to be the state's junior senator, Roman Catholic Don Nickles, and the member of the House of Representatives from the area, Ernest Istook, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon). Until recently, members of either of these churches would not have been welcome in a Pentecostal church,⁴ unless they were coming to renounce their former churches and become members of that church. At this celebration, both Istook and Nickles spoke, and Nickles even received a standing ovation from the congregation. Both recognized Pastor Sheaffer as a man of God who had done great things with his church. The presence of these elected officials, who are clearly affiliated with the Christian

³A megachurch is described as any congregation that has more than 3,000 members.

⁴

Members of Fundamentalist and Pentecostal churches view Mormons not as fellow Christians, but as members of a non-Christian cult. Martin (1997) argues that Mormons are not Christians because they actually teach polytheism. In Mormon doctrine, it is possible for a faithful Mormon to become a god after death. Mormons also do not believe in salvation by grace, which is a foundational doctrine of Christianity. With the addition of the *Book of Mormon* and *Doctrines and Covenants*, the Mormons are adding to the revelation of the accepted Christian canon of Bible. Martin delineates many other deviations between Mormon doctrine and accepted Christian doctrine as well. Roman Catholic doctrine has been disputed by Protestant Christians since the time of the Reformation. Fundamentalists argue that the inclusion of the veneration of saints into Catholicism makes them not Christians, but idolaters. Within the Fundamentalist and old Pentecostal denominations (Crossroads Cathedral, as an Assemblies of God church, is classified as Pentecostal) anyone who would attend either the Mormon or Roman Catholic churches would be classed as a non-Christian, destined for eternal damnation. They would certainly not be invited to speak from the platform of such a church.

Right,⁵ as well as Sheaffer's attendance at prayer breakfasts and candidate fund raisers, makes Crossroads Cathedral a church linked to the Christian Right.

The celebration at Crossroads Cathedral indicated an increase in sophistication within the Christian Right.⁶ Istook spoke to the congregation about the values that he as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and the members of the Pentecostal congregation held in common.⁷

Nickles also affirmed the notion of shared values, and made both biblical and political references in his speech. The congregation responded to both the biblical and political aspects of Nickles's speech. This celebration demonstrated the development of a sophisticated Christian Right, because until this time the Christian Right had been politically naive, or rustic. Most notable among the rustic attitudes was an unwillingness to be allied with others who shared their

5

The term, Christian Right, is used to define Christians who are politically conservative and involved in the political process. The term is widely used, and most people who would be classified as members of the Christian Right do not like the term. Rep. J.C. Watts is rather blunt about the term, stating, "I am the Christian Right." Others do not particularly like the term. Ralph Reed (1993) prefers "people of faith" as his definition of conservatives of various religious affiliation who are involved in the political process. In this research, the term, Christian Right, will be used to name the conservative Christians involved in the electoral process.

6

The evidence for the increased sophistication of at least the leadership of Crossroads Cathedral was the inclusion of Rep. Istook and Sen. Nickles as important guests at the ceremony. The warm congregational welcome received by both men, especially as Istook clearly stated his religious affiliation, indicated that the members of Crossroads Cathedral knew Istook and Nickles as political allies, in spite of their religious differences.

7

Istook stayed for the entire service, and remained after the service to allow members of the congregation to speak with him.

political beliefs while not sharing their church doctrinal positions.⁸ The members of this sophisticated Christian Right understood the need for greater inclusiveness if the group's policy goals were to be achieved. A Mormon and a Roman Catholic speaking at a Pentecostal church was certainly a demonstration of political inclusiveness, doctrinal disagreements notwithstanding.

The appearance of the sophisticated Christian Right at the Crossroads Cathedral celebration was a portent of things to come in the fall congressional elections. Morgan, England, and Humphreys (1991) argued that although Republican presidential candidates were consistently winning in Oklahoma, the rest of the state's elected positions were dominated by Democrats, and they did not see this state of affairs changing any time soon. Through a set of serendipitous circumstances that created several open seat races in 1994, Oklahoma Republicans were given the chance to field competitive candidates whose victories would change the configuration of the Oklahoma congressional delegation from majority Democratic to majority Republican. This research will demonstrate that the activities of a sophisticated Christian Right, including Christian Right candidates, political operatives with political expertise, and activated volunteers provided the catalyst to accomplish Republican victories in several crucial congressional races. This research will demonstrate that the

8

The increasing sophistication of the Christian Right was one of the important components in the 1994 elections. The leadership of the Christian Right at the national level discovered the importance of Congress, and directed a great deal of their attention to congressional races in 1994. This was apparent in the rhetoric of the Christian Right national media, as will be explored in greater depth later.

common denominator that allowed the members of the Christian Right who were candidates and political operatives to so successfully interact with the political world is the quality of entrepreneurial leadership. This quality is necessary for success in the realm of Evangelical Christianity, and also in the realm of candidate centered politics. This entrepreneurial type of leadership is a feature in both the world of Evangelical Christianity and the candidate centered political realm. The members of the Christian Right were accustomed to being motivated to action by entrepreneurial leaders in the religious world. This allowed the Christian Right political entrepreneurs to draw upon the potential resources within the Christian Right. These resources included energy, commitment, and volunteers, and were mobilized at the strategic point when political opportunity structures were present. The Christian Right provided the momentum for Republican realignment in Oklahoma at the congressional level.

CHRISTIAN RIGHT ELECTORAL SUCCESS

Although the Christian Right exists in all parts of the country, it has had some of its greatest successes in the South. The South has a particular religious heritage that developed during the Antebellum period and has continued until the present. While churches and other Christian institutions in the North embraced the abolitionist ideas of the anti-slavery movement,⁹ churches in the South were defending the institution of slavery.¹⁰ The defense of

⁹Christian colleges, especially Oberlin College, were active in the abolitionist movement.

¹⁰

It is safe to argue that slavery divided the churches of the nation during the Antebellum

slavery created cleavages in the major denominations during this period. At the beginning of the Civil War, the major denominations in the South were the Methodists and Baptists, with an additional presence of many Presbyterian congregations. The disagreements over slavery that led to the Civil War also forced denominational splits, with the southern Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians forming their own distinct denominations that supported the institution of slavery, separated from the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians of the north who did not support it (Hill 1980).¹¹

During the Reconstruction period, the northern conquerors controlled all of institutional life, except for the churches. During this period, the Methodists and Presbyterians declined in numbers, leaving the Southern Baptist Convention as the largest denomination in the South (Finke and Stark 1992). The churches became a unifying force, and a keeper of southern traditions. As time passed,

period as effectively as it divided the rest of the nation.

¹¹

Several major denominations split during the period prior to the Civil War. The Wesleyan Methodist Church was formed in 1843 by those who believed that owning slaves was immoral and unchristian. The Wesleyan Methodists came from the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was the major Methodist denomination of the time. The Methodist Episcopal Church split into the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1845. The Baptists encountered the same problems concerning slavery that the Methodists did, with the Southern Baptist Convention splitting from the Northern Baptists in 1845, also over the issue of slavery. The two existing Presbyterian denominations split over both slavery and other theological issues, and those who left the existing denominations united to form the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1864 (Cairns 1981). The breaches within these groups still exist, but within the last fifteen years, the major denominations that supported slavery have recanted these views. The denominational splits, however, still remain.

other churches in the southern tradition joined the Baptists, including the Assemblies of God, Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) and the Pentecostal Holiness church. For the African-American population in the South, the influence of the church was also strong.¹² The social and political life of the African-American community was centered in the church, which was the only institution African-Americans controlled, and the only place in which African-Americans had freedom of expression (Kosmin and Lachman 1993).

Kosmin and Lachman (1993) argue that a distinct form of Christianity is found in the south. They state:

Southern Christianity is a relatively stable, distinct religion based upon an evangelistic and Fundamentalist heritage that involves inerrancy, which means the acceptance of a literal interpretation of the Bible, as well as an emphasis on an experience of personal conversion. Southern Christianity is emotional, Jesus-centered, and contains a strict moral code, but it is also expressed through southern gospel music, Christian country music, and televangelists, as well as through local secular laws against alcohol and obscenity (1993: 49-50).

¹²

For African-Americans in the Reconstruction and Jim Crow periods, the life of the community centered in the African-American church. It was not only the religious center of the community, but the social and political center as well. During Reconstruction, the political affiliation of African-Americans was Republican, because the party of Lincoln was the party with which they identified. As Jim Crow laws disenfranchised the African-Americans politically, neither African-Americans nor their churches were able to impact the political process. With the rise of the Civil Rights Movement, because the movement had little support from Republicans, African-American political affiliation switched from Republican to Democratic. Currently, African-American churches remain central to the community, but their political focus is now Democratic. African-American churches are facing competition from a growing Muslim presence in the African-American community. The prominence of Louis Farakkan and the Nation of Islam provide evidence of this competition.

The influence of Southern Christianity has not been diluted even with the emergence of the "New South" in the decades including and following the Civil Rights Movement. While this period has seen an increase in nondenominational churches, in the South these churches are either Fundamentalist or charismatic.¹³ Southerners are still very church-oriented people, more than

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Terms that are used to differentiate types of churches must be defined. The first term is Evangelical. There are several components involved when defining the term Evangelical. A primary component of Evangelicalism is a high view of the Bible as at very least the inspired word of God, if not the inerrant or literal word of God, and an emphasis on the authority of the Bible, especially the New Testament, as opposed to the authority of the church or reason. Evangelicals reject the Roman Catholic argument that the church can create doctrine that is not in the Bible, especially the New Testament. This is why Evangelicals reject the worship of Mary, veneration of the saints, and purgatory, as examples of extrabiblical Catholic doctrine. Evangelicals also reject the use of reason to reason away the portions of the Bible with which individuals might wish to disagree. The second component necessary to define an Evangelical is one who has had a born again experience, repenting from sin and turning in faith to Jesus for salvation. The third important component of Evangelicalism is to affirm the basic beliefs of orthodox Christianity, what C.S. Lewis (1943) calls mere Christianity. Mere Christianity includes the virgin birth of Jesus, the doctrine of Jesus as the Son of God, the death and resurrection of Jesus as the necessary sacrifice for human sin, and the acceptance of the finished work of Jesus as the only way to salvation. The fourth component of Evangelicalism is to share the good news of Jesus with a dying world, and be a faithful witness for Christ while living in the world. Pentecostals, charismatics, and Fundamentalists all fit within the category of Evangelical. Pentecostal and charismatic are terms that refer to churches with similar beliefs concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit (referred to in Acts 1 and 2) and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (referred to in Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12 and 14). The doctrinal position of the Pentecostal and charismatic churches state that the Bible is God's Word and God's Word never changes. Because God's Word never changes, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and gifts of the Holy Spirit, including glossolalia (speaking in tongues), prophecy, and healing have been a part of normal church practice since apostolic days, and continue today. The Fundamentalist perspective comes from the system of biblical interpretation called dispensationalism. The dispensationalist view argues that God has interacted with humans in different ways during different periods of time. According to dispensationalists, there are seven time periods, and the time periods are called dispensations. According to dispensationalist theology, the baptism of the Holy Spirit

people in other parts of the country. Most of the prominent televangelist ministries are rooted in the south (Kosmin and Lachman 1993). Two prominent televangelists, Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin, are located in the greater Tulsa area. In addition, Oral Roberts University and Hagin's Rhema Bible Institute are extensions to their ministries. So Oklahoma is similar to the South in a religious sense, while other influences mute the likeness with other southern states. These influences include demographics and the influences that come from Oklahoma's location west of the Mississippi as well as south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

OKLAHOMA AND THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN RIGHT POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

Oklahoma provides a fertile area for the exploration of the role of the Christian Right in the political arena. Kosmin and Lachman (1993) included Oklahoma as a part of the southern "Bible Belt", because its predominant denominational affiliation by church is Southern Baptist. However, Oklahoma is a difficult state to place into a regional classification. Edward Everett Dale, an

and gifts of the Holy Spirit became unnecessary after the contents of the Bible (referred to as the canon of Scripture) was decided (Dahlin 1997). Pentecostal denominations come from the period of the late 1800s and early 1900s during which revivals featuring the baptism in the Holy Spirit occurred. The charismatic churches hold the same doctrinal beliefs, but the charismatic renewal occurred in the late 1950s and 1960s in the denominational churches (Erickson 1985). Pentecostals, charismatics, and Fundamentalists all believe either in the literalist interpretation of the Bible or that the Bible is inerrant. The biblical literalists believe that the Bible is literally true. Those who hold the view of biblical inerrancy believe that the Bible is true, but they allow that the sections of poetry, imagery, and history should be read as such. However, the dispensationalist paradigm of the Fundamentalists lead them to a different perspective than the Pentecostals and charismatics.

Oklahoman who received a Ph.D. at Harvard and returned to Oklahoma to teach history at the University of Oklahoma, classified Oklahoma as a western state. Dale taught Oklahoma history to his students from this perspective, and Dale's students wrote many of the textbooks used in the classrooms of Oklahoma to teach state history. Geographically, the classification of Oklahoma seems appropriate, because of its location west of the Mississippi and its history of the land runs, cowboys, explorers and pioneers. However, while the state is indeed west of the Mississippi, it is also south of the Mason-Dixon line, and actually geographically south of most of the state of Virginia, the heart of the Confederacy. Goble (1994) argues that looking at the state from a southern perspective increases the understanding of issues involving culture and race.

While Oklahoma was not a state at the time of the Civil War, and therefore not an official part of the Confederacy, Oklahoma shared many characteristics with the South. One of the characteristics that Oklahoma shared with the South was slavery. There was slavery in Oklahoma prior to and during the Civil War.¹⁴ After the Civil War, as towns were settled, segregated towns were created for the African-American population, as well as segregated sections of the larger cities like Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Unlike the rest of the

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In fact, in Oklahoma, not only did the whites own slaves, but the Native Americans owned them as well. An additional characteristic of Oklahoma is its large Native American presence. However, the Native American presence does not figure prominently in the political history of the state. The Native Americans were among the groups that were not a part of the development of the state's constitution, and were not a significant part of the political structure of the new state (Goble 1980).

South, however, the African-American population is not sufficiently concentrated in any area to allow the creation of majority-minority districts. In Oklahoma, the African-American population is scattered in various locations throughout the state (Goble 1980). V.O. Key (1949), in his significant work on southern politics, argued that large, concentrated African-American populations shaped southern politics. The scattered African-American population in Oklahoma mutes some of the similarity between southern politics, and Oklahoma politics.

When Oklahoma became a state, eight percent of the population was African-American. However, the new state constitution disenfranchised the African-Americans and established a Jim Crow system of racial separation that was similar to the rest of the South. This constitution was proposed and ratified by the state's Democrats, who characterized the only opposition to the constitution as "Carpetbaggers, Corporations, and Coons," (Goble 1994: 287). To classify Oklahoma as only a western state is to ignore the domination of Democrats of the southern mold¹⁵ in the creation of the constitution.

Since statehood, the political environment of the state has been deeply influenced by its racist beginnings. For example, Thurgood Marshall, as attorney for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), won two important civil rights cases involving Oklahoma. *Sipuel v. Oklahoma*

¹⁵

Democrats of the southern mold refers to segregationist Democrats. These Democrats institutionalized Jim Crow laws into the Oklahoma constitution. This allowed the disenfranchisement of African-Americans and established segregation as the law in Oklahoma.

State Board of Regents (1948) which mandated that the state must provide Ada Lois Sipuel with the opportunity to attend law school, and *McLaurin v. the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education* (1950), which provided that George W. McLaurin must be admitted to the University of Oklahoma's graduate school. However, both Sipuel and McLaurin were subjected to Jim Crow provisions and forced to sit in separate areas roped off from the other students. It was not until the *Brown v. the Board of Education* (1954) decision that education was integrated at the university level, despite the previous Supreme Court rulings. The *Sipuel* and *McLaurin* cases were essential ingredients in arguing the *Brown* decision (Goble 1994).

Both the southern and western influences are a part of Oklahoma's political culture. "Oklahoma political culture is primarily "traditionalistic" but with a strong "individualistic" component," (Morgan, England and Humphreys 1991:7-8). The traditionalistic portion of the political culture comes from the southern influence found in Oklahoma, and is typical of the other southern states. The traditionalistic political culture is conservative, and sees government as maintaining the status quo, rather than making large changes. States with traditionalistic political cultures tend to be dominated by one party.¹⁶ The other

¹⁶

The traditionalistic political culture is very intent on the maintenance of the status quo. The traditionalistic political culture of Oklahoma was clearly demonstrated in the state constitution. The accounts of both Sipuel and McLaurin as they fought to attend the University of Oklahoma's graduate programs provides evidence of the traditionalistic political culture that was institutionalized into state government with the constitution. As a political scientist who came from California, a very liberal state, I was struck by

component, the individualistic component, is more like other middle states in the nation.¹⁷ The individualistic political culture wants to limit government intervention into the lives of the citizens, especially within the business realm. Both political cultures share the notion that government is not supposed to be active in creating a great deal of societal change. When exploring the political culture of Oklahoma, it is important to note the location in the state when discussing political culture. Oklahoma's political culture is a blend of the traditionalistic and the individualistic to different degrees in different portions of the state. Which type of political culture is dominant depends upon the area of the state being discussed.¹⁸ Starting in the northwestern portion of the state and

how traditional Oklahoma was, as compared to California. Even the political spectrum in Oklahoma was narrow by California standards. The conservative side of the political spectrum was as conservative, if not more conservative, than the conservatives in California. The liberals in Oklahoma would be California moderates.

¹⁷

The individualistic political culture is best visualized by thinking of the cowboy and pioneer settlers of the west. Fiercely independent and self-reliant, they looked to themselves, not the government, to make things happen.

¹⁸

Looking at Oklahoma's congressional districts, the political culture explanation does not work well for the first district, because it is composed of urban and suburban Tulsa, and the urban influences mitigate the political culture explanations. The districts in which the political culture explanation is the most effective are the second, third and sixth. The second and especially the third, because they are located mostly in the southeast portion of the state, are traditional in political culture. On the other hand, the sixth, in the northwest corner of the state, is more individualistic in political culture. The individualistic political culture of the sixth district was exploited by Frank Lucas in the special election, as he pointed out his rural roots, and his appreciation of the independent life of a rancher. Both Tom Coburn and Wes Watkins emphasized their connections to the conservative moral traditions of eastern Oklahoma in their campaigns, playing to the traditionalistic political culture of southeastern Oklahoma.

working diagonally to the southeastern part, the political culture is predominantly the individualistic political culture shared with the rest of the middle states. The northwestern and western portion of the state is where the cowboy and pioneer influences are the strongest. But moving toward the southeast, the traditionalistic political culture becomes more and more dominant. Moving closer to the southeast corner of the state, the influences of the culture of the South becomes more prominent. After arriving in "Little Dixie," the far southeast portion of the state, the political culture becomes traditionalistic (Morgan, England and Humphreys 1991).¹⁹ Little Dixie is the portion of Oklahoma that most resembles the area classified as the South.

Oklahoma also shares another characteristic with the South. For most of its political history as a state, Oklahoma has been a one party state.²⁰ Key

¹⁹

Another way to differentiate Oklahoma is to divide the state in half, using Interstate 35 as a line. The western portion was known as Oklahoma territory and the eastern portion was Indian territory. Oklahoma territory was settled and had a territorial government just as other places did before they became states. Indian territory was the home of the Five Civilized Tribes, the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole. All but the Seminole had constitutions and bicameral legislatures during the period when Oklahoma territory was being governed by a territorial government. Western Oklahoma, formerly Oklahoma territory, was influenced by the states nearest to it. Northwestern Oklahoma was influenced by Kansas, which was a free state, and Republican in its political affiliation. Southwestern Oklahoma was influenced by Texas, which was a slave state and Democratic in its political affiliation (Baird and Goble 1994). While the territorial history of western Oklahoma gives it a very individualistic political culture, the partisan background differs because of geographic location.

²⁰

In the period before statehood, there were competitive elections, in which both parties competed. In these elections African-American voters participated as well. In Oklahoma territory, African-American voters comprised 10% of the electorate, and were

(1949), explored the development of the South as the political bastion of a single party. A consequence of a one party system is that for those who want to run for office and win, political ambition is channeled into the party that wins. In Oklahoma this had always been the Democratic party. The location of electoral competition was not the general election, but the Democratic primary (Morgan, England and Humphreys 1991).

During the 1980s much of the South moved from the Democratic party domination noted by Key (1949) and became increasingly Republican at the congressional level. The creation of minority-majority congressional districts, to facilitate minority representation had the unintended consequence of creating many mostly white congressional districts. Throughout the South, most of the white congressional districts are now Republican, while the majority-minority districts are mostly held by African-American Democrats. Race and redistricting played a role in the Republican resurgence in the South (Parent 1995), but religion provides another factor when exploring southern realignment. The white congressional districts are also a part of the Bible Belt. An additional explanation for the Republican realignment in the South is that the increasing liberalization of the Democratic party, especially at the national level alienated conservative southerners. As Democrat turned Republican Wes Watkins stated, "I did not

a reliable vote for the Republicans, the party of Lincoln. After the state constitutional convention, which was dominated by Democrats, and the ratification of the constitution, African-Americans were disenfranchised and electoral competition lessened, enabling Oklahoma to become a one party Democratic state (Baird and Goble 1994).

leave the Democratic party, the Democratic party left me (Watkins 1996)."

Democrats no longer were able to represent the views of conservative southerners.²¹

In Oklahoma, realignment did not occur during the 1980s as it did in the rest of the South. At the presidential election level, Oklahoma has not cast its electoral votes for a Democratic president since 1964, when Texan Lyndon Johnson won the White House. Even in 1992 and 1996 when Bill Clinton, from neighboring Arkansas, was the Democratic candidate, Oklahoma voted solidly Republican. But the realignment at the presidential level did not extend to the lower electoral officials. Part of the reason for the lack of realignment below the presidential level was the weak Republican party in Oklahoma. Since 1980, the Republican party in Oklahoma had been growing and expanding, and this growth included the election of Republican candidates as governor and United States senator. During this period the first political consulting firm especially created to facilitate the election of Republican candidates was formed (Cole 1994). But the Republican realignment did not occur until the entrepreneurial leaders of the Oklahoma Christian Right became motivated, and mobilized for the 1994 congressional elections. Realignment in Oklahoma was fueled largely by religion.

²¹

The political culture of the South is the traditionalistic political culture discussed earlier. As Democrats at the national level pushed political change and increasing government intervention in the lives of citizens, these views did not mesh with the traditionalistic political culture. It is difficult to imagine someone with a traditionalistic political culture supporting Sen. Edward Kennedy or other Democrats with similar views.

The congressional reapportionment as a result of the 1990 census was designed by the Democratic state legislature to preserve the status quo.²² The status quo was four secure Democratic seats, with two seats conceded to the Republicans in the Tulsa and Oklahoma City areas. However, for Republicans, a set of serendipitous circumstances and the mobilization of the Christian Right in the 1994 election shattered the status quo and left Oklahoma Democrats wondering what went wrong.

The underlying argument for the political activation of the Christian Right is as old as America itself, and predicated on the notion that the citizens are entitled to representation of their interests. Members of the Christian Right believed that their interests were not being represented, and this belief motivated both becoming involved in the political process and staying involved. This research indicates that in an area that has a population with views and interests sympathetic to the Christian Right, electoral success can be achieved. Electoral success comes by fielding quality candidates with appropriate issue positions, and obtaining the political expertise necessary to elect these candidates. A consequence of that success is representation in the policy making process. The Christian Right would supply candidates, political operatives, volunteers, and funds to allow campaigns for various offices to be conducted in a sophisticated manner enhancing the chances for electoral success.

²²

Legislative reapportionment is always political in nature. The party in power in any state attempts to conserve political power by apportioning both the congressional districts and the state legislature to favor them.

REPRESENTATION AND THE POLICY PROCESS

The concept of representation is central to the design of the American government. Hanna Pitkin (1967) discussed several conceptualizations of representation. Two of Pitkin's concepts are representation as "standing for" the represented and representation as "acting for" the represented.²³ These concepts are powerful tools in relating how members of any social movement view self avowed members of the same social movement who are in office. Pitkin portrayed a representative who stands for the interests of the represented as accomplishing this in two ways, descriptive representation and symbolic representation. In descriptive representation, representatives (and then, by extension, the representative body) are in some way are a smaller version of the electorate.²⁴ Since members of the Christian Right are a part of the electorate, the Congress cannot be descriptively representative of the electorate unless members of the Christian Right are a part of it.

²³

The "acting for" component of representation is apparent in the governmental situation. A member of Congress "acts for" the constituents as the member works in committees that are essential to the constituents' interests, presents their views in the Congress, and votes on legislation.

²⁴

Another way of expressing descriptive representation is the notion that the representative should be like the represented. This likeness can take many forms, including racial or ethnic likeness, or ideological likeness. The notion of descriptive representation fuels the debate concerning majority-minority congressional districts. Majority-minority districts are created because many members of minority groups believe that someone who is racially or ethnically like them is a better representative than someone who just shares their views. This notion of racial or ethnic likeness makes minority groups seem one-dimensional, as if their minority group identity excludes the possibility of any ideological variation.

There is also a component of symbolic representation when members of the Christian Right are elected to legislative bodies. For example, California has two senators, Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, who are liberal and never represent the interests of members of the Christian Right. Many California House districts are represented by liberal Democrats as well. For members of the Christian Right who live in these districts, seeing Christian Right senators and representatives from other parts of the country lets them know that their views are being articulated by someone in government, even if it is not their senators and representatives. Those members of the Christian Right who live in districts in which they are not the majority can look to members of the Christian Right elected from other districts as symbolically as well as descriptively standing for their views. For viewers of the *700 Club* or listeners to the *Focus on the Family* radio program, seeing and hearing these senators and representatives proclaim their viewpoints makes them feel represented.²⁵

The notion of the representative as one who acts for the represented is also a part of the concept of representation for members of a social movement. Members of Congress affiliated with the Christian Right propose legislation that is supported by members of the Christian Right and fight against legislation that does not coincide with the interests of the group. In this way Christian Right

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Both Dobson on the radio and Robertson on television often give air time to senators and representatives who are affiliated with the Christian Right. Notably, I have seen Mormon Rep. Istook on Robertson's *700 Club* numerous times, because Istook is the author of an amendment to the United States Constitution that involves the right to pray.

members of Congress are acting for the people who share their views, and who helped elect them. Pitkin (1967) argued that notions of descriptive and symbolic representation are not sufficient to completely flesh out the concept of representation, and adds additional concepts of the representation of interests and political representation to complete the picture. The idea of the representation of interests could be viewed either as the representation of individual interests, or as the representation of the interests of a group of individuals.²⁶ The Christian Right, as a social movement, is concerned about the representation of its interests. Political representation must include looking at the institutional design of the American political system. The institution most designed to be representative of the population is the Congress, particularly the House of Representatives. Any group with a sophisticated understanding of the institutional design for representative government in the United States, and idealistic notions of representation must look to the legislative bodies, whether at the national or state level, to achieve political representation.

Pitkin's descriptions of various types of representation, culminating in a discussion of political representation, provide an interesting theoretical discussion of representation. However, Pitkin's descriptions do not provide the

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The political system in the United States is not designed in a manner that easily allows the representation of individual interests. Political practice indicates that the interests of groups are most often represented. Of course, there is always the exception of the extremely rich and powerful individual who receives personal attention from the representative, but, for regular citizens, the best way to have their views represented is to be affiliated with a group.

means to operationalize the notion of representation to determine if either the individual constituent or a like minded group are actually being adequately represented. Eulau and Karps (1977) explored the notion of representation from a different perspective and conceptualized four components of responsiveness in an attempt to clarify what representation is.²⁷ The four components of responsiveness are: policy; service; allocation; and symbolic. Policy responsiveness involves agreement between the representative and the represented on policy issues.²⁸ Service responsiveness is defined as linkages to constituents such as newsletters and case work²⁹ (Johannes and McAdams 1987; Parker and Parker 1985). Allocation responsiveness involves bringing money and projects into the constituency (often called pork-barrel politics). Symbolic responsiveness involves what Fenno (1978) called "home style," or the activities representatives

²⁷

Eulau and Karps do not only want to operationalize the concept of representation, but they want to be able to measure whether representation is actually occurring. Pitkin's theoretical development of representation is not easily quantified. Eulau and Karps types of representation are things that representatives actually do, so they can be measured and evaluated.

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If a representative is to be rated highly in this area, the representative will actively work to represent the interests of the district. For an agricultural district, this would be agriculture, for a district with many businesses developing new technologies, this would involve those issues. For members of the Christian Right, while it is expected that a representative will represent those interests of the district, the representative must also represent the ideas that are important to the Christian Right.

²⁹

Service responsiveness includes everything from getting grandmother's Social Security check when it gets lost, getting flags that have flown over the Capitol for local schools, and providing gallery passes to constituents that visit Washington D.C. It also includes communication with the constituents, usually using franked mail. Franked mail is the free mail privilege that senators and representatives have.

perform among their constituents to create a relationship of trust between them. Eulau and Karps's more specific definition illustrates the need for some sort of connectedness to occur between the representative and the represented. Their exploration did not consider whether a descriptive link between the representative and represented was necessary to achieve the responsiveness they asserted to be central to representation.³⁰

For members of the Christian Right, two of the types of responsiveness described by Eulau and Karps (1977) are probably immaterial. All representatives who wish to retain their positions are going to do the best job possible in the areas of service responsiveness and allocation responsiveness. It would not matter to a representative what the political or religious views of a constituent would be if the constituent asked for help in obtaining a lost Social Security check or in attempting to interact with some other portion of the federal bureaucracy. The political views of the representative would also not matter to a constituent who received assistance. Both parties would wish to bring the matter to a successful conclusion. In the area of allocation responsiveness, members of the Christian Right would probably have no objections to pork barrel projects that the representative would obtain for the district, unless the project would fund

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The notion of descriptive representation is problematic if race and ethnicity are the only descriptive components involved. For some voters, and for members of the Christian Right, the beliefs of a political candidate or representative are more important than race or ethnicity. The question becomes: Is a representative descriptively like the constituents if the representative looks like them, or if the representative believes like them?

something objectionable such as an abortion clinic or provide funds for the schools for sex education that is not abstinence based.

The other two areas of responsiveness go directly to the heart of reasons for Christian Right electoral involvement. Policy responsiveness and symbolic responsiveness are important issues for members of any social movement, and the Christian Right is no exception. One of the largest complaints that members and leaders of the Christian Right have made is that no matter how often they call or write to their representatives, their representatives fail to enact policies with which they agree or fail to actively block legislation with which they disagree.³¹ With the election of representatives who are either members of the Christian Right, or sympathetic to their goals, policy responsiveness becomes possible. Symbolic responsiveness is also heightened if the representatives are associated with the Christian Right, because their activities and lifestyle would be compatible with their constituents.

The increasing sophistication of the Christian Right has taught them that placing all of their eggs in the basket of a presidential victory is insufficient to guarantee implementation of their policy goals. The Moral Majority failed using this strategy. Since 1988 the Christian Right, led politically by the Christian Coalition, has emphasized local mobilization in order to impact congressional

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When James Dobson tells his Focus on the Family radio listeners to call their representatives, the listeners call. However, even though it is known that Dobson can completely jam the congressional switchboard system at any time, that does not mean that all of those calls actually change the votes of the representatives (Hertzke 1988).

elections as well as state and local elections. The importance of my research into the efforts of the Christian Right to elect like-minded people to Congress speaks to the issue of representation, especially in the areas of policymaking, access to representatives, and the ability to influence those representatives to which access is available. In the American system of checks and balances, one way for a social movement or other interest group to counter the policy initiatives of the executive branch is to elect members to Congress whose ideology and policy goals reflect their goals. With representatives in Congress who share their policy goals, a social movement or interest group then at least has access to Congress. The checks and balances inherent in the constitutional system allow the legislative branch to check the efforts of the executive branch.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 1994 OKLAHOMA MIDTERM ELECTIONS

The 1994 congressional elections resulted in a fundamental reconfiguration of the partisan make-up of the Oklahoma delegation in Washington. The partisan transformation from a Democratic dominated delegation to a completely Republican delegation was completed with the 1996 congressional elections. The obvious underlying issue driving the renewed Christian Right activism in the 1994 election and continuing into the 1996 election was Bill Clinton. Clinton campaigned as a moderate, and began his administration governing like a liberal. Clinton reversed all of the executive orders limiting the availability of abortion, changed the status of gays in the military, and behaved in ways that were much different from the content of his

campaign materials. The change in Clinton was especially disturbing to members of the Christian Right, particularly the leaders of the Christian Right social movement organizations.³²

Christian Right leadership had been wary of Clinton's promises during the 1992 election, and Clinton's political behavior in his first months in office convinced the Christian Right leadership that Clinton's political agenda must be stopped. The first and most obvious way to curb Clinton's power was to elect a Republican Congress in an effort to blunt the more odious Clinton policies. The 1994 congressional elections provided an excellent opportunity to explore whether the Christian Right leadership would be able to use their varied media resources to motivate members of the Christian Right to become involved in the elections.

In addition, the Oklahoma Republican Party was a particularly interesting place in which to look at a political cleavage created by a previous presidential election (Kessel 1988).³³ The cleavage occurred due to Pat Robertson's

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Within the leadership of the Christian Right, prior to the 1992 election, there was suspicion that Bill Clinton was not the moderate that he claimed to be in his campaign materials and speeches. Their suspicions were confirmed after the first days of the Clinton administration, and the mobilization of the Christian Right for the 1994 congressional elections began.

³³

Kessel argues that one or more cleavages often result in political parties at the time of presidential elections. For example, when a new group of people become politically activated because of interest in a presidential election, a number of these people become a part of the activist ranks of the particular political party involved. Often these zealous new activists irritate and alienate the members of the party that have supported the party for a long time. This can cause problems during later electoral cycles.

showing in Oklahoma in the 1988 primary. Robertson received 21% of the primary vote, the highest he received in any state. The cleavage involved members of the Christian Right, because Robertson's campaign moved some members of the Christian Right into the activist ranks of the Republican party. This fueled the Oklahoma Republicans with the populist energy created by the Robertson campaign. The cleavage was especially apparent in the party organization in the first congressional district,³⁴ which had an active Christian Right component as well as an older, Country Club Republican component. In other parts of the state the dichotomy between the Country Club Republicans and the Christian Right Republicans was not as obvious.

The 1994 general election in Oklahoma provided an excellent location for this research due to the nature of the state. There are six congressional districts, which provided diverse races and district party organizations to observe. It also provided the opportunity to explore the style of entrepreneurial leadership that various candidates used to cope with the decentralized, candidate centered environment of congressional elections, and to mobilize Christian Right involvement. At the outset, it also provided several types of races, from the long term incumbent to the open seat race, with some examples that fell between the two extremes. In addition, the Republican Party fielded the

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The first congressional district of Oklahoma is comprised of Tulsa and the suburban area surrounding Tulsa. Tulsa views itself as the sophisticated portion of Oklahoma as opposed to Oklahoma City, to which Tulsa residents derisively refer as "Cow Town." Many of the country club Republicans reside in Tulsa and its suburbs.

largest number of quality candidates³⁵ (Kazee 1994) in its history, with six quality candidates in the first district (Richard Bunn, Dick Crawford, Joan Hastings, Rob Johnson, Steve Largent, and Paula Unruh), one in the second district (Tom Coburn), two in the fourth district (Ed Apple and J.C. Watts), and incumbents with no primary challenges in the fifth and sixth districts (Ernest Istook in the fifth and Frank Lucas in the sixth). For a state that has had a small Republican Party with limited success in the arena of congressional elections, it was extraordinary that nine qualified candidates were actively pursuing three nominations. In addition, Ernest Istook in the fifth district did not even attract a Democratic challenger in a state in which the Democratic Party has been dominant. The third district was conceded by the state GOP to the Democrats, because the incumbent, Bill Brewster, was popular. However, the third district also indicated the entrepreneurial nature of congressional elections, because the Republican nominee, Darrel Tallant, was unknown to the state party leadership, did not look to them for advice or support, and did not have a campaign office that anyone could locate. Tallant obviously filed the nomination papers and became the nominee without any input from the state party, and lost badly to incumbent Brewster. Tallant did, however, complete a Christian Coalition survey, because his responses were listed on the 1994 voter guide.

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The concept of a quality candidate will be explored in greater detail later. It is sufficient to define a quality candidate as one who has some visibility within the congressional district, either via celebrity (Largent), or via previous political involvement at the state level (all the rest). A quality candidate is not someone obscure who decided to run as a whim.

Significantly, the eventual GOP nominees in all but one of the House races were affiliated with the Christian Right in some respect. Largent, Coburn, Watts, and Lucas all attended Christian churches. Istook, a Mormon, might have been rejected by the Christian Right in the 1980s, but in 1994 was accepted by sophisticated conservative Christians as an individual who shared the same values as they did.³⁶ In addition, the surprise Democratic nominee in the second district, Virgil Cooper, distributed campaign literature that demonstrated that he was just as Christian Right as his opponent, Coburn. Indeed, in an appearance on the *700 Club*, Ralph Reed, then executive director of the Christian Coalition declared the second district of Oklahoma as a win-win situation for the Christian Right, because both nominees were conservative Christians.³⁷ The Democratic nominee in the fourth district, David Perryman, campaigned as a conservative Democrat, and mobilized a large number of volunteers to claim the nomination. His literature emphasized his roots in the community and mentioned his role as a deacon in his church. Perryman never identified himself as a member of the Christian Right but he could be classified as a conservative Democrat in the

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The acceptance of Rep. Istook at Crossroads Cathedral, and his frequent appearances on the *700 Club* are evidence of this.

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Watching Reed and Robertson on the *700 Club* discuss the race between Cooper and Coburn was interesting. It was obvious that they did not know any of the circumstances concerning the race, other than the facts that Cooper and Coburn had both submitted favorable answers to the candidate surveys distributed by the Christian Coalition. Neither Reed or Robertson commented on the electability of either candidate, only that the district was a win-win situation for conservative Christians.

southern mold. The role of the Christian Right in Oklahoma congressional elections was more extensive than anyone could have imagined.

From questions concerning the role of the Christian Right in Oklahoma congressional races, it may be necessary to look at national trends as well. Political scientists had been waiting for a realignment since the late 1960s and the mobilization of the Christian Right may have been the factor that fueled the realignment of a portion of the electorate. Neuman (1986) argues that there are three groups in American politics: a small elite group that is vitally interested in politics; those who participate if mobilized and informed; and those who are apolitical and totally uninvolved. The Christian Right has moved some people from the apolitical group to the group who vote when informed and mobilized. The Christian Right has also solidified much of the Evangelical vote, into the Republican column. In addition, groups like Family Research Council and the Christian Coalition articulate as one of their primary goals the education and mobilization of voters. Downs (1957) argues that people will not bother to vote when information is too costly to obtain.³⁸ Christian Coalition and Family Research Council create educational materials that are short and to the point, lessening the cost of obtaining information. Voter mobilization is facilitated when easily obtained voter education materials are available and when pastors and

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For Downs, the cost of information involves how easy or hard it is to obtain the information necessary to decide for which candidate to vote. Downs argues that if it is too time consuming to obtain the information needed to make voting decisions, people will not vote.

other group leaders articulate the duty of Christians to be involved in the political process. In addition, as Moen (1992) argued, some members of the Christian Right found that they enjoyed politics, and became a part of the small elite group vitally interested in politics. The possibility of the Christian Right playing either a starring role or even a supporting role in the long awaited partisan realignment is an interesting topic for exploration.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

There are several interesting questions that may be asked about the role of the Christian Right in Oklahoma congressional elections in 1994. These questions direct the research into various facets of the congressional election process. The first question concerns the overall role of the Christian Right in the congressional elections, which is, can a social movement impact candidate centered elections, and if so, why? Is there something about the world of Evangelical Christianity that promotes Christian Right mobilization in elections, in this case, congressional elections? This leads to the exploration of the role of the Christian Right in the candidate emergence process. Were there specific Christian Right activists who were recruiting candidates? Or were likely candidates who happened to be affiliated with the Christian Right recruited by other party sources? Another question concerns the primaries. How did the Christian Right operate in the primary and runoff elections? What happens when there is more than one Christian Right candidate in a race? Moving to the general election, how does the Christian Right operate during the general

election? Did the Christian Right readily support other candidates, or do supporters disengage when their first choice is not in the race? Would there be any House elections in Oklahoma in which the Republican nominee is not acceptable to the Christian Right? Voting studies indicate that there are many Evangelical Democrats, although they do not necessarily identify with the Christian Right. Could there be Christian Right Democrats (like Virgil Cooper)? What would the result of Christian Right victories be? Would the areas of policy responsiveness and symbolic responsiveness be heightened? Would the newly elected Christian Right representatives also work to become representatives who are responsive in the areas of allocation and service? Finally, how would these newly elected Christian Right representatives face the challenge of running for reelection?

There were obviously two types of candidates that the Christian Right is willing to support. The first type was a candidate who agreed with the issue positions deemed important by the leadership of the various Christian Right social movement organizations, and reiterated by pastors in the pulpit throughout the nation. These candidates could be conservative, but not affiliated with religious groups. The other type of candidate was a member of the Christian Right, and a true believer in the goals of the Christian Right. The articulation of beliefs acceptable to members of the Christian Right would allow both types of candidates, operating in the manner of entrepreneurial leaders to which members of the Christian Right are accustomed, to motivate other true

believers, who were trained by church membership and affiliation with Christian Right social movement organizations to become involved in the political process.

DATA, METHODS AND APPROACH

The data for this paper is drawn from extensive observation of the political process in Oklahoma, beginning before the 1994 primaries and extending through 1996. The campaign headquarters of the major candidates were visited, to see firsthand how the operations were actually run. Campaign staff and volunteers were interviewed, both to gauge the approach to the campaign and determine the reasons for involvement. Observations of the various activities occurring at the headquarters were also part of the visits. In addition, members of Christian Right organizations involved in the election were interviewed and literature from the groups involved was read.³⁹ Christian television and radio were carefully followed for references to the electoral process, especially in terms of voter mobilization. Campaign coverage of the races in the state's two major newspapers, Oklahoma City's *Daily Oklahoman* and the *Tulsa World* was also examined. The churches with which the various candidates were involved,

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As an Evangelical Christian who has attended both nondenominational charismatic and Pentecostal churches, I am able to perform research on the Christian Right from the position of a participant-observer. One of the advantages of being a participant-observer is that I actually fit with the members of the Christian Right with whom I interact. Because conservative Christians are so frequently treated badly by academe and the media, members of the Christian Right, especially those who are in positions of leadership, are wary about the manner in which they speak to interviewers. Since I know the language of Evangelical Christianity, by use of that language I am recognized as a safe individual with whom to speak. This facilitates my research of the Christian Right.

and the doctrinal positions of those churches, were also surveyed. In addition, several of the candidates were interviewed and observed in campaign and Christian Right related settings. To explore the dynamics of the 1996 congressional elections, media coverage of the primaries and general elections was followed, and a research trip to Oklahoma in October 1996 was included. While in Oklahoma, the campaign headquarters in all six districts were visited. Political commercials in the local television markets were viewed, and newspaper coverage perused. While in the various congressional districts, the activities of Christian mass media were observed.

The exploration of connections between the Christian Right and the political process begins with an exploration of the Christian Right as a social movement. This exploration defines a social movement and discusses theories concerning how social movements interact with the rest of society. A discussion of theories of social movements points to the necessity of organization if the social movement is to influence the larger society. An exploration and identification of Christian Right social movement organizations logically follows a discussion of social movement organizations. The important linkage between the study of social movement organizations and political campaigns is the entrepreneurial style of leadership necessary to both social movement organizations and political campaigns. A study of the Oklahoma elections of 1994 follows, beginning with a review of the sixth district special election in the spring of 1994. The 1994 primaries are then explored, with an emphasis on the

competitive races. Coverage of the 1994 general elections comprises the next chapter, with special attention to two different kinds of Christian Right discovered in the second district. Attention is then given to how the newly elected Christian Right representatives behaved when going to Washington, whether the Christian Right had actually elected representatives that would push their agenda, especially looking at policy responsiveness and symbolic responsiveness. The 1996 election is also explored, as the Christian Right representatives defended their seats in the very different electorate that a presidential election year brings. An evaluation of social movement theory using the Oklahoma case as a test for the theory brings the research to a conclusion. The finding is that the notion of entrepreneurial leadership and followers who as a group are conditioned to be motivated by entrepreneurial leadership work as unifying factors to allow the Christian Right as a social movement to interact with the candidate centered political system.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

DEFINING THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT

The Christian Right must be defined as a concept before discussing the Christian Right as a social movement. Fowler (1993) defines the Christian Right as "those Evangelicals and Fundamentalists of the 1970s and 1980s who participated in or sympathized with the movement to bring conservative moral and social change to the United States in line with their religious values" (60).¹ Fowler (1993) does not mention the Pentecostals and charismatics within this definition, but their doctrine makes them a part of the Evangelical sphere of Christianity.² While there are differences between Pentecostals and

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When performing survey research, identifying exactly those individuals who are members of the Christian Right is a difficult process. A short cut often utilized is to employ the born-again Christian designation to identify members of the Christian Right. While this does identify Fundamentalists, Pentecostals and charismatics that fit the Christian Right description, it also includes liberal Evangelicals who will answer affirmatively to the born-again question, but hold politically liberal views that would exclude them from the category of Christian Right. Fowler's definition, and the use of the born-again variable also fails to include conservative Roman Catholics that must be included as a part of the Christian Right. The conservative Roman Catholics must be included especially when discussing the abortion issue.

2

Evangelical Christianity is that group of Christians that believe that faith in Jesus Christ is the only means for salvation. A major tenet of Evangelical Christianity is that it is necessary to share the message of salvation (evangelize) the world. Fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and charismatics all share the belief in the necessity to evangelize the world for Jesus. The doctrinal differences between these groups do not include the centrality of evangelism to the life of the Christian.

charismatics³, the groups do cooperate. Mathew (1994) and Wilcox (1992) classify Pentecostals and charismatics together when discussing the intersection of religion and politics. Wilcox (1992) adds another dimension to the discussion of the Christian Right by dividing the Christian Right into three groups, Evangelical, Fundamentalist, and Pentecostal-charismatic. This is a useful distinction, because it properly identifies three important components of the Christian Right that do not always work well together.⁴ It is also a problematic distinction, because Fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and charismatics all view themselves as Evangelicals.⁵ For example, in the 1988 presidential primary,

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The differences between Pentecostals and charismatics are not primarily doctrinal, but historical. Erickson (1985) explains that Pentecostals derive from the revival of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that occurred in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The denominations known as the classical Pentecostal denominations, including the Assemblies of God, Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), and Foursquare formed from this revival. The charismatic movement, also known as the charismatic renewal, occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, mostly in the mainline Protestant denominations and in the Roman Catholic Church. The charismatic renewal did not renew the denominational churches, and many who left the denominational churches due to their charismatic experience affiliated with the classical Pentecostal churches, or formed nondenominational charismatic churches.

4

The dispensationalist system of biblical interpretation excludes the possibility of individuals being baptized in the Holy Spirit and having the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This means that for Fundamentalists, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not coming from God. For Fundamentalists, the obvious interpretation of the source of these gifts is that they come from the devil, and that Pentecostals and charismatics are not true Christians. This explains why the two groups often struggle when attempting to work together.

5

The best way to distinguish Evangelicals (by Wilcox's definition) from Fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and charismatics is to identify Evangelicals as Christians who believe in authority of the Bible, but use neither the dispensationalist system of biblical interpretation favored by the Fundamentalists or the emphasis on the gifts of the Holy

Marion "Pat" Robertson drew his support from the Pentecostal-charismatic group, while the Fundamentalist and other Evangelical groups that were courted by George Bush supported Bush. The Rev. Jerry Falwell, Fundamentalist leader of the now defunct Moral Majority, endorsed Bush. Fowler's definition of the Christian Right also works to define the two previous manifestations of the Christian Right that occurred in the 1920s, and again in the 1950s.

The Christian Right can accurately be described as a social movement⁶ interacting within the American polity on multiple levels, from critiques of culture to political involvement at the local, state and national level. Soper (1994) defines a social movement as "(1) a form of organized group action, (2) being directed toward political institutions, (3) trying to change society to conform to group norms, and (4) having goals which are not reducible to the material self-interests of the group (28)." The Christian Right is frequently described as a social movement by researchers (Wilcox 1992; Moen 1992) and even leaders of the Christian Right explain the activities of the Christian Right using this approach (Reed 1993). Therefore, it is clear that the Christian Right is appropriately interpreted as a social movement.

Spirit that marks Pentecostals and charismatics.

6

Another reason that the use of social movement theory is appropriate when interpreting the Christian Right is because it is impossible to classify the Christian Right as merely a single interest, or special interest group. The Christian Right has policy positions on abortion, family issues, taxes, and persecution of Christians in other nations. For example, most favored nation status for the People's Republic of China was opposed by the Christian Right because of persecution of Christians.

Previous research on the Christian Right has explored the Christian Right using two approaches. The first perspective examines the behavior of the individuals involved with the Christian Right, with the goal of explaining why people would affiliate themselves with a social movement like the Christian Right. The particular focus of this strain of research concerns reasons why individuals would join churches from which members of the Christian Right would be drawn, in light of the perceived rejection of modern, scientific explanations⁷ by these churches. The second perspective explores the Christian Right from a group perspective, because members of the Christian Right are usually identified not as individuals, but as a group. The group perspective is important because ordinary individuals in contemporary society seldom garner much attention, while large groups are able to attract the attention of the society. An investigation of the various theories concerning the formation and development of social movements leads to the acceptance of the political process model of social movements as the vehicle by which the history of Christian Right political involvement can be explored.

7

The scientific explanations that are rejected by these churches focus especially on the issue of creation and evolution. Fundamentalists in particular completely reject any explanation for the existence of the universe that is not creation based. Fundamentalists will expound various creationist theories of how the world came into existence, but evolution is rejected. This position is also held by many Pentecostal and charismatic churches. The major issue that causes rejection of the evolutionary explanation for the genesis of humanity is that it runs counter to the biblical concept of humanity being created in the image of God (Genesis 1-3). For these Christians, it is impossible to conceive that the humans created in the image of God could have evolved from primates.

THEORIES OF INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR

Why do people become involved in a social movement, especially one with the conservative ideological content of the Christian Right? Modernization theory argues that religion should become less salient as people more readily accepted the scientific explanations and technological advances that modernity brings. However, the rise of the Christian Right, and its continued endurance as a political force, indicates that modernization theory may not be completely correct.⁸ While not accepting some of the explanations offered by the academic community, such as the theory of evolution to explain how the world came to be, the Christian Right embraces the technological advances of modern society. There have been Christian Radio stations airing Christian radio programs since the 1920s (Synan 1987), and currently there are numerous Christian radio and television programs, along with internet web sites. So, perhaps the notion that conservative Christians rejected technological advances that would further their goals should be rethought.⁹

8

One possible problem with modernization theory is that the theory does not take into account the multifaceted nature of humanity. This problem is apparent in political science as political scientists strive to understand why individuals behave politically as they do. The probable explanation is that humans are extremely complex, and defy simplistic explanations concerning how they behave. In addition, social scientists have ignored the religious dimension that has been a part of human existence since the time of early man.

9

When viewing the state of the art television facilities of both Pat Robertson's CBN and TBN, and the state of the art facility that James Dobson has in Colorado Springs, it is difficult to argue that conservative Christians are opposed to technology. Technology that helps humanity, and helps spread the gospel message is acceptable. Technology

This does not mean that the world of conservative Christians has been understood by those who have studied them. Early authors on the subject of conservative or Fundamentalist Christians used derogatory descriptions of personality traits that would predispose an individual to identify with the Christian Right. These personality explanations include alienation, psychopathology and status anxiety¹⁰ to explain why these people continued, in the face of modernization, to cling to their religious faith (Lipset 1959; Lipset 1963; Lipset and Raab 1978). Those who clung to their faith were criticized as irrational or stupid by academics who accepted liberal theology.

The critique concerning individuals who affiliate with religious groups can be traced to the borrowing of Freudian psychology by political scientists to help explain political behavior. Freud was a confirmed atheist, and described attachment to religion of any sort as a psychopathology. In *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud (1929) argued that people looked to religion to provide explanations for an uncertain world. He stated that scientific study of the natural world would allow people to assuage their fears without using the crutch of religion. In his writings, Freud described the religious feelings of individuals as pathological conditions (Gay 1989). Political scientists such as Lasswell (1936)

and scientific explanations that demean humans, and can be seen to raise questions concerning the human status as created in the image of God are rejected.

¹⁰

The assertions of Lipset and Raab could be used to argue that anyone who believes in the conservative form of Christianity is mentally ill. This is reminiscent of the approach used by the former Soviet Union to quash dissent by identifying political dissidents as mentally ill..

and Lipset (1959) extended Freudian notions into political science. Lipset (1959) was more selective than Freud in his damnation of religion. Lipset had no problem with modern Protestant theology, approving of the mainline Protestants who had blended their theology into the developing secularized consensus¹¹ (Marsden 1993) that excluded conservative Christian groups. Lipset condemned Fundamentalist and other chiliastic religions¹² that did not participate in the secularized consensus. With the efforts to review and modify many of the conclusions of Freud that are now occurring within the discipline of psychology, however, it is important to review concepts within political science drawn from Freud to see if they also need revision. This includes Lipset's characterization of Fundamentalists and chiliastic religions.

Another explanation of the affiliation of individuals with right-wing groups, whether secular or religious, is the notion of the authoritarian personality. First posited by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunskik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950), the notion

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Modern Protestants, following the lead of Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, and Emil Brunner have questioned historical (or orthodox) Christian doctrines including the issue of the connection of Christianity with the historical figure of Jesus and soteriological (relating to the process of salvation) issues. These individuals contributed to the development of liberal theologies that are based on interpretations of the Bible as a limited document. Liberal theologians do not hold to the views of biblical inerrancy and biblical literalism that are a part of Fundamentalist, Pentecostal-charismatic, and other theologically conservative Evangelical Christians (Erickson 1985). Liberal theology is acceptable to secular scholars, like Lipset.

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Chiliastic religious groups are those who believe in the millennium. The millennium is a period of 1000 years in which Jesus Christ will reign over the earth. Fundamentalists are chiliastic, as are Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses and extreme groups such as the Branch Davidians (Martin 1997).

of authoritarian personality can be linked to Freudian notions that individuals project their feelings of aggression onto members of various out-groups¹³. In addition to this projection of aggression, those with the authoritarian personality type are also attracted to right-wing authority figures. The prejudice demonstrated toward Catholics, Jews, and sometimes African-Americans by the early Fundamentalists led researchers to tag them with the authoritarian personality type. However, early Fundamentalists were not the only groups that were prejudiced, especially against African-Americans and immigrant groups.

Bruce (1988) found that religious rather than personality explanations are actually more accurate, arguing that the Fundamentalist notions of the authority of the Bible and the conflict between good and evil embodied in the personalities of God and Satan provided a more accurate reason for the behavior of Fundamentalists. Expanding on Bruce's research, Wald, Owen, and Hill (1989) debunked the notion of authoritarian personality and replaced it with the notion of authority mindedness. Individuals who are authority minded do not have a personality disorder, but believe that obedience to authority is an important biblical principle. This includes the authority of God, the Bible, pastors and

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An individual with an authoritarian personality type is one who would be inclined to submit to or be obedient to an individual who projects authority. The authority figure is one who articulates ideas with which the individual is already sympathetic, and the individual is then led by the authority figure. This concept is applied to conservative and especially Fundamentalist Christians because of their literalist interpretation of the Bible, and the number of places that the Bible instructs submission to authority (see Hebrew 13:17).

leaders in the church, and the traditional authority of husbands over wives and parents over children. All of this is rooted in the two forms of biblical interpretation used among conservative Christians, biblical literalism and biblical inerrancy,¹⁴ not some personality disorder.

Most of these earlier explanations were demeaning to the individuals who chose to affiliate with the Christian Right, in arguing that a lack of rationality, lack of intelligence, or some other deviant personality trait were the only possible explanations for the behavior of these people. The participants in other groups wishing to change society during the 1950s and 1960s, such as the civil rights movement and the women's movement, however, were not subjected to demeaning personality evaluations, and their involvement was viewed as rational.

Marx and McAdam (1994) provided a healthy antidote to the negative characterizations of right-leaning social movements. They observed that researchers are not as objective as they think they are. They also noted that it is

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The terms biblical literalist and biblical inerrancy are often coupled when discussing the Christian Right. The biblical literalist believes that the Bible should be interpreted literally, and its concepts applied directly to the lives of Christians. The biblical literalist rejects the ideas of liberal theologians who argue that the Bible is culturally bound and should be selectively followed with allowances made for the cultural differences between biblical times and contemporary society. Biblical inerrancy is the notion that the Bible, as far as it is correctly translated, is without error and the absolute guide to faith and morals for the Christian (Erickson 1985). The position of inerrancy also allows poetry, imagery and history to be interpreted in a nonliteral fashion, but insists on following the moral strictures of the Bible as written. Fundamentalists, and many other Evangelicals, especially of the Pentecostal-charismatic variety, are biblical literalists who also believe in biblical inerrancy.

easy to be sympathetic to the goals of a group with which the researcher agrees and to portray that group in a favorable light (McAdam 1982). Marx and McAdam remarked that it is just as simple for researchers to interpret the actions of individuals belonging to groups with which they disagree as psychopathology, status anxiety, authoritarian personality, or something equally negative, and they included the pro-life movement and the Christian Right as examples. Obviously, social science is not as objective or value free as many researchers would like it to be. The very human tendency to treat sympathetically the behavior of those with whom we agree, and to be less tolerant of those whose ideas with which we are uncomfortable limits the possibility of objectivity.¹⁵ A more evenhanded view would suggest that members of various groups, both left and right in philosophy, affiliate with one another because of their shared beliefs about an issue or set of issues. Members of all social movements are motivated by normative beliefs about the morally correct way the issue or issues upon which the group focusses should be addressed and the policy changes that are necessary because of their beliefs.

Wilcox (1992) provided the best explanation for why members of the Christian Right have become mobilized politically. The argument is simply that political mobilization is rational for people who believe as members of the

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The issues raised by Marx and McAdam cut to the heart of social science research. Researchers are instructed to be objective so that they are able to research and assess behavior in a neutral manner. However, it becomes apparent that the notion of unbiased social science research is difficult to imagine. Any researcher who does research in the social sciences brings his or her prejudices and worldview into the research process.

Christian Right believe. Wilcox used extensive survey data to argue his case that members of the Christian Right do not demonstrate any of the personality pathologies that characterized most of the early research into individuals affiliated with the Christian Right. Wilcox indicates that members of the Christian Right became politically active to address the issues in the political arena that most concern them. This links the Christian Right to other contemporary social movements such as the civil rights movement and the women's movement.¹⁶ Political mobilization is rational for all of these groups because of their beliefs, because political mobilization is the only way to bring change within the current institutional system in the United States.

Just because political mobilization is rational does not necessarily mean that the individuals who belong to the groups have the skills required to interact in the civic arena. Recent research indicated that church membership provides an arena in which individuals can obtain skills that transfer into the civic arena. Brady, Verba, and Schlozman (1995) developed a resource model of political participation, and one of the resources that facilitates political participation is the development of civic skills. These civic skills include administrative skills, the ability to plan and organize events and participation in elections, either as a candidate or as a volunteer. They asserted that people who are members of

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Obviously linking the Christian Right, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Women's Movement is connecting three groups that on the surface seem to have very little in common. However, one of the most interesting recent alliances is between feminists and the Christian Right concerning the issue of pornography. While both groups argue against pornography from differing perspectives, they are united in their opposition to it.

churches¹⁷ are able to use the institutional church setting to acquire and enhance civic skills via activities like organizing and overseeing the Sunday school, planning a church picnic, or running an election within the church. These civic skills learned in the nonpolitical environment of the church can be translated into the political realm.¹⁸

Brady, Verba and Schlozman (1995) do not discuss the enculturation process that is a part of church membership.¹⁹ Components of this enculturation also transfer into political life. As an active member of any church, an individual is conditioned to contribute money to causes that the church as a group believes

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Brady, Verba and Schlozman do not include Roman Catholic churches within this classification. This is because the organization of Roman Catholic and other Protestant churches differ significantly. Most especially, Protestant churches do not have religious orders like those found in the Roman Catholic church that accomplish many organizational tasks. However, as vocations for the religious orders are declining within Roman Catholicism, Roman Catholic churches are being forced to depend on the laity to perform tasks that had been performed by members of religious orders.

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There is not much difference between the process of organizing a fund raising activity for a Christian group and organizing a political fundraiser. Organizational skills learned in any arena, whether church, school, business, or politics easily transfer from one arena to another.

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My pastor, Zac Nazarian discusses the enculturation process that occurs when a new convert comes to church. He uses his own experience to relate how he learned what the norms and expectations of the church were. He states that a new church member has to learn how to behave within the church, why church attendance is important, why financial contributions are important, and why volunteering within the church is important. Someone who is reared within the church environment absorbs this naturally. An adult convert learns these behaviors when the convert becomes involved in the culture of the church. All of the behaviors learned in church, regular attendance, contributing financially and volunteering are important for the political realm as well.

to be important, and is trained to volunteer to assure completion of the various tasks within the church. Ehrenhalt (1991) stated that much of the training that is provided in Evangelical colleges and by extension, in Evangelical churches is centered in teaching individuals to be comfortable communicating their faith to groups of people of various sizes. Ehrenhalt then argued that those skills also translate well into the political realm, because one who is comfortable with communicating one's beliefs to groups of various size is well equipped to work in the political arena. So active participation in a church provides individuals with a place to develop and hone organizational and interpersonal skills that are valuable in the political arena. Churches also socialize their members to contribute money and volunteer time to causes in which they believe.

Church attendance has other effects on behavior as well. Wald, Owen and Hill (1988, 1990) argued that churches are communities and because members are drawn together in shared beliefs, this like-mindedness extends to the political beliefs of the congregation. They also noted that churches that are strong, according to the criteria presented by Iannaccone (1994),²⁰ display the characteristics of community and also political cohesiveness to a greater degree than do the mainline churches. A politically cohesive church will be more apt to follow political cues given by the church leadership.

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Iannaccone links church strength with the strictness of the church. He argues that churches that are theologically and behaviorally lenient tend to be weak. Conversely, churches that are theologically conservative and have strict behavioral norms tend to be strong churches. The strict behavioral norms in the stricter churches create a stronger sense of community within the church.

An additional twist on this issue came from Miller, Gurin, Gurin, and Malanchuk (1981), who argued that any group that has "a self-conscious awareness of their status as a deprived group," (494) participates in politics at higher rates than other groups. Eyerman and Jamison (1991) asserted the importance of leaders in articulating messages to members of a social movement. One message projected by several of the national Christian Right leaders in 1994 was the argument that the only group toward which discrimination is now socially acceptable is Christians.²¹ This allowed Christians to view themselves as a deprived group, also motivating political participation. So members of the Christian Right can be viewed as acting rationally when becoming involved in politics, because their involvement is a way to further their interests. With the civic skills obtained through church activities to facilitate and motivate political involvement, members of the Christian Right can quickly become effective participants in the political realm.

THEORIES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Sociologists have spent considerable time exploring social movements, and developing theories to explain how social movements develop. McAdam (1982) described three models of social movements, the classical model of social movements, the resource mobilization model, and his own political

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The rhetoric articulating the notion that the only currently acceptable prejudice is against conservative Christians is frequently heard in Christian media. James Dobson of Focus on the Family regularly discusses the growth of prejudice against conservative Christians on his radio program.

process model. Each of these three models of social movements is based on an underlying theoretical perspective concerning how the American political system works. The classical model is rooted in the pluralist theory of political power. The resource mobilization model reflects an elite approach to the distribution of political power. McAdam's political process model is drawn mainly from a Marxist perspective about political power. An exploration and critique of these three models of social movements allows the development of a theoretical perspective from which to examine and interpret the activities of the Christian Right, especially in the electoral arena.

The Classical Model

The classical model is based on a pluralist view of American politics. The greatest proponent of the pluralist view of American politics is Dahl (1967; 1989). The pluralist view argues that the American political process is open to all groups who wish to operate within the system. Inherent in the pluralist view is the notion that no single group is so powerful that it can exclude other groups from participation.²² From this pluralist perspective, any individuals who believe that their views are not being heard can organize to make their point. If the

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The pluralist view of American politics ignores the very real differences between Americans of various social classes, education levels, and racial and ethnic groups. Since the early days of the American Republic, wealth has purchased political access. Education levels often determine not only wealth, but whether individuals understand the political system sufficiently to impact the political process. And, of course, racial and ethnic minorities have been excluded from the political system, whether by law or by lack of wealth and education. The pluralist model of the American system is a rosy look at how the system should be, not how it actually works in practice.

pluralist view is correct, all groups have the ability to organize and have a voice within the political system, and social movement insurgency would be unnecessary since access is not a problem. The actual argument may be that the pluralist view is not an accurate depiction of the American political system. One of the reasons that social movements form is because the members of the movement are excluded from political power, and the pluralist explanation of American politics argues that all have the opportunity to participate in the political process.

The causal chain in the basic version of classic social movement theory is that individuals are moved for some reason to join a social movement to make their views known. Some sort of structural strain felt by individuals creates within them a disruptive psychological state, leading to participation in a social movement (Marx 1982). The language used to describe the events leading to social movement membership are almost as degrading as the descriptions of the psychological states of members of the Christian Right by early theorists. Classical theorists studied social movements not as natural events occurring because the views of a particular group are being ignored, but as the result of "a wide range of disturbed 'states of mind'" (Marx 1982:7).²³

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The pluralist perspective on American politics paints a fairly favorable picture of the American polity. Deriving a theory of social movements from a positive characterization of the system naturally leads to the conclusion that something must be mentally wrong with anyone who would even think that something could be wrong in such a system. Yet it was the allegedly fairly favorable system that gave us the problems between racial and ethnic groups that continue to plague the nation today.

There are three subtypes of the classical model. They are mass society theory (Kornhauser 1959), status inconsistency (Lenski 1954: Broom 1959), and collective behavior (Turner and Killian 1957; Lang and Lang 1961; Smelser 1962). In the mass society theory, the social isolation of modern life leads individuals to feel alienation and anxiety, leading these individuals to extreme behavior as manifested in participation in a social movement. The status inconsistency theory argued that those whose social status is inconsistent with what they believe it should be experience cognitive dissonance, and the feelings of cognitive dissonance lead to participation in a social movement. Using the collective behavior model, a specific cause of the strain in the system is not articulated, but is attributed to social change (Gusfield 1970). The strain produces a normative ambiguity in those who feel the strain, and this normative ambiguity stimulates the feelings of individuals and moves them to participate in social movements (Smelser 1962).

One obvious criticism of the classical model is that it presupposes periods in which sufficient strain leads to social movements. As Wilson (1973) argues, societies are seldom stable or without strain, so there is always the possibility of a social movement occurring. Since in actuality social movements do not constantly occur, some other explanation of the development of social movements is necessary (McAdam 1982). If societal strain were a sufficient cause for the development of social movements, a heterogeneous society²⁴ like

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Even though the United States has a white majority, the existence of various racial,

the United States should have hundreds of social movements occurring all at once. Even in the turbulent period of the 1960s and 1970s, in which various social movements flourished, there were never as many social movements as there were cleavages in society.

The classical model fits well with the explanations of behavior posited by Lipset (1959; 1963) and Lipset and Raab (1978), because the model allows participation in a social movement such as the Christian Right, the civil rights movement, or any other social movement to be explained away as aberrant behavior.²⁵ This leads to another major criticism of the classical model, its emphasis on individual discontent as the motivation behind social movements. As McAdam (1982) argued, the attribution of severe pathological traits may be a way to discredit political enemies, but it is hardly a convincing scientific description of social movements. Pinard stated it best: "we do not see how such political movements could recruit a disproportionately large number of people characterized by pathological personality traits" (1971: 225). Wolfinger, Wolfinger, Prewitt and Rosenhack (1964) found that members of a group affiliated with the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade of the 1950s and 1960s

ethnic and religious groups from every possible place in the world make it a heterogeneous society.

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It would be difficult to argue that the participants in the Civil Rights Movement were some sort of pathological individuals who were involved in aberrant behavior. When viewing films of the 1950s and 1960s covering the Civil Rights Movement, the most aberrant behavior is displayed by the segregationists who were in power and attempting to maintain the status quo.

rated above the national average in income, education, occupational prestige, and organizational participation. In addition, Wolfinger, *et al.* found that those affiliated with the Crusade were also more connected to their communities than others in the survey. These data challenge the conclusions of Lipset (1959; 1963) and others who painted all conservative Christians as uneducated people easily led by their equally uneducated pastors, or so alienated from their communities that they need to belong to right-wing fringe groups.²⁶ These earlier findings bolster Wilcox's (1992) argument that members of the Christian Right perform as rational actors in their political participation.

The Resource Mobilization Approach

A host of criticism of classical models of social movements arose. One of the fundamental critiques of the classical model is its reliance on the pluralist model of society. Rogin (1967) argued that the problem is the assumption of pluralist democracy inherent in the classical model of social movements. If everyone shares power, as the pluralists argue, there is no reason for the formation of social movements, and participants in social movements must be irrational. The weakness of the pluralist model of society is that it does not correspond to societal reality, because everyone does not share power in American society. If the model of pluralist democracy is replaced by an elite or Marxist explanation of political power, the irrationality of participation in social

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If Lipset's characterization of uneducated people being led by uneducated pastors is an accurate portrayal of the Christian Right, it could also be an accurate portrayal of much of the Civil Rights Movement.

movements disappears (McAdam 1982). Authors including Mills (1959) and Bacharach and Baratz (1973) reiterated Schattschneider's (1960) critique about the pluralist choir singing with an upper class voice and argued that not all groups even get to sing in the choir.²⁷ The elite model of political power asserted that some groups are too disadvantaged to participate in the political system. This criticism of the pluralist model of society, by McCarthy and Zald (1973; 1977), Oberschall (1973), Gamson (1975), and numerous others led to the development of a new model of social movements, the resource mobilization model. McCarthy and Zald (1973) were the first to use the term resource mobilization. Inherent in the model is the notion that some groups are so disadvantaged that without help from elite groups, the power disparity in society makes it impossible for their voices to be heard.²⁸

McAdam argued that there were several strengths to the resource mobilization model. The first is that participants in social movements are described as "collections of political actors dedicated to the advancement of their stated substantive goals" (1982: 22). The second strength is that because social movements are political, participation in a social movement is transformed

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The necessity of the Civil Rights Movement provides evidence that some groups are excluded from the pluralist choir.

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The Civil Rights Movement is again an example of this. Without help from white northern liberals, who augmented the efforts of African-Americans, the Civil Rights Movement would have had greater difficulty in achieving its goals.

from a psychological pathology to a rational act.²⁹ The third and fourth strengths are interrelated, because both include the effect of groups on a social movement. The third is that resource mobilization explores the interaction of external groups on social movement development. The fourth strength is that rather than focussing on the individuals in the social movement, resource mobilization looked at various groups, both formal and informal, that the movement depended upon for success. Included is the notion that social movements "require a steady input of resources to survive over time" (McAdam 1982: 23). The classical model, with its emphasis on the pathologies of individuals involved in social movements, ignored the dynamics of group activity and support in the establishment and maintenance of a social movement.

The resource mobilization model, while an improvement over the classical model, also has weaknesses. McAdam (1982) argued that resource mobilization did not adequately address the problems of elite mobilization of social movements. McAdam argued that elites become involved in social movements only to the degree that the involvement can be used to circumvent the social movement and retain power.³⁰ Resource mobilization theory is so intent on the

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The one strength of resource mobilization is that it moves participants in social movement activities from psychopathic status to the status of normal citizens who are fighting to have their views acknowledged in the political arena, and their policy needs met.

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The only problem with McAdam's argument concerning elite behavior is that he is obviously operating from the assumption that elites could have no other motive in becoming involved in a social movement other than to curb its power and retain theirs.

exploration of how resources are mobilized by elite groups and other social movement organizations that the importance of a mass base is often ignored. In addition, the notion of resources is so broadly defined as to be useless. Resources include everything, whether material, like jobs, money and facilities, or nonmaterial, such as legitimacy, trust, friendship, and moral commitment (Oberschall 1973; McCarthy and Zald 1977). McAdam summarized that "resource mobilization affords a useful perspective for analyzing organized reform efforts initiated by established polity members. It is less convincing, however, as an account of social movements" (1982: 34). Resource mobilization worked well when exploring established interest groups, not groups who do not have an established place within the political realm. Entrepreneurial social movement organizations cannot be interpreted via resource mobilization. McAdam argued that the resource mobilization must be augmented to explain political insurgency by groups not assisted by elites.³¹

This view appears to come from the rational actor model of human behavior, which states that humans do what serves their interests. The only problem with the rational actor model is that it excludes any explanations of human behavior that might be motivated by religious beliefs, altruistic impulses, or a sense of justice. An explanation of elite behavior that is just as plausible as McAdam's is that the elites in a resource mobilization situation realize that an injustice has occurred, and that the elites are willing to invest time and energy to right a past wrong. However, if the elites wanted to remain elites, they might have to limit how much assistance they would provide to a social movement addressing injustice.

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This is the inherent weakness in the resource mobilization model. According to resource mobilization theory, elite mobilization is necessary to fuel a social movement. An example of a social movement that had little elite mobilization, especially in the beginning, is the environmental movement. Elite support of that movement came after

The Political Process Model

McAdam's (1982) political process model argued that anything that members of a social movement wish to accomplish must occur within the framework of the political process. McAdam's model treated the generation of a social movement as a function of the structure of political opportunities, the indigenous organizational strength of the movement, and the cognitive liberation of members of the social movement (1982: 40). McAdam developed his model from the Marxist and elite perspectives of political power. The Marxist perspective allowed McAdam to acknowledge that "the power disparity between elite and excluded groups is substantial" (1982: 37), but Marxist thought sees as normal the transfer of power from elites to the masses. As Schwartz stated, "Any system contains within itself the possibility of a power strong enough to alter it" (1976:173). The importance of grounding any theory of social movements in a political process model is supported by Soper's (1994) historical review of the Christian Right in the United States and Britain. Soper (1994) emphasizes the importance of the interaction between the structure of the particular political system and the success of a social movement. Soper finds that the institutional structure of Britain inhibited the ability of the Christian Right to influence policy, while the structure of the United States facilitated the success of the Christian Right.³² The political process model, combined with an

it was established. Resource mobilization is weak when explaining something like the environmental movement.

understanding of political organizations and cultural characteristics, is helpful in interpreting the success of any social movement in a particular political environment. One of the strengths of the political process model is that the importance of the type of political institutions is built into the model.

One of the weaknesses of resource mobilization theory is the notion that established members of the polity will willingly surrender power to groups that are not already a part of the process. Gamson (1975) made the distinction between "members" who are part of the political process and "challengers" who have no access to the political process. Drawing on Gamson's distinction, McAdam (1982) indicated one weakness of the resource mobilization model is the insistence that established elite groups are willing to sponsor social movements that would transform challengers into members and so dilute the power of the elites. This leads to another important component of the political process model, the ability of groups to create and develop indigenous organizational strength. McAdam argued that the creation and development of

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The parliamentary system in Great Britain allows only one manner of entering into the political process there. The entry is via the House of Commons. In the United States, there are multiple places in which it is possible to impact the policy process. Multiple points of entry into the political process include the local level, in school boards and city and county government. The next point of entry is at the state level, both through the executive and legislative branches and in some states directly via the initiative process. The last point of entry into the political process moves to the national level via the Congress and the presidency. If any of these avenues are unsuccessful, it is always possible to turn to the courts, both state and national. All of these institutional points of entry into the policy process facilitate political activity by social movements in the United States.

indigenous organizational strength was necessary for successful social movement insurgency. The necessary components of organizational strength are leaders, members, an established set of incentives for member participation, and a communications network.³³

McAdam's (1982) exploration of the civil rights movement emphasized the importance of leadership in the development of group ideology and solidarity, the recruiting of members, and the maintenance of incentives for members to remain involved. Eyerman and Jamison (1991), also emphasized the role of leaders in the development of a social movement, particularly the necessity of leaders who are able to communicate with the members of the social movement. Leaders are involved in the planning of strategy, and the rallying of members to support the activities necessary to promote the policy goals of the social movement. One flaw in McAdam's description of leadership is that he does not mention the importance of the development of continuing leadership to maintain the social movement. He notes that a lack of leadership can cause a social movement to fade, and the waning of the civil rights movement after the death of Martin Luther

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The necessity of leaders to organizational strength is obvious. The task of the leaders of any movement are to rally the troops, and to articulate the message of the group. The necessity of members is apparent, because the leaders must have someone to lead. But, without leaders who are able to recruit and retain members, an organization will eventually wither and fade. Incentives for member participation are necessary in any group, because, as Olson (1965) argues, in any voluntary organization there is always a free rider problem. Social movements must be viewed as voluntary organizations. A communications network is also essential, to allow the leaders to communicate with the members of the group.

King, Jr., illustrates that point.³⁴ An important component in the continuation of any social movement is the development of new leadership to replace the old.

A social movement cannot be supported only by leaders, but must have members to demonstrate the number of people involved in the movement, and to do the work necessary within the political process to impact the system.

McAdam (1982), when exploring the development of early social movements, indicated that members of new social movements are often drawn from earlier movements that have compatible ideology. For example, members of the nineteenth-century women's suffrage movement were drawn from the abolitionist movement (Melder 1964). Another method of generating members for the group is by merging existing groups with similar goals, such as the development of the Populist party from the various Grange and other farmers' organizations (Hicks 1961). Oberschall (1973) argued that solitary and isolated individuals are not the ones mobilized for social action, but mobilization occurs from groups or blocs of people who are already participants in an organization. People who are loners do not become participants in social movements, because they avoid groups.

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The Civil Rights Movement has not found anyone since King that is able to unite and rally the members of the group with the same level of effectiveness as he did. There are many African-American leaders today, but no one individual can claim the prominence of King. The Christian Right has not had a single, extremely respected leader like King, but has the same problem in the development of leadership that the Civil Rights Movement had. Admittedly, King's untimely death at the hand of an assassin created a problem for the Civil Rights Movement. But since no human can predict the length of his or her life, the development of a younger generation of leaders is essential for the maintenance of any social movement.

The importance of a communications network seems obvious, because without one, social movements can quickly fade. Jackson, Petersen, Bull, Monsen, and Richmond (1960) describe the failure of an attempted property tax revolt movement in California in the 1950s due to the lack of a communications network. However, a similar property tax revolt movement succeeded in California with the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. The difference was the communication network, mostly direct mail driven, that the charismatic and entrepreneurial leaders of the 1970s movement, Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann, were able to establish. Without a way to communicate with members and potential members of a social movement, it is impossible to coordinate efforts for social movement activities. Social movements of the 1990s operate with a technological advantage that their counterparts of earlier eras did not have. The proliferation of computerized mailing lists, facsimile machines, cable television channels, radio, and computer networks offer a staggering set of communication possibilities for social movement organizations with the resources to exploit them.³⁵

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Current social movements do not have the problems with communications that social movements of the 1950s had. Communications technology is so readily available, and available for a reasonable price, that it would be foolish for any group attempting to mobilize participation not to use it. For example, in the 1996 election, Wes Watkins's campaign manager was eager to showcase the communications abilities of the campaign. From a personal computer in the office, it was possible for the Watkins campaign to send 10,000 blast faxes during the night, while the campaign office was closed. This technology is not only available to political campaigns, but to social movement organizations. Family Research Council uses similar fax alerts to alert subscribers to important legislation and votes in Congress.

The last of McAdam's components of indigenous organizational strength is an established set of incentives for member participation. Olson (1965) discussed the free rider problem for voluntary organizations, and participation in a social movement must be viewed as voluntary. McAdam (1982) argued that there are sufficient interpersonal rewards for participation in any social movement that the free rider problem is overcome.³⁶ Most of the rewards are intangible, such as the satisfaction of fighting for something in which one believes and the friendships developed among the like-minded participants in the group. For those already involved, few incentives seem necessary.

However, it is not possible for any group within society to change society if the members of the group believe themselves to be politically impotent. To overcome this political impotence, McAdam (1982) drew again from Marxist thought and added that a "subjective transformation of consciousness" is necessary to mobilize individuals for whom political action could derive benefits. This notion of transformation of consciousness becomes another of the central components of McAdam's political process model, cognitive liberation. Drawing on the work of Piven and Cloward (1979) cognitive liberation is described as a three stage process. During the first stage, people whose concerns are being

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The free rider issue is important for any voluntary organization, including churches and social movements. Pastors and other church leaders are continually encouraging the comfortable pew sitters to additional involvement, and they are able to motivate some members of their congregations to be more involved. Since Christian Right leaders come from churches, another thing that can be learned in church is how to mobilize volunteers and motivate them to stay involved.

ignored by the system begin to lose faith in the legitimacy of the system, This is because the system is perceived to be wrong. The second stage is a change in attitude by the affected citizens from a fatalistic attitude to an attitude of asserting one's rights as a citizen. The last stage is a sense of efficacy, a perception that it is possible for members of the group to change their position. When the cognitive liberation of members of a social movement occurs, the group then becomes a force in the political process.³⁷ The notion of cognitive liberation also extends nicely to the necessity of group ideology (Soper 1994), and the necessity of leaders (Eyerman and Jamison 1991) to articulate and disseminate that ideology.

An important facet of McAdam's model is his notion that development and decline is inherent in social movements. McAdam argued that social movements develop in response to political opportunities, and decline when circumstances are less favorable to their continued existence. When exploring other social movements, such as the labor movement, the civil rights movement, the women's movement and the environmental movement, it is apparent that social movements develop because of issues in the political arena that sufficiently

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McAdam's model of cognitive liberation is that of the African-Americans who became a part of the Civil Rights Movement. The process of cognitive liberation brought the people from passive acceptance of the existing system, to a belief that the system was wrong. From that belief, it was then possible to motivate the people to assert their rights as citizens. Even though the protests did not bring immediate change, as the protests continued, a sense of efficacy grew. For those who participated in the Civil Rights Movement, passive acceptance of racial injustice was no longer possible. This model can be applied to any social movement.

motivate individuals to join the group and participate in the political process. Motivation to join the group and become active must be strong, to overcome the free rider problem that occurs when any type of interest group mobilization occurs (Olson 1965). In addition, when the issues in question are resolved to the satisfaction of the members of the social movement, interest in mobilization wanes and the social movement begins to decline.³⁸ All of these facets of McAdam's political process model develop a theoretical perspective from which to interpret the activities of the Christian Right in the twentieth century.

THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT INTERPRETED VIA THE POLITICAL PROCESS MODEL

The Christian Right has existed in three distinct historical manifestations, the first in the 1920s in response to modernization and the teaching of evolution in schools, the second in the 1950s and 1960s as a response to "Godless" communism, and the third beginning in the late 1970s as a response to the Equal Rights Amendment, the legalization of abortion, the secularization of public education, the declining moral standards of the media, especially sex and violence (Medved 1992), and the breakdown of the family. Within the third

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When issues begin to come to a successful resolution, that is when the free rider problem grows, and the social movement loses steam. If another issue rekindles the perception of a need for activism, the social movement can regenerate itself. In California, when an anti-affirmative action proposition was placed on the ballot via the initiative process, minorities who had been less involved in the political process rallied to work against the initiative. After the initiative passed, continued protest has occurred, especially on the nine University of California campuses. The initiative motivated those who had begun to free ride to become active again.

manifestation of the Christian Right there has also been a development, decline and redevelopment of political involvement. The political process model allows us to interpret the various manifestations of the Christian Right, and demonstrates why the Christian Right emerges after periods of decline.

The First Political Occurrence of the Christian Right The 1920s and Evolution

The first manifestation of the Christian Right as a social movement developed because Christian Fundamentalists were uncomfortable with the direction modern society was taking. Christian fundamentalism developed in the early twentieth century, and a series of volumes called *The Fundamentals* was published in 1910 to describe the beliefs of Fundamentalists. Fundamentalism was a response to liberalization of society, and the development of modern theological perspectives that diminished the importance of the Bible as the inerrant word of God. An important component that motivated the Fundamentalists to political involvement was the theory of evolution that was starting to be taught in the public schools (Marsden 1980). For the Fundamentalists, evolution was incompatible with the Bible, and therefore should not be taught in the schools (Wilcox 1992).³⁹

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The idea of evolution can be nothing but problematic for the biblical literalist, which is the usual perspective of the Fundamentalist. In Genesis 1, the Bible states that God formed the first man from the dust, and breathed into him the breath of life, and the first man became a living soul (or spirit). This special creation of the first man is the origin of the concept of humans being created in the image of God. The idea that Fundamentalist children would be taught that humans somehow arose from the primordial soup, from amoeba through various evolutionary stages, and then became

Fundamentalist Christianity was not the only Christian response to the issues of modernity in the early twentieth century. The Pentecostal movement in the United States was born at the turn of the century as well. Several new denominations were formed from existing denominations, including the Church of God, the Church of God in Christ, the Pentecostal Holiness Church, and the Assemblies of God churches (Marsden 1980; Poloma 1982). These new Pentecostal denominations were actually Fundamentalist in their belief in biblical literalism and the inerrancy of the Bible. But the Pentecostals rejected the dispensationalist interpretation of the Bible, insisting that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were to function in the contemporary church. This drove a wedge between the Pentecostals and the Fundamentalists. Most of the negative rhetoric came from the Fundamentalists and a sense of distrust between the doctrinal groups developed (Wilcox 1992).

The first manifestation of the Christian Right (Wilcox 1992) had many of the components that McAdam (1982) discusses in his political process model, including the organizational strength and members provided by Fundamentalist churches, leadership, and a communication network between churches. In 1919 the first Fundamentalist organization, the World Christian Fundamentals Association (WCFA) was founded. With the birth of the WCFA, the doctrinal battle within Evangelicalism began. The differences between Fundamentalists and other Evangelicals over doctrinal issues divided many denominations,

human, was absolutely intolerable.

especially the Baptists and Presbyterians (Wilcox, 1992).⁴⁰ During the first manifestation of the Christian Right the identities of the three groups, Evangelical, Fundamentalist, and Pentecostal, and the doctrinal disagreements that create the suspicion and distrust between these groups even today, were formed and solidified. The political activities of this period were limited, centering in the issue of theory of evolution replacing creationist theory.

The fight against evolution was led by the WCFA, but there were several other organizations also involved. The Bible League of North America, Bible Crusaders of America, and Defenders of the Christian Faith were other organizations that were involved. In addition to these more national groups, there were also groups at the state level as well. The groups used several political tactics, including lobbying, rallies, and mass speeches. As support for the anti-evolution position shrank to only the Fundamentalists by the late 1920s, the issue of anticommunism became important. Communism, with its rejection of the role of God in the lives of people, was a natural next target for the Christian Right (Wilcox 1992).⁴¹

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The doctrinal differences between the Fundamentalists and other Evangelicals are rooted in the dispensationalist interpretation of the Bible. Because the dispensationalist view is a complete system for biblical interpretation, other interpretations of the Bible must be rejected if one is to remain true to the dispensationalist paradigm. The Ryrie Study Bible is a version of the Bible with study notes that comes from dispensationalist theology (Dahlin 1997).

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Anyone who is familiar with the writing of Karl Marx, and his assertion that, "Religion is the opiate of the people," should be readily able to understand the Fundamentalist objection to communism. For Fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and other Evangelicals of

What the first manifestation of the Christian Right did not have was the cognitive liberation necessary to sustain continued political involvement. Fundamentalist doctrine taught that participation in the secular political world should be avoided (Wilcox 1992). The ideological function of cognitive liberation did not liberate members of the first manifestation of the Christian Right to participate in the political process, rather it liberated them from participation in the process. The first manifestation of the Christian Right ended with a withdrawal of Fundamentalist Christians from the political realm, with these believers focussing on preparing for the next world rather than being involved with the problems of the present world.⁴² The withdrawal of the Christian Right from the political realm also illustrates McAdam's (1982) notion of the development and decline as a part of the dynamic of a social movement. In this case, the decline occurred because the incentives within the movement encouraged disengagement from continued political participation.

While Fundamentalist Christians were withdrawing from the political realm, they were not inactive in pursuing their interests within their own religious subculture. Churches grew and Christian colleges were established to educate the children of the faithful. These colleges allowed Fundamentalists to educate

the time, their faith was the most important part of their lives, and completely integrated into all facets of their lives. A political system that denied the existence of God would be an obvious target.

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Preparing for the next world included a great deal of evangelism and mission work. Rather than focussing on the political system, the Fundamentalists worked to bring as many to heaven with them as they could.

their children without exposing them to the worldly influences found in secular institutions of higher learning.⁴³ Fundamentalist rhetoric during this time also became racist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Catholic.⁴⁴ The Great Depression of the 1930s further demonstrated how the world was becoming corrupted and the Second Coming of Christ was nearing. While organizations that were devoted to the fight against evolution waned, others formed. In 1941, the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC) was founded to represent Fundamentalist churches. Some Fundamentalists found this group too conservative, and founded the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in 1942 (Wilcox 1992). These groups provided the indigenous organizational strength that would fuel the surge of Christian Right activity in the 1950s.

Round Two for the Christian Right The 1950s and 1960s and Anticommunism

The second social movement occurrence of the Christian Right also had problems overcoming the notion that Christians should not be extensively

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The creation of Fundamentalist colleges also extended to the creation of Fundamentalist seminaries. The seminaries run by the other Evangelical and mainline denominations were liberalizing in their approaches to the study of theology. This was not acceptable to Fundamentalists, who then formed their own seminaries. Dallas Theological Seminary even today teaches theology from the dispensationalist paradigm.

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Because much of Fundamentalist growth was in the South, the racist component was a natural outgrowth of affiliation with southern denominations that were created to support the institution of slavery. The anti-Semitic component was a part of much of Christianity of the time, including Roman Catholicism, because the Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah. The anti-Catholic bias came from the rejection of the Roman Catholic practice of the worship of Mary and the veneration of the saints. These Roman Catholic practices were viewed as idolatry.

involved in the political sphere (Wilcox 1992). The second occurrence started in the 1950s and extended into the early 1960s as a response to the rapid spread of communism in the post World War II era. Organizations that remained from the first round of Christian Right activity, the ACCC and the Defenders of the Christian Faith, were active in the anticommunist campaign. During this period other organizations formed, including the Christian Crusade, led by Billy Hargis, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, led by Fred Schwartz, and the Church League of America, led by Edgar Bundy (Wilcox 1992). McAdam's (1982) political process model indicates the importance of indigenous organizational strength and leadership, and the ACCC and Defenders of the Christian Faith produced the leaders of the newly formed groups. The older groups also provided a ready access to members, and an existing communications network.⁴⁵

The second wave of Christian Right activity ended with the defeat of Barry Goldwater in the 1964 election. The various Christian anti-communist organizations affiliated themselves with the Goldwater campaign, and Goldwater's loss caused the financial support for these organizations to wither. As a consequence, organizations lost influence after the 1964 elections, and

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The communications network consisted of mailing lists and access to Christian radio. The mailing lists were not the sophisticated computerized lists that are used today, but faithful volunteers can address and stuff envelopes. This network was sufficient to motivate the members of the movement. The backdrop of the Cold War and the McCarthy era provided further reinforcement that a fight against communism was absolutely necessary.

although some existed at the beginning of the third wave of Christian Right activity, none are influential in it (Wilcox 1992). The consequences of the 1964 election support another facet of the political process model, that when issues are no longer salient or when the opportunity structure changes, a social movement wanes.

Round Three The Christian Right since the Late 1970s Multiple Groups and Issues

The third manifestation of the Christian Right began in the late 1970s in response to the threats of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), gay rights, and perceived liberalization of curriculum in the public schools. The current manifestation of the Christian Right was a response to the liberalization of American culture and politics in the wake of the turbulent 1960s (Wilcox 1992). The actions of the Warren Court were particularly reprehensible to conservative Christians. Cases such as *Engel v Vitale* (1962), that outlawed a generic school prayer, and *Abington School District v Schemp* (1963) and *Murray v Curlett* (1963) that banned Bible reading and the Lord's Prayer from schools, indicated to conservative Christians that their religious views were being devalued. In addition, the cases starting with *Griswold v Connecticut* (1965) that allowed legal birth control and culminated with *Roe v Wade* (1973) and *Doe v Bolton* (1973), the cases that overturned all state and federal abortion laws, convinced conservative Christians that American society was headed in the wrong direction. In addition, public school textbooks were becoming increasingly

discordant with the world view of conservative Christians.⁴⁶ Wald (1992) emphasizes the importance of local battles, notably the textbook protest in Kanawha County, West Virginia, the referendum on a gay rights ordinance in Dade County, Florida, and efforts in several states to defeat the ERA as catalysts in the movement.

The development of the third manifestation of the Christian Right as a social movement within the larger society occurred during a period of change in American religion in general. Wuthnow (1988) traces the restructuring of religion in America in the post World War II era, and finds that significant change occurred. At the end of World War II, through the 1950s, the tripartite religious division, into Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jew, was apparent.⁴⁷ This was the era of religious parades and Sunday School attendance drives. During this period the mainline Protestant denominations were the dominant force in Protestantism.⁴⁸ This division was apparent in voting behavior as well, with

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The dissonance between the world views of members of the Christian Right and the steady liberalization of American society moved members of the Christian Right in the direction of cognitive liberation. As posited by McAdam (1982), cognitive liberation moves people from passivity to activity because of a change in consciousness. All of the facets of societal change provided the impetus toward cognitive liberation for members of the Christian Right.

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There was little ecumenical activity during this period. Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews pretty much kept to themselves. Inter-marriage between religious traditions was uncommon, and discouraged.

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This was the golden era of the mainline Protestant churches. Denominations including the Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Baptists enjoyed growing

mainline Protestants voting Republican and ethnic Catholic and Jewish voters appearing in the Democratic column (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960).

However, the turbulence of the 1960s and controversy over the Vietnam War brought changes to the American religious landscape. A division occurred, and the division was apparent within denominations. A liberal-conservative divide bifurcated American religion. The clergy in the mainline Protestant denominations, educated in the universities and seminaries in which protests against Vietnam and American imperialism were occurring, became more liberal than their congregations. The liberal mainline denominations began to lose members, while the conservative Fundamentalist and Pentecostal churches enjoyed great membership gains. One factor to which membership losses in mainline churches can be attributed was the steady liberalization of the clergy in the mainstream denominations, while the laity remained conservative. Finke and Stark (1992) argue that mainline denominations are always in decline, because as they attempt to become relevant, they make participation in religion less costly, and paradoxically, less attractive to people seeking spiritual certitude. Relevance often means diluting absolute precepts of what is right and what is wrong. Less costly participation does not mean financial contributions, but the

churches populated by many children, the baby boomer generation. This was the period of Sunday School attendance contests and Vacation Bible Schools from various denominations competing for attendance in the summer (Wuthnow 1988). The mainline Protestant churches contributed to the cultural stability of the Ozzie and Harriet era.

cost of renouncing sinful behaviors such as drug and alcohol use and premarital sex.⁴⁹ Notable among the denominations that gained members were the Fundamentalist Southern Baptist Convention, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of God and Foursquare churches. In addition, many nondenominational charismatic and Fundamentalist churches experienced great growth during this period. The growing denominations were those in which there were definite costs involved with belonging to the church, but also tangible benefits to be obtained by participation. Wuthnow (1989) characterizes the current religious era as one in which conservative and liberal religionists, as well as those who are secular, are locked in a struggle for America's soul. It is within this context that the Christian Right gathered strength for its third appearance.

The Christian Right was not the only conservative movement occurring in the United States during this period. Gottfried (1993) and Himmelstein (1990) provide histories of the secular conservative movement. Secular conservatives

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Mainline denominations were also not attractive to the newly converted hippies that came to Christianity during the Jesus People revival of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The mainline churches would not accept the long hair and jeans style of attire that characterized the Jesus People. The Jesus People did not go to the existing Fundamentalist churches either, because their style of dress was rejected as ungodly. Calvary Chapel, the church that became a denomination, began in the late 1960s as Chuck Smith ministered to the Jesus People that were rejected by mainline churches. The Calvary Chapels, other nondenominational Fundamentalist and charismatic churches, and the existing Pentecostal churches that accepted the Jesus People emphasized the rejection of substance abuse and premarital sex, and the acceptance of long hair and hippie clothing styles. Even though the Jesus People matured and lost the hippie style of hair and dress, they did not return to the mainline churches that rejected them.

such as Paul Weyrich and Richard Viguerie became involved in the mobilization of conservative Christians during the late 1970s (Moen 1992, Gottfried 1993). Weyrich and Viguerie provided leadership and the ability to understand and interact with the political system that was lacking in many Fundamentalist Christians who had not participated in political activities prior to this time (Wilcox 1992). In McAdam's (1982) political process model, leadership is an essential component, and the leadership and expertise of Weyrich and Viguerie are essential components at the beginning of the latest surge of Christian Right activity. Weyrich was more politically sophisticated than the Christian Right leadership. Weyrich argued that it was necessary to develop a notion of cultural conservatism to which conservatives of various religious and secular backgrounds could agree (Moen 1992).⁵⁰ Newly mobilized members of the Christian Right were not able to operate at this level of sophistication, and this hampered their ability to operate in the political realm.

McAdam's (1982) notion of cognitive liberation is evident in the development and continuation of this wave of Christian Right activity. Wilcox

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Development of a type of cultural conservatism to which both secular and religious conservatives can agree is precursor to the religious toleration exhibited at the Crossroads Cathedral celebration detailed in the first chapter. By 1994 there was obviously a notion of cultural conservatism that the Pentecostal members of Crossroads Cathedral, Roman Catholic Sen. Nickles, and Mormon Rep. Istook could embrace. In some ways a religious-secular split would be easier to overcome than the doctrinal prejudices that would have separated those actors in previous years. This level of sophistication within the Christian Right did not exist when Weyrich urged the development of a religious-secular synthesis of cultural conservatism.

(1992) argued that the candidacy of Jimmy Carter in 1976 brought Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians back into participation in electoral politics. Carter asserted throughout his campaign that Christians were obligated to participate in politics.⁵¹ Carter's campaign and continued rhetorical support of Evangelical Christianity throughout his presidency gave Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians an example of participation in electoral politics. After Carter's election, and with the help of other Christian Right social movement organizations, the process of cognitive liberation has driven conservative Christians of all doctrinal persuasions into political participation. For the first time in the history of the Christian Right, political participation was being encouraged by the churches and other parachurch organizations.⁵²

The most ironic result of this cognitive liberation was that many Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians, mobilized by Jimmy Carter, did not

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Carter's assertion that Christians were obligated to participate in the political process contributed to the cognitive liberation of the third manifestation of the Christian Right. Carter was especially important because he was a southerner, and Christians from the South could both identify with him, and be motivated by him.

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The encouragement of participation by churches and parachurch organizations increased to the point that by 1992, John Eldredge wrote a booklet titled, *Why You Should Be Involved: A Biblical Case for Political and Social Involvement*. Eldredge's work was a refutation of the Fundamentalist perspective rejecting political involvement for concern with evangelism. Focus on the Family published Eldredge's booklet and distributed it free of charge to anyone who requested it. Focus on the Family is an organization that is evangelistic in nature, so Eldredge did not discount the necessity for evangelism, but asserted the necessity of political involvement. As an example of the use of technology by Christian Right organizations, it is possible to find the complete text of Eldredge's booklet on the Focus on the Family web site at www.family.org.

approve of his administration's record on various issues.⁵³ The Christian Right backed Ronald Reagan in the 1980 election (Wilcox 1992, Moen 1992).

Reagan often articulated the views of the Christian Right, gave several members of the Christian Right positions in his administration, and placed other conservatives whose ideas were compatible with the Christian Right's agenda in other positions (Wald 1992). According to Moen (1989,1992), during the Reagan administration the Christian Right placed many of its issues on the national agenda.⁵⁴ While becoming a player in Washington, the Christian Right made many mistakes, and in learning from these mistakes, slowly became more politically sophisticated. One of the greatest mistakes was to put all of their eggs in one basket, and target the presidency. Although Reagan was sympathetic to many of the goals of the Christian Right, they were not his first priority. He would mention family values, or how important school prayer was, but the energies of his administration were focussed in other directions. Reagan was pleased to have the Christian Right as a part of his electoral coalition, but his agenda was

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Carter personally was opposed to abortion. However, many of his appointees, because they were drawn from the ranks of the Democratic party, were pro-choice. Abortion was then and continues to be a litmus test for the Christian Right. In addition, Carter was viewed as being soft on communism. The third manifestation of the Christian Right had a sufficient number of holdovers from the anti-communist days that being perceived as soft on communism would not win Christian Right support. The Christian Right is very patriotic as well, and Carter's ineffectual handling of the Iran hostage crisis also did not endear him to the Christian Right.

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To have issues on the national agenda rather than completely ignored was progress, but frustration resulted when the issues never became a part of national policy.

focussed on cutting taxes, rebuilding the military, and defeating the "evil empire" of the Soviet Union, not on Christian Right social policy goals.

The most notable change is the political mobilization that occurred during the 1970s and 1980s wave of Christian Right activity. After being liberated from political participation in the first wave, a new process of cognitive liberation occurred that allowed conservative Christians to participate in the political process. The Fundamentalists mobilized first, drawn to political involvement by the presidential candidacy of Jimmy Carter, and the creation of the Moral Majority by the Fundamentalist Falwell. The Pentecostals and charismatics mobilized later, being drawn into the political world by the presidential candidacy of Pat Robertson.⁵⁵

A large problem the Christian Right has worked to overcome is the lack of interest in and knowledge about politics that has characterized the Fundamentalist and Pentecostal-charismatic portions of the Christian world. For a time, these groups believed that Evangelical activities and retaining spiritual purity were more important than involvement in politics. Several Christian Right social movement organizations have become involved in the continuing process of educating the faithful about the need for political involvement, as well as how to become involved. Early players were Moral Majority, the National Christian

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The two components of the Christian Right mobilized at different times, and backed different candidates in the 1988 election. The significance of the 1994 congressional election was that for the first time the two portions of the Christian Right really worked together toward a common goal.

Action Coalition, the Religious Roundtable, and Christian Voice. Falwell, a minister affiliated with the Fundamentalist Bible Baptists, created the Moral Majority to educate Christians about their responsibilities as citizens and to mobilize the faithful to political action. Strege (1986) explored the beliefs of Falwell, and his efforts with Moral Majority describing the strengths and weaknesses of the Moral Majority in the political arena. Falwell's views, as articulated via Moral Majority, couple the ideas from the first and second manifestations of Christian Right activity with contemporary concerns. Creationism, the driving force of the first manifestation, and anti-communism, the motivation of the second manifestation, were combined with the contemporary concerns about abortion, homosexuality, the ERA,⁵⁶ school textbooks, and school prayer.⁵⁷ While Moral Majority disbanded in late 1989, it was an important organization because it was the most prominent national organization during the early days of the latest wave of Christian Right activity.

One of the catalysts that motivated many in the Pentecostal-charismatic portion of the Christian Right was the 1988 presidential candidacy of Pat Robertson. Robertson, the owner of the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN)

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One of the Christian Right organizations not mentioned in this work, but still politically active is Eagle Forum. This organization was founded by Phyllis Schlafly, who became involved politically as she worked to defeat the ERA.

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Falwell included the issues of all three manifestations of the Christian Right. The retention of the issues of the first and second manifestations indicate that the concerns of the Christian Right did not change, but the steady liberalization of society added more issues of concern for the Christian Right.

and host of a popular religious show, the *700 Club*, had been encouraging viewers of his show to be involved in politics for some time. Robertson articulated his concerns that the nation was moving from its godly roots⁵⁸ and identified the cause as a lack of Christian involvement in politics. His presidential campaign moved his charismatic and Pentecostal followers to participate in the Republican Party, and raised large amounts of money to support the effort (Hertzke 1993). After the 1988 election, all of the factions of the Christian Right were mobilized. However, after Robertson's defeat in the 1988 election, and the subsequent ignoring of the movement by the Bush administration in terms of appointments (Dye 1990) while paying lip service to their concerns, the movement appeared to wane. According to Fowler (1993), the Christian Right failed because it had been unable to implement any of its policy preferences. Hertzke (1993) argued that the agenda of the Christian Right was unfinished, and the issues involved remained as salient as ever to the newly activated members of the Christian Right. The election of Bill Clinton and the activation of the Christian Right proved that there were indeed salient issues around which the Christian Right could mobilize.

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Whenever members of the Christian Right discuss the godly roots of the nation they are referring to the Christian ethics that were the societal norm at the nation's founding. James Dobson and Pat Robertson often refer to these norms as Judeo-Christian ethics. The Jewish portion of the Judeo-Christian ethics are noted because as a part of the cultural conservative consensus mentioned by Weyrich (Moen 1992), conservative Jews are being courted to help expand the Christian Right to the religious right. At the time of the nation's founding, there were few Jews in the United States.

The third manifestation has lasted longer than either of the previous manifestations of the Christian Right. Since the societal issues with which members of the Christian Right disagree are larger and harder to ignore than they were earlier in the twentieth century, there has been a greater need for political mobilization to continue. However, there have been periods of development and decline within the third occurrence of Christian Right movement activity. The period of the late 1970s and early 1980s was a very active time for members of the Christian Right. The televangelist scandals of the late 1980s were unfortunate, because they embarrassed many members of the Christian Right, and lessened the momentum of social movement mobilization.⁵⁹ The televangelists who fell into disfavor over their unacceptable behavior were charismatic and entrepreneurial leaders whose organizations declined in the wakes of the various scandals. The momentum was regained with the election of Bill Clinton in 1992, due to his actions in the first months of his administration. These actions, including the executive orders on abortion and the gays in the military issue, provided a catalyst for conservative Christians to once again become vocal and active in the political arena. Bill Clinton and his actions gave the leaders of the various Christian Right social movement organizations the ammunition that they used to transform a declining social movement into a surging social movement (McAdam 1982).

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After the televangelist scandals, many Christians were defensive about admitting that they were Christians, let alone touting themselves as the moral arbiters of the political world.

THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT AND CONGRESSIONAL POLITICS

Fiorina (1989) argued that Congress is central to the Washington power structure, so it is essential to elect representatives to the House and Senate if the policy preferences of a social movement are to be implemented. Moen (1989) explored the attempts made by the Christian Right to influence members of Congress during the 1980s. Hertzke (1988) and Moen (1989) indicated the difficulties that members of the Christian Right had when members of Congress were not supportive of their agenda, and would not even allow them access, let alone be influenced by them. The Christian Right was able to mobilize millions of voters to write letters and call their members of Congress during the Reagan administration, but had little success because the members of Congress did not share their views. The increasing sophistication of the Christian Right taught them that a presidential victory is insufficient to guarantee implementation of their policy goals. Since 1988 the Christian Right, led politically by the Christian Coalition, has emphasized local mobilization in order to impact congressional elections, and also state and local elections. This research into the efforts of the Christian Right to elect like-minded people to Congress speaks to the issues of access and influence, because members of the Christian Right who are elected to Congress will share the same views and policy goals as the conservative Christian groups who wish to influence them. In the American system of checks and balances, one way to counter the policy initiatives of the executive branch is to elect members of Congress whose ideology is similar to your own.

A large problem for the Christian Right is the divisiveness between the various factions. Members of the Christian Right are learning, slowly, that issues of doctrinal purity and worship style are best left at the door when gathering to participate in politics. Those sectarian differences can be saved for another forum. To win in the political arena, like-minded people need to put aside their religious differences and work together toward common policy goals.⁶⁰ The fostering of this ability to work with people who are politically like minded is being encouraged by the Christian Right social movement organizations that are currently active. It is these organizations that will be explored in the next chapter.

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The Crossroads Cathedral celebration is evidence that the Christian Right is becoming more sophisticated.

CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIAN RIGHT SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS: STIMULATING AND DIRECTING POLITICAL ACTIVISM

THE CASE FOR GROUP ORGANIZATION

The United States is a large and diverse nation, and it is almost impossible for an individual to make an impact on the political process. Only one with the wealth of a Ross Perot or a Steve Forbes, enabling that individual to command the attention of the media, either by purchase or otherwise, can hope to obtain a national hearing for their views. One could argue that Candy Lightner had a profound influence on public policy, but she did not do it alone. Lightner organized a group, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), and the group has contributed to impressive victories in changing the laws about penalties for drunk driving, tighter definitions of what constitutes driving under the influence of alcohol, and zero tolerance for minors caught driving under the influence. MADD has also created educational campaigns to be used in high schools, and a spinoff organization Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD), to reach young people. Could Lightner have accomplished these things herself? Would state and national legislators have listened to just one mother who lost a child to a drunk driver? The answer is obviously negative. Lightner's success is directly related to the development of a group that had leadership, unity of purpose, members (recruited mostly from others whose lives had been impacted by a drunk driver) and a communications network, including newsletters and the cooperation of the national media in spreading her message. The example of

MADD demonstrates the necessity of organization if a social movement or an interest group is to influence public policy. The example of MADD also illustrates the importance of entrepreneurial leadership. Lightner began MADD from nothing, except her vision that there was a problem and her personal resolve to address that problem. Entrepreneurial leadership is at the core of the development of social movement organizations. This is also true of Christian Right social movement organizations.

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN RIGHT SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Mario Diani (1992) defines the components of a social movement as "networks of relations between a plurality of actors; cognitive identity; conflictual issues" (17), and these components are best articulated and organized within the framework of social movement organizations. The political process model of social movements emphasizes the importance of social movement organizations (SMOs) to the success or failure of social movements.¹ McAdam (1982) argued that indigenous organizational strength is necessary for successful social movement insurgency. McAdam particularly stressed that the SMOs must be indigenous, that is, arising from within the movement itself, rather than being created and imposed by outsiders to exploit the grievances of the group for personal or political gain.² The necessary components of organizational

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A social movement organization (SMO) is a group that arises to assist a social movement in the acquisition of its political goals.

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For McAdam (1982), only a SMO that is created from within a group is beneficial. He

strength, according to McAdam are leaders, members, and a communications network. Soper (1994) added the notion of a group ideology perspective to facilitate understanding and interpretation of social movements in general, and the Christian Right in particular. The ideology of the group cements the group together, providing shared norms and goals.³ Eyerman and Jamison (1991) also emphasized the role of leaders in the development of a social movement, particularly the necessity of leaders who are able to communicate with the members of the social movement. None of the social movement theorists articulate the type of leadership that is necessary to the formation of a social movement organization. The leaders that create SMOs from nothing must be entrepreneurial and able to work in a decentralized and multipolar political

does not argue that indigenous groups do a perfect job at all times, but rather that an indigenous group is less likely to have a hidden agenda as a reason for helping the group. For example, when Republicans began to support the concept of majority-minority congressional districts, it was questionable to assert that Republicans actually were concerned about minority representation. In fact, by isolating the minority voters, who usually vote overwhelmingly Democratic, the Republicans were making it easier for the GOP to win congressional districts. Minority political power is at its height when Democrats are in power, and Republican support of majority-minority districts facilitated the creation of the Republican congressional majority. Therefore, even though majority-minority districts increase minority representation, they do not increase minority power. There was no group with less political clout on Capitol Hill than the Congressional Black Caucus when the Republicans won control of the House.

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An example of cohesive group ideology within the Christian Right is found concerning the impeachment of Bill Clinton. From surveying the major Christian Right SMO publications and electronic media, the consensus is that Clinton should be removed from office. When it became obvious that there were not enough votes to convict, Pat Robertson, one of the politically more realistic SMO leaders attempted to persuade members of the Christian Right that the issue was best dropped. However, this was not the majority opinion within Christian Right circles.

system. They must also be visionary and charismatic, because these characteristics allow them to conceive the vision of the organization and its role, and communicate the vision to potential members of the organization. It is important for SMOs and their leaders to provide a unity of message if the movement is to succeed. During the 1994 election cycle, Christian Right SMOs, and their leaders, presented the necessity of conservative Christian involvement in the political process, with the goal of influencing policy outcomes.

The Christian Right has a communications network in place that allows for the dissemination of information to a wide variety of supporters. There are Christian radio and television stations across the nation, and information from the major SMOs is available from these sources. For those who are familiar with conservative Christians, they often do not listen to secular radio, and are very selective in their television viewing. The apostle Paul warns Christians, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, But be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2 NIV).⁴ Individuals other than conservative

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It is difficult to comprehend how most of the fare found on secular radio and television would meet the biblical pattern of renewing the mind. With the extreme radio examples of Howard Stern and Don Imus, and the television examples of Jerry Springer, MTV, and the availability of R rated movies on the major movie channels, it is not surprising that members of the Christian Right reject much of secular media in favor of Christian media. A Pew Research Center Survey in April-May 1998 indicated that the most popular radio personality was James Dobson, with 10% of those surveyed as regular listeners. This compares to 5% for Rush Limbaugh, 4% for Howard Stern, 3% for Dr. Laura, and 1% for Don Imus. This may indicate that members of the Christian Right often listen to the radio, or that the more flamboyant radio personalities are not as popular as their press releases would like the public to believe.

Christians have commented about the moral decline in network programming, so it is not surprising that Christian radio and television are popular with conservative Christians. Christian Right SMOs make good use of this communications network to disseminate their message. Unlike the example of Lightner and MADD, conservative Christians are usually not able to count on the national media to deliver their message, because the national media is often hostile to the ideas and policy goals of the Christian Right.⁵

A problem that often arises when multiple SMOs exist within a social movement concerns competition between SMOs for scarce resources, including membership and money (Zald and Ash 1970). The problem has been observed in the civil rights movement, the abortion rights movement, and the environmental movement. This is less of a problem for the Christian Right SMOs, because of their beliefs. The leaders of these groups believe that it is God who wills their organizations into existence, and if God wants them to continue, the funds will be provided.⁶ Some, like Pat Robertson and the *700*

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Lightner's ability to draw the national media into her campaign was especially helpful. Because of the sensationalistic coverage that has become the norm among the national media, pictures of families grieving the loss of loved ones as a result of a drunk driver make a compelling story. In the case of the Christian Right, the national media is not sympathetic to them. Medved (1992) states that most of the media is not religiously observant, and when they are, it is a liberal religious affiliation that is the norm. The Christian Right is much more dependent on its own communications network than is a group like MADD, because there are few members of the media that sympathize with the Christian Right in the same way that they sympathize with a group like MADD.

6

Within Christian circles, groups like Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, PromiseKeepers, the *700 Club*, and other ministries that are not based within a

Club, have pledge drives and run commercials to garner financial support. The Christian Coalition, both at the national and state levels, uses membership dues as a method of raising money. However, many state coordinators assert that they waive dues for loyal volunteers that cannot afford to pay them. James Dobson of Focus on the Family and Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council ask for money only when necessary, and Dobson often reiterates his belief that God must supply their needs. PromiseKeepers charged for their rallies until 1998 when the rallies became free, and do charge for their materials, but there are no dues involved. All of these organizations are members of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. The Council was founded in the wake of the televangelist scandals of the 1980s, and all members open their books to the outside auditors of the Council.⁷ The Council issues reports concerning who is spending their money wisely. The issue of finances is important for all SMOs, Christian Right or otherwise, because in a high technology, communications

congregational church setting are called parachurch organizations. Parachurch organizations generally and the above listed organizations especially, encourage those who would contribute to them to meet their obligations to their local churches before contributing to the particular group. James Dobson is particularly adamant that obligations (often called tithes, from the biblical 10% designated as the required amount to give) to the listener's local church must be met before Focus receives funds.

7

As previously stated, the televangelist scandals of the 1980s dampened Christian Right enthusiasm, partially from shame. Because these parachurch organizations do not have to be accountable to a denominational hierarchy concerning how funds are spent, the groups are open to charges that financial proprieties are not being observed. The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability was formed as an independent auditing agency to keep the various ministries accountable for the way that money is raised and spent.

oriented society such as the United States, money buys what is needed to continue operations.

All of these organizations are accessible via the internet as well. All of the groups mentioned have sites on the world wide web as well. This provides another communications network to accompany television, radio, magazines books and videos. The Christian Right most definitely holds to the moral values of an earlier time. However, holding to the values of an earlier time does not prevent the SMOs from using every type of sophisticated technology available to help spread their message.

I will discuss the organization and activities of several Christian Right SMOs. These organizations have been chosen because they are now the most active and organized in the current political landscape. They are: Focus on the Family and its leader, James Dobson; the Family Research Council, led by Gary Bauer; the 700 Club, and its host, Pat Robertson; Robertson's Christian Coalition, and its first executive director, Ralph Reed; Concerned Women for America, led by Beverly LaHaye; and the new kid on the block, PromiseKeepers, led by former University of Colorado football coach Bill McCartney.⁸

8

There are other influential members of the Christian Right who are not mentioned in this group. These individuals include: D. James Kennedy, senior pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Florida; Phyllis Schlafly of Eagle Forum; Jack Hayford, senior pastor of Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California and founder of the King's Seminary; and Marlin Maddox, who has a call-in radio program that is heard nationwide. Maddox could be called the Rush Limbaugh of Christian radio. The list is by no means an exhaustive list of other influential members of the Christian Right. They are not included for extensive coverage in this research because they do not have

Focus on the Family

It was after the 1994 elections, that the secular media became aware of the activities of one of the oldest Christian Right SMOs, Focus on the Family.⁹ In fact, Wilcox's (1992) comprehensive treatment of the Christian Right does not even mention Focus on the Family (the larger organization referred to hereafter as Focus) or its founder, James Dobson. While it is true that Focus was not designed to be a political organization like Moral Majority or Christian Coalition, it must be considered as the oldest and most respected Christian Right SMO. James Dobson, a psychologist with a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, launched Focus on the Family as a radio show in March, 1977. James Dobson was already a familiar name among conservative Christians in 1977, and was a successful author. His most famous book, *Dare to Discipline*, provided support for those parents who believed that the permissive child rearing advice of Benjamin Spock and others was not acceptable for committed Christians.¹⁰ Dobson has many books to his credit that discuss child rearing,

the extensive organizational structures that the groups included have.

9

Focus on the Family has been around for a long time. I remember listening to James Dobson on the radio at work fifteen years ago. His show was popular among the mothers at the Christian day school and preschool my children attended. When talking with other mothers waiting to retrieve their children from school, what was on Focus on the Family that day was a hotter topic than any soap opera or television talk show. As I surveyed the literature about the Christian Right in which Dobson and Focus on the Family were seldom mentioned (Hertzke 1988 being an exception), it was clear that those who studied the Christian Right never sufficiently interacted with members of the Christian Right to identify one its most influential leaders.

adolescence, and marriage. In fact, he has never taken a salary from Focus, deriving his family income from his writing and speaking. During the early and mid 1970s, Dobson spent his weekends speaking in churches, beginning in southern California, and later in various parts of the country, speaking about the deterioration of the American family. When it became apparent that he could not speak in every location that invited him, the radio show began as a weekly broadcast (Merrill and Yorkey 1992).

As a part of his ministry, Dobson filmed a series called "Focus on the Family" that could be shown in local churches, allowing Dobson to cut the amount of time he spent traveling.¹¹ The radio show did not just remain a weekly broadcast on a few Christian radio stations. The show quickly gained in popularity, by April 1980 it became a daily fifteen minute show, and by June 1980, was carried by 100 radio stations. In January 1982, the program changed to a daily half hour broadcast. By 1983, the program was broadcast worldwide on Armed Forces radio, and the magazine, *Focus on the Family*, began. *Focus*

10

Dobson does advocate the biblical use of corporal punishment. For example, Proverbs 22:15 states, "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him." Since most members of the Christian Right are biblical literalists or believe in biblical inerrancy, prohibitions against corporal punishment would demonstrate to them that Dobson's views are unbiblical. However, he is careful to draw the line between two or three swats on the bottom and child abuse. As a professor and clinician at Los Angeles Children's Hospital, Dobson saw a lot of child abuse and is very careful, both in print, and on the radio, to make a distinction between the two.

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Dobson and his wife, Shirley, were raising their two children, Danae and Ryan, during this period. Because Dobson believed that the extensive travel was not beneficial for his family, the film series was developed.

on the Family magazine is sent at no charge to anyone who calls or writes to request a copy. Focus also opened a Canadian office in 1983. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan appointed Dobson to the National Advisory Council on Juvenile Delinquency, and in 1985 he was appointed to the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, linking Dobson to the conservative agenda in Washington. In 1988, the first Spanish broadcast of the radio show occurred, and by 1992 the show was carried on 2500 radio stations (Merrill and Yorkey 1992).

Other portions of Focus were growing as well. In 1986, a second film series, "Turn Your Heart Toward Home" was created for showing in local churches. The *Focus on the Family* magazine hit 1 million in circulation, and Focus on the Family Publishing published its first book. In 1987, a new magazine, *Focus on the Family Citizen*, was first published. *Citizen* may be obtained for a twenty dollar yearly subscription, and has a current circulation of approximately 60,000. *Citizen* provides Dobson with a forum in which public policy issues may be discussed, and those involved in government who represent the ideology of Focus may be featured. *Citizen* discusses everything from Washington politics to grassroots politics, and every topic from national legislation to public school curriculum and local efforts to curb pornography. Focus has since expanded its magazine publication to ten, for readers ranging from children and teens, to single parents, physicians, and ministers (Merrill and Yorkey 1992). Radio programming has also expanded, including a special

weekend version, called Focus on the Family Weekend, that airs on Saturday. The hourlong weekend show includes excerpts from the shows aired during the week. For Christian stations that focus more on music than teaching, a short feature, "Family News in Focus," airs several times daily.

Dobson's first book that dealt with issues in the political sphere was co-authored with Gary Bauer. *Children at Risk*, published in 1990, discussed the cultural war between conservatives and liberals in the realm of policies impacting children and families. The book illustrated the increasing sophistication of the Christian Right. The early Christian Right was content with President Ronald Reagan, who was rhetorically supportive of the concerns of the Christian Right, but did little to transform those concerns to actual policy outputs. Because most members of Congress were not sympathetic to the policy goal of the Christian Right, members of the Christian Right could bury their representatives and senators with mail and telephone calls, and the members would still vote against them (Dobson and Bauer 1990). Hertzke (1988) and Moen (1989) also related that conservative Christian lobbyists did not have access to many members of Congress, who were hostile to their policy positions. Dobson and Bauer then argued that accountability is the issue, and began to push conservative Christians to replace members of Congress who did not support their policy goals (Bednar and Hertzke 1995).

Focus has an important link to people in various states that are concerned about family issues. The link is family policy councils that are affiliated with

Focus but designed to do research on specific issues in the states in which they are located.¹² By 1995 there were thirty one family policy councils in states throughout the nation (Gray 1995), and by 1998 the number increased to forty one (Dobson 1998b) . The family policy councils track the votes of state legislators and provide information to allow Christians to hold their representatives accountable for their policy choices. Family policy councils vary from state to state. *Citizen* magazine places inserts from these family policy councils in the center of the magazine every month. Green (1995) argued that Focus on the Family, with Concerned Women for America, were the two groups that ranked second to Christian Coalition in political involvement, even though their primary purpose is not political, as is Christian Coalition.

Another communications tool, in addition to radio, magazines, films, and books, is a monthly church bulletin insert produced by Focus which talks about marriage, child rearing, and other family issues and gives Dobson a communications link to many conservative churches throughout the nation.

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Family policy councils are groups of conservatives, usually some with academic or political credentials, that research politics at the state and local level. Focus cannot cover the particular policy agendas of the fifty states from one location. So the family policy councils provide the ability to explore local issues and bring the information to Focus. The leadership of the family policy councils, including the executive director and members of board of directors from each state meet with Dobson once a year in Colorado Springs (Hudspeth 1995). The executive director of the family policy council and some of the office staff are usually paid positions, and the others who are involved are generally volunteers. Family policy councils run on donations.

Political issues are incorporated into these inserts in a political alert at the bottom of the insert.¹³

All who have done research on the Christian Right are aware of the factional problems that have disrupted the ability of the Christian Right to exert maximum influence in the political sphere. The Christian Right is far from a monolithic social movement. The 1988 presidential election provides evidence that Fundamentalists, charismatics and Pentecostals do not work well together in the political realm because of doctrinal differences (Wilcox 1992). This makes the role of Focus particularly important. Dobson¹⁴, because he eschews all types of doctrinal controversy and sticks to family issues, is highly respected by all segments of the Christian Right. One is as likely to find Dobson's materials in a Southern Baptist church as in an Assemblies of God church or

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These inserts usually cover family issues of interest to the Christian family. Most of the information in these inserts is not political. However, because Dobson and his organization are so respected, the small amount of political content is read. Dobson and Focus are extremely careful to stay within their tax exempt guidelines as a 501(C)3 corporation, and do not endorse candidates. They do, however, articulate clear positions on public policy issues.

14

Dobson is personally affiliated with the Church of the Nazarene, a denomination that grew from groups dissatisfied with the Methodist denomination in the late 1800s (Cairns 1981). Dobson does not broadcast his affiliation with the Church of the Nazarene. It was revealed on a recent Focus on the Family radio broadcast, on which a recording of one of Dobson's talks at an evening service was played. The church in which he gave the talk was identified as a Nazarene church, and identified as Dobson's home church. I have never heard Dobson or his co-host refer to specific denominations by name, except to introduce a speaker and identify the speaker's church.

nondenominational fundamentalist or charismatic fellowship.¹⁵ Moen (1992) argued Dobson is the best candidate to be a nationwide leader of the Christian Right because he works well with all groups. Moen also argued that Dobson is wary of the role, but his increasing visibility since the 1994 elections, especially in Republican circles in Washington D.C., indicated that Dobson may be now pursuing it. The media reports that Dobson is frequently in Washington since the 1994 elections, and is welcome in the offices of Republican legislators and the party. Evelyn McPhail, co-chair of the national Republican party worried that Dobson's unbending message on abortion could be divisive to the party in the future (McPhail 1995).¹⁶

Within Christian Right circles, Focus continues to grow. In addition to *Focus on the Family* magazine, anyone that receives the magazine receives a monthly newsletter written by James Dobson. In 1994 the circulation on the magazine and newsletter were 2.1 million per month, and has increased to 2.2 million per month in 1996 (Hughes 1996). Dobson's letters have become

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One reason that Dobson is able to remain neutral in the doctrinal disputes between the various groups is that the radio programs do not involve discussions of eschatology. Eschatology is the study of the end times, centered in the books of Revelation, Daniel, and Ezekiel, with references in various other parts of the New Testament. Eschatology is definitely impacted by the dispensationalist interpretation of the Bible (Dahlin 1997). By avoiding involvement with eschatological issues, Dobson does not step on anyone's doctrinal toes, and remains popular with all segments of conservative Christianity.

¹⁶

McPhail's chief concern was the inability of members of the Christian right to understand the incremental nature of the political process. Because McPhail and other party operatives understand that immediate change is not possible, they are worried that the Christian Right will destroy the viability of the Republicans in the political realm.

increasingly involved with public policy in the last few years.¹⁷ In 1995, Focus did a survey to determine how recipients of the letter were feeling about the increased coverage of the political sphere. The results, published in Dobson's July 1995 newsletter indicate that 95% of the respondents indicated that Dobson should continue to discuss political issues, with only 5% stating that too much coverage was given. This is a larger mandate than any U.S. president has ever received, so look for Dobson to continue to be a force in Christian Right circles and active in public policy.¹⁸

Family Research Council

Working closely with Dobson is Gary Bauer, a former Reagan appointee, who is president of the Family Research Council (FRC), a conservative Christian lobbying and research organization that was formerly a part of Focus on the Family. When McPhail mentioned Dobson's stubbornness on certain issues such as abortion, she included Bauer, and indicated that Washington insiders, especially within the Republican party, consider the two in tandem when speaking of their public policy views (McPhail 1995). Moen (1992) indicates that

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As a regular reader of Dobson's monthly letters, in a year, the average number of letters that cover the public policy arena number somewhere between eight and ten. His newest policy concern, in late 1998 and early 1999, is the gaming industry.

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When listening to the Focus on the Family radio program, the deference with which Dobson is treated is extremely apparent. On the air, not even his long-time co-host calls Dobson by his first name, he always refers to Dobson as Dr. Dobson. This is true for most of the guests as well. Shirley Dobson, his wife, calls Dobson Jim, as does Gary Bauer. In all of the years I have listened to the show I can only remember a handful of people ever using Dobson's first name.

Bauer can be considered one of the possible leaders of the Christian Right in the future.

FRC began as an independent social policy research and educational organization in 1981. In 1988 it merged with Focus.¹⁹ FRC then developed an expanded organizational base, and split from Focus in 1992. This allowed Focus to concentrate on the family issues that Dobson views as most important, allowing the FRC to engage in lobbying and other political activities that are an important part of the ability to influence policy at the national level.²⁰ The excellent radio network belonging to Focus can be used by Bauer to get a message to the listeners at any time. Dobson will preempt scheduled programming if he believes that something important needs to be brought to the attention of his listeners. Bauer, as the Washington insider, usually delivers these messages by telephone link to the radio audience. Hertzke (1988) indicated that as early as 1984 a call to action by Dobson could cause congressional telephones to ring off the hook. With the larger base that Dobson and Bauer now have, it is no problem for them to inundate congressional offices on issues that they deem important. And, since the 1994 election, these

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Dobson and Bauer engineered the FRC merger with Focus to reinvigorate the FRC. This gave the FRC access to Focus's mailing list. Dobson also featured Bauer frequently on the radio show during this time.

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Tax laws involving nonprofit corporations and their activities in the political arena made the split necessary as FRC became more involved in lobbying. Focus, as a 501(C)3 nonprofit, is more limited in the political arena than FRC, which is a 501(C)4 nonprofit. The 501(C)4 designation allows for greater political involvement.

telephone calls no longer fall on deaf ears, with the large number of conservative Christians among the 1994 Republican freshman class.

FRC publishes a monthly newsletter that describes various pieces of legislation coming before congressional committees for hearings or waiting for votes in either the Senate or House. Bauer always knows the correct number of each piece of legislation, and where it is in the process. The letter, called *Washington Watch*, is sent to 250,000 families nationwide. FRC also publishes a 20 plus page resource booklet, with books, reports, and issue packets on various topics. Bauer is the author of a book, published by Focus, *Our Hopes, Our Dreams*, in which he discusses his vision of America, based on conservative Christian values. On February 21, 1996, Dobson featured Bauer on the Focus radio broadcast to discuss important points from the book.

With discontent rising among leadership of the Christian Right, especially in regard to the presidential nominees, Bauer recently took a different leap into the political arena. At the end of 1998, Bauer resigned his position with FRC and formed an exploratory committee as a candidate for the 2000 Republican presidential nomination.²¹ Since Bauer has been articulating his political views to listeners to the Focus radio broadcasts for some time, Bauer at least has some

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Bauer has been discussing the possibility of a presidential campaign since the 1996 elections. The rhetoric coming from FRC mailings is that the Republicans did not stay on message in 1996, and the Republicans need someone to clearly articulate the conservative message. Bauer's action is no surprise for those who have been following developments within the Christian Right.

level of name recognition among members of the Christian Right. He is also well connected to the rest of the Christian Right SMOs. As a candidate, he will compete with other conservative candidates like Pat Buchanan and Alan Keyes. But with the Pew Research Center Survey from April-May 1998 indicating that 10% of the national radio audience regularly listens to Dobson's radio broadcast, Bauer has already had a good deal of exposure among members of the Christian Right.

The 700 Club

The 700 Club is the television show made famous by former Republican presidential candidate Pat Robertson, and is the centerpiece of his Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) operation. *The 700 Club* airs on the Family Channel²² twice daily and on various other television stations across the nation. Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), the other national Christian station, also airs the *700 Club*. In most states, it is possible to view the day's *700 Club* in the morning, afternoon, or evening. The *700 Club* has recently expanded its programming from 60 to 90 minutes, and the first 20 minutes is now devoted to news. CBN boasts a state of the art facility, with all of the high technology found in any newsroom (Hertzke 1993).²³

²²

The Family Channel was owned by the Robertson family until it was sold to Fox and became the Fox Family Channel in 1998. Fox has cut the number of times per day the *700 Club* is on the Fox Family Channel to once a day.

²³

The CBN facility is another example of how the Christian Right is willing to spend the funds necessary to obtain state of the art equipment. While many of their ideas of the

The 700 Club news, called Newswatch Today, usually devotes at least half of its air time to Washington, but covers other significant breaking news. Robertson has been attentive to Congress for some time, and especially attentive to conservative members of Congress. As the son a senator, Robertson knows something of the workings of the Senate, and is able to comment about how the Senate operates. Newswatch spends several minutes developing the story, unlike the soundbite coverage made famous by the major networks and CNN, and Robertson often interprets and comments on the stories that are reported.²⁴ Robertson is extremely well connected in political circles, especially among Republicans. Powerful Republicans appear frequently on the program, and CBN interviews many Christian leaders as well.

The 700 Club provides excellent coverage to various activities by other Christian Right SMOs and other activists. Shirley Dobson, James Dobson's wife, has been the national chair for National Day of Prayer activities for several years. In addition to access on her husband's incredible communication network through Focus on the Family, the *700 Club* also covers the National Day of

Christian Right harken back to the past, their use of technology is cutting edge.

²⁴

On the *700 Club*, Robertson is not shown the deference that Dobson is shown on the Focus on the Family radio program. Robertson is referred to as Pat by his co-anchors, new reporters, and guests. Age does not readily provide an explanation for this, because Robertson is older than Dobson. Perhaps a possible explanation is that television is a media that lends itself to a more casual approach. Or another possible explanation is that Dobson's organization stresses his academic credentials to heighten his legitimacy among listeners.

Prayer. The newly formed PromiseKeepers are frequently featured, including the gathering of 40,000 pastors from various denominations in Atlanta February 15-16, 1996, and the Washington Mall rally in 1997 that probably drew one million men.²⁵ Members of the Family Research Council appear on the *700 Club* to discuss issues about which they are knowledgeable. *The 700 Club* is the centerpiece of the conservative Christian television news network.

Christian Coalition

Christian Coalition (CC) rose from the ashes of Pat Robertson's presidential bid in 1988. Many would call it Robertson's "failed presidential bid", but in terms of the impact of Robertson's campaign on the organization of conservative Christians at the grassroots level, Robertson's presidential bid was a smashing success.²⁶ Robertson incorporated all of the features of a high technology political campaign and a large grassroots effort in his attempt to gain the Republican nomination. Robertson's campaign was an excellent training ground for those who would be activists in subsequent elections.

Ralph Reed's story of the founding of CC demonstrates the interconnected relationships between Christian Right leaders. Reed wrote the

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The Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), the major Christian television station, covered the Washington Mall rally for six to eight hours, including all of the music and speakers. The Family Channel was unable to preempt its programming. This is another example of media cooperation among conservative Christian organizations.

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Robertson's campaign activated the Pentecostal-charismatic segment of conservative Christianity. This increased the number of Christian Right voters, and added additional conservative activists to the ranks of the Republican party across the nation.

outline of what a grassroots political movement of conservative Christians would look like in response to Robertson's request for such information when the two spoke at the Bush inaugural in January 1989. Reed developed the outline, sent it to Robertson, and returned to working on his dissertation.²⁷ Reed was invited by Robertson to a strategy meeting in Atlanta on September 25, 1989. Prior to the meeting with political activists from Robertson's presidential campaign, a strategy meeting was held with major religious leaders, including Beverly LaHaye, and two prominent television preachers, Charles Stanley, and D. James Kennedy (Reed 1994). Both of the preachers are southern, and have megachurches featured on Christian television. Stanley is from Georgia, and Kennedy is from Florida.²⁸

Reed then relates that everyone assumes that CC started with a huge budget, but this is untrue. Robertson (who launched CBN with \$70 in start-up funds) and Reed launched "a national political group with several thousand dollars, some borrowed furniture, and a small office in a ramshackle warehouse" (Reed 1994: 4). CC has grown considerably since 1989. As well as a national office, there are coordinators in all fifty states with independently funded state

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By the time Robertson wanted Reed to lead the CC, Reed had finished his dissertation. Reed holds a Ph.D. in history.

²⁸

Beverly LaHaye's husband, Tim, is also well known in Christian Right circles and was a part of this meeting. Robertson consulted with various Christian right leaders to gauge whether or not there would be support for an entity like CC among Christian Right leaders. CC was a carefully planned organization, with the clearly defined goal of electing conservatives who shared the political views of the Christian Right to office.

operations. It is possible to be a member of CC at either the national level, the state level, or both. Membership at the national level is dues based, as is membership in state level organizations, but the state organizations often waive dues for individuals who are particularly active in other ways.²⁹

A particular focus of CC is teaching conservative Christians, or people of faith, as Reed (1993, 1994) prefers to call them, how to become involved in the political system. CC runs training sessions all over the country teaching people how to become involved at the precinct level, how to run a campaign, how to run for office, and how to conduct voter registration drives. The focus is as much at the grassroots level as at the national level.³⁰ CC is the embodiment of political sophistication among conservative Christians, because it stresses the importance of local politics to the daily lives of individuals. Electing a president who is sympathetic to your goals is important, but so is the Congress, the state legislature, and local governments, especially the school boards.³¹

²⁹

Other ways of being active include attendance at meetings, being active in literature distribution, and helping with get out the vote activities. Sellars (1994) indicated that he would not reject from membership anyone who wanted to be involved, especially if the problem with membership was the inability to afford to pay dues.

³⁰

Two of these training sessions were held in Oklahoma in the spring of 1995. One was in the greater Oklahoma City area, and the other was in Tulsa.

³¹

Remembering that one of the motivating factors for the resurgence of the Christian Right in the late 1970s was the content of textbooks, school boards remain an important area of concern for the Christian Right. Issues include sex education (birth control versus abstinence) and teaching alternative lifestyles as normal. Members of the Christian Right are opposed to the outcomes based education philosophy and were

With a desire to encompass all people of faith, CC launched a new entity in Fall, 1995. The Catholic Alliance, a division of CC, was founded to incorporate conservative Catholics into greater cooperation to achieve policy goals. Catholic opposition to abortion allies many Catholics with other conservative Christians, as do other lifestyle issues including the importance of marriage and family, and opposition to homosexuality as an approved alternative lifestyle. Catholics are often characterized as a swing vote,³² and over 50% of Catholics voted Republican for the first time in the 1994 midterm elections. CC's goal is to bring those conservative Catholics into the political process as supporters of conservative candidates. Whether the Catholic Alliance will succeed remains to be seen.

CC, because of its affiliation with Robertson, has instant access to a national television network via the *700 Club* whenever it is necessary. Robertson frequently interviews Reed and discusses the activities of CC. CC also publishes a magazine, *Christian American*, that reviews the political scene, and advertises training sessions and other activities. The early version of

active in opposing it, not only in Oklahoma, but throughout the country. Outcomes based education was a hot topic at the time of the 1994 elections.

³²

Catholics are often cross-pressured voters. For Catholics who believe in the church's teaching concerning abortion, pro-choice candidates are unattractive to them. But the church also has a strong component of peace and justice teaching, and extensive social programs are seen as necessary to achieve peace and economic justice. While the Republicans are right on abortion, they are wrong on social programs. The Democrats are right on social programs and wrong on abortion. This places the Catholic voter in a difficult position.

Christian American was a monthly tabloid style magazine, but in September 1995 the format was changed to a bimonthly publication in a magazine format. Subscriptions cost about sixteen dollars per year, or the magazine is included with higher levels of monthly contributions to CC at the national level. The old tabloid style magazine demonstrates the relationship between the SMOs, with full page advertisements for Concerned Women for American and Family Research Council and a full page story about PromiseKeepers in the April 1995 issue.³³

Reed left CC to form his own political consulting firm in Atlanta, Georgia prior to the 1996 election. Reed is telegenic and articulate, and could possibly be a political candidate in the future, but is at present content to help elect conservative Republicans to office. However, with former Speaker Newt Gingrich's retirement from the House after the 1998 elections, there is a question as to whether Gingrich's seat might look attractive to Reed.

CC continues its work under the leadership of Randy Tate. To bolster CC in the wake of the impeachment and looking toward the 2000 election, in January 1999, Robertson decided to take a more active role in CC. Robertson has returned as president of the organization, and the organization is in the middle of a national fund-raising telephone campaign. CC does have one problem that continues to dog it. CC continues to be involved in a lawsuit initiated by the

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The advertising by other Christian right SMOs in the *Christian American* magazine further evidence that there is cooperation, rather than competition between Christian Right SMOs.

Federal Election Commission,³⁴ however, CC remains active in the political realm. The suit has yet to be settled.

Concerned Women for America

Concerned Women for America (CWA) was founded in 1978 as an alternative for Christian women to the feminist organizations that developed during the women's movement. The founder of CWA, Beverly LaHaye, is the wife of the Rev. Tim LaHaye,³⁵ and together they were a popular team presenting Family Life conferences nationwide. According to LaHaye and other conservative Christian women, the women's movement ignored or debased the lifestyle choice of conservative women who remained devoted to husband and family. The brochures for CWA use the very extreme rhetoric of the feminist movement to indicate to Christian women that they need to join with CWA to protect the American family from encroachment by the government (Hertzke 1988). LaHaye's issues are similar to Dobson's with the difference that they are

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The lawsuit by the Federal Election Commission alleges that CC's campaign materials are not nonpartisan, but partisan in nature. The gist of the argument against CC is that it is an arm of the Republicans, not a nonpartisan group. Any group that espouses liberal ideas could be said to be an arm of the Democrats, just as any conservative group can be accused of being affiliated with the Republicans. The rules of the Federal Election Commission are not clear, and are open to wide interpretation.

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Tim LaHaye has been prominent in Christian Right circles for a long time. He is currently coauthoring (with Jerry B. Jenkins) a series of Christian fiction based upon the dispensationalist, premillennialist theology of the rapture of the church. The rapture occurs when Jesus returns to take the church to heaven prior to the seven year tribulation that features the rise of the Antichrist. The books are currently very popular among Evangelical Christians.

presented from a woman's point of view. She stresses the importance of the role of mothers as primary caregivers of their children, and decries the tax system that forces so many women to work rather than remain home with their children.

CWA claims a membership base between 500,000 and 600,000 (Piper 1996). They have approximately 1200 chapters evenly distributed throughout the country. The *Beverly LaHaye Live* radio program is an hour long program that is carried on Christian radio stations throughout the country.³⁶ LaHaye often uses a call-in format, and has more callers than time to listen to them. Some observers criticized LaHaye for moving her ministry to Washington in the late 1980s, when the Christian Right appeared to be withdrawing from the national scene. However, LaHaye's patience has been rewarded, and now CWA, with its research and lobbying staff is right in the middle of the action. In addition, with the anti-Clinton sentiment, there are many sympathetic supporters among the Republicans who are willing to listen to CWA's message. CWA also publishes a monthly magazine to inform members interested in subscribing about the activities of the group.³⁷

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On the air. LaHaye is treated with the same type of deference that characterizes Dobson's program. She is referred to as Mrs. LaHaye by all who work for her. While listening to *Beverly LaHaye Live*, the only person I have ever heard call her by her first name was her husband, Tim.

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Conservative Christian women are not going to join a women's organization like the National Organization for Women (NOW), because their religious and political views are diametrically opposed. CWA provides conservative Christian women with an

PromiseKeepers

PromiseKeepers (PK) is the newest Christian Right SMO. While it is not an overtly political organization, the precepts incorporated within PK can easily lead to political involvement within the community. Founded in 1990 by Bill McCartney and Dr. Dave Wardell, PK began as a group of 70 men who committed to meet together for discipleship. In July 1991, 4,200 men met together, and in July 1992, it was 22,000. By the summer of 1993, more than 50,000 men filled the stadium at the University of Colorado, Boulder, to meet together and grow as men in Christ (Phillips 1994). In 1994 and 1995, meetings were held in stadiums all over the country. In February 1996, a meeting of 40,000 pastors from all denominations was held in Atlanta, with the goal of bringing the pastors together across racial and denominational lines. The most remarkable event occurred on Friday, February 16, 1996, when ABC Evening News made Bill McCartney³⁸ the Person of the Week, recognizing his work with

organization that validates their lifestyle choices, especially the choice to remain in the home and raise a family rather than work outside the home. LaHaye, like Dobson, is supportive of women who must work, but always stresses the importance of the role of the stay-at-home wife and mother. When conservative Christian women are bombarded by the feminist message that stay-at-home wives and mothers are wasting their lives, CWA provides the support they need to validate their choice to remain at home and manage their families.

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McCartney was the head coach of the Colorado Buffaloes football team. He revealed that he saw the need to form PK as he took stock of his own family. One of his daughters had become pregnant without being married, and the father was one of his players. His marriage was crumbling, and it looked as though his family was going to fall apart. McCartney decided to try to mend his family, and resigned his position as football coach. It was in the wake of McCartney's family problems that he became a

PK. Although the spot included the usual derogatory comments from a spokesperson for NOW, and views of homosexual demonstrators outside a PK rally, the spot was largely positive. If PK is being recognized to this extent in the secular media, it must be included with other Christian Right SMOs.

PK is based on seven promises the men must make if there is to be healing and renewal in the nation. The first promise is a man and his God, in which a PK places his commitment to Jesus as the primary focus of his life. The second is a man and his friends, promising to find a small group of men to keep him accountable.³⁹ The third is a man and his integrity, involving spiritual, moral and ethical integrity, and sexual purity. The fourth is a man and his family, promising to build a strong marriage and family. The fifth is a man and his church, promising commitment to his church and pastor. The sixth is a man and his brothers, focussing on the need to bridge racial and denominational barriers. The seventh is a man and his world, focussing on his role in the community and world, and also evangelism⁴⁰ (*Seven Promises of a PromiseKeeper* 1994).

part of the men's discipleship group that eventually founded PK (Phillips 1994). Discipleship groups are a part of Evangelical Christianity. The premise behind a discipleship group is that it is a place where Christians can meet together, confess their sins and struggles, and be accountable to one another.

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The notion of accountability means that the men meet together regularly, usually once a week, in discipleship groups. During these meetings, the men discuss their relationship with God, and with their families. The recommendations in the book, *Seven Promises of a PromiseKeeper*, are that the men in the group would talk to each other's wives to see if the men were really doing what they said they were doing.

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The best place that a man could go to be able to fulfill the promises that a PK makes

The seventh promise, involving the community and world, is the promise that could lead to political action, especially in light of the encouragement of the other Christian Right SMOs and the opportunities for political involvement they provide. In addition, concern for his children could lead a man to run for school board.⁴¹ Concern for bridging racial barriers could lead to other political roles within the community.

The impact that PK has in the political realm remains to be seen, but it has a message that is complementary to the message of other Christian Right groups and illustrates the cooperation between various Christian Right SMOs. Dobson has been a speaker at PK events since its inception, features PK on his radio program, wrote a chapter in one of PK books, and Focus publishes the PK books. *The 700 Club* provides excellent media coverage for all PK events. And, what female member of CWA would object to having a PK for a husband?

The PK organization made a decision to make all of its stadium events free of charge to participants in the wake of the Louis Farakkan's March on Washington in 1997. PK wanted to make their rallies accessible to all regardless of ability to pay. As an organization, PK depends completely upon donations, just like all the other Christian Right SMOs.⁴² This caused some financial

would be a men's discipleship group. In fact, the formation of discipleship groups is something that is encouraged after the large PK stadium rallies. The purpose of the groups is that the men are to hold each other accountable concerning how well they are incorporating the seven promises in their lives.

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Involvement in PK could also push conservative Christian men into involvement with CC.

problems for them. In mid-March, 1998 PK laid off all of its paid staff, seventy seven people, due to insufficient funds. By mid-April, 1998, contributions had increased sufficiently that PK was able to begin to recall its staff to work. By the end of April, 1998, all workers had returned to work. After weathering this crisis, PK looks like it will be active for some time to come.

CHRISTIAN RIGHT SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND SOUTHERN POLITICS

In the September 1994 issue of *Campaigns and Elections*, an entire section was devoted to the Christian Right. As an almost prophetic precursor to the 1994 midterm elections, the report argued that the Christian Right was the dominant influence in the Republican party in eighteen states, had a substantial influence in the party in twelve others, and had only a minor influence in twenty more. Of the thirteen southern states, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia were in the category of Christian Right dominance of the Republicans.⁴³ Arkansas and Mississippi were classified as having substantial Christian Right influence, and Tennessee and West Virginia were determined to have minor Christian Right

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The reason that PK decided not to charge for their stadium meetings is that they do not want men of lower socio-economic status to be excluded from the meetings. Since one of the goals of PK is racial reconciliation, and since many members of minority groups are of lower socio-economic status, making the events free allows more minority men to attend.

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Of the eighteen states in which the Christian Right was reported to dominate the Republican party, nine of them were southern states. These states were also states in which Pat Robertson focussed during his presidential bid.

influence in the party (Persinos 1994). As previously stated, even though Oklahoma was not a state during the Civil War period, the state has characteristics that make including it with the southern states reasonable. There was slavery in Oklahoma, and the religious characteristics of Oklahoma are very similar to other southern states. The major difference between Oklahoma and the other southern states is that the minority population is sufficiently scattered to render the creation of majority-minority congressional districts impossible.

Demographic information about the percentage of voters who are born-again Christians was included. The ABC/Washington Post poll from June 1994 indicates that the nationwide percentage of born-again voters is 32%, but in the South, the percentage rises to 45%. By no means is the measure born-again Christian synonymous with Christian Right activism, but it does provide a measure that can be used to determine possible Christian Right support.⁴⁴ The 45% of born-again voters in the south does provide a fertile area for Christian Right activism, and the combination of CC organization at the state level, as well as Robertson supporters who remained Republican party activists explains the findings of Christian Right domination of various Republican state party organizations in the *Campaigns and Elections* report (Hamilton 1994).

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The born-again Christian variable might be more predictive of Christian Right affiliation in the South, particularly among white voters. The churches in the South are more conservative than the churches in the rest of the nation (Kosmin and Lachman 1993), so born-again white voters in the South are likely to be Christian Right voters. Even with this consideration, measurement of the Christian Right vote is not exact.

In fact, among the states categorized as having a Republican party dominated by the Christian Right, CC organization levels are higher than in other places in the South. It is possible to apply Gibson, Cotter, Bibby, and Huckshorn's (1985) measurement of local political party organizational strength to state CC organizations to evaluate their strength. The measures for an organized party include a full time headquarters location, a full time paid state chair, and paid staff. Of the nine states in the dominant category Oklahoma, Texas, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina fulfill the measures for full organizational strength. The organizational strength of the CC in South Carolina has been reported by Graham, Moore and Petrusak (1994) and Guth (1995).⁴⁵ The other states describe organizations that are continuing to grow. Texas claims over 90,000 members for the state CC, and plans to go over 100,000 by the end of 1996 (Haford 1996). Virginia is also a special case, while it does not have all of the characteristics of organizational strength, the Virginia state CC is able to use the national headquarters, located in Virginia, as its local office and support staff. This enables the CC at the state level to save funds by not duplicating organizational structure already available (Harding 1996).

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Of the fully organized states, none is as completely organized as the South Carolina CC. The chairperson of the CC in South Carolina during the organizational phase was Roberta Combs. Combs had a wealthy husband, who was a real estate developer. Her husband told her to get what she needed to create the organization, and he would pay for it. So, instead of having to spend time raising money to rent office space, equipment, and pay salaries, the South Carolina CC was able to organize very quickly (Vickers 1996).

In the other two states categorized as dominant, Alabama and Louisiana, Pat Robertson gathered over 10% of the primary vote in 1988. While these states do not have a well organized CC, they could easily follow the pattern of states like Oklahoma. In Oklahoma, in addition to a growing state CC⁴⁶, many of the Robertson activists became incorporated into the state Republican party after the 1988 election. As Oldfield (1988) and Moen (1992), explain, the Robertson activists became involved because of Robertson, and stayed because they enjoyed political activism. An introduction to political activism can cause individuals, whether liberal or conservative, to catch the political bug and remain involved within the political process.⁴⁷ This notion is also confirmed by Kessel (1988), who argued that party configurations after presidential elections contain remnants of those moved to activism by the election. This provides an

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The current executive director of the Oklahoma CC, Kenneth Wood, indicated that the CC in Oklahoma went from about 100 volunteers in early 1994 to 37,000 members in 1999. He indicated that the CC is continuing to grow (Wood 1999). In a report on interest groups, Cole Hargrave Snodgrass and Associates indicated that in the Sooner Survey taken between September 5-7, 1996, the Christian Coalition and the National Rifle Association were the two interest groups viewed most favorably by the citizens surveyed. The Oklahoma Education Association, AFL-CIO, and the Trial Lawyers Association were all viewed less favorably than the conservative groups.

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There is something heady about being involved in the political process, even in a small way. In observing various campaign events, it was clear that for the supporters of the various political candidates, they were having a good time being involved with politics. Many of the regular volunteers with whom I talked indicated that they believed they were contributing to something important by working for their candidate. CC members indicated a similar belief. It is a very human thing to enjoy working with people who share your values, which is what occurs both in the political campaigns, and with CC involvement.

explanation for the dominance of the Christian Right in Alabama and Louisiana. This explanation also applies to Arkansas and Mississippi, who have state CCs that do not demonstrate great organizational strength. These states also have activists that were introduced to the political process by Robertson's campaign.

The two states with minor Christian Right influence in the state party, Tennessee and West Virginia, are in early stages of CC organization. They did not have large showings by Robertson in the 1988 election. However, Tennessee Republicans were sufficiently organized to elect two Republican senators and several Republican House members. CC does have state chairs in both states, and organizational sophistication may increase, depending on the abilities of these individuals. Thus the case study of the Oklahoma CC has implications for states in which the CC is only in its early stages of organization. With the proper organizational efforts, the CC in other states could obtain similar results.

One of the problems with measuring the influence of Christian Right SMOs is that they are not as detailed about keeping records as quantitatively oriented political scientists would like them to be.⁴⁸ When asking about how

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The measurement of the activities of the Christian Right within the election cycle is also difficult. Since it is impossible for a researcher to be in every conservative Christian church every Sunday in the period before an election, it is difficult to measure exactly what the pastors are communicating to their congregations. Some pastors never mention politics, some mention issues, and some even encourage voting. It is also impossible to listen to every Christian radio program and watch every Christian program on television. But, in talking to people in Oklahoma, both in Republican party circles and Christian Right circles, it was apparent that a great deal of mobilization and activity was

many listeners Focus or Beverly LaHaye has, or how many are daily viewers of the *700 Club*, answers are given in approximations, such as the number of stations that carry the programming. Even CC state chapters are less concerned about numbers than accomplishing the things that must be done, such as distribution of voter guides and the running of training schools. The state coordinator from Arkansas stated that even though he did not have every county in the state organized, he had sufficient contacts to distribute voter guides and perform other tasks when he needed them done (Myshka 1996).

The more organized state chapters, however, have more definite goals. In addition to the ongoing goals of training individuals to participate in political parties at the precinct and county levels, training to become a campaign manager, or run for office⁴⁹, they are working to incorporate minority populations, such as African-Americans and Latinos, into the CC. The Texas and Florida CC's are working hard to reach the Latino population in their states, and Texas has Latino county coordinators as well as members (Haford 1996; Berry 1996). The Georgia CC is working to reach the African-American community, and has an African-American member on the state advisory board, and multiple African-American county coordinators (Mulligan 1996). The Mississippi state coordinator

occurring. While it was not readily quantifiable, it was happening.

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For obvious reasons, a Christian Right candidate is more reliable to members of the Christian Right than a candidate who just agrees with the policy positions that the Christian Right favors. The added dimension of religious agreement makes a Christian Right candidate more attractive to members of the Christian Right. But being a good candidate is not easy, so that is why CC holds training sessions.

is an African-American minister (Naylor 1996)⁵⁰, and the western regional director at the national level is African-American as well (Haford 1996). The Alabama CC indicates success in working with the African-American community, using the interesting tactic of informing African-American ministers with the names of African-American state legislators who are casting votes that are not pro-life (Russell 1996).⁵¹ The polling data from the 1994 ABC/Washington Post poll indicates that 49% of African Americans responded as born-again voters, so this is a fertile area for CC development. The Latino community, as a predominantly conservative Catholic community, is also an area that could be developed, and this is an area in which the national Catholic Alliance will be helpful. Current evidence suggests that the Christian Right may not be as white a movement as it has been in the past.

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When I spoke to Naylor, I thought that he was African-American. However, I did not assume this to be true. In the course of the interview, as I asked about efforts to incorporate minorities into the Mississippi CC, Naylor identified himself as an African-American, and a minister.

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When I was doing my undergraduate work at California State University, Dominguez Hills, I shared a political science class with an intelligent and articulate African-American young man who was involved in Democratic politics. He had worked with the campaigns of former Rep. Mervyn Dymally, and with Dymally's daughter as she ran for school board in Compton. He stated that he perceived the two most influential occupations within the African-American community to be that of a politician or a minister. He stated that ministers were actually more respected than politicians. Because of his perceptions, he was undecided concerning which career to chose. So it follows that the tactic of having the ministers call members of the state assembly to chastise them for not voting properly is a powerful rebuke within the African-American community.

The Oklahoma CC got off to a slow start. The first executive director, Bill Caldwell, was employed full time and unable to devote the necessary energy to the creation of a new entity.⁵² Caldwell had sufficient contacts throughout the state to distribute some flyers in 1992 and had little difficulty in distributing flyers for the special election in the sixth district in early 1994 (Caldwell 1994). The new executive director, Fred Sellars, took the position just before the August 1994 primary.⁵³ By early October, Sellars had organized county chapters in all of the large metropolitan areas, including Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Lawton, and Norman (Sellars 1994). In early 1995, Sellars had established an office for the Oklahoma CC in Oklahoma City, and staffed it with a field director and a political consultant, in addition to himself. At the 1995 state Republican convention, Sellars organized a prayer breakfast, which was attended by members of the congressional and state legislative delegations. Senator Phil Gramm, then running for president, made it a point to arrive in time to address the prayer breakfast. Sellars stated that his goal was to try to be inclusive, and he even tried to contact the Democrats to organize a prayer breakfast at their convention, but was told by the Democrats that they were not interested (Sellars 1995). By 1996, the Oklahoma CC had organized about three fourths of the counties in the

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Caldwell also lived in Tulsa, which is in the northeast portion of the state, and about 100 miles from Oklahoma City, the state capital. So in addition to his work schedule, much of the insider work of state politics was not easily accessible to him.

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Sellars lived in Norman, which is a commuter city for many Oklahoma City workers, so he had better access to the political center of the state.

state, and was planning the most ambitious distribution of flyers in its short history.

Family policy councils affiliated with Focus are also important actors in these states. Of the forty one family policy councils in the U.S., eleven are in the thirteen states discussed here. These councils share the goals of educating the public on family issues⁵⁴ being considered at the state and local level. However, the methods used to accomplish this goal vary from state to state. The Family Foundation in Virginia distributed one million voter guides in 1994, all in a person to person fashion (Bocek 1995). The Free Market Foundation, the Texas council, distributed 100,000 voter guides in the same manner as Virginia (Cushman 1996). The Florida Family Council and Georgia Family Council were able to distribute voter guides in a major supermarket chain in their states (Hamme 1996).⁵⁵ Because their materials do not have an overtly Christian label, like CC's materials, they are acceptable in this area. Guth (1995) indicates that

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Family issues include a wide variety of issues. The pro-life position is the cornerstone of all family issues. Other issues include the marriage tax penalty, teaching homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle choice in schools, the acceptance of homosexual marriage, and various school issues. School issues run the gamut from textbook content, the content of sex education (the Christian Right asserts that it should be abstinence-based), and school vouchers. The Christian right generally believes that school issues should be decided at the local level. Hence, they oppose a national proficiency test, on the grounds that such a test will open the door to further federal interference in local issues.

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The voter guides created by the Florida and Georgia family policy councils were not offered to patrons in the grocery stores, but were inserted into the bags of customers by the wrappers. This strategy was to be used again in 1996 (Hamme 1996).

the Palmetto Family Council in South Carolina distributed nonpartisan voter guides during the midterm election. Bednar and Hertzke (1995) reported that Resource Institute of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma family policy council, distributed voter guides in the state's two major newspapers the Sunday before the election. The Arkansas Family Council also used the state's major newspaper to distribute voter guides (Boles 1996), while the Alabama Family Alliance found it more effective to place their guides in small weekly newspapers throughout the state.⁵⁶ The Alabama group also prepared a candidate briefing book for all qualified candidates in 1996. The guide, a three-ring binder with sections on economic and social issues, included issue papers that candidates could use (Waldron 1996).⁵⁷ The fact that one third of the nation's family policy councils are concentrated in these southern states indicates that activism directed by Christian Right SMOs is indeed alive and well in the south.

Oklahoma has a family policy council, called the Resource Institute of Oklahoma (RIO). The director that organized and made it a viable organization was Terry Allen. By the time the 1994 congressional election was occurring, Terry Allen had resigned as executive director to run the campaign of Steve

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Whether in the large Sunday papers in Oklahoma and Arkansas, or in the small weekly newspapers in Alabama, newspaper distribution is an easy, but not inexpensive method to disseminate a lot of information.

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Waldron stated that the Alabama group went so far as to include prewritten legislation in its three ring binders, ready for the legislators to propose. Because the Alabama legislature has limited staff resources, Waldron stated that many legislators appreciated the help.

Largent in the first district. Allen was replaced by David Dunn as interim executive director. After the 1994 election, when Allen went to Washington as Rep. Largent's chief of staff, Dunn became the permanent director. RIO's attempts in the political arena became more sophisticated over time. In 1992 RIO created a voter guide of several hundred pages that the group sent to donors. Realizing that these were unwieldy, in 1994 RIO created tabloid voter guides that were placed in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa newspapers, and 3,000 inserts including voter guides that went into Focus's *Citizen* magazine. Dunn tried to portray RIO as not being linked to conservative Christian groups, and not really affiliated with Focus, but this did not ring true.⁵⁸ Focus would not include materials in one of its magazines unless they knew who created the materials. In addition, Dunn indicated that Focus mailed another 22,000 of the inserts with voter guides to Oklahomans (Dunn 1994). Despite Dunn's protests to the contrary, in 1996 Focus was identifying the renamed Oklahoma Family Policy Council as a family policy council affiliated with their organization.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIAN RIGHT SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Because of the free rider problem explained by Olson (1965) one of the problems with volunteer organizations is actually getting people to work within a

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As I interviewed Dunn in 1994, he seemed hesitant to admit the link between Focus and RIO. It was as if Dunn, when speaking to an academic interviewer whose intentions he could not determine, hedged. I spoke to Dunn again in 1997, and purposely dropped sufficient Christian jargon and insider knowledge to let him know that it was safe to talk, so he was willing to tell me more.

social movement. Christian Right SMOs have less of this problem, because of the socialization process that occurs, particularly with long term church membership. Church members have a strong volunteer ethic, because that is how most church work is accomplished. People who are raised within a church are socialized from childhood to help in the work of the church. Members of the Christian Right, because of their church affiliation, carry that ethic into the party when they become involved. There is little difference between volunteering to perform necessary tasks within the church and volunteering to perform necessary tasks in a political campaign. Church members are socialized to give money to the church, creating the habit of contributing to causes in which they believe. In addition, organizational skills are learned within the church that can be transferred to Christian Right SMOs as well. If an individual can organize a church dinner for a large group, or run the Sunday school, or chair a committee within the church, this individual can easily organize a precinct or coordinate literature distribution (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995).⁵⁹ The habits of volunteering and contributing to causes, as well as the organizational and leadership skills acquired within the church also motivates effective participation in Christian Right SMOs.

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Socialization that naturally occurs when someone either is raised within the church, or joins and becomes active as an adult, makes church members different from others in society who do not belong to churches. Churches, particularly conservative churches, become mini societies in which certain behaviors are expected. These behaviors include financial contributions and volunteering within the church. Not all become leaders within the church, but all are expected to contribute.

CHRISTIAN RIGHT SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

All of the various Christian Right SMOs, from the large organizations profiled in this research to the various state chapters of Christian Coalition and the family policy councils have one component in common. That component is entrepreneurial leadership. All of these organizations started from nothing. One individual who was consumed with a vision for a particular group of people or issues worked to organize a group, cast a vision, recruit followers, and raise funds. All of these components were necessary in order to translate the vision of the entrepreneurial leader into the existing organization. Christian Right SMOs must operate within the freewheeling marketplace that comprises American religion. American religion is entrepreneurial, as the development of various cultic groups like the Mormons, Christian Scientists, and Jehovah's Witnesses demonstrate. Evangelical Christianity in America is also entrepreneurial, and includes a group of denominations and parachurch organizations that are decentralized, multipolar, and were created by entrepreneurial leaders. All of the organizations in this research were created and are being sustained within the world of Evangelical Christianity.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The effectiveness of any of the Christian Right SMOs in the policy arena has one variable that is difficult to predict, but makes all the difference to the outcome. This is the human variable. In exploring the various state CC chapters in the southern states, it was apparent that the states blessed with an

energetic leader who could devote the time, raise the money, and build an effective grassroots organization would be successful. Those who were less gifted, or had fewer resources upon which to draw were still able to impact the political process, but not as much. The leadership variable is hard to quantify, but so important.⁶⁰ It also raises questions. Can there be a Focus without James Dobson? Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council is closely affiliated with Dobson, but is not a psychologist and would have a difficult time replacing Dobson on the radio broadcasts. And, with Bauer now running for president in 2000, would he stop running if something happened to Dobson? Can there be a *700 Club* without Pat Robertson? *The 700 Club* did poorly when Robertson withdrew to run for president in 1988, and it took some time for him to rebuild it after he returned. Robertson, who looks hale and hearty, is over 70. Dobson is over 60, and has had one major heart attack. In addition, on June 16, 1998, Dobson had a stroke. He was given an anti-stroke medication and was able to return to work at Focus in a week. Dobson attributes this to all the prayers that were said for him (Dobson 1998a). Dobson's health is at best questionable, and at worst a large problem for Focus. Will these organizations survive after their leaders are gone? Can a successor easily replace a charismatic founder of an

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I have observed the Christian Right since the early 1980s. From this perspective, I do not see a member of the fortysomething generation that is currently visible within the Christian Right who has the proper characteristics to allow him or her to become the Christian Right leader of the next generation. That does not mean that there are no members of that generation who possess entrepreneurial leadership skills that will rise to the task when there is a need.

organization? With the emphasis on the importance of leadership to the sustaining of social movements, if a new generation of leadership is not developed, these organizations will likely fall into decline.

It is also difficult to draw conclusions about something that is as dynamic as the Christian Right. Returning to McAdam (1982) and the notion of surge and decline in social movements, it is apparent that Christian Right activism as a whole, directed by its prominent SMOs, is currently surging. The period of opposition created by the election of Bill Clinton gave the Christian Right a unified focus as to who the opponent was, and what issues must be addressed. It would indeed be ironic if Clinton's election provides the catalyst for the long awaited realignment that political scientists have been anticipating since the late 1960s. The next chapter explores the activities of the Christian Right in 1994 in Oklahoma, a state particularly suited to Christian Right activism.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE 1994 SIXTH DISTRICT SPECIAL ELECTION: CHRISTIAN RIGHT INFLUENCE BEGINS

INDIVIDUAL DECISIONS

The story of Candy Lightner and the founding of MADD illustrates the importance of group organization when attempting to influence the policy process. Also, Lightner's story illustrates the fact that the decisions individuals make concerning how they choose to live their lives can have influence far beyond the individual. What if Lightner had decided to devote the rest of her life to mourning her dead child, and became a recluse instead of an activist and social movement organization entrepreneur? The impact would have been enormous. There would be no MADD or SADD, and the tougher laws regulating drunk driving and the lowered percentage of alcohol needed to be classified as driving under the influence of alcohol would probably never have been passed. Also, there would be more innocent victims of drunk drivers, either dead or disabled for life. Lightner's decision to organize MADD, and her legitimacy in speaking to the personal and social costs of drunk driving created political opportunities for her. Lightner has addressed the Congress and various state legislatures, using the political opportunities created by her daughter's death. So the decision of an individual regarding his or her life can have influence far beyond only that one person.

If the individual decisions of a private citizen like Lightner can be used to create political opportunities, it is obvious that the decisions of elected officials

can also create political opportunities. Within a brief period, a decision by one Oklahoma elected official, and the seesaw process of making a decision by another elected official influenced far more than just the personal lives of the individuals making the decisions. These decisions created political opportunities which manifested themselves as several open seat races for Congress, and an open seat race for U.S. Senate. The individual decision of sixth district Rep. Glenn English to retire from his House seat created the first political opportunity, and rumors concerning a career change by Senator David Boren were the beginning of a chain of events that led to political opportunities that resulted in a vastly different partisan alignment in the Oklahoma congressional delegation. The Christian Right in Oklahoma, supported by various national Christian Right social movement organizations (SMOs), capitalized on the available political opportunities to help fuel the partisan change.

A SURPRISING POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY

On January 7, 1994, Glenn English, the dean of the Oklahoma congressional delegation announced he was retiring to become vice president and general manager of the National Rural Electric Co-Operative Association¹ (Greiner 1994). As early as December 1993, there were rumors that English would resign his seat. English first won election to the House in 1974, and at the

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The National Rural Electric Co-Operative Association deals with rural electrification. While 99% of rural America has electrical service, the service is provided differently than in urban settings. In rural areas, electric co-ops purchase electricity, maintain the lines, and assess fees to the members of the co-op. Because the sixth district is mostly rural, this was an issue with which Rep. English was familiar.

conclusion of his present term, would have served in the Congress for twenty years. When asked about his decision to resign, English stated that he had reached a point in his career at which a decision was necessary. Should he serve another ten to twenty years in the House and retire, or was he ready for a new challenge? While English was considering his situation, the position with National Rural Electrical Co-Operative Association was offered to him. English decided to resign from the House and begin a new career (G. English 1996). He had been involved with the issues of the Co-Op during his tenure in the House, so he brought knowledge, as well as his contacts on the Hill, to the new position.

English offered several reasons for his resignation. One was the challenge of a new position. But other reasons offered insight into a disturbing trend among Washington politicians. These reasons have been echoed by other retiring members of both the Senate and the House. English stated that his satisfaction with the job of House member was decreasing, and he attributed this to the increasingly partisan climate in the House. English recalled a time when it was possible for members of Congress to disagree on issues but remain personal friends during their time off the House floor.² This was no longer true,

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English also asserted that increased partisanship made the atmosphere in the House less pleasant (G. English 1996). Because the Republicans had spent such a long period as the minority party, and wanted to become the majority party, the level of collegiality changed. Individuals, rather than issues, became partisan, even in their social lives. As the expectations that members of Congress be home every weekend increased, there was also less time for friendships to develop between representatives and senators. If an individual is only in Washington Tuesday through Thursday, and travels back to the district on weekends, this leaves little time for a Washington social life (Fenno 1978).

and House members of differing ideologies had become enemies even after the business of the House was concluded. He attributed this problem to the rise of single issue groups on both the left and the right which cast those who disagree with them in the role of a villain. English enjoyed his time in the House, but knew it was time for a career change (G. English 1996).

English's decisionmaking process is illustrative of the decentralized, candidate centered and entrepreneurial world of the contemporary member of Congress. English did not consult with Democratic party leaders concerning an opportune time, from the party's perspective, for his retirement. English behaved in the entrepreneurial manner that is consistent with a decentralized, candidate centered system. English evaluated his life, and the career opportunity before him, and made a decision. His decision was based on what the next best step for his career was. Current retirement decisions are no longer party centered, but centered in the individual decisions of the elected official.

English's retirement left the sixth district without a representative in the House. The Oklahoma constitution does not allow the governor to appoint a representative or senator to fill the term of a retiring member of the congressional delegation without an election.³ So Governor David Walters was

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Other states allow the governor to appoint someone to finish the term of a retiring member of Congress. For example, in California, the governor can appoint an individual to fill the seat of a senator who retires. The appointed senator must then stand for election at the next regular election time. However, the California governor may not appoint a representative to fill an unexpired term. That is why there were special elections in California after the deaths of Walter Capps (D) and Sonny Bono (R).

forced to call for a special election to fill English's seat. According to Oklahoma law, a candidate in a primary must receive a majority of the vote to win the nomination, so when multiple candidates run, special primary, runoff, and general elections would be necessary. Walters declared that the filing period for the special election would be January 31 through February 2, 1994. The special primary election was scheduled for March 8, the special primary runoff (if necessary) was scheduled for April 5, and the special general election for May 10. The Christian Right now had the opportunity to test its political capabilities before the 1994 general elections.

SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Before exploring the candidates and the election process in the special election, it is necessary to make some observations about special elections as opposed to regular elections. For the Christian Right or any other social movement, the rules of politics do not evaporate due to their involvement. Social movements are constrained by the political structures in place wherever they are operating. In any given election year, politicians in each state know the procedures and timetables for decisions concerning the election. If a social movement is to impact an election, the leaders of the movement must know these procedures and timetables as well. Fowler and McClure (1989) discuss the time period in which electoral decisions must be made, and indicate that the decision making process begins some time before the election ever occurs,

Their wives replaced them.

usually in the fall of the previous year or the spring of the election year, depending on the filing periods in the various locations. A part of the decision making process is personal, such as: Do I want to go to Washington? How will this impact my family? The other part is political: Do I have a base of supporters? Can I raise the money to run a campaign? Do local and national circumstances favor my candidacy at this time? All of these questions are a part of the calculations made by potential candidates.⁴

All of these questions indicate the decentralized and entrepreneurial nature of the candidate centered political process. Nowhere in these questions is there a consideration concerning whether the party will support my efforts at campaigning. That is because parties cannot be involved until after a nominee is determined by the primaries. The structure of political opportunities in a primary system forces political campaigns to be candidate centered and entrepreneurial. An entrepreneur is one who is willing to take the risk to begin a new venture, knowing that there is a possibility of failure. In the candidate centered political system in contemporary elections, every candidate is a political entrepreneur. That means all the decisions concerning any potential run for office are the

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Fowler and McClure's (1989) research indicates that the decision to run is often difficult. It is possible that the time to run could be perfect politically and horrible for the candidate's family, or perfect for the family and horrible politically. The costs and benefits of becoming a candidate must be carefully weighed when making the decision. An individual who values having a quiet, private life, no matter how talented, may decide not to run, even if urged by party leaders. Also, an individual who could damage the party's chances of obtaining the nomination may not be dissuaded from running. All of these considerations illustrate the candidate centered nature of elections.

candidate's decision. The candidate can obtain advice from professional political consultants, but decisions about running for political office are ultimately the candidate's.

Using the Oklahoma case, a potential candidate has the fall prior to and the first half of an election year to make these decisions. In Oklahoma, the filing period for the November elections is the first Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday after the Fourth of July. The primary election is in mid August, the primary runoff, if necessary, in late September, and the general election in November. If it is a presidential election year, the potential candidate has seen the results of the state's March presidential primary and the tone of the campaign, and can make decisions about whether or not to run. In a midterm election, the potential candidate has observed the president's popularity and how the electorate is responding to various issues. In any case, these considerations can be accomplished within a specified time period.⁵

A special election is an entirely different situation. Just looking at the timetable for the special election in the sixth district, it is obvious that there was less than one month from English's resignation date until the filing period began. Even including the period of rumors concerning English's possible resignation during December 1993, the period that potential candidates had to make their

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During the period prior to the filing period, the most important consideration is whether the potential candidate who wants to be considered a serious challenger will be able to obtain the money to run a credible campaign. This testing of the waters occurs before the filing period. Only a rank amateur, with no chance of victory would decide to file without the expectation of adequate financial resources to conduct a campaign.

decisions to run was brief at best. The theoretical considerations found in recent research on candidate emergence (Copeland 1994, Kazee 1994, Fowler and McClure 1989) apply in the case of a special election, but the truncated time period does not allow for candidate recruitment and emergence to occur as it would during a normal election cycle.

The truncated period also has a major impact in the area of fund raising. During the normal election cycle it is possible to begin to raise money during the period before the candidate must begin to actively campaign. Accumulating a war chest is a time honored method used by incumbents to scare off challengers. In open seat races the quality candidates begin raising money before the hectic period of campaigning begins. However, in a special election, campaigning and fund raising occur simultaneously from the time the decision is made to seek the nomination. Whether the time period is calculated from the December 1993 rumors of English's resignation or from the January 7 announcement, two to three months until the March 5 primary is a short period in which to organize a campaign and raise money to run it.⁶ This is an area in

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In a special election, those individuals who have run a successful campaign for elective office previously have an advantage over individuals who have not ever run for office. While it is possible to hire a political consultant to run a campaign, there are some things that are best learned by experience. I helped a friend run for school board. The filing period was in December 1998, and the election in March 1999. She was slow to get her campaign organized, waiting until after Christmas to get down to business. She also hated to ask people for money. As a result, even with a good political consultant, and some good advice, she was unsuccessful. One of the things she said she learned from the experience was that it was really hard to ask people for money. If a candidate in any election, especially a special election, is unwilling or unable to be absolutely

which a social movement can be helpful. Most social movements, including the Christian Right, are able to communicate with members of the group, and the Christian Right communications network is good. Since voter mobilization is important, the communications network of a social movement like the Christian Right is able to supplement the efforts of the candidate.

Yet, many of the observations about regular elections apply to special elections. Special elections are as candidate centered as any other election, and the personal decisions of potential candidates shape the field. In some ways special elections can be more entrepreneurial than regular elections, because decisions must be made quickly to allow rapid organization and fundraising. Also, some of the same types of candidates are found in special elections as in general elections. There are quality challengers, those who have previous electoral experience or a particularly strong base within the party in the particular district, and the ability to raise the funds necessary to create a credible campaign (Bond, Covington, and Fleisher 1985). Also, there are amateurs, who can be classified as either ambitious amateurs or experience seeking amateurs (Canon 1993).⁷ All of these types of candidates are working with the same set of

shameless in soliciting funds, the candidate will be unsuccessful.

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Canon (1993) divides the ranks of amateurs into ambitious amateurs and experience seeking amateurs. An ambitious amateur is an individual who, even though an amateur at politics, has a chance of winning the race. One characteristic of an ambitious amateur is that this individual already has some sort of celebrity status that provides name recognition. Canon includes actors, athletes, and astronauts in this celebrity category, but it could also include a very visible military leader as well, for example, Colin Powell or Norman Schwarzkopf. Experience seeking amateurs are those who run to gain

disadvantages during a special election, with the greatest disadvantage being the shorter time period in which the individual must campaign and also raise money to fund the campaign. However, a candidate who has already won at least one race will be able to initiate a credible campaign more quickly than an amateur who has never run for office. A candidate who has repeatedly mounted unsuccessful runs for office may be even less capable of running during a short special election than during a regular campaign.⁸ Campaign experience and expertise may be more important in special elections than in regular ones.

A PROTOTYPICAL CHRISTIAN RIGHT DISTRICT

English's resignation provided the Christian Right with a prototypical district in which to try its wings in its first attempt to win an Oklahoma congressional race. The state of Oklahoma is shaped much like a saucepan, with the handle of the pan extending west above Texas. The state is divided in half by Interstate 35, which runs north from Texas to Kansas through the middle of the state, dividing the eastern and western portions of the state. Interstate 40 runs from east to west from Arkansas to Texas, and divides the state into the northern and southern half. Interstates 35 and 40 are free roads. Interstate 44

experience. The experience seeking amateur may eventually figure out how to be a good candidate, or may never get that far.

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An individual who has run unsuccessfully several times probably does not have a clue how to run a credible campaign, or how to raise money. During the longer election period, such a candidate may gain some support via attendance at candidate forums and other campaign activities. This candidate will not have the knowledge or resources to use all avenues available to get out the message of the campaign.

runs from the northeast corner of the state to the southwest corner, but it is a toll road, which limits access for those who cannot afford the toll. Oklahoma City is at the center of the state, and all three interstates intersect in the city. The southeastern portion of the state, defined as south of Interstate 40 and east of Interstate 35 has several toll roads as well. The toll roads are well maintained, divided highways. The northwestern portion of the state, defined as north of Interstate 40 and west of Interstate 35, has no toll roads, and most of the roads are one lane in each direction. The sixth district includes the northwestern quarter of the state.

The northwestern quarter of the state is rural, and from the previous study of Oklahoma political culture, is individualistic in nature (Morgan, England, and Humphreys 1991). An individualistic political culture is a political culture in which the message of the Christian Right resonates. It particularly resonates with certain issues the Christian Right frequently addresses, including parental choice in education, decreasing taxes, balancing the budget, and Second Amendment rights. Individualistic political culture means that citizens do not like the government to be too active in their lives, and do not want the government to create social change. Since the further liberalization of American society is one of the prime issues concerning which the Christian Right voices opposition, the rural portion of the sixth district is fertile Christian Right territory.

But the sixth congressional district includes more than just the northwestern quadrant of the state. Beginning at the southwest corner of the

state, a diagonal line drawn toward Oklahoma City separates the sixth and fourth districts, with the area north of the line going to the sixth district, and the area south of the line going to the fourth district. The rural portion of the district has the western portion of Interstate 40 as its only major highway. When exploring the rural areas of the sixth district, it is possible to drive for miles without seeing another car. The rural sixth district can best be summarized as acres of farm and ranch land, with miles of two lane highways punctuated by small towns. This makes travel within the district time consuming, and campaigning difficult. Stops in the various small towns for gas or food bring immediate recognition that one is a stranger in the area.⁹

When driving in the district, it is also apparent that churches are central to small town life. It was previously noted that Christian radio is a prominent part of the media available in the rural portion of the district. The importance of Christianity is visible in other ways. Almost every town has a First Baptist

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When I spent some time driving in the sixth district in October 1996, I was struck with how rural and empty most of the area is. It is possible to drive for miles without seeing another car. Electronic media is sparse as well. The television channels all come from Oklahoma City, with the exception of the extreme northwestern portion of the district. These counties along the Kansas border also receive Kansas television. The radio stations are also few in number. One evening I listened to a sports talk radio show that was discussing the chances of the local high school football team in the upcoming state championship tournament. The local football coach was the special guest. In another area in the district, I covered the entire radio dial and only found one radio station, an AM Christian station from Texas, and no FM radio at all. The news media included the *Daily Oklahoman*, the Oklahoma City paper, and various weekly papers published in the small towns. Whenever I stopped in one of the small towns, I was immediately recognized as an outsider.

Church, and many small towns have multiple churches. The majority of these churches are of denominations that are sympathetic to the views of the Christian Right.¹⁰ The people of western Oklahoma are conservative and the sixth district is an area in which Christian Right views would not be considered radical, but mainstream.¹¹

The redrawing of congressional districts that occurred as a result of the 1990 census and was implemented with the 1992 election added a portion of Oklahoma City to the sixth district. The new portion of the district included the now famous Murrah Federal Building, site of the bombing in April 1995. This portion of Oklahoma City is on the western half of the city, and includes a substantial African American population. Also, it increased the Democratic partisan advantage in registration in the district. Democrats had a two to one edge in registered voters in the district (McGuigan 1994b). The goal was to insure that there would be sufficient Democratic voters to keep the seat safely in Democratic fold.

However, there was a problem with the new congressional districts. Most of the voters in the portion of Oklahoma City that was moved into the sixth district still believed that they were part of the fifth district (Casteel 1994a). The

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In addition to the Baptist churches, I observed quite a few Pentecostal churches, which also are doctrinally and politically conservative.

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Rural people tend to be more conservative than urban people. Perhaps this is because of the more sheltered life of many rural people. With little outside influence, the rural areas change more slowly than urban areas.

greater Oklahoma City area is divided between the fourth, fifth and sixth districts, and confusion can easily result when district lines are redrawn. If voters do not know that they are a part of a particular district, they are unlikely to take an interest in the race in that district.¹²

The rest of the sixth district is mostly rural, and quite conservative. Even with the Democratic advantage in registered voters, the district has voted Republican in presidential elections for some time, and Oklahoma's very conservative Senator Don Nickles has an excellent base of support there. The rural portion of the sixth district is an area in which partisan realignment may be occurring. However, it is not a realignment that happens in one or two election cycles, but a gradual process. After the 1992 elections, Bill Clinton became increasingly unpopular in much of the nation, and western Oklahoma was no exception. Gays in the military, gun control, and the Clinton health care proposals were all unpopular within the district (McGuigan 1994b). Unpopular stands on important issues provided additional incentive for partisan realignment.

The rural portion of the district would be crucial to the electoral prospects of whoever aimed to become the new representative. As Tom Cole, the state's leading Republican political consultant argued, the rural voters would be more

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Downs (1957) argues that if information concerning political campaigns is too hard or too time consuming to obtain, voters will not vote. If unmotivated voters do not even know in which congressional district they reside, they are not going to be motivated to become informed and vote. This is why it would be more sensible to place all of Oklahoma City in one congressional district, like the first congressional district, which is Tulsa and suburbs.

likely to vote as a block for a rural candidate than Oklahoma City voters would be to vote as a block for an urban candidate (Casteel 1994a). In addition, turnout tends to be higher in rural areas than in urban areas, so the rural vote is especially important for any candidate running in the district.

The availability of electronic and print media makes campaigning in the sixth district somewhat more difficult. The northwestern portion of the district receives television from Oklahoma City, and also from stations in western Kansas. The number of people being reached by the Kansas stations would make it expensive to use for campaigning, especially in a primary. Local radio is limited, but a cost effective way in which to reach the voters in the district. *The Daily Oklahoman*, the Oklahoma City newspaper is available throughout the district, as are various newspapers from the smaller towns. *The Daily Oklahoman* is a very conservative newspaper, and reenforces the conservative views of the district's rural population.¹³ It is also a cost effective advertising vehicle, because the newspaper is delivered throughout the district. Other small town newspapers are published weekly, or only on certain days, usually Thursday or Friday. The coordination of media in a district like the sixth is difficult, especially the coordination of timely press releases to all of the small

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The Daily Oklahoman also reenforces the Christian Right position. McGuigan, the opinion page editor and frequent columnist, is a Roman Catholic whose views are sympathetic to the Christian Right. In addition, syndicated columns by Cal Thomas and other conservative writers also reflect the Christian Right position and reenforce the message. The conservative positions reflected by the *Daily Oklahoman* are the mainstream positions in the rural sixth district.

town presses.¹⁴ Using the Daily Oklahoman for advertising is sensible for politicians who run in the rural portion of western Oklahoma.

Exploring the 1992 elections, Copeland (1994) argues that the presence of a popular incumbent, Dave McCurdy, in Oklahoma's fourth district caused possible candidates for that seat to direct their political ambitions elsewhere, rather than challenge the incumbent. English was a popular incumbent in the sixth district for longer than McCurdy was in the fourth. Those who might have been interested in a congressional seat had busied themselves with service in the state House and Senate or with other career choices, rather than running for Congress. The literature on congressional elections indicates that quality candidates wait for the time to be right for both personal and political reasons before they run (Fowler and McClure 1989, Hertzke 1994, Kazee 1994). For ambitious politicians in the sixth district, the resignation of English meant that politically, the time was right to run for Congress.¹⁵

CANDIDATES FOR THE SPECIAL PRIMARY

English's resignation signaled that the time was right for several ambitious individuals to make a run for the House. Hermson (1995) argues that special

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Small town papers are important in rural areas, because these papers discuss the issues that are closest to the rural residents. Tip O'Neill's famous statement, "All politics is local," is especially applicable to rural areas. For residents of rural areas, everything that is important, is local.

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And, in terms of English's almost twenty year tenure in the House, it was the first time that the time was right for ambitious politicians in the sixth district in half a generation.

elections are often more volatile than regular elections in which there is no incumbent. He states that such special elections attract more candidates, and the results are more unpredictable than in regular open seat elections. The assortment of candidates in the sixth district Republican primary validates Herrnson's observations. The lack of candidates in the Democratic primary illustrates how an external force can invalidate generalizations like Herrnson's regarding special elections. The external force that limited the Democratic field was the presence of Dan Webber, the protege of senior Senator David Boren.¹⁶

The Republicans

The Republicans in the sixth district, knowing their district and knowing how unpopular Bill Clinton was in the district, saw the special election as a golden opportunity to win a congressional seat. Five political entrepreneurs emerged to seek the nomination. Two of the challengers, Thom Holmes, 36, of Enid, and Robert W. Carter, 51, of Guymon, were political neophytes, neither of whom could be considered quality challengers.¹⁷ Holmes was well connected in Republican circles in Enid, which is one of the most Republican areas in the

¹⁶

Senator Boren was as popular as Senator Nickles. Boren had won reelection easily each time he ran, and was an important influence in state Democratic politics. This was particularly true in 1994, when the Democratic governor, David Walters, was under investigation for unethical activities.

¹⁷

A quality challenger, according to Canon (1993), is one who has a chance of winning. A challenger is considered quality either by political connections or celebrity that gives name recognition and access to resources, particularly money. Holmes and Carter had no political experience, even at the city or county level, and neither was a celebrity.

district, but had no experience. Enid is a small city and is adjacent to the district's largest military installation, Vance Air Force Base. Both Holmes, who worked for an independent oil company, and Carter, the operator of a car dealership in Guymon, ran using the outsider image, with their primary argument being that professional politicians were the problem, and they were part of the solution because they were not professionals. Both Holmes and Carter were very conservative, reflecting the views of the rural areas from which they hailed (P. English, Greiner, and Hinton 1994).

The three quality candidates in the Republican field were members of the Oklahoma legislature, Senator Brooks Douglass, Representative Tim Pope, and Representative Frank Lucas. Douglass and Pope both came from the Oklahoma City portion of the district, with Pope representing Mustang, a town adjacent to Oklahoma City. Lucas was the only rural candidate of the three quality challengers. Lucas, with his wife, runs a cow-calf operation on his farm¹⁸ outside Cheyenne. All were experienced state legislators (P. English, Greiner, and Hinton 1994).

Brooks Douglass, age 30, had a major advantage from the beginning of the race, which was name recognition. However, his name recognition came from tragic circumstances. In 1979, when Douglass was sixteen, and living in rural Okarche, with his parents and twelve year old sister, Leslie, two men broke

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Lucas used his farm (ranch) to his advantage in the campaign. He used pictures of the farm and the animals to remind the voters of his rural roots.

into the family's house, killing Douglass's parents and wounding both Douglass and his sister. Leslie was sexually assaulted as well. The perpetrators of the crime were tried and convicted, with both children forced to testify in multiple trials.¹⁹ Douglass turned his personal experience into tough stands on crime and victim's rights. He authored victim's rights legislation that became law. Douglass was also a part of the legislative leadership of the Oklahoma senate. He hired Neva Hill, a successful political consultant, in the early stages of the campaign, indicating his intentions of running a competitive race (McGuigan 1994a). From the beginning, Douglass positioned himself as the candidate to beat. Douglass also had the support of the Christian Right in his district, because he was supportive of Christian Right issues.

Representative Tim Pope, 36 years old, believed that he was the candidate best positioned to win the nomination. His state House district was within the area of Oklahoma and Canadian counties with the largest Republican voter registration. He spoke of going to Washington to oppose the tax-and-spend liberals whose policies were bad for the district, and the nation. The phrase, tax-and-spend liberal resonated with conservatives, but it also resonated with the Christian Right.²⁰ Pope, a state representative who first won election in

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There was an undercurrent of sympathy for Brooks and Leslie Douglass that was apparent in various media reports about their terrible experience. It was obvious that the media was very careful not to do anything to minimize the horror of this event, even though it occurred fifteen years prior to the race.

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The reason that the tax issue was and is so often a prominent portion of Christian Right

1988, was also an experienced campaigner²¹ (P. English, Greiner, and Hinton 1994). The problem for Pope is that he and Douglass shared the same voter base in the areas surrounding Oklahoma City, and Douglass was the better known candidate.

The only quality candidate from the rural portion of the state was Frank Lucas, age 34. Lucas believed that his advantage was that rural people are more likely to go vote, and more likely to vote for someone who knows their life and shares their experiences (Lucas 1995). Since 1989, Lucas had been dividing his time between the cow-calf operation he and his wife run and the state House. Lucas is also conservative, and has worked to help farmers and ranchers with legislation passed to help first time farmers, and to provide tax breaks for farmers.²² Correctly interpreting the anti-Clinton sentiment in the

political discourse involves the issue of the family. The Christian Right argues that parents, not the government, are the ones primarily responsible for rearing their children. One of the current problems seen by the Christian Right is the tax structure. Taxes take so much of a family's income that it is necessary for both parents to work. This removes the mother from the home and places the children in a day care setting. In a day care setting, Christian parents cannot be sure that their children are being taught proper Christian values. This is the source of Christian Right opposition to government funding of day care. So, opposition to tax-and-spend liberals is word usage that lets members of the Christian Right know that a candidate represents their interests, as well as appealing to the anti-tax sentiment of secular conservatives.

²¹

Pope was also well connected to the Christian Right. Pope is a member of Crossroads Cathedral, described in the opening vignette of the first chapter. Pope was acknowledged by the congregation at the celebration, as one of their own. While this celebration was after the special election, it indicated Pope's connection to the Christian Right.

²²

Since agriculture is so important to the sixth district, Lucas campaigned with a focus on

district, Lucas planned to make the election a referendum on Clinton's performance (P. English, Greiner, and Hinton 1994). Lucas knew that issues like gays in the military, gun control, and national health care were viewed negatively by the rural voters in the district²³ (Lucas 1995). He also demonstrated his serious approach to the election by hiring Tom Cole, the top Republican political consultant in the state, to help with his campaign.

Tom Cole²⁴ has been active in Republican politics in Oklahoma for years, and understands the political nuances throughout the state better than any other Republican consultant. Cole's consulting firm, Cole Hargrave Snodgrass and Associates, began working with state legislative races. They were the first consulting firm in the state who focussed on Republican elections, because the state's politics had always been dominated by Democrats (Cole 1994). Cole's consulting firm built a reputation among Republicans as a reliable and

agriculture. He argued that he was the best person to send to Washington to help write the next farm bill, because he is a farmer and understands the needs of farmers (Lucas 1995). Lucas missed no opportunity to highlight his rural roots.

²³

While Lucas never verbally allied himself with the Christian Right, all of the issues that he pushed were Christian Right issues. Making the election a referendum on Bill Clinton was exactly the strategy that Christian Right SMOs were advocating for the fall elections. Lucas is a member of a Christian church in Cheyenne.

²⁴

Cole has also been involved in Republican politics at the national level. Cole is a former executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee, a committee dedicated to raising funds to help elect Republicans to Congress. He is also one of the key players who helped to reinvigorate the Republican party in Oklahoma (Bednar and Hertzke 1995). Cole also has an uncanny knack for picking the winners of elections. Every Republican that has used Cole as a consultant since 1994 has won.

professional firm and are now involved in most of the prominent Republican campaigns in the state.

The Republican candidates, with the exception of Carter, were ambitious young men in their thirties who were energetic and ready for a challenge. Because of the state's term limit law that was passed in 1990, the three members of the legislature would have been thinking about other areas in which to channel their political ambitions during the late 1990s because they would not have been eligible to run again for their current positions.²⁵ In addition, the special election allowed the three state legislators an opportunity to run for higher office from the security of their current positions.²⁶

The Democrats

Any ambitious Democrat who saw English's retirement as an opportunity to advance a promising political career was unhappy when Dan Webber announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination. Webber, who hails from Okarche, spent the previous six years working as a legislative and press aide to Senator David Boren, the state's senior senator. Boren was a powerful

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The choices for legislators who have reached their term limitation in Oklahoma are small. There are few other positions as prestigious as being a member of the state legislature. County and city offices are not that attractive, and there are not enough statewide and national offices for all of the termed out legislators.

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A special election is a wonderful opportunity for someone who already holds elective office. It is a no-risk situation. The worst case scenario is that the candidate remains in the current elective position. The best case scenario is election to a better position. No ambitious politician would pass on an opportunity like a risk-free special election.

force in state Democratic politics. Webber resigned from Boren's staff to run, and had the full support of his former boss. Support included help with the all important job of fund raising, with Boren shaking the political money trees for his protege.²⁷ Webber, at 27, was the youngest candidate in the field from either party. Webber argued that his experience working with the 1990 farm bill would enable him to step into the job as sixth district representative and immediately be effective. Boren highly recommended his protege, and indicated that he would make an excellent representative (P. English, Greiner, and Hinton 1994).

Boren's extensive knowledge of the state and his network of political contacts gave Webber particular advantages over candidates of both parties, particularly in a truncated special election cycle. There were rumors that Boren scared away other potential candidates to ensure that his protege would receive the nomination²⁸ (Casteel 1994b). Boren, as one of the most powerful, if not the most powerful Democrat in the state, could readily have influenced other candidates not to run.

The only other Democrat brave enough to challenge the might of Boren's influence was former state representative Danny George. George, 41, hails from Elk City, a western Oklahoma town located just north of Interstate 40. George

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Boren never had any trouble raising money for his previous campaigns, and had many contributors to contact on Webber's behalf.

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It is doubtful that Boren ever directly threatened anyone to keep them from running. However, the high visibility of Boren in Webber's campaign was enough to scare all but one of the challengers away.

served in the state legislature from 1984 to 1987, and spent time prior to the election working for the Oklahoma Municipal League.²⁹ George saw agriculture as the most important issue in the race (P. English, Greiner, and Hinton 1994). With Webber and George comprising the Democratic choices, the stage was set for the March 8 primary.

THE MARCH 8 PRIMARY

With all of the candidates identified, the campaigning began in earnest. The important issues included crime and guns, agriculture, and the Clinton health care plan. The Democratic conclusion was forgone, with Webber beating George by a two to one margin. The Republicans had a difficult choice between five very similar candidates. All were conservative, and for voters with Christian Right sympathies, all of the candidates were pro-life, pro-family, and in favor of tax breaks for families.³⁰ In this situation, the choice was not between which candidate was the Christian Right candidate and which was not, but which candidate individual voters would choose, based upon individual decisions. Candidates needed to convince the voters that they had the better skills to be an effective legislator than the others in the field. There was no candidate in the Republican field who was so highly visible that he had a substantial lead, so it

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The Oklahoma Municipal League is a group that helps municipalities in their dealings with each other and with the state and federal government.

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The Republican primary was obviously a winning situation for the Christian Right. No matter who won, there would be a Republican candidate behind which the Christian Right could throw its full support.

was apparent that the primary would only narrow the field to two candidates for the April runoff.

The results of the Republican primary indicated two clear frontrunners, and three also ran. Frank Lucas finished a close second to Brooks Douglass. Douglass captured most of his votes in the more urban areas of the district, while Lucas did better in the rural areas. In Roger Mills county, Lucas's home county, only six of the 355 primary votes were cast for someone other than Lucas.³¹ Pope, Holmes,³² and Carter badly trailed the leading candidates. Obviously Pope's base in Oklahoma and Canadian counties was not as strong as he anticipated, with Douglass beating Pope by wide margins in both counties.³³ The next stage was the runoff.

THE APRIL 5 RUNOFF

Runoffs in Oklahoma are not always as easy for the front runner from the primaries. One notable example is found in the fifth congressional district elections in 1992. The incumbent, Republican Mickey Edwards, badly wounded in the House check scandal, drew four opponents in the August primary.

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Lucas was obviously very popular with the voters at home. He was also popular with voters in other rural counties, gaining a majority or plurality of the vote in fourteen other rural counties. The rural vote enabled Lucas to finish second in the primary.

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Holmes did well in Garfield county, the county in which Enid is located. Douglass won 1,112 of Garfield county's votes, but Holmes was close behind with 1,076 votes.

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The only candidates receiving either majorities or pluralities of the vote in any county were Douglass and Lucas.

Edwards finished third to Bill Price and Ernest Istook. Price had spent the entire primary campaign bashing Edwards and doing little else. But Price was seen by many Republicans as not as conservative as he should have been³⁴. In the runoff, second place finisher Istook outpolled Price by almost 6,000 votes and then won the general election. So finishing second in the primary is not necessarily negative to the runoff campaign.

When candidates hold similar views on as many issues as Douglass and Lucas did, it is necessary to find something else about which to campaign. So, the first dispute concerned who would be the better legislator. Douglass accused Lucas of not being as effective as he was, because Douglass had passed more legislation. Lucas countered that he added many items of concern to his district as amendments to legislation, and that the passage of legislation was not the only criteria by which legislators should be judged. Lucas also argued that his position within the leadership of the House equipped him to be a better legislator than Douglass, because of the experience he gained as a part of House leadership (P. English 1994). But since Douglass was also a part of leadership in the state Senate, Douglass could just as easily argue for his qualifications.

Another area of dispute concerned the issue of endorsements. Tim Pope endorsed Lucas quite soon after his defeat in the primary, stating that Lucas's

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Price would have been a successful Republican in either the eastern or western United States. For Oklahoma, however, Price was much too liberal. The Oklahoma Republican party is very conservative.

rural roots put Lucas in a better position to beat Webber in the general election. Douglass stated that he thought endorsements were not important, and that he and Lucas should concentrate on the race. Pope also stated his intention to campaign for Lucas.³⁵ Pope was the third place finisher behind Douglass and Lucas, and received about ten percent of the votes. Gaining the votes of Pope's supporters would help toward a runoff victory (P. English 1994).

The last issue of debate illustrated the urban-rural conflict within the district. Douglass was from Okarche, a small town in the rural portion of the district. He had since moved to Oklahoma City, and had not lived in rural Oklahoma for some time. Lucas argued that Douglass was out of touch with the rural portion of the district, and would not be able to represent that portion of the district as well as Lucas could. Douglass countered that he had lived in both the rural and urban parts of the district, and would be better able to represent everyone in the district. Obviously both candidates campaigned with a special focus on the areas that were their strengths, Douglass in the urban portion of the district, and Lucas in the rural portion. Lucas argued that the urban-rural dichotomy gave him the advantage, because the rural voters go to the polls

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Pope was obviously well connected to the Christian Right, proved after the election in August 1994 with his prominent place in the celebration at Crossroads Cathedral. Pope's endorsement of Lucas indicated to members of the Christian Right in the Oklahoma City area that Lucas would indeed represent them well. Pope's endorsement was good for Pope's political future as well, because he allied himself with someone influential in Oklahoma politics.

more readily than urban voters (P. English 1994).³⁶ This discussion would reappear in the general election.

April 5 dawned sunny and warm, and voters had no trouble getting to the polls to decide the Republican candidate for the sixth district special election. Turnout was better this time, with about 5,000 more voters than in the primary. However, the second place primary finisher won this time. All of the rural counties except Caddo county voted for Lucas, and Douglass's strong showings in Oklahoma and Canadian counties were not sufficient to overcome the rural vote that went to Lucas. Lucas's home county, Roger Mills, only had two voters of 449 that voted for Douglass.³⁷ The nominees were Republican Frank Lucas and Democrat Dan Webber.

FUNDING AND RUMORS

The next problem, particularly for Lucas, was gathering funds for the general election. Webber, not having to waste money with a runoff, was in better financial shape than Lucas. Once a party's nominee has been decided, the party can reward the victorious political entrepreneur with funding and advice. However, the Republicans, both at the national and state level, saw the

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The voters in the urban portion of the district were still in a state of confusion about the district in which they resided (Casteel 1994a). When this confusion of urban voters was coupled with the higher likelihood of rural voters voting, this gave a slight advantage to the Lucas campaign.

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The rural counties gave strong support to Lucas. Even with the population disparity between the more populous urban counties, the rural vote gave Lucas the victory.

importance of the election, and did what they could to help. House minority whip Newt Gingrich came to Oklahoma on March 25 to hold a fund raiser for fifth district Rep. Ernest Istook, and while in the state participated in a fundraiser the same day for the eventual nominee in the sixth district (*Daily Oklahoman* 1994). With anti-Clinton sentiment running high, Oklahoma's sixth district looked like a possible Republican win.

However, the biggest help Lucas got in the fundraising area came from the state's junior senator, Don Nickles. Nickles is very popular in western Oklahoma, and has enjoyed a solid base of support there in all three of his U.S. Senate campaigns. Nickles is also very well connected to the Christian Right, so any list of Nickles supporters would include members of the Christian Right who had contributed to Nickles's previous campaigns. After Lucas won the primary, Nickles contacted Lucas and made his mailing list of supporters available to Lucas.³⁸ This gave Lucas a much needed boost in fund raising. In addition,

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Nickles's mailing list was a great help to Lucas, because a large amount of money needed to be raised in a short period of time to fund the race between Lucas and Webber (Lucas 1995). Nickles was also strategic in the way he offered help to Lucas. Nickles did not help anyone at the primary election stage. This meant that there would be no hurt feelings among Republicans in the district, as there would have been if Nickles supported someone during the primaries. Thus, Nickles made no enemies, because he waited to support the party's nominee. This illustrates one of the ways that the primary process lessens the influence of political parties. A party cannot support the strongest candidate, or the candidate most loyal to the party, during the primary election process, because the party must wait until the voters decide who the party's nominee will be (Key 1994).

Nickles did all he could to help Lucas, but not in the overt fashion in which Boren was helping Webber (Lucas 1995).³⁹

During this period, events were occurring in Washington, and in Norman, Oklahoma that would change the complexion of the race. In Washington, Senate majority leader George Mitchell announced that he would not seek reelection in November. This announcement brought discussion and jockeying for position as senior Democratic senators considered seeking Mitchell's post. Senator Boren was not among the names being mentioned as a successor to Mitchell. Boren, fairly liberal on social issues, but conservative on economic and defense issues, was not popular with the Senate Democrats with liberal views on the economy, which eliminated him from the running.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, in Norman, the unpopular president of the University of Oklahoma, Richard Van Horn, announced his intention to retire from his position as president and return to teaching in the university's business school.⁴¹ Boren

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Boren's support was more overt because he used his influence to scare candidates away from the primary election. Boren also raised money for Webber. Nickles did not influence the nomination process, but did provide help after the nominee was decided. Also, Nickles made his list of supporters within the sixth district available to Lucas, but Lucas had to solicit the funds (Lucas 1995).

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Boren was reflecting the views of Oklahoma in his views on economic and defense issues. With the retention of Tinker Air Force Base such an important issue to the Oklahoma economy, and the pro-military sentiments of Oklahomans, Boren was merely representing his state.

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Van Horn was unpopular for various reasons, but the chief reason had to be his personality. When Van Horn walked about the university campus, he did not smile, nod

had often stated that he would like to be the president of a university, and negotiations began to bring Boren to Norman as the next president of the University of Oklahoma. In early April, rumors began to fly all over the university campus that Boren would be the new president. Although Boren repeatedly denied that he was resigning from the Senate to take the position in Norman, the gossip at the university was that Boren would be the new president.

An unintended consequence of these rumors fell on Dan Webber. Webber's major source of campaign funds was the supporters of Boren, who figured that with Webber's election, they would have someone in both the House and Senate with whom they would have influence. Oklahoma is a state with a small population, and rumors spread quickly. When it became apparent that Boren was serious about the position in Norman, the money trees Boren had been shaking for Webber (P. English, Greiner and Hinton 1994) stopped dropping money (Lucas 1995).

Webber was low on money at a crucial time in the campaign, and unable to counter the media surge that Lucas was using. The Lucas campaign created a clever commercial that showed Webber as a political opportunist, packing his car and returning to the sixth district of Oklahoma from his Washington job so Webber could run for the House. The commercial touched on both the issues of

or speak to people he encountered. A university president needs to have a personality that interacts well with people, and this was Van Horn's weakness. I observed Van Horn at a political breakfast featuring Nickles in Norman. Van Horn looked more comfortable and animated among the business leaders who were interacting with him at the breakfast than he ever did when I observed him at the university.

urban versus rural representation and also branded Webber as a carpetbagger, coming home to run for office only for his own personal benefit. Because Webber had not lived in the district for more than six years,⁴² and Lucas was operating a family business within the district, this commercial was particularly effective. The commercial again displayed the urban-rural representation issue.

Lucas used other advertising that pointed out the urban-rural issue. The television spots portrayed Lucas, in work clothes, working his farm. Webber tried to counter with a spot that placed him in the rural area, talking to farmers about the farm bill, but even this commercial made Webber look like someone coming from outside the district. The idea of Webber as an outsider was effectively reinforced by the carpetbagger advertisements.⁴³

Another campaign issue was the beginning of a discussion concerning how a representative stays in touch with the district or state that an individual is representing. The issue of residence was first discussed during the Lucas-Webber race, and the discussion continued during the November election.

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Webber actually began living in Oklahoma in the aftermath of the elections. Webber obtained employment as a clerk with a federal judge in Oklahoma City. His son, Joseph, was one of the children who was badly injured in the bombing of the Murrah Building in April 1995.

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The issue of being an Oklahoman, and what constitutes being an Oklahoman, was central to the carpetbagger debate. Webber was certainly not the first ambitious young Oklahoman to seek employment possibilities outside the state, and he would by no means be the last. It is an open question whether spending six years in Washington working for the senior senator from Oklahoma was sufficient to make Webber an outsider. However, the ad campaign was effective, especially in rural Oklahoma.

Lucas, and the other Republican nominees later in the year all stated that they would go to Washington, but their families would stay home in Oklahoma. The candidates argued that they would not be able to represent the district adequately if they did not come home frequently. Fenno (1978) discussed the issue of family residence, and found House members who promoted both approaches to juggling House work and family. In Oklahoma, the argument also seemed partisan, because the families of two Republican members of the House delegation resided in Oklahoma, while the Democratic members and their families resided in the greater Washington area.⁴⁴

BILL CLINTON AND THE ENERGIZING OF THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT

Christian Right interest in congressional elections escalated with the election of Bill Clinton. Clinton was never popular with Christian Right leaders or activists. Members of the Christian Right believed that the character flaws that were so apparent in Clinton's personal life would be reflected in the way he conducted himself in public life. The media portrayed and continues to portray a dichotomous view of human nature that is at odds with the view of human nature held by Christians who are biblical literalists or those who believe in biblical inerrancy, whether of the Fundamentalist or Pentecostal-charismatic affiliation. The argument presented by the media is that an individual's private and public life are two separate issues. According to this argument, it is possible to act one

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The debate over family residence would occur again in the general election, not in the sixth district, but especially in the second and fourth districts.

way in public life and another in private life. Thus, it is possible to be immoral in one's private life and moral in the manner in which one conducts public business. Thus it is possible to make morally correct decisions in the public arena while living an immoral life in private. This explanation is used by the media to excuse immoral behavior in the private lives of many public figures, especially when the immoral behavior involves sex.

This perspective is not shared by Christians who are biblical literalists or believe in biblical inerrancy.⁴⁵ For them, a person behaves in the same manner, whether in public or in private, and it is inconceivable that an individual will not behave in a consistent manner, in all phases of that individual's life. If a person is trustworthy in his or her private life, this will also be apparent in the manner in which that individual behaves in public life. The dichotomous explanation of Bill Clinton's behavior, that he was a good politician but had problems in his personal life, was and continues to be rejected by the Christian Right as impossible. Because Clinton is one person, the way he behaves in his private life will be the same as the way he behaves in his public and political life.⁴⁶

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Most members of the Christian Right are biblical literalists or believe in biblical inerrancy, and Christian Right leadership is definitely biblical literalist or biblical inerrant in belief. Either group believes that the Bible is the final arbiter of both issues of faith and of morals.

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My church is governed by our senior pastor, Zac Nazarian, assisted by an eight member council. The council is all men, because Nazarian uses them as a group to whom he is accountable in all areas of his life. The members of the council are elected for two year terms, and no one serves more than one term. Each year four members of the council are selected, so the council always has experienced members. The members of the

Clinton's actions as governor of Arkansas, including his reputation for extramarital affairs, disqualified him for leadership in the eyes of the Christian Right.⁴⁷ Also, Clinton's actions in the first several months in office both confirmed the fears of the Christian Right leadership and activists, and angered and energized them. The repeal of all of the executive orders prohibiting abortion, the liberal nominees for cabinet and other positions, and the introduction of a new policy regarding gays in the military were the major issues bothering members of the Christian Right.⁴⁸ Christian media, both electronic and

council are not elected, but are selected by the previous council and ratified by the congregation. Every year, on council ratification weekend, Nazarian teaches on the biblical requirements for leadership. He uses as his texts I Timothy 3:1-7 and Acts 6. These texts emphasize the importance of a consistent life. A person who is a leader in the church must be above reproach, in both private and public life, have a stable marriage, be temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, manage the family well, and have a good reputation with outsiders. On ratification weekend, Nazarian asks the congregation if anyone knows any reason why the men selected do not fit the above qualifications, and asks for members of the congregation to report to him if any of the nominees do not meet the standard. Because of the belief that an individual must be viewed holistically, all areas of the nominees's lives are open to scrutiny. These qualifications for leadership are also required of others who are in church leadership (in our church, about 400-500 people are a part of leadership). For members of churches like mine, the argument of a dichotomous public and private life is complete nonsense.

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Clinton's behavior would not have disqualified him for leadership if he had not been vocal in his claims of affiliation with Christianity. Most Christians do not hold nonchristians to Christian standards of behavior, including behavior appropriate for leadership. Clinton, by trumpeting his Christianity invited comparison with Christian leadership standards, and should not have been surprised when this occurred, either during his 1992 election campaign, or during his tenure in office.

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All of these occurrences were predicted by the leadership of the Christian Right prior to the 1992 election. Clinton behaved exactly as expected, and this gave Christian Right leaders the ability to tell Christian voters who voted for Clinton based on his campaign rhetoric, "We told you so!" Christian Right leaders used Clinton's actions to create

print, unleashed a barrage of programming and literature concerning the ungodliness of the decisions of the Clinton administration, and the need to find a way to curb Clinton before he destroyed America. The 1994 midterm elections were a focal point, with much emphasis on the importance of electing individuals who actually represented the people, not the liberal establishment. The special election between Lucas and Webber occurred during the period in which Christian Right leadership was using Christian Right media to communicate the importance of the 1994 elections to the faithful. Therefore, Lucas was the beneficiary of activities by the national Christian Right.

One of these activities was the focus on the importance of Congress in the communications networks of the national Christian Right social movement organizations. The Christian Right had begun the process of nationalizing the 1994 congressional elections during the period of the sixth district special election. Two messages were being transmitted simultaneously. The first was that a Congress with members who were sympathetic to the Christian Right could curb Clinton's excesses.⁴⁹ The second was the creation of a prototypical Christian Right candidate. This candidate was pro-family, attended church, and held Christian Right views. It was also helpful if the candidate had done something other than being a professional politician for his or her whole life, because there was an emphasis on the theme of the citizen legislator. Frank

incentives for political participation in the 1994 midterm elections.

⁴⁹By definition, this would have had to be a Republican Congress.

Lucas fit perfectly with the messages that the national Christian Right leadership was transmitting to the faithful. This was especially important because the sixth district was a prototypical district for Christian Right mobilization.

For example, Clinton's campaign promise of the most moral administration in America's history rang false to the Christian Right, especially the leadership of the Christian Right. It was easy for Christian Right leaders to illustrate the foolishness of this promise to members of the Christian Right when the travel office scandal occurred at the beginning of Clinton's administration. By the time of the 1994 elections, there were sufficient moral failures in the Clinton administration to allow Christian Right leaders to comment on Clinton's personal lack of morality, and how it was reflected in the people he selected for government positions. The immorality of the Clinton administration provided the Christian Right leadership with an incentive for political participation by members of the Christian Right. The incentive was to elect to Congress individuals who shared the Christian Right's concern with moral leadership.

It was easy for Christian Right leadership to demonstrate how unlike the Christian Right Bill Clinton and his administration were. It was obvious to the leaders of the Christian Right that their views on political issues were being ignored by the system, and this provided the means necessary to rally members of the Christian Right to political involvement to counter the Clinton administration. Christian Right leaders engaged in the process of cognitive liberation of members of the Christian Right by illustrating how the Clinton

administration was ignoring their views, and telling them that they needed to assert their rights as citizens and become involved in the political process to counter this situation.⁵⁰

Christian Right commentators on national programs were already beginning to draw composite portraits of the type of person that would best represent conservative Christians in elected positions, both at the national and local level. A good representative would be an individual who was pro-life and pro-family, especially favoring the preeminence of parents in the rearing of their children and tax breaks for families. The representative would also be in favor of a smaller federal government, and less federal government control of daily life. The national leadership of the Christian Right, did not, however especially mention the special election in Oklahoma. But, Frank Lucas perfectly fit the profile of a good representative being portrayed by Christian Right leadership, and Lucas was running in a perfect district for the Christian Right. For leaders of national SMOs, the special election was an Oklahoma issue, and not something that would be discussed in programming that was designed for a nationwide audience.

Senator Boren was never particularly popular with the Christian Right in Oklahoma, because of his liberal stands on social issues. Boren spent his

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This is the same cognitive liberation process described by Piven and Cloward (1979), but with one important difference. The legitimacy of the system was never questioned by the Christian Right leadership. The legitimacy that was questioned was Clinton's moral authority to lead. Christian Right leadership urged involvement in the political system to curb Clinton's illegitimate policy positions.

Senate career acting as a conservative on economic and defense issues and as a liberal on social issues. Boren had supported some of Clinton's very liberal nominees for various cabinet positions, and he had become increasingly unpopular with the Christian Right. While not voting for Joycelyn Elders as Surgeon General because he was attending his daughter's graduation from Yale University, his verbal support of Elders and other nominees reinforced the notion that Boren was not sympathetic to the views of conservative Christians. Webber, as Boren's protege, was viewed with suspicion by the Christian Right.⁵¹ Members of the Christian Right feared that Webber would be as liberal as his mentor on social issues.

Another issue on the ballot statewide at the same time as the sixth district special election was State Question 658. The passage of State Question 658 would form a state lottery. All of the states surrounding Oklahoma have state lotteries, and lottery supporters argued that Oklahoma dollars traveled to neighboring states each time these states had a large jackpot. However, many Christians, both conservative and liberal are opposed to gambling of any sort, including lotteries. As a result, religious groups who were opposed to the lottery were involved in statewide get out the vote efforts. The majority of the rural religious population being conservative Christian, this worked to Lucas's

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As Boren's press secretary, Webber often articulated Boren's views on various issues. Since Boren hired Webber to work for him, it was safe to assume that Webber's views would be similar to Boren's. Congressional staffers usually share the ideological perspectives of their employers.

advantage.⁵² In addition, the Christian Coalition voter guide included the admonition to vote no on the lottery issue in large print at the bottom of the voter guide. This allowed the voter guide to mobilize both anti-lottery voters and Lucas voters. For an individual who received the voter guide and was anti-lottery, the information about the views of Lucas was readily available, and able to influence the voter's decision in the congressional election.

The above example indicates how Christian Right social movement organizations were involved in the election. The Christian Coalition, the specific Christian Right SMO that concerns itself with voter education, was active in the latter stages of the election.⁵³ The largest electoral activity undertaken by the Christian Coalition at the national level is always the creation of the national congressional scorecards and voter guides for the various statewide and congressional races. Because this was a special election, Christian Coalition activities were limited to the voter guides.⁵⁴ A congressional scorecard would

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The old adage that politics makes strange bedfellows was demonstrated in the campaign concerning the lottery. The religious groups were opposed to the lottery, but so was the Oklahoma horse racing community. The racing community believed that the limited number of gambling dollars in Oklahoma should be spent on parimutuel wagering, and that the lottery would draw money from racing. Christians are not in favor of horse racing either, but Christians did not want to see the opportunity to gamble expanded. So, the horsemen and religious groups allied in opposition to the lottery initiative.

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A special election with its truncated campaign period puts the same constraints on social movement and interest group involvement with the election as it does on the candidates. The shorter time period allows less time for issue research and strategic development of campaign issues.

⁵⁴See the Appendix, page 351 for a copy of the sixth district voter guide.

have been useless for the special election, because there was no incumbent in the race. At the time of the special election, the Oklahoma Christian Coalition was not organized. Its coordinator was Bill Caldwell, a Tulsa resident who was only working part time at the task, because he had a full time job (Caldwell 1994). Caldwell did not have an office or any full time help, so the organizational strength of the Oklahoma Christian Coalition was minimal at the time of the special election.

However, the national organization did print voter guides, and about 100 volunteers accomplished the distribution of these guides (Wood 1999). The Oklahoma Christian Coalition claimed that they distributed 100,000 voter guides,⁵⁵ as well as working phone banks to get out the vote. Distributing voter guides means that they were dispersed in groups of 50, 100, 200 or another requested quantity to various churches and Christian organizations in the district. The voter guides are printed and distributed so that they can be in the churches the Sunday before the election. When the voter guides are distributed in the church bulletin of a church in which the pastor is urging the congregation to vote, they provide the necessary information about the candidates with little effort exerted on the part of the voter (Downs 1957). The voter guides were the usual blunt affair that all SMOs of both right and left use, illustrating the issues in a

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Distribution of voter guides means that they are delivered to churches and various other locations that request them. Since the voter guides are half sheets of 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper, they fit nicely as an insert in a church bulletin. Some churches allow someone to place the voter guides on all of the windshields of the cars in the parking lot.

simplistic fashion that does not allow for discussion or nuanced answers (Bednar and Hertzke 1995). The voter guides made Lucas look conservative, and Webber look liberal. The issues that were selected were all Christian Right or conservative hot button issues, including abortion, gays in the military, gun control, and tax breaks for families. Gun control is not necessarily a Christian Right issue, but it is a conservative issue, and since Christian Coalition voter guides are designed to bifurcate candidates into dichotomous liberal and conservative groups, gun control would be in the mix of issues included.⁵⁶ In addition to influencing the special election, these voter guides gave the Christian Coalition a chance to see which issues would be effective for the general election in November.

The average population in a House district is about 545,000, and the number of eligible voters probably closer to 200,000 to 300,000. So, the distribution of 100,000 voter guides could make a significant difference in the outcome of the election. Even if all of the voter guides were not distributed, the guides reached a substantial number of the voters in the district. With every small town having a First Baptist Church, it is likely that most of the voter guides were distributed. With the linkage of the lottery initiative to the special election on the voter guides, Christian Right voters were being mobilized on the basis of two issues. The mobilization of these voters could only be helpful to Lucas.

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Ralph Reed, then head of the national Christian Coalition, never addresses the issue of gun control in either of his books (Reed 1993, 1994).

THE SPECIAL ELECTION OUTCOME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

On May 8, the sixth district elected its new representative. Frank Lucas's election evened the Oklahoma House delegation at three Republicans and three Democrats. Lucas carried all but five of the twenty four counties in the district. Lucas even carried Canadian county, which is adjacent to Oklahoma county and has a significant suburban population. Lucas received 54.2% of the vote, while Webber received 45.8%. Lucas continued to receive strong support in Roger Mills county, his home county, receiving 80% of the vote there. Because Lucas was elected in a special election, as soon as the results were certified by the governor, Lucas was on his way to Washington to be sworn in as the new sixth district representative.

While the Christian Right certainly had a role in the outcome of the special election in the sixth district, it can only be viewed as one of several factors that led to the Republican victory. The anti-Clinton sentiment in Oklahoma must be considered, and the Republican candidate was the beneficiary of this sentiment. Campaign expertise was also a factor, with both candidates availing themselves of the best they could afford. The Christian Right's role in the campaign was to reenforce what many people in the district believed, that Clinton was too liberal and not fit to lead and a Republican victory was the best way to curb Clinton's influence. The Oklahoma Christian Coalition, however, saw the election in retrospect as where their political success began, and called the outcome in the special election the catalyst for the rest of the 1994 victories (Wood 1999).

The role of Senator Boren is also an interesting factor. It is an open question whether Webber would have been a more attractive candidate if Boren had been seen as dedicated to completing his Senate term. With Boren's previous remarks that he would love to be a university president common knowledge, and the presidency of the University of Oklahoma as the most prestigious and important university presidency in the state, Boren's denial of rumors did not seem convincing. Since money is so important in congressional campaigns, the rumors concerning Boren's resignation were particularly unfortunate in their effect of causing Webber's campaign contributions to slacken. Boren's decision in this matter was important not only in Lucas's victory; but Boren's possible departure had a great impact on the primary and general elections to come. Boren's decision as a political entrepreneur in a decentralized, entrepreneurial, candidate centered political environment created a ripple that impacted the decisions of several other political entrepreneurs of both parties.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE 1994 CONGRESSIONAL PRIMARIES IN OKLAHOMA A WINDOW TO THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT ROLE

ANOTHER RESIGNATION CREATED POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES

This work is an exploration of how a social movement and its organizations intersect with the electoral process. However, the decisions of individuals created political opportunity structures on which political entrepreneurs and organizations seeking to impact the political process could capitalize. For any social movement, including the Christian Right, the political opportunity structures must be present to allow the movement to become involved with, and impact the political process. If the 1994 congressional races all had involved incumbents defending their seats, the opportunity structures upon which the Christian Right capitalized would not have existed. After a two and one half month period of rumors and denials, which contributed to a lost house seat for the Democrats, senior Senator David Boren announced his resignation on June 22, 1994, with an effective date of November 15, 1994. Boren's resignation, the action of a political entrepreneur who decided that his career options looked better outside the realm of politics, created the first unexpected political opportunity. Boren's resignation meant that a special election would be necessary, and thus involved Governor David Walters. Walters, a Democrat, had two choices in determining Boren's replacement. He could call a special election to fill Boren's seat after his resignation became effective, or he could incorporate the special election necessary to fill Boren's

seat within the context of the already scheduled congressional elections.

Walters chose the second approach, and the 1994 elections now included a special election to fill the last two years of Boren's unexpired term.¹

Walters's decision to incorporate this election within the 1994 general election had consequences for the structure of the political opportunities presented and process of candidate emergence. If Walters had called a special election in early 1995 to fill the seat, any of the newly reelected members of Congress would have had a risk free chance at a Senate seat. Two of the political opportunities upon which the Christian Right capitalized, the open seat races that are a part of this study, would not have happened. However, Walters's choice meant that running for Boren's seat was a chance to become a senator, but also a chance to lose not only that election, but one's House seat as well. Two political entrepreneurs from the Oklahoma delegation, Democrat Dave McCurdy from the fourth district, and Republican Jim Inhofe from the first district, decided to take the risk and run for the Senate seat. Both won their primaries, and moved into a hotly contested general election race. Their decisions meant

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One reason that Walters may have chosen to incorporate the special election to fill Boren's unexpired term with the already scheduled election was cost. A statewide special election is costly. If the special election to fill Boren's unexpired term elevated a member of the U.S. House of Representatives to the Senate, another special election would then be necessary to replace the House member. And, if the House special election elevated a member of the state legislature to the U.S. House, then another special election would be necessary. Incorporation of the special election with the 1994 general election eliminated the problems and expense that multiple special elections would have caused.

that the first and fourth districts were now wide open, and other political entrepreneurs who would not have challenged the incumbents took the opportunity to run for the open seats.² These two open seat races were among the surprises during the 1994 election.

TWO TYPES OF CHRISTIAN RIGHT?

By late June 1994, the political opportunities created by the decisions of several individuals set the stage for the congressional primaries, including the two open seat races that no one thought would be open seat races even a month prior to June. The success of Christian Right candidates in the primaries led to the 1994 election results, which changed the Oklahoma delegation to a five Republican, one Democrat configuration. In addition to the dramatic partisan transformation, the Republican portion of the delegation also votes uniformly with the Christian Right.³ To understand this transformation, we must explore the

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In addition, the entire study of the role of the Christian Right in the congressional elections in Oklahoma would not have been as significant without the decisions of McCurdy and Inhofe to seek the Senate seat. The Christian Right would have worked for Inhofe's reelection in the first district. Inhofe's sister, Joanne Johnson is a long time Republican activist and affiliated with the Christian Right (Farmer 1994). However, whatever occurred in a safe reelection campaign would not have been particularly interesting. In the fourth district, McCurdy was viewed as a safe incumbent (Copeland 1994), so the likelihood of a competitive race was small. Without a competitive race, Christian Right activity would not have made an interesting study either. The only significant Christian Right activity would have been in the second district.

3

It is possible to argue that the Republican portion of the delegation was uniformly Christian Right after the 1994 election with the exception of fifth district Rep. Ernest Istook. Because Istook is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon), he does not draw support in the same way from the Christian Right that the other members of the delegation do. Istook is always portrayed in a positive fashion on

dynamics of the process by which candidates emerged and were victorious. A critical phase that led to this transformation was the nomination of candidates in selected Republican and Democratic primaries that demonstrated the evolving role of the Christian Right in Oklahoma.

To understand the turnaround in the Oklahoma congressional delegation, it is important to explore the role of the Christian Right in the election. The Christian Right provided several important components to the Oklahoma congressional elections. The first was candidates, who took their experience with and observation of entrepreneurial leadership from the realm of the church to the political world. In each Republican primary, there was a least one candidate affiliated with the Christian Right. There was also campaign expertise provided by the political entrepreneurs affiliated with the Christian Right, as well as a host of volunteers.

In addition, the second district Oklahoma primary had two distinct Christian Rights working within the political process. One Christian Right was sophisticated, and understood the political process and what had to be done to win an election. The other was rustic, and did not understand much about the political process. Its members did not understand the necessity of coalitions, both within the party and with individuals who agreed on some, but not all,

congressional voting scorecards produced by the various Christian Right organizations, because he votes in agreement with Christian Right positions. But because the Mormons are still considered a cult by Evangelical Christianity, especially the Fundamentalist and Pentecostal-charismatic portions of Evangelical Christianity, Istook cannot really be considered a member of the Christian Right.

issues.⁴ They did not understand the limits under which Christian Right social movement organizations must operate.⁵ The existence of two distinct Christian Rights and how they worked within the political system allows us to understand the outcome of the primaries, and ultimately, the general election.

WHY STUDY PRIMARIES?

What makes the study of primary elections important? Since candidates are no longer selected by a party dominated nomination process, candidates must be selected through primary elections. This means that candidates must be entrepreneurial leaders who are willing to take the risk of running, work to organize a campaign, raise funds, and attract and motivate supporters. There are several different types of primaries. Some are for open seats, and these are the most competitive, and draw the best challengers. Some are hopeless

4

Members of the rustic Christian Right would never have understood the alliance between the churches and the horse racing interests that occurred during the vote on State Question 658 that attempted to establish a state lottery in Oklahoma (which coincided with the Lucas-Webber race). The horse racing interests would definitely have been a group with which the rustic Christian Right would never have dreamed of being allied, because of their obvious support of the ungodly practice of gambling. The notion that politics makes strange bedfellows is not comprehensible to the rustic Christian Right, because an alliance with an impure group would then taint the Christians.

5

The rustic Christian Right could not understand why Christian Right social movement organizations could not provide endorsements and financial support. Their lack of sophistication (and political knowledge), made them unaware of the constraints under which the Christian Right social movement organizations, as 501(c) tax entities, were forced to operate. This lack of knowledge made some members of the rustic Christian Right feel disappointed that Christian Right SMOs did not do enough to help them (Cooper 1995).

challenges of a secure incumbent. Others are challenges to a vulnerable incumbent. Still others are primaries for the opposite party in which the incumbent looks vulnerable (Herrnson 1995). From all of these scenarios, an eventual nominee is selected.

Primaries, like general elections, are candidate centered. In fact, the state party organizations in Oklahoma, as well as the national party organizations, must stay out of the primary process.⁶ The primary is the time for the candidate to prove to the party that he or she is capable of creating a campaign organization and winning an election. Help from the state and national parties is forthcoming upon nomination, if the state and national party organizations deem the candidate worthy of assistance.⁷ Therefore, anything

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Clinton Key, chair of the Oklahoma Republican party, indicated that party noninvolvement with the primaries was absolutely necessary. It was acceptable for the party to recruit candidates, and convince them to participate in the primaries, but no help would come from the party until a candidate became the nominee (Key 1994). It is apparent that if any party becomes involved during the primary process, it is detrimental to the party. While the candidate that the party favors would probably win the nomination, the candidates who did not receive help from the party could easily feel rejected by the party. No political party wants to create negative feelings among party members, and the best way to make sure that no feelings are hurt is to take a hands-off approach to the primaries.

7

Being worthy of assistance usually has to do with two factors. First is the competitiveness of the district. If the party's nominee in a district does not have a remote chance of winning, the party will not waste resources on that nominee. This is especially true in years when the state and national parties only have limited amounts of money. The other factor is the nominee. If the nominee behaves in a manner that indicates to the party that the money spent would be a waste, the nominee will not get much help. If the party has a surplus of money in any given year, marginal nominees are more likely to receive money than in years when money is tight.

that helps with securing the nomination is important to the candidate. The members of the Christian Right were involved in providing volunteers, funds, and expertise that made several of the victories possible.

CANDIDATE EMERGENCE

In exploring the special election, the candidate emergence process was briefly discussed. Discussions of candidate emergence encompass several factors that must be considered to explain who decides to run for Congress and why they do it. Since leaders of political parties no longer determine the party's nominees for various offices, political scientists have explored the issue of candidate emergence and developed a candidate centered model. In the candidate centered model, the potential candidate is a political entrepreneur, with the success or failure of the campaign the responsibility of the candidate. The decisions of individuals to become political candidates based on their perceptions, comprise the heart of the candidate centered model. The important aspects that enter into candidate emergence issues are the ambition of the individual for a political office, the particular circumstances that are involved in the race⁸ in which the individual is interested and the national forces at the time

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The particular circumstances of the Oklahoma primaries made the decisionmaking process to enter the first and fourth district primaries more like a special election than a normal primary. The filing period for the Oklahoma general election is the first Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday after July 4. Boren's official announcement coming in late June, and Walters' decision to incorporate the special election into the general election also occurring in late June, made for a very brief period in which to decide whether or not to run. Usually, potential candidates spend the end of the previous year and the spring of the election year assessing the electoral situation and deciding whether

the individual is making the decision to become a candidate. Influential individuals from within the party structure can also have a role in influencing promising individuals to run, but more extensive involvement occurs only after the nomination is secured. However, party operatives understand the entrepreneurial nature of candidate centered politics, and only attempt to influence to run those individuals who display the potential for entrepreneurial leadership.

Political ambition is the first explanation that political scientists used as the candidate centered model began to develop. Barber (1965) and Schlesinger (1966) incorporated the idea of political ambition into their discussions of political careers. As time passed, the idea of ambition was further refined to encompass the notion of strategic ambition (Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Bianco 1984). Proponents of the notion of strategic ambition argue that those who decide to run for office assess the situation and only decide to run when the circumstances are strategically right to allow them to have a chance of being elected. Strategic ambition emphasizes the rationality of potential candidates, and their ability to judge when the time is right to run. However, the notion of ambition, even modified to strategic ambition, is not sufficient to judge how successful a candidate will be. The problem with using strategic ambition as the only factor by which to judge candidates is that strategic ambition is coupled with individual

or not to run. For Boren's Senate seat, and the first and fourth district congressional seats, the decision to run had to be made quickly.

perceptions of the political environment. Individual perceptions may not be correct, and an objective observer might not see the same strategic context that the ambitious individual sees.⁹

Misperceptions by ambitious individuals demonstrate the need to add other factors to the assessment of the emergence of candidates actually capable of winning a congressional election (Bond, Covington, and Fleisher 1985). In addition to strategic ambition, the factor of candidate quality is added. The idea of what makes a quality candidate, or quality challenger, at the congressional level includes previous political experience and the ability to raise the funds necessary. Canon (1990) notes that high profile individuals, such as actors, athletes,¹⁰ and astronauts, can enter a political race and do as well or better than experienced politicians. Canon's research points to the importance of name recognition, the hurdle that many ambitious individuals are never able to cross in their quest for office. Canon (1993) adds another classification to the notion of

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In the cases of Boren's vacant Senate seat, and the open seats in the first and fourth district the time was never going to be better to run for these seats. With incumbency as a norm in congressional election, and the advantages of being an incumbent and running for reelection well known, any time there is an open seat is a strategic time for an ambitious individual to run for Congress.

¹⁰

The high profile athletes included the eventual Republican nominees for the first district, NFL great Steve Largent, and J.C. Watts, a former University of Oklahoma quarterback who played professional football in Canada. Jack Mildren, another former University of Oklahoma quarterback, was the Democratic nominee for governor. Even though Watts and Mildren were not nationally recognized athletes, in Oklahoma, being a former Sooner quarterback makes one a recognized athlete.

candidate quality, the classification of amateurs as ambitious¹¹ or experience seeking. Canon argues that ambitious amateurs evaluate the political situation and decide to run only when the chance to win is good. An experience seeking amateur would run just because he or she decided it would be a good idea, with little concern about the mechanics of running and funding a campaign. The Oklahoma races included high profile athletes, ambitious amateurs, and experience seeking amateurs.

The particular circumstances of the individual race and the situation of the potential candidate also impact the decision to run. An individual may be consumed with political ambition, but only the most naive run when there is a strong incumbent who looks unbeatable. The Oklahoma primaries discussed here attracted the variety of challengers because there were circumstances that indicated that victory might be possible. Two open seats made political opportunities look particularly good for those who coveted a trip to Washington.

In addition, national factors, coupled with the situation in Oklahoma, indicated that 1994 was an excellent time to run, especially for ambitious Republicans. President Clinton was not popular in Oklahoma, and did not carry

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Tom Coburn, the eventual Republican nominee, would be classed as an ambitious amateur. Coburn was well connected to the state Republican party, and allied with Sen. Nickles. The Republicans had been targeting the second district incumbent Mike Synar, for some time. Coburn was carefully recruited, and his selection of campaign staff indicates that Coburn was more than an experience seeking amateur. Coburn's first campaign manager Rick Farmer, had been a candidate for state Republican party chair and lived in the district. Coburn's other campaign manager, Carl Alhgren, was Nickles' field coordinator for the area comprising the second congressional district.

the state in the 1992 election. Oklahoma is also a conservative state, part of the Bible belt, and has many born again Christians as a part of the electorate (Bednar and Hertzke 1995). Executive orders by the Clinton administration on abortion and fetal tissue research, the actions on gays in the military, and the advocacy of gun control were extremely unpopular in Oklahoma. Since Clinton's election, special elections had been going to Republican candidates across the country, and the victory of Republican Frank Lucas in the sixth district was part of the trend. National factors indicated that 1994 would be an excellent year for Republicans.

The Oklahoma Republican party had been in the process of developing into a viable party for some time, with the goal of making Oklahoma a two party state. One of the most influential forces within the party is Senator Don Nickles, who was elected in 1980 in the Reagan landslide. Nickles was able to communicate with all factions of the party, from the conservative and religious Christian Right to the country club Republicans¹² in Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Nickles has been active in developing the party, and has former staffers distributed in various positions throughout the state. Nickles was active in the

¹²

Country club Republicans refers to Republicans who have been affiliated with the party for a long time, and the reason that they are Republicans is because of their economic status. They are not as interested in social issues as the Christian Right, but are extremely interested in economic issues, especially tax issues. The country club Republicans and the Christian Right Republicans do not mix well, because the issues important to each group are significantly different.

candidate emergence process, particularly in encouraging individuals to become candidates.¹³

Another important actor in Republican politics in Oklahoma is Tom Cole. Cole, former executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee, is now in Oklahoma full time and has a consulting firm that works with promising Republican candidates at the congressional and statewide level. Cole is a former chair of the state Republican party, and is extremely knowledgeable about Oklahoma politics. Cole was also involved in the candidate emergence process that led to the primary elections.¹⁴ Coincidentally, Cole was also the political consultant for all of the victorious Republican members of the House except fifth district Rep. Istook. Istook established an in-house campaign structure after his victory in the 1992 election, and decided to continue to use what worked in the past.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Republican party in Oklahoma has developed a strong Christian Right component during the most recent manifestation of Christian Right activity, the period beginning in the late 1970s. One evidence of Christian Right

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Both Largent (1995) and Coburn (1995) reported that they received phone calls from Nickles encouraging them to run.

¹⁴

Cole also talked to the eventual nominees in the first, second, and fourth districts, and offered them encouragement to run, and advice how to win (Cole 1994). So Cole recognized the political opportunities that the 1994 congressional races presented, and worked to capitalize on those opportunities.

development in Oklahoma was in 1988, when Pat Robertson activated the Christian Right to fuel his 21% showing in the Oklahoma presidential primary. Many of Robertson's supporters have remained active in the party (Van Ness 1990). Candidates who are members of the Christian Right, or who hold issue positions favored by the Christian Right are able to find support among Christian Right party activists. Each Republican primary discussed in this article had at least one member of the Christian Right running for the nomination.

The existence of a Democrat affiliated with the Christian Right was one of the surprises of the year. The Christian Right is normally linked to the Republican party. However, many of the Reagan Democrats who voted Republican in presidential elections in the 1980s could be classified as Christian Right. The emergence of a Christian Right Democrat could indicate that Christian Right movement into the Republican party is not complete.¹⁵

Primary elections set the stage for the general elections that follow. Oklahoma, like the rest of the South, has for most of its history been a one party state. The winners of general elections were usually determined in the Democratic primaries, while the Republican primaries were either nonexistent or irrelevant. The 1994 primaries were different, because quality Republican

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The existence of a Christian Right Democrat was also an illustration that there were still conservative Democrats who did not hold the liberal views of their party, especially on issues such as abortion. After the 1994 election, conservative Democratic Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama switched parties and became a Republican. Whether Democrats affiliated with the Christian Right remain Democrats, or do what Richard Shelby and other conservative Democrats have done, and become Republican, remains to be seen.

candidates emerged. The fifth district did not have a primary. The incumbent, Republican Ernest Istook did not draw a primary challenger. In the third district, Democrat Bill Brewster had a primary opponent, but he outpolled him by a three to one margin. Istook did not even draw a Democratic opponent, and Brewster drew an obscure Republican who was unknown even to the state Republican party and they could not locate him (Key 1994). Newly elected Republican Frank Lucas in the sixth district did not draw a Republican primary opponent, and the Democratic primary was comprised of three extremely weak challengers. There were, however, four primaries that were particularly important to the eventual outcome of the elections, and these were the Republican primaries in the first, second, and fourth districts and the Democratic primary in the second district. All of these primaries demonstrated various levels and types of Christian Right involvement.¹⁶

THE FIRST DISTRICT

The first congressional district of Oklahoma is the most compact district in the state. It encompasses Tulsa county, which contains Tulsa, the second largest city in Oklahoma, and a portion of Wagoner county that contains

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Sophisticated Christian Right involvement was evident in all Republican races, but rustic Christian Right activities were limited to the second district. Perhaps the rural nature of the second district, and its location in the portion of the state with a political culture with some southern influence explains the existence of the rustic Christian Right there, and nowhere else. The only other district likely to have a rustic Christian Right was the third district, but the third district had an incumbent Democrat running for reelection.

suburban areas that are a part of the Tulsa standard metropolitan statistical area. Unlike any other district in the state, it is easy to campaign in the first district without spending time away from home or spending a large portion of the day driving to and from campaign events. The first district became an open seat primary because the incumbent, Republican James Inhofe, decided not to run for reelection as first district representative, and set his sights on the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate seat. The first district is one of two Oklahoma congressional districts in which Republican voter registration outnumbers Democratic registration (the other is the fifth). The outcome of the Republican primary is very important, and an open seat looked very attractive to ambitious individuals who were waiting for an opportunity to run for Congress. There was no Democratic primary in the district, and a lone Democrat, Stuart Price, would face the winner of the Republican primary in November.

The first district of Oklahoma is the home to several large Pentecostal and charismatic Christian ministries. Notable among these are Oral Roberts University, Kenneth Hagin's Rhema Church and Bible Training Center, and Willie George's Church on the Move and related children's ministries, including the Gospel Bill television program. Roberts and Hagin also have successful television ministries.¹⁷ These organizations are conservative, and Wald, Owen,

¹⁷

The radio and television ministries of Hagin and Roberts are in the format of preaching and teaching, not social movement communication. However, they preach that abortion is biblically unacceptable. They also teach that homosexuals can be forgiven, but they must not be sexually active, just as heterosexual Christians must not be sexually active except when they are married. The religious teachings of these ministries is identical to

and Hill (1988; 1990) argue that churches are political communities that are politically cohesive. By any classification, these organizations must be identified as a part of the Christian Right. Since the theological message of these organizations is either biblical literalist or biblical inerrancy, the political message will be conservative, especially on issues like abortion and homosexuality. The message of political involvement has permeated these organizations, and a candidate that can appeal to them will attract votes.

Since an open seat is a rare occurrence, six ambitious individuals decided to test the waters as Republican congressional candidates.¹⁸ The remarkable thing was that five of the candidates were quality candidates (Bond, Covington and Fleisher 1985), who had political experience and some level of name recognition among Tulsa Republicans. Paula Unruh, a former state party chair, Joan Hastings, a former state legislator and current Tulsa county clerk, Dick Crawford, the former mayor of Tulsa, Rob Johnson, a former state legislator, and Richard Bunn, a local Republican activist, all decided that this was their opportunity to run for Congress.¹⁹ All of these individuals knew how complicated

the message being received from the Christian Right SMOs.

¹⁸

Since the first district is Republican in voter registration, it is a logical place to draw many ambitious Republicans for an open seat race.

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Richard Bunn, the local Republican activist, is of the five the most tenuous one to be classified as a quality candidate. As an activist, he had been involved with local Republican politics, but never actually run for office. The other four, except Paula Unruh, had all run for elective office and won at least once. Paula Unruh, as a former state party chair, had run for office among Republicans to become state chair. The experience of running for office teaches an individual things that cannot be learned by

it was to run a successful campaign, and all had the ability to build the candidate centered organization that is necessary to run a contemporary congressional campaign (Salmore and Salmore 1989; Hermson 1995). But it was a sixth candidate, Steve Largent, an ambitious amateur in Canon's (1993) scheme, who did what looked to be impossible. In a field of six quality challengers, Largent was able to obtain over 50% of the vote in the primary election and avoid a runoff.

Largent fits well with Canon's (1990) exploration of athletes and others who run for office, because Largent had immediate name recognition due to his athletic achievements. Largent attended the University of Tulsa, a private university located in the heart of Tulsa, and made a name for himself there as a football star. Largent then played wide receiver for the Seattle Seahawks of the National Football League. During Largent's professional career, he gained national attention by setting six all time NFL receiving records.²⁰ In addition to all of the national media attention that Largent received, the major Oklahoma newspapers publicize the achievements of professional athletes with Oklahoma connections. To argue that Largent far and away led the field of candidates in name recognition is an understatement. Since many candidates spend large

observation. Running a winning campaign is even better experience.

²⁰

While most of Largent's NFL records have been broken, the records were sufficient to get him inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame. Of the 1994 freshman class in the House of Representatives, only the late Sonny Bono had greater nationwide name recognition than Largent.

sums of money to boost name recognition, Largent began one step ahead of the crowd because he did not have to create name recognition, his football superstar status gave it to him (Canon 1990).

In addition, and equally important, Largent is well connected within Evangelical Christianity. Largent had been active before, during and since his professional career with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, first as a participant in their youth program and later in their youth evangelization efforts.²¹ Largent also participates in various evangelistic efforts. In August 1994, right after the primary runoff, Steve Russo held a youth crusade in Norman, and Largent was the celebrity guest on the first night of the crusade.²²

21

Largent has spoken at Fellowship of Christian Athletes youth events for many years. Fellowship of Christian Athletes works with athletes at the high school, college and professional level. For example, the University of Oklahoma allows its facilities to be used by various athletic groups to provide summer athletic camps. Fellowship of Christian Athletes arranges chapel services at such events. They also hold Bible studies and prayer group meetings for college and professional teams.

22

The Steve Russo Crusade was geared toward reaching youth, especially high school age, with the message of Christianity. The crusade had obviously been planned for some time, and Largent was invited because of his record setting play in the NFL with the Seattle Seahawks, not because he was the Republican nominee for Congress in the First District.

Watching Largent interact with the crowd, I was struck with his ability to connect with his audience, and how rapidly he was able to do so. His message was completely apolitical. He talked about his difficult childhood, parents divorced at 6, mom remarried when he was 10 to an alcoholic stepfather. Home was pretty bad, so he used any opportunity to get out of the house. When he was a sophomore in high school, he was invited to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes meeting. Not long after that, he went to a revival at a Southern Baptist Church. Until then, he characterized his relationship with God as a football card relationship, he knew about God, but had no relationship with God. He told the kids that none of his receptions in the NFL was more important than when he received Christ as his savior.

Largent is also connected to two of the major Christian Right SMO leaders at the national level, Pat Robertson and James Dobson. Largent has appeared on Robertson's *700 Club* television show and Dobson's Focus on the Family radio program. Robertson and Dobson have huge followings among members of the Christian Right. When appearing on Christian media, Largent combines talk of his Christian faith with the language of cognitive liberation (McAdam 1982; Piven and Cloward 1979) that begins with a loss of faith in the system, moves from a fatalistic acceptance of this situation to anger and the asserting of citizen rights, to political action and efficacy. Largent talks about the godlessness of the system in Washington, and the need to send godly people to Washington to counter the ungodly things happening there. Largent does not rant and rave, but speaks in a manner that inspires the listeners, and makes them believe that they can really make a difference. People believing that they can make a difference is an excellent example of efficacy.

Largent attends a nondenominational Fundamentalist church that is centered in the five precincts that have the greatest percentage of Republican registered voters in Tulsa. His children also attend Christian school, which is an additional link to the Christian Right. Via church and his children's school,

The most notable thing about watching Largent was the way he spoke and how he carried himself. Largent is a physically handsome man, and he speaks well. Knowing that Largent has done a lot of work for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, it is no surprise that he was at home speaking to a crowd. He spoke without notes, was able to remember what he said, and did not stumble while delivering his message. I observed that he connected with the audience better than the main speaker, Russo, did.

Largent has contacts within the local Christian Right community. In addition, people that knew Largent from his church and his children's school were people who could be motivated to work for his campaign.²³

Largent also possesses personal characteristics that make him a formidable opponent. He is extremely personable, and able to communicate well whether he is in a one on one interview, small group, or large gathering. He is also photogenic and telegenic. The city editor for the *Tulsa World* claims that it is impossible to take a bad picture of Largent. Many of Largent's views, particularly on abortion, are much more conservative than the views of others in his district, but he is so personable that he is able to charm and disarm many of these voters and gain their support (W. Green 1995). Largent made a perfect candidate for the media driven era in which campaigns are now conducted.

Exploring Largent's decisionmaking process demonstrates his connections to the Christian Right. When the open seat opportunity presented itself, Largent and his wife fasted and prayed for ten days to obtain direction as to whether or not he should run. Largent also consulted with his pastor and others in his church.²⁴ During this period Senator Nickles called Largent twice

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When visiting Largent's campaign headquarters, I spoke with a woman who attended Largent's church. She stated that she volunteered because she knew Largent from church and knew he would represent her well in Washington. Mike Willis, Largent's volunteer coordinator stated that many volunteers came from Largent's church (Willis 1994).

²⁴

Largent displayed that his perspective is either that of a biblical literalist or a believer in biblical inerrancy in his decisionmaking process about running for the House. Fasting

and strongly urged him to run (Largent 1995). This is another example of Nickles's influence in the congressional races in 1994.²⁵ Also, since Nickles called Largent and urged him to run proves that Largent was known in Republican circles as well.

After Largent made the decision to run, he assembled a paid campaign staff that was heavy in experience and expertise. He hired Terry Allen, a longtime political entrepreneur whose last position was as the director of the Resource Institute of Oklahoma, a family policy council affiliated with Dobson's Focus on the Family organization. Allen had taught classes in grassroots campaign techniques for Focus, and must be identified as a part of the Christian Right.²⁶ Largent gave Allen the opportunity to put his skills to use, and also gave

and prayer is a traditional method of seeking God's will within all of Christianity, not just Fundamentalist and Pentecostal-charismatic Christians. But the coupling of prayer and fasting with seeking pastoral counsel for a clearly secular decision marks Largent as a biblical literalist. Largent relaying this account of his decisionmaking process to other members of the Christian Right also communicates to them the idea that Largent believed that God called him to run for Congress. Within the Christian Right, being obedient to what God calls you to do is very important, and would increase Largent's credibility among both leaders and members of the Christian Right.

²⁵

Nickles obviously knew Largent, knew his strengths, especially in a media-driven campaign, and knew he would be an excellent candidate. Since one of Nickles' goals is to strengthen the Republican party in Oklahoma, encouraging someone who would be a good nominee is something Nickles would do. In addition, with the short period between the seat becoming open and the filing period, it was essential for Nickles to find someone who would easily be able to raise the necessary funds to keep the first district seat safely Republican.

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In addition, Allen had worked in Washington for other members of Congress (Willis 1994). Allen is an example of someone who is clearly affiliated with the Christian Right who has also been active in Washington and grassroots politics. While Allen may or

him the resources to run a first class campaign. In addition, Tom Cole was retained as a political consultant for the campaign. Largent stated that he hired Allen because of his expertise at grassroots campaigns, and Cole because he understood Oklahoma politics better than anyone else (Largent 1995).

One great advantage that Largent had was the ability to raise money. It is impossible to run a modern congressional campaign without sufficient funds. Herrnson (1995) argues that congressional campaigns have changed since the 1970s, and now must be more professional if the candidate is to succeed. Funding provides the backbone for a professional campaign. Funds allow the hiring of professional campaign staff, telephones, computers, consultants, media, and for polling (Salmore and Salmore 1989).²⁷ For Oklahoma, 1994 was a very different year politically, with competitive primaries in several congressional races, and many statewide races. As a result, fundraising was a difficult process for many candidates. Largent retained his contacts in the Seattle area, and was able to raise campaign funds from Seattle as well as in Oklahoma.

Allen devised a campaign strategy that allowed Largent to maximize his already high name recognition and build upon it. Allen obtained data from the Oklahoma State Election Board for all of the precincts in the district. Using this

may not have political ambitions himself, he definitely has skills and connections that are helpful to a Christian Right candidate who would hire him.

²⁷

Congressional campaigns are expensive. Largent won his primary race because he had funds at the early stage of the race that allowed him to purchase the expertise he needed to run his campaign. In the 1990s, the cost of congressional campaigns has risen, and it is not unusual for a candidate to spend a million dollars or more to win a House seat.

data, an analysis was performed to determine the 100 most Republican precincts. Precinct captains were appointed for 80 of the 100 precincts, and these precincts were worked systematically. The first order of business was a blind identification poll, with volunteers calling all registered Republicans in each of these precincts and asking who the individual favored for the congressional nomination. In addition, the respondents were asked what the three most important issues were for them, and asked to rank the issues.²⁸ The data obtained from this poll was fed into a computer, and letters from Largent were produced addressing the issue most important to the respondent.²⁹ Every respondent who stated that he or she was undecided was visited personally. Largent himself walked the 10 precincts with the greatest number of Republicans. Another campaign tactic involved volunteers calling various Republicans in the district and asking if they wanted to have Largent as a guest for coffee at their home. This was a very successful tactic and Largent did two such coffees per week (Willis 1994).³⁰

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The respondents were allowed to choose the issues that were important to them, they were not given a choice from a set of issues articulated by the caller. Issues that were important to the respondent could have been anything from economic, tax, social or foreign policy issues.

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Obviously Allen had helped Largent to articulate his position on a variety of issues, and composed letters that addressed the issues that the phone respondents would identify.

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Largent's primary campaign was facilitated by computer technology. Computer technology is advancing at such a rapid rate that the things that Largent's campaign accomplished via computer would not have been possible in previous elections. Largent's campaign had up-to-date computers, with software modified to meet the

A grassroots campaign of this type would not have been possible without an army of volunteers. Sabato (1988) argues that one of the weaknesses of the Republican party is that they must often pay for services that Democrats have volunteers perform. Christian Right involvement provides the volunteers that Republican campaigns often lack. In addition, having plentiful volunteers allows precious campaign funds to be spent on media, rather than on tasks that volunteers could perform. The Largent campaign had over 300 volunteers working during the primary, many of whom were affiliated with a church. Regular church attendance is a part of the Christian Right subculture, and there are several behaviors learned by attending church that carry over into the political realm. Church members learn to volunteer to complete the tasks within the church, and also to contribute money to causes in which they believe. These two characteristics are also the hallmark of good political volunteers (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995). So when members of the Christian Right are activated politically, they already know what to do. And, since sharing your Christian faith means that an individual needs to know how to communicate with people, communication skills learned within the church also transfer into political situations.

These volunteers made possible the extensive get out the vote efforts via phone banks and letters that helped Largent win the primary outright. Michael Willis (1994), the volunteer coordinator, stated that the breakdown of the voters

special requirements of the campaign (Willis 1994).

from the primary election indicated that in the precincts that were worked systematically, 54% of the voters chose Largent. In the precincts not worked, 48% voted for Largent. The combination of expertise, high tech capabilities, and a host of volunteers allowed Largent to poll 51.1% of the vote in a six way race and avoid a runoff. The precincts that were worked by the volunteer effort made the difference between a successful capturing of the nomination in the primary and the expensive prospect of a runoff.³¹ In this race, members of the Christian Right supplied the candidate, the professional campaign manager, some funds, and especially the volunteers needed to accomplish the task.³²

THE SECOND DISTRICT

The second district of Oklahoma offered two primaries of interest. The Republican primary featured three candidates who wanted a chance to take on eight term Democratic Rep. Mike Synar. Synar was very liberal, and a vocal

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There is a political action committee (PAC) that helps pro-choice women candidates. It is called EMILY'S List. EMILY'S is an acronym for "early money is like seed" and the PAC's purpose is to provide money to candidates early in the election cycle, when it can make a difference. Largent's primary campaign proved the assertion of the founders of EMILY'S List, because without the funding to hire Allen's political expertise, and the technology to best use that expertise, Largent would have been forced into a runoff. With six candidates in the race, and the quality and connections of the other candidates, it was remarkable that Largent was able to receive 51.1% of the vote.

32

It is difficult to determine whether Largent used his NFL affiliation in connection with his campaign. I did not see any notices of other football players coming to Oklahoma to help with his campaign. Largent's Fellowship of Christian Athletes connection may have brought him some volunteers, but since many of his speaking engagements for this organization were out of state, this affiliation would probably not yield many volunteers. Since most Fellowship of Christian Athletes activities are aimed at young athletes, this connection would not yield much money, either.

supporter of all of Clinton's policies that were unpopular in Oklahoma. But Synar was also a good representative, whose constituency service record of responsiveness to the district was excellent. In 1992, Synar faced a tough primary challenge from Drew Edmondson, but emerged victorious. Synar then defeated Republican Jerry Hill in the general election. Hill decided to run again in 1994, and was joined by two other Republicans, Dr. Tom Coburn, a Muskogee physician, and T.J. Tipton. Synar faced another primary challenge himself, but the challengers were two unknowns, retired school principal Virgil Cooper and political gadfly Bill Vardeman. These races demonstrated the existence of a very different Christian Right than was seen in the first district races.³³ In the second district, it is possible to identify two distinct Christian Rights, one sophisticated and capable of operating within the political system of the 1990s³⁴ and a second, rustic Christian Right, that seems to be unable to cope well with contemporary politics.

³³

The Christian Right seen in the first district race was sophisticated. Largent was willing to do what was necessary to secure the nomination, and he did not reject other Republicans who were not affiliated with the Christian Right as a part of his campaign. In hiring Tom Cole, Largent did not look at his church affiliation, which happens to be Methodist (Cole 1994). Largent hired Cole because he knew Oklahoma politics. The Christian Right in the first district, while absolutely dedicated to Christian principles, worked within the contemporary political system.

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The sophisticated Christian Right in the second district bore a marked resemblance to the Largent campaign in the first district. The sophisticated Christian Right looked similar all over the state.

The second district is mostly rural, and comprises fifteen complete counties and parts of three others. The smaller, western part of the district is separated from the eastern part of the district by the first district. The largest city in the district is Muskogee, and there are no other cities even close in size to Muskogee. Voter registration in the second district is overwhelmingly Democratic, but these are not bicoastal, liberal Democrats, but conservative Democrats like those found in the rest of the South.³⁵

The Democrats

After Rep. Mike Synar survived his difficult primary in 1992, some observers thought that he had a safe seat for as long as he wanted it, while others were concerned that the primary had demonstrated weakness that could be exploited later. Voter registration in the district had always been heavily Democratic. However, Synar acted as if he was unconcerned with the views of his constituents, and seemed not to care that his support for the policies of the Clinton administration was unpopular with his constituents. This was clearly contrary to the previous behavior of Synar, who was known for his responsiveness to his constituents and his cordial relationships with them. There were stories circulating within the district, some of which seemed apocryphal, that Synar was disrespectful to his constituents, even cursing at

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Second district Democrats like the social programs provided by the Democratic party, but are generally conservative on social issues, including abortion and homosexuality. Second district Democrats also like the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. These factors make second district Democrats different from the liberal Democrats found on the east and west coasts of the nation.

them when he came home for town meetings and accusing them of being the dupes of his political opponents.³⁶ In retrospect, it is probable that the behavior changes in Synar were the result of the brain tumor that would take his life shortly after he left office. Synar was popular with the Democratic leadership in Congress and within Oklahoma, especially members of the state legislature who resided in his district. So any type of primary challenge would not come from influential Democrats within the district, because they did not want to disrupt the seniority of someone they saw as an effective member of Congress.³⁷

It was two very ordinary Democrats who, with no recruitment from within the party, behaved like political entrepreneurs, went to the election board and filed papers to become candidates to challenge Synar for the nomination. Bill Vardeman was classified by the city editor of the *Tulsa World* as a cantankerous old man (W. Green 1995). Vardeman had run for Congress in the second

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The tales may not be so apocryphal. When I interviewed Glenn English, the former sixth district representative, I asked him about the stories I had heard concerning Synar. English stated that constituents who had visited Synar before visiting him had come in seething with anger at the way they had been treated by Synar. English reported that Synar had a problem with his temper (G. English 1996). Obviously, losing your temper with your constituents is a good way to alienate them. In addition, the second district has so many small towns in it that if you offend someone, the word travels through the town rapidly. Since Synar had a good relationship with his constituents until the 1994 election cycle, the brain tumor seems a more likely explanation for his behavior than disregard for his constituents.

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During Synar's tenure in the House, it was controlled by the Democrats, and an eight term House member had enough seniority to have considerable clout. It would have been foolish for district Democrats to work to oust Synar and exchange eight terms of seniority for a freshman House member.

district twice previously, in 1990 as a Republican and in 1992 as an Independent. Virgil Cooper was an amateur who had never been deeply involved in politics in the past, and his run for Congress was his first political experience. Neither had much knowledge about political campaigns, and as a result, both ran very low-key, unprofessional campaigns. Rick Farmer, who served as Tom Coburn's campaign manager during the primary, stated that he found one of Virgil Cooper's business cards stuck under his windshield wiper. Farmer thought that one of Cooper's campaign workers had surely put the card there, but later press coverage indicated that Cooper himself was the one driving around the district distributing business cards (Farmer 1994). Synar did not take the primary as seriously as he should, because during the period he should have been back home campaigning, Synar was in Washington pushing Clinton's legislative program. When the votes were counted, Synar received only 47% of the vote, and the two unknowns Cooper and Vardeman had captured 53% between them. Cooper had the largest vote total of the two, so he was in the runoff with Synar.

The runoff between Cooper and Synar demonstrated two completely antithetical campaigns. Synar, who bragged about not taking political action committee (PAC) money,³⁸ instead took money directly from all sorts of

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PAC money, or money from political action committees, is seen as special interest money. However, I saw Synar's campaign finance report from the primary election, and he took just as much money from special interests as he would have by taking money from PACs. The only difference was that Synar got the contributions from the individuals affiliated with the special interests, which was apparent from the occupations listed on the campaign finance report.

individuals from inside the beltway who were affiliated with PACs. Synar raised much of his campaign money from outside the district. Coburn's primary campaign, which was predicated on the notion that Synar was the real opponent,³⁹ had published this fact during the primary, and Cooper emphasized it during the runoff. Cooper bragged that he was running an old fashioned campaign, and that he wanted to prove that it was still possible to win a congressional election without all the fancy technology, campaign managers, political consultants, and large amounts of money (Cooper 1995).⁴⁰

Cooper was most unusual because he was a Democrat who associated himself with the Christian Right. The manner in which Cooper sought Christian Right help demonstrated that he did not understand the political process, and did not know the limitations under which various Christian Right social movement organizations are forced to work. Cooper stated that he contacted various groups, including Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, and other organizations, and that they did not endorse him or provide him with any help, financial or otherwise. All of these organizations are 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4)

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Rick Farmer, Coburn's primary campaign manager, and Coburn decided that they would make Synar the most important campaign issue from the outset. Coburn's campaign probably helped the two underfunded Democrats as much as anything they did to campaign.

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However, Cooper was not unwilling to use Coburn's campaign research to blast Synar. I know it was Coburn's campaign research, because I went to the state capitol to retrieve the first set of campaign finance reports on behalf of Rick Farmer, Coburn's primary campaign manager.

corporations under Internal Revenue Service regulations. Such corporations cannot endorse political candidates or contribute funds to them. The Christian Coalition was functioning as a 501(c)(4) corporation.⁴¹ Cooper was genuinely ignorant of the facts that these groups could neither endorse him nor give him financial assistance of any kind because of their tax status (Cooper 1995). In his naive notion that it was possible to run a congressional campaign on a shoestring budget, and that the Christian Right organizations were places from which he could obtain campaign assistance, Cooper demonstrated that he could not be grouped with either Largent or Coburn and their sophisticated operations that understood the parameters of 1990s politics, and were able to operate successfully within those parameters.

Cooper should be grouped with the rustic Christian Right that emerged in the second district, which was ignorant of how the political process had changed and he refused to learn about how it had changed. The Christian Coalition sent questionnaires to all congressional candidates to obtain information for the voter guides that they were preparing. In 1994, the Coalition for the first time created voter guides for the primary elections. Cooper gladly filled out the candidate questionnaire sent by the Christian Coalition, and wrote across the top, "Check me out, I'm what you're looking for!"⁴² The Christian Coalition did not endorse

⁴¹In 1999 the Internal Revenue Service denied the Christian Coalition's 501(c)(4) status.

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Cooper's comment betrayed his naive understanding of the abilities and constraints of the Christian Coalition. Cooper indicated that he wrote on the top of the form hoping for an endorsement (Cooper 1995).

Cooper, but it did create a flyer that contrasted the positions of the two candidates. Cooper perceived the Christian Coalition materials as especially designed to help him (Cooper 1995), not seeming to understand that similar materials were being distributed in congressional districts throughout the country.⁴³

In the Christian Coalition voter guides, Cooper and Synar were demonstrated to be polar opposites, and the issues selected were hot button issues such as gun control, abortion, prayer in school, and special rights for homosexuals were all issues that would accentuate their differences. Charles Cunningham, congressional coordinator for the Christian Coalition, indicated that it did no good for an incumbent member of the House of Representatives like Synar to ignore the Coalition's survey, because the Coalition was capable of issue research and would discover and publish the issue positions of the candidate anyway. For Synar, this was easy, because the Congressional Record supplied roll call votes that Synar was forced to acknowledge and defend (Cunningham 1995). Fred Sellars, executive director of the Oklahoma Christian Coalition, claims that the Coalition distributed 110,000 flyers prior to the Cooper-Synar runoff (Sellars 1994).⁴⁴

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When I interviewed Cooper in 1995 he still demonstrated little understanding of the constraints under which organizations like the Christian Coalition operated. He seemed genuinely bewildered about not receiving financial help from them. He expected the Christian Right SMOs to operate like PACs and provide campaign funds.

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Attempting to obtain back voter guides from the Oklahoma Christian Coalition is a

The Christian Coalition voter guides clearly demonstrated to conservative Democrats who was conservative and who was liberal. The voter guides, distributed to hit the churches and other Christian locations the Sunday before the election, again provided information about the candidates in a succinct format. In addition, one of the issues on the voter guide concerned support for the ownership of legal firearms. Synar, as a proponent of gun control, and Cooper, as a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA) were polar opposites on this issue. The voter guides, in addition to Synar's high negatives in the district, contributed to Synar's runoff defeat.

Cooper received help from other interest groups, especially the NRA. Cooper as an NRA member benefitted from the help. This was especially true since Synar was one of the members of Congress on the NRA hit list, because of his votes in favor of various pieces of gun control legislation. In addition, there was a state question on the runoff ballot that asked about instituting term limitations for members of Congress.⁴⁵ For those individuals who were avid

measure of how poorly organized it was at the time of the 1994 elections. Since there was no permanent office at that time, there are few samples of voter guides from the 1994 elections. They were probably discarded in the move from wherever leftover voter guides were kept (probably Sellars' garage) until the move to a permanent office.

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State Question 662 on the issue of term limitations for Congress would limit the terms of members of the House to three two year terms and members of the Senate to two six year terms. In addition, no one would be able to serve more than a total of eighteen years in Washington. State Question 662 passed with an overwhelming majority of 66.5% yes to 33.5% no. Every county in the state voted in favor of term limitations. In the runoff, Synar carried eight counties while Cooper received a majority in ten counties. Whether voters who turned out to vote for term limitations gave Cooper the victory is hard to determine. State Question 662 has been ruled unconstitutional by the

supporters of term limitations, Synar, as an eight term representative, was a walking advertisement for them. For individuals who were mobilized to vote because of the term limitation initiative, a vote for Cooper would be a rational choice. After pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into a three week campaign blitz, Synar was only able to pick up an additional 2% of the vote from his 47% showing in the primary. Cooper spent just over \$17,000. Rep. Mike Synar, eight term member of Congress, lost to political neophyte Virgil Cooper, 49% to 51%. A race that should have been between a Republican challenger and a Democratic incumbent was now an open seat race.

The Republicans

For the Republicans in the second district, the notion of having a Republican representative was something that seemed almost unattainable. But the political climate in the wake of the 1992 presidential election, and the vulnerability demonstrated by the hotly contested Democratic runoff in 1992 indicated that things could possible change in the district.⁴⁶ In addition, Synar's negatives were extremely high because of his support for unpopular issues. For this type of change to happen, a different kind of Republican would have to be

courts, since only the federal government can place term limitations on the Congress.

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Synar, a seven term incumbent in 1992, was challenged in the Democratic primary by Drew Edmondson, a member of a prominent Oklahoma Democratic family, and two other challengers. Synar only received 43.2% of the vote in the primary and was forced into a runoff with Edmondson, who received 38.2% of the primary vote. Synar won the runoff with 53.1% of the vote, and easily won the general election. However, the necessity of a runoff in 1992 made Synar look vulnerable to Republicans.

the party's nominee. The Republicans needed someone intelligent and articulate, who understood the views of the people of the second district, and could oust Mike Synar. Three candidates emerged, Dr. Tom Coburn, Jerry Hill, the Republican loser in 1992, and T.J. Tipton. Tipton, a self-styled Christian "song evangelist" who played his guitar and sang at campaign appearances, could be easily dismissed, because he did not even raise the amount of money needed to be required to file a candidate financial statement. The race was between Coburn and Hill.

Jerry Hill had the campaign organization from his 1992 run, and Hill's organization was Christian Right.⁴⁷ Hill, like Cooper, demonstrated that he was not a sophisticated political operative. His campaign literature spoke of not becoming allied with ungodly people, and especially stressed that he would not take money from those whose motives were not right. It was better not to have the money than to be tainted by accepting funds from sinners. Hill's literature cast the race not as a earthly battle between three candidates, but as a battle that belonged to God, and that the angels would fight for them. Every point in a one and one half page list of guidelines had Bible references to justify the

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Hill, of course, had to reorganize his campaign, and get it up and running again. However, Hill had planned to run ever since his defeat in 1992, so he was ready for the 1994 election. He had lists of his former contributors and campaign workers, so it was easy for him to prepare for the 1994 campaign. Farmer, as a Republican insider, told me that Hill felt some sort of entitlement to the nomination in 1994 because he ran in 1992. Hill was upset that Coburn was running and attempting to take his nomination away from him (Farmer 1994).

position.⁴⁸ Hill's rustic Christian Right organization confused politics and religion, and his followers saw themselves as above the worldly campaign being run by Coburn. In particular, they disapproved of Coburn's acceptance of help from the moderate wing of the party.

Coburn was definitely a Christian Right candidate. A conservative Southern Baptist, he spent a great deal of time instructing young people in his church about the virtues of abstinence and the evil of abortion. Coburn stated that several friends and associates, some of them Democrats, encouraged him to run for Congress because it was time to replace Synar. Sen. Nickles also encouraged him to run (T. Coburn 1995). Coburn, once the decision to run was made, surrounded himself with people with expertise in running a competitive political campaign. When Coburn decided to run, he hired Rick Farmer, a Ph.D. candidate in political science at the University of Oklahoma and a long time second district Republican activist to run his primary campaign. Farmer had been chair of the party's second district congressional committee, and had run for state party chair in 1990.⁴⁹ In addition, Coburn hired Tom Cole as a political

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Even Cooper, who was naive in the extreme, did not print biblical guidelines for his campaign. See Appendix pages 352-53 for a copy of Hill's campaign guidelines.

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Farmer stated that he had been hoping for the day that a credible Republican candidate would emerge and have a chance of defeating Synar (Farmer 1994). Farmer, as a former second district party chair and long time resident of the district, brought knowledge and expertise to the campaign. However, Farmer was not Coburn's first choice as campaign manager. Nickles had recommended his aide, Carl Alhgren to Coburn. But when Coburn tried to contact Alhgren in May, Coburn was unable to get in touch with him. Coburn then turned to Farmer to run his primary campaign (Alhgren 1994).

consultant. Cole's organization provided polling capabilities, and Cole provided political advice. Using polling data, Coburn's campaign decided to ignore the Republican candidates and concentrate on the main objective, the defeat of Mike Synar. The goal was to run Synar's negatives up, and they succeeded. At the beginning of the campaign, Synar's negatives were 39%, and by the primary election, they were over 50% (T. Coburn 1995). The strategy was obviously the right one, because Coburn won the primary without a runoff with 63.5% of the vote. After his primary victory, Coburn replaced Farmer with Carl Alhgren, Senator Nickles's field representative for southeastern Oklahoma.⁵⁰

Coburn also had many of the same advantages that Largent had as a Christian Right candidate. Coburn stated that conservative Christians are a part of his natural constituency (T. Coburn 1995). When the Christian Coalition distributed literature, Coburn's issue positions were in line with the positions favored by the Christian Right.⁵¹ Coburn is personally very conservative, and

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There are two different stories on Coburn's replacement of Farmer with Alhgren. When conversing with Alhgren, Alhgren stated that Coburn knew that Farmer needed to finish his dissertation, so he wanted to let Farmer get back to school (Alhgren 1994). The story Farmer told was somewhat different. Farmer, even though he is a conservative Republican, and a Christian, obviously absorbed a great deal of information as a political science graduate student. One of the obvious lessons that Farmer learned is that Republicans need to move toward the political center to be electable. Farmer tried to push Coburn toward more centrist positions, but Coburn resisted. This caused conflict between Farmer and Coburn (Farmer 1994). There is also a good political explanation for the switch. By hiring Alhgren, and retaining him after the election, Coburn allied himself to the most powerful Republican in the state, Nickles.

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Actually in the Republican primary, all of the candidates uniformly held Christian Right positions. This was demonstrated in the Christian Coalition's voter guides. The

this was apparent in his campaign. It was also obvious that a professional like Coburn heeded the professional expertise of others, and did all of the necessary things to run a contemporary congressional campaign. Technology, polling, electronic and print media, and get out the vote efforts were used. Coburn, like Largent, had a wealth of volunteers, and was able to make use of telephone banks to get out the vote, and sufficient volunteers to cover the district with literature and signs.⁵²

Coburn was also able to mobilize Christian Right voters from within his church and around the district. Coburn demonstrated that he was a leader who could engage conservative Christians in the process of cognitive liberation that Piven and Cloward (1979) describe as necessary to voter mobilization. People who went from never working on a campaign became devoted campaign workers, and even stayed on to work as volunteers in Coburn's district offices after he was elected (Holland 1996). Coburn was able to sell McAdam's (1982) notion that the only way to impact the public policy process is via political activity, and Coburn was able to activate the Christian Right voters of his district, and create in them the sense of political efficacy necessary to sustain social movement activity.

Christian Coalition's materials did not make the difference in this race. The Coburn campaign did the best job of convincing Republicans that Coburn would be the best nominee, and of getting people to the polls on election day.

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Coburn also drew volunteers from his church, the First Baptist Church of Muskogee. Farmer stated that the campaign had plenty of volunteer help, both from party activists and Coburn's associates (Farmer 1994).

Unfortunately for the Republicans, the rustic Christian Right supporters of Jerry Hill and the sophisticated Christian Right supporters of Tom Coburn did not mix well. Instead of pledging to support the Republican ticket in the November election, Hill did not endorse Coburn, creating a divisive situation. Indeed, after the primary, Hill's rustic Christian Right organization crossed party lines to work for Virgil Cooper. It is difficult for someone who does not understand the religious perspectives of the rustic Christian Right to see differences between Cooper and Coburn. Both support the same issues positions and both even belong to Southern Baptist Convention congregations. Hill's supporters were opposed to alliances with those who did not hold to the biblical guidelines they followed, and Coburn worked with all Republicans who would support him.⁵³ The divide between rustic and sophisticated Christian Right did not appear in any other congressional district in Oklahoma, but it was a factor in the second district primaries and runoff and would continue to be a factor in the general election contest between Cooper and Coburn.

THE FOURTH DISTRICT

The fourth district was another open seat, because Democrat Rep. Dave McCurdy, the district's representative since 1981, decided to run for the

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Coburn's hiring political experts like Tom Cole, was a probable source of discord between the Coburn and Hill camps. Cole, who would not have been seen as sufficiently religiously pure by rustic Christian Right standards, worked with any Republican who could afford to hire him. Cooper, by attempting to run a simple campaign without all of the contemporary campaign structure, was more appealing to the rustic Christian Right.

Democratic nomination for retiring Senator Boren's seat.⁵⁴ The fourth district runs diagonally from south Oklahoma City, encompassing a small portion of Oklahoma County and ten additional counties and extending to the Texas border. There are three military installations in the district, Tinker Air Force Base in Midwest City, in the far northeast portion of the district, Fort Sill in Lawton, and Altus Air Force Base in the southwest corner of the district. So, one of the priorities for any representative in the fourth district is to develop a good rapport with the military. The district is also the home of the University of Oklahoma, in Norman. The fourth district has some rural areas, but also two large cities, Norman and Lawton, which are about equal in size. The portion of Oklahoma county in the district is more urban than rural.

There was an open seat primary and runoff for the Democratic nomination, but this nomination process is not of particular interest for this research because there was no Christian Right activity. There was, however, a retired Colonel from Tinker Air Force Base who badly misjudged the political climate of the election, and chose to run as a Democrat. As Copeland (1994) aptly described in his 1992 study of the fourth district, electable Democrats had directed their political ambition away from the fourth district congressional seat

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The observations made concerning the candidate emergence process in the first district apply equally to the fourth district. The quality candidates on the Republican side figured that McCurdy was running again, so they were not even looking at the race until McCurdy announced for the Senate seat. McCurdy received 70.7% of the vote in the 1992 election, so both Democrats and Republicans in the district who would have been quality candidates did not think of running until McCurdy was no longer in the race.

while McCurdy was the representative. The most important aspect of the Democratic primary was the scarcity of campaign money, because McCurdy took large sums from the district to fund his Senate race.

There was also plenty of activity on the Republican side. Mike Warkentin, a Norman CPA and attorney, decided to challenge McCurdy while it still looked like McCurdy would be running for reelection. Warkentin was an experience seeking amateur (Canon 1993), who was willing to run against McCurdy several times in a row to unseat him.⁵⁵ Warkentin claimed that McCurdy had gone Washington, living in Virginia and seldom returning to the district. As a member of the Democratic Leadership Council, McCurdy styled himself as a moderate, but members of the Christian Right in the district argued that the longer McCurdy was in Washington, the more liberal he had become, and was out of touch with the district. In fact, McCurdy did not even have a residence in the district and stayed in motels when he came to Oklahoma.⁵⁶ Warkentin was a definite member of the Christian Right, attending a conservative nondenominational charismatic church and working with a prison ministry. When McCurdy decided to run for the Senate, Warkentin decided that he could not be a quitter, and

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Whether Warkentin's calculation that he could run several times and eventually unseat McCurdy was accurate or not cannot be proven. Warkentin's commitment to unseating McCurdy was obvious because he was willing to run several times to accomplish it.

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The accusations against McCurdy concerning not having a residence in the district again demonstrate the issue of what it means to be connected to your congressional district. This issue was raised in the sixth district special election, and kept recurring in other districts.

continued in the race, even when better known candidates emerged (Warkentin 1995).⁵⁷

There were two other nonquality candidates in the field. One was amateur Peter Saker, who advocated a draconian cutting of the federal government and who no one took seriously. Another candidate was Howard Bell, who had twice unsuccessfully challenged McCurdy for the seat, garnering only 29% of the general election vote in 1992 (Copeland 1994). Bell, with his previous political experience could not be classed as an amateur (Canon 1993), but was far from a quality challenger (Bond, Covington, and Fleisher 1985, Kazee 1994). Bell did not seem to learn much from his previous campaigns, and even with several primary and general elections under his belt, had little name recognition. Bell had been a sacrificial lamb (Canon 1993) so often that he did not know how to run a campaign for an open seat race.

The two quality candidates that entered the field were state Rep. Ed Apple and Corporation Commissioner J.C. Watts, Jr. Both were experienced political entrepreneurs. In a study of candidate emergence in Oklahoma's fourth

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There was some talk during the primary that Warkentin was not really connected to the Republican party, and was some sort of religious radical. During the runoff election, a debate between Watts and Apple was held at the Lawton Country Club. The event included dinner, and then the debate. Both lieutenant governor candidates for the runoff attended as well. This dinner was obviously a place for fourth district Republicans to see and be seen by each other. Warkentin, and his wife Georgia were there and it was obvious that Warkentin was well connected among Republicans. The way people interacted with Warkentin made it obvious that he was not part of some lunatic fringe of the party.

district in 1992, Copeland (1994) named both Apple and Watts as individuals who had directed their political ambitions elsewhere because of the secure incumbent, Dave McCurdy. When the opportunity arose to run for an open seat, both were ready to go. Apple was an active and vocal member of the state House of Representatives, and very conservative in his political views. Watts was then serving on the Corporation Commission, and serving as a part-time youth pastor at his church.⁵⁸

When asked about the Christian Right, Apple stated that he did not particularly like the term, but said that he was a Romans chapter thirteen Christian (Apple 1995). The first six verses of Romans chapter thirteen discuss

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Watts served as part-time youth pastor at Sunnyside Baptist Church. The church is multiracial, as are the members of the youth group. Watts appeared at the Steve Russo Crusade on the Saturday after his victory in the runoff election. During this appearance, Watts seemed to be in his element, because he was talking to youth and Watts was then a youth pastor. Watts connected as well with the youth at the crusade as Russo did. At the beginning, he recognized members of his youth group, and admonished them to be in Sunday School the next morning.

Watts talked of his own life. He mentioned that he was baptized when he was 7, but remained unsure of his salvation. He wanted to know where he would spend eternity. On December 11, 1988 he asked Jesus into his heart and received assurance of salvation. He talked about becoming a youth pastor, and how important young people are. He said that young people of God were needed in schools and offices, to communicate their faith to others. Watts remembers his godly parents, especially his father who was never ashamed of his faith.

Since Watts had become the Republican candidate for the fourth district House seat only the Tuesday prior to the crusade, it is clear that Watts was on the program because of his contacts with Russo through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and his position as the only African-American statewide elected official may also have been part of it. However, Watts was introduced as the Republican nominee for the fourth district. It may be that Watts was recognized for his political activities and Largent was not because the crusade was being held in the fourth. Watts was not as articulate as Largent was in his appearance at the crusade.

submission to secular authorities, because all human authority is derived from God. This includes paying taxes. The passage also argues that those who are doing right have no fear of the secular authorities, because only those who are doing wrong need to fear the authorities. Apple's answer is a convenient way to dodge the question, but it does demonstrate that he knows the Bible well enough to use it if necessary.⁵⁹ Apple belongs to a Methodist church, and his issue positions make him completely acceptable to members of the Christian Right. Apple also knew that he had to run a professional campaign. He hired Neva Hill, a political consultant from Cleveland county, the most populous county in the district, to run his campaign. Apple resided in the rural portion of the district, but he believed that he could appeal to voters from both the rural and urban portions of the district.

Watts had the distinction of being the first African American elected to statewide office. Watts was a former University of Oklahoma football star from

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The way Apple used the Romans 13 reference made me wonder if he was to some degree a biblical literalist, or at very least a believer in the inerrancy of the Bible. Romans 13 speaks to the issue of submission to the secular authorities, but the secular authorities obviously being mentioned in the passage were the Roman authorities, who were persecuting Christians at the time Paul wrote Romans. How to apply Romans 13 to the republican form of government created by the Constitution is an interesting question. Does applying Romans 13 to American citizens require only submission to the laws, or does it require political participation as well? Apple used the biblical reference as a way to dodge the question, but depending on how someone wishes to interpret Romans 13, the passage could justify several types of involvement with the political system.

the glory days when Oklahoma was winning national championships.⁶⁰ As an athlete, Watts enjoyed the same high name recognition as did Largent, especially in the fourth district, where devotion to Oklahoma football almost equals, or some would say exceeds, religious fervor.

Watts had also attracted the attention of the national Republican party. African American Republicans are in short supply. So, when the party finds an African-American Republican, a great deal of attention is given to that individual. Watts was thrust into the national spotlight in 1992, when he gave one of the seconding speeches for George Bush at the Republican National Convention. When Watts returned to Norman full time after his retirement from professional football, he became a youth minister at a local Southern Baptist church, and worked as a businessman. Watts, like Largent, was also active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. All this speaking experience gave Watts the ability to communicate well in large group situations. He did well at the convention, and the national Republicans were anxious to bring him to the national political arena.

Watts, a political veteran of a statewide campaign, also hired a professional staff. Jim Dorman, who had run Republican campaigns in various parts of the country, was hired as campaign manager. Dorman had been southern coordinator for the Bush campaign. Watts also hired Cole as political

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An option quarterback, Watts did not play in the NFL, but spent several seasons playing Canadian football. He did well playing Canadian football, and his team won the Gray Cup, the Canadian football equivalent to the Super Bowl.

consultant, and Cole was especially helpful to Watts because Cole lives in the fourth district. Watts drew campaign staff from local churches and from the University of Oklahoma College Republicans. The August primary was a little early for the College Republicans to provide significant assistance, but they were a significant help in the runoff and general election.⁶¹

Watts is also a self described member of the Christian Right. In several interviews with members of the national media, when asked about the Christian Right, Watts bluntly declared that, "I AM the Christian Right." When further elucidating his views, Watts stated that he was not a conservative because he was a Republican, but that he was a conservative because he is a Christian (Watts 1994). Factional disputes between Fundamentalists and pentecostals have been a part of the Christian Right since the 1980s (Wilcox 1992), but the Watts campaign demonstrated no evidence of any breach. Watts, a Southern Baptist, preached at an Sunday evening service in a Pentecostal church, and he participated fully in the service. The pastor of the church, also a sophisticated member of the Christian Right, knew that he could not take a love offering for Watts, because it would be a violation of campaign finance laws. So the pastor passed out envelopes addressed to Watts's campaign, and encouraged his congregation to show their appreciation for Watts by contributing. In addition, the pastor recognized and approved of a member of the congregation who was a

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The College Republicans were not of much use in the primary because the primary was on August 23 and school had barely started at the University of Oklahoma. The College Republicans were ready to help with the runoff and general election campaigns.

part of Watts's campaign staff. This church service was a demonstration of the sophisticated Christian Right at its best.⁶²

No one received a majority in the fourth district primary, and Watts and Apple were forced into a runoff. Watts came close to an outright majority in the primary, but scarce funding limited his campaign options, especially in terms of media, as the primary approached.⁶³ Another explanation for the runoff was

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J.C. Watts was invited to be the speaker at the evening service at Norman Tabernacle in August 1994. Since Watts was a youth pastor, it is probably not notable that he would be a guest speaker for an evening service. However, Norman Tabernacle is an independent Pentecostal church and Watts serves as a youth pastor in a Southern Baptist congregation. While Pentecostals in general consider members of denominational churches to be Christian, Fundamentalist churches like many of those affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention often view Pentecostals as heretics, and even possessed by Satan. This is because of the dispensationalist view of the Fundamentalists. Since Watts was at the time a candidate for the Republican nomination for the fourth district seat in Congress, this invitation demonstrates that sophisticated Fundamentalists and Pentecostals are beginning to understand that doctrinal differences are best ignored when operating in the political arena.

The pastor of the church, Ronnie Harrison, is obviously a pastor who does not have a problem with using the pulpit to express his beliefs concerning how Christians should be interacting with the political system. He made it very clear that he disapproved of the results of the 1992 elections, and while not mentioning him by name, of President Bill Clinton. One of his most revealing comments was that if people had voted like he thought they should, which he clearly stated as Republican, things would not be in the mess that they are now.

At the service, Watts told the story of the search for little Johnny, a small boy who wandered away from his farm. It was a cold fall day, and little Johnny was not dressed to be out overnight. Many people came to search for little Johnny, but they could not find him. The next morning, finally, they all joined hands and walked through the fields. They found little Johnny, but it was too late, he was dead. His mother commented that the result would have been better if they had joined hands sooner. Watts concluded his sermon with the rallying cry, "Let's all join hands and work together for America."

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What Largent was able to accomplish because he had sufficient financial resources, Watts was unable to accomplish because he did not have the financial resources. This

Apple's campaign. Apple ran an aggressive campaign, and used professional campaign assistance. With the three minor candidates to draw a small percentage of the vote away, it was more difficult for Watts or Apple to gain an outright majority.

The runoff was hard fought and Watts emerged victorious, but only received 52% of the vote. Both candidates had run professional campaigns with lots of volunteers. The candidates campaigned at all places in which large numbers of people would be found, including high school football games⁶⁴ and University of Oklahoma Sooners games.⁶⁵ They participated in a spirited debate to a packed house at the Lawton Country Club. The eventual winner was a self-described member of the Christian Right, and even the loser would have had no problem with Christian Right support if he had become the nominee. Christian Coalition materials made little difference here either, on Christian Right issues, Watts and Apple were identical.

demonstrates that even with two candidates who were very much alike in many ways, money remains an essential component in political campaigns. Largent also had the easier district in which to run. Watts had to cover a lot more territory to campaign than Largent did.

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One of the high school games that occurred before the runoff was between Moore High School and Westmoore High School. This game is a huge rivalry in Moore, a small town just south of Oklahoma City. I had friends who lived in Moore during this time, and the talk in Moore for two weeks before the game was the game. There was a huge crowd at the game, which made it a great place to campaign.

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The Sooner game the Saturday before the runoff had every politician involved in the runoff in attendance. I saw the Democratic candidates for governor, lieutenant governor and other statewide offices, the Republican candidates for lieutenant governor, and Watts and Apple working the crowd outside the stadium.

MOVING TO THE GENERAL ELECTIONS

The Christian Right was active in all of the races discussed. The three Republican nominees, Coburn, Largent, and Watts, were all excellent examples of political entrepreneurs who judged that 1994 was an excellent time to run for Congress. They had all developed entrepreneurial skills in other arenas before running for Congress, Largent and Watts as athletes and businessmen, and Coburn as a businessman and a physician. They were also well connected to the Christian Right, and the Oklahoma Republican party.

The unexpected finding was the existence of two distinct Christian Rights in the second district, one rustic, and the other sophisticated. The first district is mostly urban and suburban, and the fourth district is a mix of urban, suburban, and rural, with the largest population in urban and suburban areas. There is no evidence of a rustic Christian Right in the first or fourth district. The fourth district has rural areas, but there was no evidence of a rustic Christian Right there.⁶⁶ Could the rustic Christian Right found in the second district be a function of the more rural character of the district? If so, it should be evident in future elections in the more rural third district. However, the sixth district is also very rural, and there was no evidence of a rustic Christian Right there during the 1994 special election. The old divisions between denominational groups were not as

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The only candidate in the fourth district that might have been tagged as rustic Christian Right was Warkentin. However, Warkentin supported the party's eventual nominee, and did not behave as Jerry Hill did in the second district. Perhaps Warkentin's connections within the Republican party made him more sophisticated than Hill.

apparent in these races as the division between rustic and sophisticated Christian Right.

The rustic Christian Right could be no more than a leftover group from the early 1980s Christian Right activists, who were clumsy and unsophisticated in their interactions with the political system. In addition, the candidate centered nature of campaigns readily magnifies the personalities of the candidates, and the rustic Christian Right in the second district could also be a reflection of the beliefs of Hill, and to a lesser extent, Cooper. Christian Right social movement organizations, including the Christian Coalition, *700 Club*, Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council, Concerned Women for American and countless other local organizations had been and are continuing to work to educate conservative Christians who have eschewed political involvement about how the political system works.

The Christian Right social movement organizations were and are continuing to work to move conservative Christians into the political process. After making voters of the conservative Christians, it is necessary to educate them concerning the political process, or the result can be voters who behave like the rustic Christian Right, who do not understand the political process. Properly mobilized and educated members of the Christian Right behave like the sophisticated Christian Right seen in the second and fourth districts. While all social movement organizations have definite ideas about what is morally right and wrong, they are willing to work with other groups within the political arena

who have similar policy goals. An excellent Oklahoma example is the alliance between the horsemen from the two Oklahoma racetracks and the Southern Baptists in opposition to State Question 658 which proposed a statewide lottery. The lottery was defeated. For the rustic Christian Right, this would be an unacceptable alliance, while members of the sophisticated Christian Right would understand that such coalitions are a part of politics. The general election campaign and results allow a further exploration of the two Christian Rights, as found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT SCORES A VICTORY THE 1994 GENERAL ELECTIONS

THE RACE BEGINS

With the preliminaries finished, it was time to tend to the business of campaigning in the general election. The political opportunity structures that led to the emergence and selection of the candidates were finished, and the outcome was left to the decisions of the individual voters of Oklahoma. The task of any political campaign is to influence those individual voter decisions toward its candidate. In the entrepreneurial political system of candidate centered politics, the task belongs to the candidate, not the party, though the party helps. The intersection of the various political campaigns and the Christian Right in social movement form became very apparent in the various campaigns in the general elections.¹

In addition to the House races, there were a large number of other races also occurring in the state. The incumbent governor, David Walters, was not running for reelection, and there was a competitive race between the Republican nominee, Frank Keating, the Democratic candidate, Jack Mildred, and Independent Wes Watkins. Watkins was a Democrat when he served as the House member from the third district, but had left the Democratic party to run as

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The most obvious intersection between campaign and social movement was the existence of Christian Right candidates in so many of the races.

an Independent. This race was very competitive, and also very expensive for the candidates, because it was so competitive.

A United States Senate seat is one of the most attractive political prizes. It is often said that many senators look in the mirror and see a future president. So it was no surprise that the two House members, Dave McCurdy and James Inhofe, did not go unchallenged during the primaries. Their opponents, not having the same campaign experience and resources as the two House members, were easily eliminated without a runoff. McCurdy and Inhofe, both experienced political entrepreneurs, were especially looking to supporters in their congressional districts to help fund their campaigns.²

Republicans were choosing strong nominees for other statewide offices that made these races more competitive than they had been in years. As a result of the competitive races, House, Senate, and statewide, many candidates had to really hustle to raise funds for their campaigns. The better political entrepreneurs were more successful in the quest to organize effective

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This meant that McCurdy and Inhofe were drawing funds from their congressional districts that would have normally gone into their reelection campaigns. Because they were both engaged in the more expensive statewide race, funds were even more necessary. It was fortunate for Largent that he was able to easily raise funds, because Inhofe was drawing on first district sources. Keating, the Republican gubernatorial nominee, was also from the Tulsa area, so he was raising funds there as well. The one who the situation hurt the most was David Perryman, the Democratic nominee in the fourth district. McCurdy was drawing so heavily on his Democratic contacts in the fourth district that it was hurting Perryman's fundraising efforts. When I observed Perryman's campaign headquarters, it was obvious that it was a low budget operation.

campaigns, and to raise the funds to pay for the campaigns. The stage was set and the general election was next.

CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

Fiorina (1989) argues that Congress is central to the Washington power structure, so it is essential to elect representatives to the House and Senate if the policy preferences of any social movement are to be implemented. The policy preferences of the Christian Right include a pro-life position on abortion, policies that favor and strengthen traditional marriage and the family, education policy that focuses on academic achievement and not social engineering, a strong national defense, and opposition to increasing the power of the United Nations.³ Moen (1989) explored the attempts made by the Christian Right to influence members of Congress during the 1980s. Hertzke (1988) and Moen (1989) indicated the difficulties that members of the Christian Right had when members of Congress were not supportive of their agenda, and would not even allow them access, let alone be influenced by them. The Christian Right was able to mobilize millions of voters to write letters and call their members in Congress during the Reagan administration, but had little success because the

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The opposition to social engineering included the teaching of homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle and any other sex education programs that are not abstinence based. Focus on the Family has created and distributes an abstinence based sex education curriculum that can be used in the public schools. Members of the Christian Right do not like the United Nations because they believe that the U.S. is ceding too much sovereignty to the U.N. The Christian Right sees a strong national defense as the best way to keep America free.

members of Congress did not share their views. This ability to mobilize voters indicated that members of the Christian Right were well conditioned by the entrepreneurial leaders of the various social movement organizations to readily respond to entrepreneurial Christian Right candidates. Social movement leaders were instructing members of the Christian Right that unless they mobilized to elect individuals who shared their policy preferences, the Christian Right would be unable to effect any political change. The mobilization efforts by Christian Right social movement organizations were of the type described by McAdam (1982) in his political process model. Christian Right leaders worked to cognitively liberate (Piven and Cloward 1979) members of the Christian Right from a passive view that the system was rigged against them to the belief that they could make a difference and impact the political system.

The increasing sophistication of the Christian Right taught them that placing all of their eggs in the basket of a presidential victory is insufficient to guarantee implementation of their policy goals. Since 1988 the Christian Right, led by the Christian Coalition, has emphasized local mobilization in order to impact congressional elections, as well as state and local elections. The idea of local mobilization is another illustration of McAdam's (1982) political process model in action. The importance of my research into the efforts of the Christian Right to elect like-minded people to Congress speaks to the issues of access and influence, since members of the Christian Right who are elected to Congress will share the same views and policy goals as conservative

Christians.⁴ In the American system with three branches of government placing checks and balances on each other, one way for a group to counter the policy initiatives of the executive branch is to elect members of Congress whose ideology and policy goals are similar to those of the group.

A review of literature concerning midterm elections indicates that scholars have various interpretations of the results of these elections. The president's party generally loses seats in midterm elections. Tufte (1975) argued that loss of seats by the president's party at midterm elections is due to national forces, particularly presidential popularity and the state of the economy. Fiorina (1981) argued that midterm elections are like all national elections, and citizens vote for or against the president's party as a function of their economic conditions. Other scholars, like Ragsdale (1980), asserted that congressional elections are discrete events, and that explorations of candidates and incumbency is the way they should be interpreted.⁵ Jacobson and Kernell (1983) argued that congressional elections, like presidential elections (Wattenberg 1991), are

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The American system of government also has multiple access points. If the access point of the presidency is blocked, as it is with the Clinton administration, it is logical to target the Congress. If the White House and the Congress are uncooperative, the court system is another possible access point. For example, all of the victories won by the Civil Rights Movement in the 1940s and 1950s were won through the courts.

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Ragsdale's argument concerning incumbency and candidates is a good way to interpret the decisionmaking process of potential candidates in Oklahoma. Political entrepreneurs like Watts and Apple, who would not consider running for the fourth district seat with a strong incumbent like McCurdy holding the seat, decided to run when McCurdy was no longer a factor.

candidate driven, and strategic politicians run when the opportunity presents itself. A strategic politician would not run against an entrenched incumbent, but would wait for an open seat or a vulnerable incumbent, regardless of whether or not it was a presidential election year.⁶ Even with all of this debate, the most popular interpretation that reaches the public is that midterm elections reflect on the president's popularity and the state of the economy. But throughout this debate about midterm elections, it is certain that all congressional elections are candidate centered, with the strategic decisions concerning the best time to run being left to the individual candidates.

In analyzing the results of elections, the importance of timing is often noted. For example, Watergate and the resignation and subsequent pardon of Richard Nixon had a huge impact on the 1974 midterm elections. Approaching the 1994 elections, timing was also a factor. The elections of 1974 reflected the political climate of the time, with an emphasis on the necessity of new blood in Congress and the reform of many Washington practices. The political climate in 1994 was no less important to the election results. Bill Clinton did not win Oklahoma in 1992, George Bush did. Clinton ran as a moderate Democrat and the activities of his administration during the first two years of his term did not correlate with his campaign promises. In Oklahoma, this was a source of trouble. Clinton's views on gays in the military, gun control, and a huge

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Jacobsen and Kernell's (1983) explanation looks like the strategic calculations of Coburn and state Republican leaders, who viewed Synar as a vulnerable incumbent.

nationally run health care system were not popular in Oklahoma. These views were also not popular with the Christian Right. The timing of the 1994 elections allowed the Christian Right candidates to capitalize on the additional opportunity structure created by Clinton's unpopularity. For a Christian Right congressional candidate to indicate that his views were the exact opposite of Clinton's views allowed the Christian Right congressional candidates to exploit the situation.

In addition, Bill Clinton's actions after his election had activated the Christian Right. It is impossible to communicate how abhorrent Bill Clinton is to members of the Christian Right.⁷ McAdam (1982) commented on the surge and decline nature of social movements in the political process model, and Clinton was the perfect catalyst to transform a declining social movement into a surging one. Christian radio and television had begun nationalizing the election long before Newt Gingrich even contemplated the Contract with America. Since it

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Clinton is, in Christian terms, a hypocrite, just like the hypocrites that Jesus denounced in the gospels. He is a habitual adulterer and liar, and the Whitewater case and White House travel office scandal indicated that he was far from above reproach in his business dealings and his conduct in office. If Clinton had not claimed to be a Christian, members of the Christian Right would have discounted his behavior, because what else could be expected from a non-Christian. But Clinton's claims of being a Christian meant that he would be held to Christian moral standards by members of the Christian Right. Jesus's admonition in John 8:11 to the woman caught in adultery was "Go, and leave your life of sin." Clinton never left his life of sin, so the Christian Right first condemned him for this. In addition, his policies were also abhorrent to the Christian Right. Even after the Monica Lewinsky situation, and Clinton's acquisition of two ministers as accountability partners, the Christian Right has no faith in Clinton. If he had confessed his sin and found the accountability partners ten to fifteen years ago, after his first adulterous incident, and not after a many year pattern of adulterous behavior, he would have greater credibility with the Christian Right.

was impossible and illegal for Christian Right organizations to endorse individual candidates, this did not happen. It was, however, possible for a composite of the perfect candidate to be created. This prototypical candidate had the correct positions on issues important to the Christian Right, including abortion, tax breaks for families, removing the federal government from K-12 education, no special rights for homosexuals, and a strong defense. The Republican House and Senate candidates fit the composites well. In addition, these same Christian Right organizations were encouraging conservative Christians to get involved in the election. This encouragement took the form of McAdam's (1982) "subjective transformation of consciousness" and moved members of the Christian Right from the notion that political activity was futile to the idea that political action was absolutely necessary. Because the Oklahoma Christian Right candidates fit the Christian Right prototype so well, the efforts to transform the consciousness of members of the Christian Right was facilitated.

THE OKLAHOMA CONGRESSIONAL RACES

The First District

The presence of Steve Largent as the Republican candidate in the first district made the task of the Democratic nominee, Stuart Price, that much more difficult. Largent is an engaging man who appears to be comfortable in any type of setting. Whether he is talking to a group of young people at an evangelistic crusade, speaking on television, or during a one on one interview, Largent draws and holds the attention of the others involved. As a star in the National Football

League (NFL), he was experienced at dealing with the media long before he ever decided to run for office. During the approximately five year period between his retirement from the NFL and his decision to run for office, Largent moved his family to Tulsa and became involved in the community. However, Largent kept strong ties with the Seattle area, and was able to raise money from friends in Seattle. This was a benefit for Largent, since political money was being solicited by so many candidates in Oklahoma. This was especially true in the Tulsa area, which was the home base for Inhofe, and the Republican gubernatorial candidate, Frank Keating.

Largent's campaign indicated that he learned some lessons from his involvement with football that he carried into his campaign.⁸ Football teams hire specialists who are the best that can be obtained to help the team win. This includes coaches, trainers, medical personnel, and the people running the business end of the organization. When making the individual decisions that are an integral part of every campaign, he looked for individuals who were particularly talented in the political arena and hired them. He asked Terry Allen to continue as director of his campaign because of Allen's expertise in grassroots campaigns. Largent also kept political consultant Tom Cole, the premier Republican political consultant in the state, for the general election. Largent

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Reasonably intelligent and experienced individuals are aware that no one can know everything. Largent saw this fact demonstrated, first in college, then in his NFL experience, and in the business world. He correctly reasoned that it applied to political campaigns as well. .

recognized that the abilities of Cole and Allen complemented each other, and would enhance the likelihood that his campaign would be a success. In addition, Cole's consulting firm provided polling capability for the campaign. Another lesson drawn from Largent's football career was the need for hard work if a successful outcome is desired. Largent was a tireless campaigner who walked precincts, did coffees in the homes of Republicans, and made as many campaign appearances as he could. Largent's football career provided an excellent training ground for the realm of entrepreneurial politics.

The campaign was a perfect example of the merging of a grassroots campaign with the technological capabilities of the 1990s. Largent actually had two campaign headquarters. The one that contained his office and the offices of his five paid staffers, was in a downtown Tulsa high rise building. The other, his volunteer headquarters, was located in an upscale strip mall in south Tulsa, near the five most Republican precincts in the district and also near Oral Roberts University.⁹ The volunteer office was organized with computers, telephone banks, and areas in which mailings could be assembled.

The organization that brought the stunning primary victory continued to be used during the general election. With the identification of the 100 most Republican precincts in the district for the primary, and 80 organized with precinct captains all of the usual types of grassroots campaigning that occurred

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The location near Oral Roberts University would be a serendipitous circumstance when Oral Roberts American government students were given an assignment to volunteer with a campaign.

during the primary could be continued into the general election. Over 300 volunteers helped secure Largent's primary victory (Willis 1994). With the data collected from the primary, and a volunteer structure already in place, it was not difficult to move into the general election prepared to wage a serious campaign.

After Largent's primary victory, he received help from an unexpected source. As do many universities, Oral Roberts University requires an introductory course in American government for freshman level students. The coordinator of the American government program, Joseph Van Ness, decided that a little practical experience with political campaigns would be a good thing for the students. Since Oral Roberts University has been a member of the Tulsa community for some time, there were faculty members with sufficient contacts that would allow students to be involved with any campaign they chose, either Democratic or Republican (Van Ness 1994). However, given the conservative nature of Oral Roberts University,¹⁰ the internship program meant a windfall for Largent's campaign.

There were approximately 225 students taking the introductory American government class in the fall of 1994. The internship assignment involved six to

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Oral Roberts University a private, Christian university, founded by evangelist Oral Roberts, is affiliated with Pentecostal Christianity. It is very conservative, and students are required to follow a dress code and attend weekly chapel services. Oral Roberts is pro-life and shares the theologically conservative positions of other Pentecostals and charismatics, and these are the views taught at the university. It would be surprising if many Oral Roberts students were politically liberal. Oral Roberts must be classed as a part of the Christian Right, and so is his university.

eight hours of volunteer service with the campaign of the student's choice. There was a form to be completed by the student and signed by a member of the campaign staff to verify completion of the internship. There was a paper option available for those unable to do the internship, but given the unwillingness of college students to write unnecessary papers, approximately 90-95% of the students completed the internship (Van Ness 1994).

This assignment is interesting in several ways. The first is that an authority figure from the university (the political science professor) pushed the students into political involvement. This plays into the notion of cognitive liberation (McAdam 1982, Piven and Cloward 1979) that is a part of the political process model of social movement theory. The students were not only being told that political involvement was good, they were being mandated to become involved. Since students, especially at a heavily residential university like Oral Roberts do not exist in a vacuum, this meant that many other students on campus knew of the political science project. The approval of the project by the administration of the school was an approval of political involvement. This provided cognitive liberation to the students, who were then given permission not only to be involved, but to continue to be involved if they enjoyed it.

The consequences of this assignment were staggering. Estimating conservatively, at least 1200 volunteer hours (200 students multiplied by a minimum of six hours) were injected into the political process. These volunteers from Oral Roberts University were in addition to the 300 who were already

involved in the Largent campaign during the primary election. The students definitely increased Largent's volunteer base.¹¹ Volunteer coordinator Mike Willis indicated that by the end of the campaign, there were 800-900 individuals listed in the computer who had performed some sort of volunteer service for the campaign. Willis stated that there were times that he had so many volunteers, that he could not find tasks for all of them to complete.¹² The Largent campaign actually sent volunteers to James Inhofe's senate campaign, because there was nothing for them to do (Willis 1994).

The literature on congressional elections does not address the problem with which the Largent campaign was faced. In fact, Republican campaigns in general usually have the opposite problem. Sabato (1988) indicated that Republicans generally pay for tasks that Democrats find volunteers to do, because Republican campaigns lack volunteer support. Largent actually had more volunteers than he needed, and even sent volunteers to Inhofe's Senate campaign. This allowed Largent's campaign to perform every type of activity that

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Because Largent's campaign headquarters was the closest to the campus, and Largent and many of the students shared political views, it is not surprising that Largent's campaign was the first stop for Oral Roberts students. The volunteer headquarters was within walking distance of the campus, so for students without cars, it was particularly convenient.

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In none of the other campaigns that I observed did anyone complain about having more volunteers than needed.

could possibly be accomplished by volunteers. There was no need to worry about which tasks would be left undone due to lack of volunteers.¹³

Another interesting result of the Oral Roberts internship program was that a number of African Americans volunteered for Largent's campaign. In fact, I observed more African Americans at Largent's headquarters than were working for his Democratic opponent. When asked why they were working for Largent, the volunteers indicated that they supported Largent's positions, especially on abortion and family issues.¹⁴

The internship by the students at Oral Roberts demonstrated that the Christian Right in Tulsa is of the sophisticated variety. Oral Roberts is best described as a Pentecostal-charismatic university, and Largent is a member of a

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Volunteers can do all sorts of things for campaigns. They can walk precincts and either talk to people or put campaign literature on their doors. They can stuff envelopes for mailings. They can make phone calls to encourage people to vote. They can give voters rides to the polls, distribute yard signs, and do data entry. Volunteers who have computer expertise can run computers. To pay for all of this type of labor, even at minimum wage, would be impossible.

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In exploring the catalogs from Pentecostal and Fundamentalist universities, it is clear that students who did not subscribe to the doctrinal positions of the school would be very uncomfortable there. In fact, Pensacola Christian College, a Fundamentalist school that also publishes the A Beka curriculum used in many K-12 Christian schools, states in their catalog that if a student considering Pensacola Christian is a Pentecostal or charismatic, the student would be more comfortable somewhere else. Since the conservative theological views of colleges and universities like these are either biblical literalists, or believe in the Bible as the inerrant Word of God, the political views at the universities will be Christian Right. So the Oral Roberts students would naturally gravitate toward conservative candidates, and this would include the African-American students attending there. Perhaps J.C. Watts will be joined by more conservative African-Americans who are products of universities like Oral Roberts.

Fundamentalist church. These doctrinal differences would, at one time, have separated these two groups of Christians. However, there is a growing movement among politically sophisticated Christians to check doctrinal differences at the door when participating in political campaigns. The doctrinal divide,¹⁵ as demonstrated in 1988 when Fundamentalist Jerry Falwell endorsed George Bush instead of charismatic Pat Robertson, does not seem to bother members of the sophisticated Christian Right.¹⁶ The conservative Christian community rallied around Largent, and gave him their support.

On the Democratic side, Stuart Price actually had the best organized campaign of all of the Democrats in open seat races. Price had a well organized headquarters in a strip mall in Tulsa. His brother directed his campaign, with Price injecting considerable amounts of his own money into the campaign. His campaign headquarters had the telephones and computers necessary to provide the technology for a contemporary congressional campaign. A well organized candidate like Price could probably have won in the second district, and maybe even in the fourth. Unfortunately, he was running in the Republican first district.

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The doctrinal divide is actually one-sided. Pentecostals and charismatics can tolerate Fundamentalists, but the dispensationalist view of Fundamentalists makes them intolerant of Pentecostals and charismatics. Dispensationalists believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not for this dispensation, and anyone who had them is not Christian.

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The sophisticated Christian Right chooses to emphasize the areas in which various Christian groups agree, and the political views on which they agree. Areas of disagreement are minimized to achieve the common goals in the political arena.

Every move he made, Largent countered.¹⁷ When the votes were tallied on election night, Price, with the best Democratic campaign in any of the open seat races, received a smaller percentage of the vote than Cooper in the second or Perryman in the fourth. Garnering only 37.3% of the vote to Steve Largent's 62.7%, Stuart Price was finished.¹⁸ Steve Largent would represent the first district of Oklahoma.

The Second District

Virgil Cooper's victory in the Democratic runoff put Cooper and Democratic leaders in the district in a difficult position. The last congressional election won by a Republican was in 1912. Since then, the second district had been safely Democrat. The Democratic leaders in the district had worked well with the defeated representative, Synar, and were not pleased that Cooper had eliminated him from the election. Cooper did not think much of the Democrats in the district either. He stated that, during the primary, when he visited the various counties in the district, the county chairs were less than helpful to him, and he

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With plenty of money, an experienced and professional staff to direct the use of the money, and an army of volunteers, it was not a problem for Largent to instantly respond to anything Price did.

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Stuart Price is a businessman who has made a good deal of money. When he was defeated, he returned to his business. Business experience is good preparation for political entrepreneurs, but Price lived in the wrong district in which to apply his business experience to the political realm.

perceived that they were not supportive of his candidacy.¹⁹ This perception did not change after he became the nominee (Cooper 1995). The Democratic leaders in the district endorsed Cooper's candidacy in the days before the general election. However, it was clear that the intent was to keep the seat Democratic, not because they viewed Cooper with any affection.²⁰

A possible source of party irritation with Cooper was the alliance formed between his campaign and some of Republican Jerry Hill's supporters.²¹ Part of

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Cooper indicated that he believed that the Democratic county chairs should have been equally supportive of all Democrats. When he traveled from county to county in his campaign, he always stopped first to see the county Democratic chair. He stated that these chairs never took him around the district and introduced him to other important Democrats (Cooper 1995).

20

The Democrats created a tabloid style campaign flier for Cooper that I found in his campaign headquarters. It contained endorsements from all of the prominent Democrats in the district. However, when comparing it to other campaign materials I saw during the election, it was nothing spectacular. The flier was in black and white, and on newsprint. It looked like a last minute, low budget venture. It did not speak at all of Cooper's virtues or abilities, only of the importance of keeping the second district congressional seat Democratic. In an age of candidate centered campaigns, it was a very party centered document.

21

At the state Republican Convention in 1995 I interviewed LaDonna Sayes, a party activist that worked for Hill in 1992 and Coburn in 1994. She characterized the distinction between rustic and sophisticated Christian Right as a personality issue, focussed in the attitudes of Hill. Part of her story concerned her personal views. She stated that, after reflection, Hill's 1992 campaign was bitter and hateful, and not loving as a Christian campaign should have been. She became a Coburn supporter in 1994. She knew that her change of heart was right when Hill was petty and bitter after his 1994 primary defeat. She also indicated that many of Hill's supporters campaigned for Cooper in 1994 after the primary. She saw the rustic Christian Right as centered in Jerry Hill's narrow, bigoted ideas, and the sophisticated Christian Right following the lead of Coburn (Sayes 1995).

the problem was Hill himself, who did not quickly endorse Coburn (a fellow Republican) and close ranks within the Republican party.²² The Republican moderates that worked with the Coburn campaign were seen as a compromise with the devil. Hill's literature indicated that the political battle belonged to God, and that the hosts of heaven would help in the battle. The Coburn campaign, correctly perceiving that angels are unable to vote, accepted help from all who offered it. Cooper indicated that during the time leading to the general election, some of his most valuable volunteers had worked for Hill (Cooper 1995).

Another point of contention between Cooper and the Democratic party was his unwillingness to relinquish control of his campaign to them.²³ The party,

22

During the Ronald Reagan era Reagan articulated an eleventh commandment for Republicans. The eleventh commandment was "Thou shalt not speak ill of a fellow Republican." Reagan's commandment is obviously broken frequently, especially in contentious, candidate centered primaries. However, after a member of the party receives the nomination, all other Republicans are supposed to support the nominee. There was no problem with this in the sixth district during the 1994 special election, or in the first or fourth district during the 1994 general election. The strange behavior by Hill is another demonstration of how odd the race in the second district was.

23

Whether Cooper refused to allow the Democrats to control his campaign because he understood the candidate centered nature of politics would be a doubtful assertion. His refusal was based on his perception of rejection by county Democratic chairs during the primary and runoff. Plus, he did not trust the Democrats to adhere to his campaign philosophy (Cooper 1995). Cooper is a simple man who spent his entire life in a small town Oklahoma environment. He had the Oklahoma frontier attitude that he would do things his way, and he did not like outsiders telling him what to do. He demonstrated this attitude when he told a story from his days as a school principal. The teachers at his school had developed a reading program to help the children at the school read better. The program had been in place for a couple years, and it was working for the children. Then federal legislation granted money to schools for reading programs. Representatives from the federal education bureaucracy came to visit the school and evaluate the reading program. The federal officials mandated changes in the program

correctly perceiving that Cooper was an innocent in the area of campaigns, wanted to assist him so the party would not lose the seat. When he became the nominee, he was offered help by the state and national party. In fact, the party made a commercial for him, and began running it before he saw and approved it. This angered Cooper, and he rejected all subsequent help from the party²⁴ (Cooper 1995).

The Cooper campaign was quaint. The office was in a shop in Drumright, Cooper's home town. The shop had been a flower shop, and Cooper's materials were interspersed with the abandoned decorations from the previous tenant. There were no computers or phone banks, and no campaign staff with the exception of a young woman from Cooper's church. The only campaign literature in the office was the tabloid from the local Democrats and Christian Coalition voter guides.²⁵ The only way in which she could be considered paid

about which the federal officials could provide no evidence of greater efficacy than the existing program. Cooper interpreted the behavior of the federal officials as bureaucratic regulation from Washington that has no idea what works in Oklahoma (Cooper 1995). Cooper brought this attitude to any situation in which an outsider tried to tell him what would work where he lived.

²⁴

Cooper's crusade was to prove that it was possible to be elected to the House without running a fancy campaign that spent a lot of money. The Democrats in the district, who knew the sphere of political campaigns better than Cooper, were sure that this would not work. When talking to Cooper about his campaign, it was clear that he was much too thin-skinned to be involved in politics. Everything that did not go the way he thought it should hurt his feelings, and he took the normal rough and tumble of politics personally.

²⁵

Cooper's headquarters was the only place in which I saw Christian Coalition voter guides prominently displayed. Since Cooper thought that the Christian Coalition voter

staff was that Cooper paid for child care for her two older children while she answered the phones in his office. She brought her infant with her, and was interrupted by the child while working. It was apparent that there was no organization, with no coordination of volunteer activities. No one had any idea how many volunteers there were, or what areas were being worked by the campaign. On the day before the general election, a visitor to Cooper campaign headquarters found the candidate busy fixing the toilet (Farmer 1994).

Cooper and Republican nominee Dr. Tom Coburn shared many characteristics. Both were conservative Christians and members of Southern Baptist churches. Coburn taught Sunday school at First Baptist in Muskogee, while Cooper was busy serving on the pulpit committee²⁶ for his church, First Baptist of Drumright. Both were staunchly pro family, a term used by the

guides were printed as a special help to him, it is logical that he would display them (Cooper 1995). I wonder if he read the ones for the general election, because the positions of Cooper and Coburn on the voter guides were identical, with the exception of one issue for which Cooper gave no response. See Appendix, page 354 for a copy of the voter guide.

²⁶

In Southern Baptist churches and other churches whose governing system is so structured, pastors are selected by the individual congregations. The method used to select a new pastor is the pulpit committee, sometimes designated the pastoral call committee. By whatever name, the duties of the committee are the same. The committee is composed of solid and prominent members of the congregation, and evaluates the needs of the local church. The committee then reviews the characteristics of various pastors within the denomination. The committee interviews selected pastors, and visits their churches. Finally the selection is narrowed to two, or at most three individuals. The candidates come to the church and preach one weekend, and talk to the congregation informally, usually at some kind of lunch or dinner at the church. The congregation then votes to choose one of the candidates as pastor. If the congregation does not choose one of the candidates, the process is repeated.

Christian Right to describe policy positions that enhance the status and autonomy of the family, and pro life.²⁷ On the Christian Coalition's flyer that was distributed before the election, their issue positions were identical. Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition, was interviewed by Pat Robertson on the *700 Club* prior to the election. Reed stated that Oklahoma's second district was a win-win situation for conservative Christians.

The Coburn campaign was a complete contrast to Cooper's. The campaign office was located in Muskogee, Coburn's home town. As a physician, Coburn understood that expertise was as necessary in the political realm as it was in the medical realm. His experiences as a businessman and a doctor readily prepared him for the entrepreneurial world of candidate centered political campaigns. His campaign managers were individuals who were knowledgeable about the district, and about politics. In addition, Coburn, like Largent, hired Tom Cole as a consultant to his campaign, providing Cole's expert knowledge and polling capabilities to the campaign. There was sufficient computer support for analysis and correspondence, and telephones to allow phone activities to support the campaign. Special emphasis was place on get out the vote activities. In a heavily Democratic district, it was essential to get every possible supporter to the polls.

²⁷

Pro family generally includes pro-life. Pro family means opposition to the marriage tax penalty, opposition to government invasion of family life, including the right to appropriately educate and discipline children. The pro family position is also against federal government interference in K-12 education. Local control of K-12 education is seen as the only way parents can maintain control of public education.

Coburn also was able to activate a large number of volunteers to help with his campaign. Evelyn McPhail, national vice chair for the Republican party, gave a training session after Coburn's primary victory.²⁸ About 200 attended, and learned how to conduct a campaign. About two thirds of the crowd indicated that they had never been involved in anything like this before (Alhgren 1994). Many of these supporters came from Coburn's church.²⁹ The Coburn campaign, like the Largent campaign, had sufficient volunteers to allow campaign funds to be spent on things that could not be accomplished by volunteer labor. Coburn was able to successfully apply his entrepreneurial leadership skills to the task of recruiting volunteers.

28

McPhail indicated that she conducted training sessions all over the country for new political volunteers. The training session had several components to it. Some of it covered, in a limited way, the rules governing political campaigns. But most of it was rallying the troops, and allowing them to meet a national political operative who told them that their work was important and necessary (McPhail 1995). The training session is an illustration of one of the intangible benefits of volunteering that McAdam (1982) discusses.

29

The ability of Largent, Coburn, and to a lesser extent Watts to get members of their churches involved in their campaigns illustrates what occurs when a member of a social movement enters the political process by becoming a candidate. Because Largent and Coburn decided to run for office, and both were respected members of their congregations, this motivated members of their churches to become involved in the political process. Whether this motivation represents McAdam's (1982) process of cognitive liberation, or is just the altruistic motivation to help a friend, the result is the same, lots of campaign volunteers. McAdam also addresses the issue of why individuals become involved in social movements, especially since the work is voluntary, and no pay is involved. Working at a campaign headquarters with friends from church, or meeting new people who share your ideas can be a personally rewarding experience. One older woman from the Coburn campaign (who did not want her name used) said she made new friends working on the campaign, and that it was fun.

When Coburn decided to run, he wanted to hire Carl Alhgren, the local field director for Senator Don Nickles, as his campaign manager. Nickles had been supportive of Republican candidates within the state since his election in 1980.³⁰ The benefits of a close relationship with Nickles was obvious. Alhgren was unavailable when Coburn wanted to hire him for the primary, so Coburn hired Rick Farmer. Farmer was a long time Republican who lived in the district. At the time Farmer was a Ph.D. candidate in political science at the University of Oklahoma, and returned to the district to conduct the campaign. Farmer focused Coburn's primary campaign as much at the incumbent Democrat Synar as he did at the other Republican candidates. Farmer is very much a pragmatic political scientist, and was continually trying to make Coburn move toward the center of the political spectrum (Farmer 1994). The tension was sufficient for Coburn to remove Farmer as campaign manager after the primary victory, and replace him with Alhgren. When asked about the change, Alhgren merely stated that Farmer needed to return to school, and Coburn had asked that he replace Farmer (Alhgren 1994).³¹

³⁰

Nickles has been generous about hiring people to work for him, training them, and then letting them take their expertise to other Republican candidates. Cole (1994) also reported that Nickles was generous about letting his staff go to work for other Republicans. Since one of Nickles's goals is to build the Republican party in Oklahoma, this is another contribution he can make.

³¹

It seems strange to change campaign managers after a winning campaign, but it was probably a strategic decision on the part of Coburn. Farmer did intend to return to the university and complete his dissertation, so Farmer would probably not have been willing to remain as a part of Coburn's staff if Coburn was elected. From listening to the

Alhgren had his own concerns as campaign manager. Coburn, a physician with a practice in Muskogee, wanted to tend to his patients and run for Congress simultaneously. Monday was set aside as "doctor day" and no campaigning could occur.³² Since Coburn taught Sunday school and went to church on Sunday, it had to be an extremely exceptional circumstance before a Sunday campaign appearance could be scheduled (Alhgren 1994).³³ Another issue involved Coburn's opponent, Cooper. A different strategy was necessary, because it was not possible to bash a 71 year old fellow Baptist in the same manner as a professional politician like Synar.

Fortunately for Coburn, Cooper began to make mistakes. Cooper's largest mistake was his announcement to the press that Coburn would be going to Washington D.C. to sign the Contract with America being touted by Newt Gingrich and the Republican congressional leadership. As soon as Cooper's announcement was made, Tom Cole got on the phone with Coburn and told him

story from all sides, I get the impression that Farmer's replacement by Alhgren was based in part on the strategic desire to have a connection with Nickles, and in part in a personality conflict between Farmer and Coburn. Coburn did not completely disconnect from Farmer, because Farmer attended his watch party after the general election, and continued to have contact with Coburn during the 1996 election.

³²

Even though he was running for Congress, Coburn had no intention of abandoning his medical practice. During both the primary and general election campaign he still attempted to work as much as he could in his practice. This presented scheduling problems for both Farmer and Alhgren.

³³

Cooper did not campaign on Sunday either, so Cooper was not attending functions at which Coburn would have been conspicuous by his absence.

under no circumstances was he to go to Washington to sign the Contract with America. Cole told Coburn that the district was too heavily Democratic for Coburn to so visibly ally himself with the national Republican party (Cole 1994). Instead of going to Washington, Coburn created his own contract with the people of the second district, thereby keeping his focus on the district.³⁴ Cooper made other accusations against Coburn, including accusing Coburn of not supporting Social Security and veterans, but Coburn's campaign staff was easily able to deal with Cooper's accusations.

Moving toward the general election, the Coburn campaign was running smoothly, with sufficient volunteers to complete the various campaign tasks. The most important of the tasks right before the election was the get out the vote effort, which was well organized. Meanwhile, the Cooper campaign was trying to find volunteers to distribute signs and literature.³⁵ In a close result, the earthly armies of the sophisticated Christian Right defeated the rustic Christian Right candidate, whose heavenly army did not participate in the contest. In the most ironic turn of the election, the unorganized campaign of Cooper received the

³⁴

This is an example of how a professional campaign staff prevented Coburn from making a strategic mistake. Whether Cooper had actual evidence that Coburn was going to Washington to sign the Contract with America, or whether he just assumed that Coburn was going, the incident made Cooper look foolish. Coburn, on the other hand, looked like a strategic politician.

³⁵

With no data base or even a pencil and paper list of campaign volunteers, simple tasks like the distribution of campaign signs and literature became difficult for the Cooper campaign.

highest percentage of the Democratic vote in the contested congressional elections with the most pathetic campaign. Coburn's entrepreneurial leadership skills allowed him to defeat Cooper, who did not have the entrepreneurial leadership skills necessary to run a campaign. Coburn won, 52% to 48%.

The Fourth District

The campaign in the fourth district received an enormous amount of attention. The Republican nominee, J.C. Watts, had given an eloquent seconding speech for George Bush at the Republican convention in 1992, gaining him national attention. There had not been an African American Republican elected from the south since Reconstruction, and Watts was making a bid to be the first. The national party was poised to assist Watts in any way legally possible.³⁶ In particular, various House members came to Oklahoma to campaign for Watts, Senator Nickles campaigned for him, and Charlton Heston even appeared at a fund raiser for Watts. Watts was and continues to be a particular asset to the Republicans, because he is articulate and able to state his views eloquently. So national and state Republicans understood the importance of doing all that could be done to enable Watts to win the election.

³⁶

The Republicans, as the party of Lincoln, were the traditional party of African-Americans until they did not support the civil rights movement. African-Americans then became almost uniformly Democratic (Carmines and Stimson 1989). Since then, the Republicans have been trying, mostly unsuccessfully, to woo African-Americans into returning to the party. An articulate individual like Watts is a definite asset in this effort.

Watts had the distinction of being the first African American elected to statewide office in Oklahoma. Watts held a seat on the Corporation Commission.³⁷ As an experienced campaigner, Watts assembled a talented campaign staff.³⁸ For his campaign manager he retained Jim Dornan from the primary and runoff elections. Dornan has been involved in Republican campaigns in various parts of the country. Watts, like all of the other Republicans previously discussed, also continued to rely on the expertise of Tom Cole as a political consultant. Cole was especially helpful to Watts, because Cole is also a resident of the fourth district. In fact, Copeland (1994) mentioned Cole as a possible Republican candidate for the congressional seat.

Watts located his campaign headquarters in his home town, Norman, in an area near the University of Oklahoma. His headquarters was in a plaza with doctors offices and other professional offices. Watts also had the computers, telephones, and space necessary to conduct a contemporary campaign. Watts's location near the university also allowed the university's College Republicans easy access to the campaign, providing one set of motivated volunteers. This made Watts, a self-described member of the Christian Right, a part of the

³⁷

The Corporation Commission is a statewide elected commission that regulates corporate activity in Oklahoma. The commission certifies weights and measures, such as scales in the grocery stores and pumps at the gas station.

³⁸

Since the Corporation Commission is a statewide office, it is necessary to campaign all over the state. At the time of Boren's retirement, there was some talk among Republicans of Watts running for Boren's Senate seat. But Watts, who knew how time consuming a statewide race was, opted to run in the fourth district.

sophisticated Christian Right. There were no worries in this campaign that the university volunteers might be fraternity and sorority members who were less than Christian. All help was appreciated, and used.

Watts had assistance from the Christian community as well. Members of his church were involved in his campaign, as were members of other local churches in the area. Even though Watts was a youth pastor at a Southern Baptist church³⁹, members of other conservative churches, including Pentecostal, non-denominational charismatic⁴⁰, and even Roman Catholic⁴¹ were a part of his campaign. At a debate at the Lawton County Club between Watts and his runoff opponent Ed Apple, "Amen's!" were shouted in response to Watts's answers to questions. Watts also fits the composite of a good Christian Right candidate, with pro-life and pro-family views. Watts is very negative about

³⁹

I sat with a couple from Watts's church at the debate at the Lawton Country Club. I am certain that there was a time when both the African-American couple with whom I shared dinner and J.C. and Frankie Watts would not even have been allowed in the Lawton Country Club because of their race. The couple indicated that there were other members of the church involved in the campaign.

⁴⁰

I attended a nondenominational charismatic church in Norman. One couple I knew was Larry and Nancy Baca. Larry appeared in a commercial made by the Watts campaign. Larry and Nancy were on the news in a background shot of Watts's runoff watch party. Larry, Nancy, and their children were also at the watch party after the general election.

⁴¹

I met Patti LaForge, a Roman Catholic Watts supporter at the Lawton Country Club, and saw her several other times, including at Watts's general election watch party and at the 1995 Republican Cleveland county and state conventions. She stated that she and her husband supported Watts because they agreed with him on social issues, especially abortion. She indicated that she and her husband were actively trying to recruit other Roman Catholic family members to the Republican party.

the welfare system, claiming that it merely makes dependent those it should be helping. Watts also gives a great motivational speech, a skill that is helpful to any political entrepreneur.

David Perryman's Chickasha campaign headquarters was located in a more rural portion of the district. Perryman's headquarters was on a downtown street in Chickasha, just down the street from Perryman's law office. It was a marked contrast from Watts's headquarters, and betrayed Perryman's lack of campaign funds. The roof leaked, and the paneling was waterstained. Tabloid style campaign literature was stacked around the room, positioned to avoid various places where the roof leaked. There were no phone banks to be seen, and only rudimentary office supplies. The campaign did have computers, but on one day the computer would not communicate with the printer, holding both Perryman's and his wife's campaign schedules for the next day captive within the computer.⁴²

Perryman had a campaign manager, Stanton Nelson, who has been a political activist in the district and had worked for Boren in the past. In addition, Perryman had a media consultant in Oklahoma City (Arledge 1994). The media consultant and Nelson did not work well together, and one volunteer indicated

⁴²

Computers and other high technology equipment are supposed to be a help to a political campaign, not a hindrance. Perhaps the damp conditions created by the leaking roof caused some of the computer problems.

that the campaign would be better without the media consultant (May 1994).⁴³ In a competitive campaign, it is necessary for all facets of the campaign to communicate with each other and work well together to achieve the desired outcome. Perryman's lack of experience hurt him in this area, because he did not make wise decisions concerning how his campaign was run. This would work in a district in which the Democratic primary decided the winner of the general election. But that was clearly not the case in 1994.

Media contributed to one of the biggest problems in Perryman's campaign.⁴⁴ Perryman ran a television advertisement comparing his youth to Watts's. Perryman emphasized his hard work on the farm while during his youth and compared it to the time that Watts spent playing football. In this spot, Perryman is portrayed as the ultimate clean cut young man, working on his family's farm. When Watts's image appears on the screen, he is wearing a football uniform, and holding his helmet, and his hair is worn in a large version of the Afro style that was popular in the 1970s. Since Watts's hair is now very

⁴³

May was an interesting case. He actually lived in the sixth district, but came to the fourth to work for Perryman. He did not say why he was not working for Jeffrey Tollett, the sixth district nominee, unless he perceived that Tollett did not have a chance against Lucas. Perhaps there was a strategic calculation involved in his decision, since Perryman looked more electable than Tollett, and might have a job for him after winning the election.

⁴⁴

The lack of communication between Nelson and the Oklahoma City based media consultant could not have helped with the problems that media caused the Perryman campaign. If Perryman had been able to afford a consultant of the caliber of a Tom Cole, the media problems would not have occurred. This is another example of how lack of campaign expertise can damage a race.

short and neatly groomed, African-American politicians in the state said the spot had racist overtones, whether or not it was so intended.

Watts's response to the spot was humorous, stating that he worked hard to grow that Afro. He mentioned that he was a leader in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at the time (Bednar and Hertzke 1995). He did not need to respond more vigorously, since the Oklahoma City African American community responded for him. In an ironic twist, the prominent African Americans in the greater Oklahoma City area, Democrats all, including the Rev. Jeffrey Tollett, Frank Lucas's opponent in the sixth district race, denounced the spot as racist.⁴⁵ Perryman tried to cover the situation, but the damage was done. It may be the first recorded incidence of African American Democrats coming to the aid of an African American Republican, to the detriment of a white Democrat. If Perryman had a media consultant and campaign staff that could have prevented this error, it would have saved him a large amount of bad publicity. In the second district campaign, consultant Tom Cole prevented candidate Tom Coburn from going to Washington to sign the Contract With America, because Coburn's signing of the Contract would not have played well within the heavily Democratic second district. Perryman, having no one who looked at the possible negative consequences of his advertisement, was hurt by airing a controversial spot that

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May, one of Perryman's volunteers, who was white, could see nothing wrong with the television spot. He was actually disappointed that Tollett had condemned the spot, and was thinking of not voting for Tollett because of the incident (May 1994). Perhaps May's reaction to the spot is an indication that even among white Democrats there is not the sensitivity to race that there should be.

alienated the African American community, a traditionally strong Democratic constituency. Even worse, Perryman alienated the Democratic political entrepreneurs who could have been helpful to him.

In addition, the fourth district also had a third party candidate. When Copeland (1994) did his exploration of candidate emergence in 1992, he mentioned a potential independent candidate, Bill Tiffee. Tiffee was dissatisfied with McCurdy, and had gathered the necessary signatures to be on the November ballot. Tiffee must be mentioned because he actively campaigned. In what looked to be a close election, even a few percent of the vote that moves from one of the regular party candidates to an independent candidate could be important to the outcome.

The fourth district, which had been held so securely by Dave McCurdy since 1980, elected a Republican in 1994. Watts won with 52% of the vote, while Perryman garnered 43%, and Tiffee 5%. Even if Tiffee's supporters had voted for Perryman, as Tiffee recommended the weekend before the election, it would not have been sufficient. Watts became the first African American Republican since Reconstruction to be elected from a southern state.

When exploring the role of the Christian Right in the election, additional insights may be acquired from the fourth district because of a special election exit poll⁴⁶ conducted by students in Professor Allen Hertzke's Parties and

46

Exit polls are performed by stationing individuals with questionnaires outside various polling locations to determine who voted for which candidate. The major networks use exit polls to project the victors in all the races throughout the nation. The University of

Elections class at the University of Oklahoma. The survey allowed an exploration of the Christian Right vote from several perspectives. The simplest way to measure Christian Right voters is by using a born again question. While it is true that the born again variable is only a crude measure of Christian Right affiliation, it produced interesting results in the exit poll. When asked how they voted, born again voters voted overwhelmingly for Watts, whether the born again voters were Republican or Democrat. When comparing those who voted for Perryman and Watts, Watts received 76.4% of the born again Christian vote, while Perryman received only 23.6% (Chi square $p=.000$). It is apparent that the born again vote was the difference in the election.

Table 1
Fourth District House Race - Measure of Born Again Vote
All Voters

	Perryman (Dem)	Watts (Rep)	Total
Not Born Again	50.7% (147)	49.3% (143)	100% (290)
Born Again	23.6% (38)	76.4% (123)	100% (161)

N = 451
Chi square $p = .000$

Source: University of Oklahoma Fourth District Exit Poll

Oklahoma Exit Poll was especially useful because it included questions that allowed an exploration of the Christian Right vote.

When the vote is separated by party affiliation, it is clear that Watts garnered the votes of a large majority of Republican voters. A victorious candidate should receive the majority of the vote from his or her own party. In fact, a candidate from any party depends upon his or her fellow partisans to provide a dependable base of votes. However, when the voters are separated into categories of born again and not born again, the born again Republicans gave Watts a significantly larger portion of their votes than voters who were not born again (Chi square $p=.01$). For those who were both born again Christians and Republicans, there was additional motivation to vote for Watts, because Watts is like them. This is a demonstration of descriptive representation at work in an election. And, since there are no majority African American districts in Oklahoma, descriptive representation, at least among Republicans, is not likely to be based on skin color, but on the beliefs of the candidate and the voters.

Table 2

Fourth District House Race - Measure of Born Again Vote
Republicans only

	Perryman (Dem)	Watts (Rep)	Total
Not Born Again	18.5% (19)	81.5% (84)	100% (103)
Born Again	5.3% (4)	94.7% (71)	100% (75)

N = 178

Chi square $p = .01$

Source: University of Oklahoma Fourth District Exit Poll

For Perryman to have had any chance to win the election, he would have needed to attract a substantial portion of the Democratic voters. According to the data, while Watts received 81.5% of the not born again Republican vote, Perryman only garnered 71% of the not born again Democratic vote. However, born again Democrats gave the majority of their votes to Watts, who received 60.2% of the Democratic born again vote (Chi square $p=.000$). While it is true that the born again variable is not a sophisticated measure of Christian Right affiliation, the data indicates that the Democratic born again vote provided the winning margin for the Watts campaign.

Another explanation of the strong showing that Watts made among Democrats is that African American Democrats voted for Watts rather than for Perryman. The notion of descriptive representation asserts that people are more likely to vote for someone who is like them in some way, and race definitely fits in this situation. The negative campaign spot could have facilitated such a vote.⁴⁷ However, the exit polling data has an insufficient number of African American respondents to draw any conclusions based on this conjecture. The scattered pattern of African-American residence in Oklahoma probably contributes to this problem with the exit polling data.

⁴⁷

However, it is an interesting fact that some of the same African-American Democrats who came to Watts's defense in the matter of Perryman's perceived racist commercial also appeared at Watt's watch party on election night. I spoke to several of them, and they indicated that they came not because they particularly agreed with Watts's political views, but they came because Watts is African-American.

The better explanation for Watts's victory is the fact that according to the polling data, among all voters, Watts received almost three fourths of the born again vote. The survey indicates that the born again vote in the fourth district provided Watts with the votes that he needed to beat Perryman. The Christian Coalition voter guides, indicating Perryman's support for abortion on demand, provided a motivation for members of the Christian Right to vote for Watts.⁴⁸

Table 3

Fourth District House Race - Measure of Born Again Vote
Democrats only

	Perryman (Dem)	Watts (Rep)	Total
Not Born Again	71.0% (125)	29.0% (51)	100% (176)
Born Again	39.8% (33)	60.2% (50)	100% (83)

N = 259

Chi square p = .000

Source: University of Oklahoma Fourth District Exit Poll

The Senate Race

The literature on congressional elections indicates that Senate races differ from House races in several ways. Senate races usually draw quality candidates

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Perryman did not respond to the Christian Coalition survey that was sent to him to elicit information for the voter guide. However, the Christian Coalition sufficiently researched Perryman's issue positions to state that he supported abortion. Since abortion is the litmus test issue for the Christian Right, that one response was probably sufficient to motivate members of the Christian Right to vote for Watts.

(Bond, Covington, and Fleisher 1985) who know how to campaign. As a result, Senate campaigns are very competitive races (Hermson 1995). The race between Democrat Dave McCurdy and Republican James Inhofe confirms all that the literature indicates about Senate campaigns. Both candidates were able to draw upon previous campaign staff and contributors to develop and fund their campaigns. Both knew how to run a campaign, and understood the need for professional campaign staff to run a quality campaign.

However, the two candidates brought different political experiences to the race, and as a result, approached the campaign differently. McCurdy, since his first race in 1980, never was seriously challenged in his district and he never lost an election.⁴⁹ Inhofe's experience was very different from McCurdy's. Inhofe had run for several different positions, and had lost as many elections as he had won. As a result, Inhofe was ready to be an aggressive campaigner, and approached the race from that perspective from the beginning. McCurdy's early campaign was not as aggressive as Inhofe's.

Since the Christian Right involvement is the issue for exploration, this race must at least draw a comment. Inhofe benefitted from the American government project at Oral Roberts University, since his campaign headquarters

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McCurdy had a close race in 1980, when he first won the seat. He defeated his Republican opponent with 50.9% of the vote. In all of his subsequent congressional races, McCurdy received over 60% of the vote. As Copeland (1994) stated, McCurdy had a safe seat. Campaigning for a safe seat, the candidate does not need to be as aggressive as a candidate who has to run a competitive race.

in Tulsa was near the campus.⁵⁰ In addition, one of the major players identified in Christian Right politics in Oklahoma is Joanne Johnson. Johnson is Inhofe's sister, and has been involved in Republican politics for a long time. Inhofe's issue positions are also right on target as far as the Christian Right is concerned, so Johnson had no trouble mobilizing her Christian Right contacts on her brother's behalf (Bednar and Hertzke 1995).

Inhofe beat McCurdy, and beat him badly. Inhofe received 55% of the vote to McCurdy's 40%, with an independent candidate collecting the other 5% of the vote. Even more devastating for McCurdy, Inhofe won the majority of the vote in McCurdy's old congressional district. Inhofe's margin of victory cannot be attributed only to the efforts of the Christian Right. Other interest groups, including the NRA, put McCurdy on their hit list because of his votes in support of gun control. However, the exit poll data indicates that Inhofe received the same strong Christian Right support in the fourth district that Watts enjoyed, with 74% of the born again vote going to Inhofe (Bednar and Hertzke 1995).

SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

Within certain constraints, social movement organizations of both the right and left interject themselves into electoral politics. The Christian Right, as a social movement, is not an exception to this observation. Christian Right

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Inhofe also benefitted from the Oral Roberts project because Largent had all the volunteers his campaign needed. In addition, Inhofe also held the same views on political issues important to the Christian Right, so students from Oral Roberts would have been comfortable working for his campaign.

organizations create two types of educational materials to let members of the Christian Right know what is going on in the political realm. The first type of educational material is the congressional scorecard. The scorecards issued by Christian Right groups such as Christian Coalition and James Dobson's family policy councils address issues that are important to their constituents. They are no different than the environmental report cards issued by groups such as the Sierra Club or Greenpeace. These scorecards indicate how every member of the Congress, both House and Senate, have voted on various pieces of legislation during a particular congressional session. These are usually distributed before the elections, especially in districts in which there are incumbents who are running for reelection.⁵¹

In 1994, Christian Coalition created voter guides for every congressional district in the nation. These voter guides are supposed to be nonpartisan, but it is apparent which positions Christian Coalition supports. There are not actually questions on a voter guide, but one phrase descriptions of issues, and whether the candidate supports or opposes the issue. The voter guides are designed to accentuate the differences between liberal and conservative candidates. For

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The votes included on the scorecards are votes of interest to the Christian Right. These issues include abortion, special rights for homosexuals, voluntary school prayer, family tax issues, and federal involvement in education, among others. The Christian Coalition Congressional Scorecard is available in two versions, a paper version, and one that is available on the Christian Coalition web site on the internet. The scorecards cover the House and Senate delegations for the entire nation. This allows voters to see the votes of incumbents who are seeking higher office, instead of running for reelection.

liberal candidates who chose not to respond to Christian Coalition's questionnaire, issue positions were taken from press releases and congressional voting records.⁵² Christian Coalition indicated that meticulous files were kept in case a position attributed to a candidate was challenged, and that the files had been used when candidates were upset at how they were portrayed. Cunningham stated that no one had sued the Christian Coalition for a misrepresentation of their position (Cunningham 1994).⁵³ The Federal Election Commission suit that was filed in 1996 and is still pending does not address misrepresentation of positions, but does charge the Christian Coalition with financial improprieties relating to support given to candidates.⁵⁴

Although the Oklahoma Christian Coalition was only in the early stages of organization at the time of the election, there were sufficient volunteers to allow distribution of the voter guides over most of the state (Sellars 1994). Distribution

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For an incumbent member of Congress or an incumbent state legislator, if there has been legislation that relates to the issue selected for the Christian Coalition Scorecard, Christian Coalition uses the recorded vote as an issue position. Unless an incumbent disavows a previous vote, the scorecard is accurately representing the issue position of the incumbent.

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However, in 1999, Oklahoma state Senator Dave Herbert filed suit against the Christian Coalition for libel, regarding what Herbert considered to be misrepresentations of his positions on the 1998 Christian Coalition voter guides. The suit was dismissed (*Daily Oklahoman* 4/17/99).

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The FEC suit argues that Christian Coalition voter guides are partisan in nature, because they favor Republican candidates. The 1994 second district race indicated that Christian Coalition voter guides can be favorable to a Democrat, if his or her issue positions are right.

means that voter guides were delivered to every place that requested the guides. Distribution does not mean that every voter guide printed was given to a potential voter. The voter guides, designed as church bulletin inserts on a half sheet of 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper, accentuated several issues that the national office of Christian Coalition decided were important in the area (Cunningham 1994). In Oklahoma, the issues could be distilled to God, guns, and gays, with abortion included because it is one of the most important issues to the Christian Right.⁵⁵

The Resource Institute of Oklahoma (RIO), the family policy council affiliated with Dobson took another approach. RIO assembled a voter guide that was distributed via the state's two major newspapers, the *Daily Oklahoman* and the *Tulsa World*. The guides were placed in the papers the Sunday before the general election. RIO's guides were more extensive than Christian Coalition's covering all of the state legislative races as well as the statewide, senate, and congressional elections. RIO's guides did not allow for nuanced answers either, only blunt yes or no responses to questions.⁵⁶

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Issues included on the scorecard (quoted verbatim): Balanced Budget Amendment; Federal Tax Relief for Families; Abortion on Demand; Taxpayer Funding of Abortions; Parental Choice in Education (Vouchers); Banning Ownership of Legal Firearms; Special Rights for Homosexuals; and Homosexuals in the Military. No nuanced answers were possible, only Supports, Opposes, or No Response. See samples in the Appendix, page 355.

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RIO is a voluntary organization, and is funded by contributions. The costs of assembling the data for the newspaper inserts and having them printed were covered by RIO.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

The Oklahoma Republicans affiliated with the Christian Right did well in 1994. They articulated their faith as a part of their lives, and it had an impact on their behavior, even while campaigning. None of the candidates identified with the Christian Right wanted to campaign on Sundays, reserving that day for church and family activities. While a very occasional appearance might be considered, the norm was no Sunday campaigning.⁵⁷ In addition, their beliefs manifested themselves in their victory celebrations. There was no alcohol to toast their victories. In fact, because the Cleveland County Republicans shared Watts's watch party, the entire county party was dry. This occasioned a humorous situation, with a campaign manager from a winning county campaign hiding her beer in a plastic cup and hoping no one would notice (Bednar and Hertzke 1995). While these facts might seem trivial, they indicate how seriously candidates took their religious beliefs.

The real test of the religious beliefs of the newly elected representatives who are affiliated with the Christian Right would be how they behaved when they arrived in Washington. Would their faith impact the way they approached the job of representative? Some decisions were evident even before they moved to Washington. All of the newly elected representatives intended to leave their families in Oklahoma. The issue of connectedness to the state was apparent in

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If there was to be a Sunday campaign appearance, all the campaign managers indicated that the appearance would have to be in the afternoon, after church.

the Lucas special election campaign, and was equally important in the other campaigns. Largent, Coburn and Watts decided to follow the example of the other Republican representatives, Istook and Lucas, and leave their families at home in Oklahoma.⁵⁸ The decision to leave their families in Oklahoma meant that all of the Republican representatives would be spending a considerable part of their time at home. The notion behind leaving their families in Oklahoma is based in their belief that Oklahoma is a better place for their children to be raised than Washington. This also saves them from the accusations that were made against former fourth district representative Dave McCurdy, that his address in the district was a Norman motel. McCurdy's family lived in Washington, and at the end of his last term as representative he did not even have a residence in the district. The representatives who leave their families at home have a much greater incentive to return to the district frequently.

Leaving their families at home means that Washington will not really be home for these representatives. It means that they are free to devote the entire time they are in Washington to the business of being a representative. With the professional campaigns that all of the newly elected representatives ran, it is apparent that they will be inclined to organize their offices in the same way. The professionals who ran the campaigns will become staffers either in the district or

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Former representative Inhofe did not have the same choice to make. His children were grown, so the matter of where he would leave his family was not as crucial for him as for the others. Nickles has a home in Washington and a home in Ponca City. Nickles's family lives in Washington, but Nickles is held in such high regard by state Republicans that the issue of residence is not questioned in his case.

in Washington, and able to continue to develop expertise. How the representatives chose to use their free time, both in Washington and at home will indicate whether their religious beliefs are incorporated into the way they approach their new job responsibilities.

While the Christian Right was not the only influence on the congressional elections in Oklahoma, its supporters could not have been anything but delighted with the outcome.⁵⁹ The Oklahoma delegation, with its five Republican House members and two Republican Senators, was now overwhelmingly sympathetic to the policy concerns of the Christian Right. The lone Democrat in the delegation, Bill Brewster, was a conservative Democrat who often voted in favor of Christian Right positions on legislation.⁶⁰ The change in the partisan composition of Congress has allowed attempts for substantive policy gains for the Christian Right but Clinton has been as effective at countering Christian Right efforts,

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The National Rifle Association, another influential player in the congressional elections, had to be delighted as well. The two biggest proponents of gun control in the Oklahoma delegation, McCurdy and Synar, would not be returning to Congress. For McCurdy and Synar, it is impossible to use the euphemism returning to Washington, because both lived in Washington and would not be returning to Oklahoma. This is where the issue of how connected to Oklahoma McCurdy and Synar actually were, and their post-election residential decisions indicated that they were indeed no longer sufficiently connected to the state to return.

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Brewster, in the Congressional Scorecard created by the Christian Coalition for the legislative session prior to the election, voted with Christian Coalition positions 57% of the time in the 1994 Congressional Scorecard. This marked Brewster as the most conservative Democrat in the Oklahoma delegation. In the 1996 Congressional Scorecard, Brewster, the lone Democrat in the delegation, voted with the Christian Coalition's positions 77% of the time.

especially in the area of partial birth abortion. This demonstrates, that in our system of checks and balances, even when legislation is passed, the president will still have the opportunity to thwart the legislative ambitions of the Christian Right, or any other social movement, via the veto.

What also remained to be seen is whether the Christian Right gains in 1994 can be maintained in the state of Oklahoma, and across the nation, during the 1996 campaign. Because 1996 included a presidential election, the electorate differed from a congressional election. The 1996 election would either secure the positions of Oklahoma's new Republican delegation, or send another group of freshmen to Washington in 1996. How the newly elected members of Congress behave, both when they get to Washington, and when they run for reelection will determine the outcome.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GOING TO WASHINGTON AND THE 1996 ELECTION LOOKING TO THE FUTURE OF THE OKLAHOMA DELEGATION

FROM THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL TO WASHINGTON

Oklahoma was sending three obvious members of the Christian Right, Steve Largent, Tom Coburn, and J.C. Watts to Washington, and the first question was, would being a part of the Christian Right influence their behavior in Washington. However, it would not be possible to watch all three together on their first day on Capitol Hill. The political opportunity structures that created the open seat races, and partisan politics, led to three different first days in Washington for Largent, Coburn, and Watts.

The peculiarity of the circumstances sent two of Oklahoma's newly elected representatives directly to Washington. Due to the resignation of David Boren, and the election of then first district Rep. James Inhofe to replace Boren, the first district seat became immediately open. As soon as the election results were certified, and Boren's resignation official, Inhofe was sworn in to replace Boren in the Senate. Since the first district seat was now vacant, Steve Largent was sworn as a new member of the House on November 27, 1994, ahead of the rest of the freshman class. This gave Largent seniority over all of the other newly elected representatives across the nation. Admittedly, little was accomplished by the Congress during the period after the election, but Largent did gain a little experience. He also gained national visibility, not only for his election to the House, but for his election to the Professional Football Hall of

Fame.¹ With the exception of the late actor Sonny Bono, elected from California, Largent was the most famous member of the class of 1994. In Christian Right circles, Largent was the most prominent member of the class.

Dr. Tom Coburn arrived in Washington with the rest of the new House members in January. Coburn and Largent settled into the apartment that they decided to share in the Washington suburbs.² Pat Robertson's *700 Club* television show did a feature on Coburn and Largent on the first day of the legislative session. The story was, as is usual for Robertson, longer than a normal network news story. The Coburn and Largent families had come to Washington to share in the excitement. It featured the two new representatives and their families as they made their way through the various activities of the day. The ceremony of swearing the representatives was shown, and the offices of the representatives were shown as well. While in their father's office, Coburn's three grown daughters sang a Christian song. It was clear that the purpose of the piece was to show two of the most prominent new Christian members of the House to *700 Club* viewers. Another purpose may have been to

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Largent was inducted into the Professional Football Hall of Fame in the same year as winning the congressional seat. Largent had a great deal of visibility among three segments of the American population. NFL fans knew him as a Hall of Fame receiver, those interested in politics knew him as the new first district representative from Oklahoma, and the leadership and members of the Christian Right knew him from long involvement with their causes.

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Interestingly, the downstairs neighbors of Largent and Coburn were third district representative Bill Brewster and his wife.

show that there were actually Christians just like the viewers now representing them in Washington. This is a demonstration of the power of the notion of descriptive representation, because the viewers could identify with the Christian representatives and their families, even when the Christian representatives did not represent the viewers's districts.

Unfortunately, fourth district Rep. J.C. Watts was unable to enjoy the festivities of being sworn with the rest of the 1994 freshman class. Watts was unable, for political reasons, to resign his seat on the Corporation Commission and take his place in Washington. The date for the transfer of power for state offices forced Watts to remain in Oklahoma. While the new House was sworn on January 3, the newly elected Oklahoma state officials would not take office until January 9. If Watts had resigned so he could be in Washington on January 3, the lame duck governor, Democrat David Walters, would have been able to appoint Watts's successor to the Corporation Commission. Walters did actually appoint a replacement for Watts, but because Watts had not yet resigned the seat, a court challenge voided Walters's appointment.

The Republicans did not want to give Walters one last appointment, so Watts did not resign until the new Republican governor, Frank Keating, took office. Watts then resigned, and Keating appointed Watts's runoff opponent, Ed Apple, to finish Watts's term at the Corporation Commission.³ Some

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There was actually a court challenge concerning who should be the new member of the Corporation Commission, Walters's appointee, or Apple. The result of the court challenge was that Apple was ruled to be the new member of the Corporation

malcontents of both parties in Oklahoma complained that Watts was doing the state a disservice by waiting to take office, because he would have less House seniority than any other member of the 1994 freshman class.

But it was absolute nonsense to argue that the delay would hurt Watts's position in Washington. As the only African American Republican elected from a southern state since Reconstruction, and a speaker at the 1992 Republican National Convention, Watts was already well connected to the national party.⁴ The committee seat that best served Watts's interests, a seat on the House Armed Services Committee (renamed the House National Security Committee), was secured for him. Watts, as an articulate conservative spokesman for the party, would not lose anything at the national level by being a loyal Republican at the state level. If anything, Watts's loyalty would increase his popularity within the party.⁵ Other than the already famous Steve Largent, J.C. Watts was the individual best known nationally of the Oklahoma congressional delegation.

Commission. At the Cleveland County Republican convention, Apple joked about being a former usurper, but now a recognized member of the Corporation Commission (Apple 1995).

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The national party was also doing things to make Watts more visible. After the election, Watts gave the Republican response to one of Clinton's weekly radio addresses.

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The fact that Watts did what was in the best interests of the Oklahoma Republicans indicated to the national party that he would also do what was in the best interest of the national party. The only thing that Watts lost by not being in Washington on January third was the opportunity to participate in the ceremony and festivities on Capitol Hill.

CHRISTIAN RIGHT ACTIVITIES OF THE NEW REPRESENTATIVES

As indicated by the profile of Reps. Coburn and Largent by the *700 Club*, the three new Christian Right representatives did not leave their religious convictions at home in Oklahoma.⁶ They did all the other things that a new representative would naturally do, such as hiring office staff and learning how to negotiate their lives on Capitol Hill. They now had to shift from the role of a political entrepreneur as a campaigner to the role of a political entrepreneur who must now become a part of the culture of the House. But their choices of activities also evidenced their religious convictions.

One obvious illustration of how religious convictions were central to the behavior of the new representatives came on January 17, 1995. The first session of the 104th Congress was just beginning and seven members of the House, along with James Dobson and Gary Bauer, met in an office to share their thoughts on what they believed their role in Washington to be. The seven House members included Reps. Chenoweth, Sauder, Wamp, Lewis, Largent, Coburn, and Watts. It is notable that of the seven representatives, three were newly elected Christian Right members of the Oklahoma delegation. Largent

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Coburn actually committed a *faux pas* due to his Christian faith. Coburn decided that he would send greetings and Bible verses to other members of Congress via e-mail. One morning he sent something to a Jewish House member, who was not happy about receiving such mail. Coburn did not understand why the member was offended, especially considering that day's biblical reference was from the Old Testament (Farmer 1995). This action by Coburn indicated that he would continue to share his faith while in Washington, and that he had a lot to learn concerning what was acceptable Washington behavior.

stated that the best advice he was given was to be yourself. He stated that if you do not know who you are when you arrive in Washington, someone will own you by sunset. Largent further stated that he knew who he was, and found his identity as a Christian, and that Jesus Christ owned him (Largent 1998). The other representatives shared similar testimonies, and all agreed that their faith was the most important thing in their lives (Dobson 1998).

In a 1997 speech to a Focus on the Family meeting, Largent recounted several anecdotes about the activities of Christian representatives. He spoke of the legislation that had passed, and the other work being accomplished.⁷ However, he indicated that important work was also being done in the lives of other representatives, as he and his Christian colleagues communicated the message of salvation to them. He talked about the Thursday morning prayer breakfast and mentioned J.C. Watts preaching one morning, and someone being saved. He also talked about other representatives who were being converted. The most interesting story he told occurred at the beginning of the 104th Congress. Largent related that four representatives cornered Speaker Gingrich, pulled him into the house that they were sharing, laid hands on him and prayed for him. He also recounted other stories of representatives having conversion

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Largent spoke of the regular work in the House, including committee work and passing legislation. He specifically mentioned the legislation banning partial birth abortion, that Clinton vetoed. Partial birth abortion is something that Christian Right social movement leaders, especially Dobson and Bauer, had been vigorously opposing.

experiences.⁸ Largent was careful not to mention names, leaving that to the individuals involved (Largent 1998). But it is clear from listening to Largent that he viewed the evangelistic efforts of the Christian representatives as more important than the legislative efforts. That is because, coming from a Christian perspective, legislation only impacts the nation and the lives of people in a temporary fashion, because this world is only the temporary home of Christians. The communication of the message of salvation is more important, because it has eternal consequences.⁹

The election of vocally Christian Right representatives like Largent, Coburn, and Watts allows them to attempt to influence the culture of Congress from inside the institution. The example of the prayer breakfast is instructive. Rather than bring in a speaker from outside the Congress, Watts preached. Watts, Largent and Coburn can speak from their experiences, both as Christians and members of the House. Membership in the House creates religious opportunity structures to influence their peers in a manner that those who are not members of the House cannot duplicate.

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Largent also talked about praying for representatives and staff whose marriages were in trouble, and giving them counsel. Largent and Coburn also hold a Bible study in their apartment for other members of Congress (Largent 1998). It is an indication that Largent and Coburn are doing exactly the same things with their personal time spent in Washington that they would be doing if they were in Oklahoma.

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Largent's emphasis on evangelism is consistent within all portions of Evangelical Christianity. Various pastors in several churches that I have attended forcibly argue that a Christian's first job is to be an evangelist, and whatever the Christian does to earn a living is secondary to the evangelistic call.

THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS IN A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR

The new Republican majority could point to some successes, including the adoption of some of the Contract with America, but was not able to curb the Clinton administration as much as they had hoped. They could also point to some notable failures, including the government shutdown in 1995. As Republican members of Congress looked to the 1996 elections, especially in light of the lackluster presidential campaign of Bob Dole, there were obvious reasons for concern. The 1996 elections would not be the same reaction against the president as the 1994 midterm elections had been, and the electorate would be larger, as is normal during a presidential election year. The Republican freshmen who were defending their seats had to find ways to appeal to this larger electorate successfully.

The notion of presidential coattails has been all but abandoned when discussing the last several elections, because the president's party has been losing congressional seats in elections recently.¹⁰ Political scientists like Ragsdale (1980), asserted that congressional elections are discrete events, and that explorations of candidates and incumbency should be interpreted as such. Jacobson and Kernell (1983) argued that congressional elections, like presidential elections (Wattenberg 1991), are candidate driven, and strategic politicians run when the opportunity presents itself. A strategic politician would

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Both Bush and Clinton lost congressional seats in 1988 and 1992. Elections in the late 1980s and early 1990s have been so volatile that the old theoretical perspectives on elections either no longer apply, or these elections are anomalies.

not run against an entrenched incumbent, but would wait for an open seat or a vulnerable incumbent, regardless of whether or not it was a presidential election year. But throughout this debate about congressional elections, it is certain that they are candidate centered, with strategic calculations of the best time to run being left to the individual candidates. This research, while focussing on the activities of the Christian Right, further bolsters the notion that congressional campaigns are candidate centered, and that the decisions of aspiring political entrepreneurs shape the electoral process. Strategic calculations played an important role in decision making processes of Democrats Glen Johnson and Darryl Roberts, and new Republican Wes Watkins as they decided whether to attempt a run for Congress. Strategic calculations also gave the two Republicans in the first and fifth districts easy races.

THE NONCOMPETITIVE CONGRESSIONAL RACES

Of the six congressional races in Oklahoma in 1996, two races were not competitive in any way. The first and fifth districts, designed to be safe havens for Republican incumbents, proved to be exactly that. Neither Rep. Steve Largent in the first or Rep. Ernest Istook in the fifth drew a legitimate challenger. Largent's opponent was running his campaign from his apartment, and was so ineffectual that Largent's campaign headquarters was closed the Thursday before the November election. Istook's headquarters was tucked away in the basement of the office building where Istook's district office was located. Istook's opponent also had no money and no following. Largent received 68% of the

votes in his district and Istook received 70%, giving both incumbents easy victories. Largent and Istook appear to have secure seats for as long as they wish to hold them.

The sixth district Rep. Frank Lucas, winner of both a special election in May 1994 and the general election in November, should have been facing a challenge in 1996. Voter registration in the sixth district favors a Democratic candidate. However, Paul Barby, the Democratic candidate, disseminated a press release announcing his homosexuality just after he announced his candidacy. The overwhelmingly rural nature of the sixth district was not the appropriate place for a gay candidate. Barby's campaign complained that the media did not want to discuss campaign issues, but focussed on gay issues instead (Smith 1996). Even though Barby spent more money on the race than Lucas, it did not impact the result.¹¹ The election was not even close, with Lucas accumulating 64% of the vote to Barby's 36%. Lucas also appears to have a secure seat.

When elected in 1994, Oklahoma's junior senator, Jim Inhofe, only won the ability to finish the unexpired term of former senator David Boren. Inhofe was now running for a full six year term. Inhofe easily won reelection against Jim Boren, a cousin of the former senator. Inhofe's identification with the Christian Right has been discussed, and he again received support from the Christian

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Barby spent approximately \$475,000, with \$410,000 of that money received as a loan from himself. Lucas spent approximately \$420,000, and ended the election with cash on hand of about \$80,000.

Right in 1996. The state's senior senator, Don Nickles, is not only the most influential member of the Oklahoma Republican party (Cole 1994), but he is also well connected with the Christian Right. Nickles, who ran for reelection to a fourth term in 1998, provided assistance to all of the Republican House candidates that needed it.

The three interesting races occurred in the second, third, and fourth districts. The race in the second district pitted the Republican incumbent, Dr. Tom Coburn, against Democrat Glen Johnson, then the speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives. In the fourth district Republican incumbent J.C. Watts, was challenged by Democrat Ed Crocker, at the time a member of the Oklahoma House of Representatives from Norman. The real surprise of 1996 occurred in the third district. The third district is also called "Little Dixie" because of its proximity and resemblance to the South, and is the most solidly Democratic portion of the state. The incumbent representative, the lone Democrat in the delegation, Bill Brewster,¹² decided not to run for reelection, making the third district the only open seat race in the state. However, the former Democratic representative of the third district, Wes Watkins, who ran as

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Brewster, as a conservative Democrat, joined with 30 other conservative Democrats in the wake of the 1994 election. These conservative Democrats voted with the Republicans on some issues. There was even talk that some of them would turn Republican, as Sen. Shelby of Alabama had. Perhaps it was not as fulfilling to be a member of the minority party as it was to be a member of the majority. Brewster was popular, and could easily have been reelected, so his reasons for not running had little to do with the possibility of electoral defeat.

an Independent for governor in 1994, changed parties again to run as a Republican in 1996. As is usual with primaries for open seat races, Watkins had several challengers, but easily disposed of them. Watkins's Democratic opponent was state Senator Darryl Roberts, who survived a crowded primary field to face Watkins in the general election.

THE COMPETITIVE CONGRESSIONAL RACES

The Second District

As Dr. Tom Coburn savored his victory in 1994, it was apparent that his road to the 1996 election was not going to be smooth. After defeating Virgil Cooper, a surprise winner of the Democratic runoff between Cooper and long time Rep. Mike Synar, Coburn had some obstacles to clear before the 1996 election. Voter registration in the district remained heavily Democratic. One thing was certain, Coburn would not face a weak candidate like political neophyte Cooper in 1996. Because the seat was now held by a Republican, the Democrats would be working to recruit a quality candidate to oppose Coburn.

Coburn's problem was to unify the Christian Right in the second district. In 1994, two distinct Christian Right groups were apparent during the election, one sophisticated and willing to form coalitions with others and the other rustic and exclusive. To unify the Christian Right in the district, Coburn needed to find other things for Jerry Hill and Virgil Cooper to do that would not compete with his reelection effort. In this effort Coburn received an unexpected boost from an unlikely source. Bob Hudspeth, a Republican activist and member of the

Christian Right was elected chair of the second district Republican party in 1995. Hudspeth, in addition to being a Republican activist, was on the board of directors for the Resource Institute of Oklahoma (now the Oklahoma Family Policy Council, affiliated with Focus on the Family). Hudspeth supported Jerry Hill in 1992, and supported the eventual Republican nominee in 1994. Hudspeth is definitely sophisticated Christian Right, especially considering that he acknowledges his very conservative views, but does not want to exclude anyone from the party (Hudspeth 1995).

Hudspeth was already looking to the 1996 elections at the Republican State Convention in 1995. He indicated that he believed that Coburn would be faced with a tough race in 1996 and that it would probably be a difficult task to reelect him. Hudspeth stated that one of his goals was to persuade Jerry Hill to run for a state office in 1996, perhaps state representative or state senate. Hudspeth was concerned that Coburn avoid a costly and divisive primary that would weaken Coburn in the general election (Hudspeth 1995).¹³ Although Hudspeth became ill in 1996 and was forced to retire from most of his activities

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Hudspeth's goal of deflecting Jerry Hill's political activities somewhere other than the second district House race indicated that Hudspeth applied his knowledge of politics to a situation for the benefit of the party. Whether Hudspeth had personal feelings for Hill, he knew that a divisive primary would be a great detriment to Coburn's reelection efforts. When I spoke to Hudspeth, he was very concerned about how he was going to convince Hill to run for another office, because he was concerned that Hill's hurt pride from the 1994 primary would motivate him to run against Coburn. Hudspeth was Christian Right and devoted party activist at the same time, and no primary for Coburn was a goal for both the Christian Right and the Republicans.

(Dunn 1997), he achieved his goal. Hill ran an unsuccessful race for state senate, and Coburn had no primary.

Virgil Cooper was another matter. Cooper was grudgingly accepted in 1994 when he was the Democratic nominee, and then shunned by the party in 1995. When Cooper went to his county Democratic convention, he was not even selected as a delegate, and had to settle for being an alternate. It was clear that Cooper was disappointed with how his party had treated him.¹⁴ In 1995, Cooper was still considering running for the Democratic nomination in 1996 (Cooper 1995). However, it came to nothing. Then on August 21, the eve of the Democratic primary, Cooper announced that he was now registered as an Independent, and was endorsing Rep. Coburn for reelection. The Christian Right in the second district did not have competing candidates, the breach between factions was at least closed, if not healed, and Coburn was ready to face his Democratic challenger.

Senator Don Nickles gave assistance to all of the Republican House candidates that needed it, both in 1994 and 1996. The most beneficial assistance that any of the candidates received from Nickles went to Coburn in 1994. Carl Alhgren became Coburn's campaign manager after Coburn's victory in the 1994 Republican primary. As Nickles's former field representative in the

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Cooper could not understand how the Democrats in his county could shun him when he had been the party's nominee the previous November. Cooper was still so naive that he did not understand that his party blamed him for Synar's defeat and the loss of the seat to the Republicans.

area comprising most of the second district, Alhgren brought a great deal of expertise to both the Coburn campaign and to the running of Coburn's district operation after he was elected in 1994.

Alhgren managed Coburn's district office in Muskogee and opened a second office in Miami, which is in the northeastern part of the district. The offices have also made use of all the technological advantages that a congressional office of the 1990s is able to assemble. After the election, lists of opinion leaders in the district were compiled and correlated with the particular interests of the individuals. Using blast fax technology,¹⁵ issue alerts were regularly sent to these opinion leaders. The offices were also well staffed, and made use of volunteers who wanted to stay connected to Coburn. An exceptional effort was made to do an excellent job of constituent service,¹⁶ and to be responsive to the needs of the district (Holland 1996). It is apparent that

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Blast fax capability was something that the Coburn district office began to use in 1995, after Coburn took office. None of the 1994 campaigns had blast fax capability, so it was new. To use blast fax technology, a list of individuals and their fax numbers is created. The Coburn district office compiled several lists, and the lists related to specific issues with which various opinion leaders were interested. One letter was prepared, and the blast fax software instructed the computer to send the letter to the fax machine of everyone on the list. This could be done overnight, after the office staff left for the day. This technology allowed Coburn to alert concerned individuals almost instantly about what was happening in Washington.

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Constituent service involves intervening on behalf of members of the district to make sure the bureaucracy in Washington meets their needs. It might be getting a replacement Social Security check for grandma, or obtaining a service academy nomination for junior.

the professional organization of the district actually began looking to the 1996 elections immediately after Coburn took office.

Coburn returned home nearly every weekend, and spent a great deal of time in the district. Coburn has also maintained his medical practice, and continues to see patients on Mondays.¹⁷ The fact that he sees patients is known throughout the district, and it helps to foster close ties to people in his district, especially in Muskogee where his medical practice is. No one in the district can accuse Coburn of having gone Washington, and forgetting his district.

The continuing advice of Tom Cole is also apparent in Coburn's behavior. The state Oklahoma Republican Convention in 1995 was probably the biggest celebration that Oklahoma Republicans have ever held. With the wonderful (for Republicans) election results of 1994, how could the convention be anything other than an incredible party.¹⁸ However, second district Rep. Coburn was conspicuous by his absence. Because the second district is so heavily Democratic in registration, it was prudent for Coburn not to trumpet his

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Coburn's continued involvement in his medical practice has created a problem for him with the House Ethics Committee. A 1989 law aimed at preventing lawyers from accepting clients who could then buy votes is being applied to Coburn. Some question whether Coburn's receiving of payment for medical services falls under the terms of this law. Coburn stated that he would quit Congress before he surrendered his medical practice. Coburn has intentions of returning to the medical practice when he leaves Congress (ABC World News Tonight, January 9, 1998).

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It truly was more of a party than a convention, including tours of the governor's mansion and a luncheon with Oklahoma first lady Cathy Keating. It was a wonderful place for Republicans to see and be seen, and included visits from several prospective presidential candidates.

Republican connections in 1995. By working hard to serve his constituents, and not trying to be rabidly partisan, Coburn laid the groundwork for a successful reelection campaign.

Coburn's opponent was Glen Johnson, then the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives. Johnson more than met the qualifications for being a quality challenger to Coburn (Bond, Covington, and Fleisher 1985). Johnson had won several state House elections, and as Speaker of the Oklahoma House, was a highly visible part of state politics. Johnson won the right to run against Coburn by winning against a crowded field of primary challengers. While Johnson's campaign was fighting for the nomination, Coburn's campaign could explore everything that was said about Johnson in the primary and decide what issues they wanted to raise in the general election.¹⁹

Both Coburn and Johnson behaved like experienced political entrepreneurs, mounting campaigns that were professionally run with paid staff and used the latest technology. Both candidates spent the necessary money, and were able to raise the money they needed. In fact, the race in the second district was the most expensive House race in the state, even more expensive

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It is always easier for a campaign if someone else's campaign has sought all the problems and misstatements that an opponent has in his or her background. It is then easy to pick and choose which ones would be the best issues to raise again in the general election. It particularly allowed the Coburn campaign to see which issues Johnson was inadequately able to explain, and exploit them.

than the open seat race in the third district.²⁰ Johnson was well connected to Oklahoma Democrats, who were motivated to take the seat from the Republicans. Coburn had the support of the Republicans who wanted to keep the seat Republican. Johnson's staff commented on the advantage that incumbents have in holding a seat already won. They mentioned Coburn's district offices in both Muskogee and Miami as tools that Coburn could use to keep his name before the voters (Keane 1996).²¹ Coburn expanded his volunteer base from 1994, using approximately 500 volunteers in conducting his campaign (G. Coburn 1996). With the breach in the Christian Right closed, incumbent Coburn handled his first reelection challenge nicely, and won easily. Coburn received 55% of the vote, with Johnson only receiving 45%.

Of all the House seats held by incumbents, the second district was the seat that the Democrats should have had the easiest time regaining. However, Coburn's margin of victory indicated that his hold on the second district seat is much more secure than anyone would have anticipated. In other parts of the country Democrats regained seats that went Republican in 1994. In the second

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Both candidates in the race spent over a million dollars. Coburn raised approximately \$1.4 million, and spent \$1.3, all of it on the general election. Johnson raised about \$1,050,000 and spent about \$1,034,000. Johnson spent some of his to win the nomination.

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What Johnson's staff did not know was that Coburn was staffing his district offices partially with volunteers from the 1994 election. Some of Coburn's 1994 volunteers decided that they liked Coburn so much that they would continue to volunteer in his district offices after he was elected (Holland 1996). These volunteers were ready to transition to the election in 1996. This is really an incumbent advantage.

district case, there are two possible explanations for why Coburn retained the seat. The first explanation is that his positions and actions were acceptable to a majority of the people in his district. Coburn did nothing to mute his very conservative Christian views, and worked on issues about which he had strong convictions, including abortion. In addition, his district offices were run in a professional manner calculated to capitalize on incumbent advantage. The second explanation involves the presidential election. Clinton again lost in Oklahoma, so the same people that did not like Clinton in 1994 and fueled the partisan change in the Oklahoma delegation still did not like Clinton in 1996 and retained the Republican House delegation. The interpretation of Coburn's victory probably includes portions of both explanations.

The Fourth District

Newly elected Rep. J.C. Watts did not have the concerns with which Coburn had to deal. Watts's chief challenger in the 1994 primary, Ed Apple, was appointed by Republican Gov. Frank Keating to fill Watts's term at the Oklahoma Corporation Commission. In 1996, Apple was busy running and winning election to the Corporation Commission, and no one else challenged Watts in the Republican primary.²² Without a primary challenge, Watts could look to the general election and raise funds while the Democrats were deciding who his

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For someone like Warkentin, who was willing to run for office multiple times to unseat Democrat McCurdy, there was now no reason to run. Watts supported the same positions that Warkentin would have supported, so Warkentin's views were being adequately represented. Plus, with the obvious support that Watts was receiving from the national party, it would have been a wasted effort to challenge him.

opponent would be. As the first African-American elected as a Republican from a southern state since the Reconstruction era, and as an excellent speaker, the national Republican party had kept Watts busy since his election in 1994. As a former Southern Baptist youth pastor and self-identified member of the Christian Right, Watts is also popular among members of the Christian Right. But Watts had the same problem as Coburn, running for reelection in a district in which the voter registration is majority Democrat.

The fourth district was the subject of a study of candidate emergence during the 1992 elections, and the results of this study continue to apply to the district. Copeland (1994) found a great deal of political talent, especially among the Democrats, but because the then incumbent, Democrat Rep. Dave McCurdy seemed to have the district securely in hand, political ambition was deflected in other directions. Interestingly enough, when the seat became open in 1994, none of Copeland's identified Democratic talent chose to run. Two of the Republican talents, J.C. Watts and Ed Apple did run, and both were rewarded for their efforts. Another identified Republican talent from the fourth district, political consultant Tom Cole, was appointed Oklahoma Secretary of State by the new Republican Gov. Frank Keating. Cole had consulted for all of the Republican congressional candidates except the third and fifth districts in 1994, and was retained by all Republican congressional candidates except Istook in the fifth in 1996.²³

²³

Between his position as Secretary of State, and running his political consulting business,

Again in 1996, none of the possible Democratic candidates identified by Copeland (1994) chose to run. State Sen. Cal Hobson, identified by Copeland as an excellent candidate, was damaged by rumors of financial improprieties that were published in the local newspapers. The rumors surfaced during the spring, which is when candidates in Oklahoma are making decisions whether entering the August primary is feasible. Even though the allegations were eventually determined to be unfounded (Farmer 1996), the decision making period was past and Hobson decided not to run. The eventual Democratic challenger, state Rep. Ed Crocker, was a weak choice. Crocker retained his state House seat in 1994 by less than 100 votes.²⁴ In addition, Crocker's district was in Norman, which is also the home of incumbent J.C. Watts.

Watts had been a very prominent member of the Oklahoma delegation. He had been picked for several tasks that brought him attention in the national media. A prime time speech at the 1996 Republican Convention featured his gifts as a public speaker, as did numerous appearances on national news programs and Republican cable television. Watts ran a professional campaign. He switched some of his district staff to campaign staff, placing his district

Cole had plenty to do. Plus, Cole was too strategic a politician to challenge Watts in 1996.

²⁴

The problem was not just that Crocker only retained his seat by 100 votes, it was who ran against him. Crocker's opponent in 1994 was Republican Steve Byas. Byas mounted a competitive campaign, but he is not photogenic, and this worked to his detriment, especially in the age when looks and personality are important assets for political candidates. If Crocker could only beat Byas by less than 100 votes, he was indeed a weak challenger to Watts.

director, Jeff Cloud, at the head of his campaign. Watts had a storefront campaign headquarters in downtown Norman, and a solid base of 250 to 300 volunteers to assist with the campaign (Cloud 1996). Republican political consultant Tom Cole provided assistance with polling and advice on computers. Watts had a state of the art campaign, with all of the technological support available for use when needed.²⁵

Crocker's campaign headquarters was also in Norman, but it was located in a house in a residential district. There was no visibility of his headquarters from a main street, and parking was limited.²⁶ Crocker also had paid staff, computers, and a reasonable volunteer base. Crocker's greatest difficulty was that he was attempting to create a base of support in the backyard of the incumbent. Polling data from both campaigns indicated that Crocker was behind, and the data was correct. Crocker could only capture 40% of the vote in the fourth district, with Watts grabbing 58% and the rest going to a little-known third party challenger.

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Cloud, Watts's campaign manager, was pleased to show me the computers in the campaign office, and tell me what the computers could do. Watts had all the latest software, and people in the office who knew how to use it.

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If I had not been familiar with west Norman, I would never have found Crocker's headquarters. I had to park half a block from the house, because there was only parking on one side of the street. It would have been impossible to have a large number of volunteers at the headquarters, because it was a house, and the rooms were small. There was no room for large tables from which to do mailings or an extensive telephone bank for get out the vote efforts.

For both Coburn and Watts, the volunteer bases from their first campaigns remained faithful followers, and the volunteers returned to help with the reelection campaigns of their candidates. Many of these volunteers were members of the Christian Right, some who were members of the churches of the incumbents, and some from other churches. Both candidates remained true to the principles by which they ran their first campaigns. There was no Sunday campaigning, with Sunday reserved for church attendance and family. The 1996 elections gave Coburn and Watts comfortable victories, with both incumbents capturing a greater share of the vote than in 1994. With proper management of their districts, these Republicans seem to have a reasonably secure hold on their congressional seats. Since Oklahoma is a state with term limits for the state legislature, experienced Democratic challengers should be available to contest both seats, if the conditions are right.

The Christian Coalition provided its usual support to the Christian Right candidates. The voter guides portrayed them in a favorable light, and the issues were the normal hot button issues for which Christian Coalition voter guides are famous.²⁷ The Oklahoma Christian Coalition, continuing under the

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The categories on Watts's fourth district voter guide were: Balanced Budget Amendment; Raising Federal Income Taxes; Banning Partial Birth Abortion; Homosexuals in the Military; Repeal the Federal Firearm Ban; and Term Limits for Congress. Christian Right social movement leadership had been pounding the partial birth abortion issue since Clinton vetoed the legislation. Because of the military presence in the fourth district, the homosexuals in the military issue was important as well. See Appendix, page 356 for the 1996 voter guides for Coburn and Watts.

entrepreneurial leadership of Fred Sellars, distributed more voter guides in 1996 than in 1994. The entrepreneurial leadership of the Christian Right made sure that the activated members of the Christian Right received the necessary encouragement to vote.

The Open Seat Race

With the retirement of Democratic incumbent Bill Brewster, the third district became the only open seat congressional race. As previously stated, the dynamic of an open seat race is very different than a race in which there is an incumbent. In an open seat race, ambitious individuals from both parties have a chance not only at the nomination, but the best chance of actually winning the seat. Political entrepreneurs are attracted to open seat races, because open seat races provide the best opportunity for victory. The notion of political ambition is central to the candidate centered model of congressional elections. Barber (1965) and Schlesinger (1966) incorporated the concept of ambition into their discussions of political careers. The idea of ambition was refined to encompass the notion of strategic ambition (Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Bianco 1984). Proponents of the notion of strategic ambition argue that those who decide to run for office assess the situation and only decide to run when the circumstances are strategically right to allow them to have a chance of being elected. Strategic ambition emphasizes the concept of rationality, and the ability to judge when the time is right to run. For a Democrat in the third district, an open seat made 1996 a good time to run. The district is solidly Democratic, and

the winner of the Democratic primary has always been the winner of the general election. State Sen. Darryl Roberts, the winner of the Democratic primary, hoped that this third district trend would continue. Roberts would also have to be classified as a strategic politician, because he risked nothing to run. Roberts did not have to defend his senate seat until 1998.²⁸

However, the concept of ambition, even modified to strategic ambition, is not sufficient to judge how successful a candidate will be. The problem with using strategic ambition as the only factor by which to judge candidates is that strategic ambition is coupled to individual perceptions of the political environment. Individual perceptions may not be correct, and an objective observer might not see the same strategic context that the ambitious individual sees. An objective observer, especially one who knows the electoral history of the third district, would indicate that there would never be a good time for a Republican to run.

Wes Watkins, the eventual Republican nominee, met previously discussed qualifications of both a strategic politician and a quality challenger. Watkins is the former representative of the third district, having served seven terms as a Democrat in Washington. However, in 1994, Watkins decided to run for governor of Oklahoma as an Independent. The results of the governor's race indicated that Watkins was still well known and popular in the third district. In

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Roberts had a risk-free situation from which to seek higher office. State Senate terms in Oklahoma last four years, and Roberts was elected in 1994. Even if he lost the House race, Roberts would retain his state senate seat for another two years.

fact, of the twenty counties entirely or partially in the third district, Watkins outpolled both the Republican and Democratic nominees in seventeen counties, and beat the Democratic nominee in two others. The last county was taken by the Republican. If the votes for Watkins would have been added to the votes for the Democratic nominee Jack Mildren, Mildren would now be governor.

Watkins knew that he was still popular within the district, but he could not run as a Democrat, because the party blamed him for Mildren's loss.²⁹ Running as an Independent might get him elected, but as a former seven term House member, he knew that political power in the House is based on party affiliation. So Watkins decided to switch parties again and run as a Republican. When asked why he switched parties, Watkins echoed the opinion of many southern Democrats who have become Republicans, "I did not leave the Democratic party, the party left me," (Watkins 1996).³⁰

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Not only did the Democrats blame Watkins for Mildren's loss to Keating, they were not inclined to forgive him and allow him to return to the Democratic fold. Watkins was an even greater pariah among Democrats than Virgil Cooper.

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Watkins reiterated the complaint of many Democrats who became Republicans, including Republican presidential candidate Phil Gramm. As the national party became steadily more liberal, conservative Democrats like Watkins had to make a decision. They could either work from within the party to lessen the liberal influences or leave the party. Throughout the south, many Democrats became Republicans. Looking at Watkins's campaign literature in 1996, he did not sound like a Democrat. He advocated local control for public schools, a strong national defense, maintenance of veteran services, opposition to gun control, support of a balanced budget amendment, and support for tax reductions.

Watkins quickly demonstrated just how strategic a politician he was by negotiating guaranteed benefits from the congressional Republicans if he won the seat. After securing the nomination, Watkins was assured by House Speaker Newt Gingrich that he would have his seniority reinstated and he would be given a seat on the powerful Ways and Means Committee if he won. Watkins used this promise in his campaign literature to tout the benefits he could bring to the district with instant seniority and the Ways and Means seat. In addition, with his seniority reinstated he would outrank all of the other Oklahoma delegation.

Watkins and Roberts, as professional politicians, both ran campaigns that featured paid staff, computers, and volunteers. However, Roberts's campaign did not display the technological sophistication of Watkins's campaign. Perhaps the difference was Republican political consultant Tom Cole, who had a successful record in electing Republican congressional candidates in 1994, and was hired by Watkins in 1996. Watkins campaign staff was proud to display the uses of the latest technology in their campaign, including blast faxes to voters in several databases.³¹ The Watkins campaign was also fortunate to have 500 volunteers in the district, with 200 of those volunteers in Stillwater, where the campaign headquarters was located (Hampton 1996). Roberts's staff could not tell you how many volunteers they had, and were not up on all of the latest

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Watkins's campaign manager, Jeff Hampton, was also delighted to display the computer capabilities of the campaign. He stated that the computer would send 10,000 blast faxes that night, after everyone had left (Hampton 1996).

computer technology. Perhaps Roberts continued to operate on the assumption that the winner of the Democratic primary would win the seat.

Watkins not only knew the history of the district, he was a part of it. Watkins had the largest campaign operation of any congressional candidate in the state, Democrat or Republican. His headquarters was a large storefront in a strip mall in Stillwater. There were a large number of volunteers there, and volunteers brought in lunch and dinner every day. Watkins's family, including his wife and daughter, were also involved in the campaign. The headquarters was a family affair as well, with a room for Watkins's grandchildren to play and sleep.³² But family affair or not, Watkins was doing all of the right things to win. He was receiving advice and assistance from Sen. Don Nickles, the senior senator from Oklahoma and raising and spending a good deal of money. Watkins stated that he had raised close to a million dollars, and was spending it to get elected (Watkins 1996).

To gain Christian Right support, there are several issues upon which a candidate must have the right issue position. The most important is abortion. In the gubernatorial race in 1994, Watkins was clearly in favor of abortion, and his

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When I visited Watkins's headquarters, I was struck with the atmosphere in the building. The atmosphere was more like a group of long term friends or even family than any other headquarters I visited. Everyone working there ate together, pot luck style, for lunch and dinner. The Watkins family joined in the meals. The day I interview Watkins at his headquarters, he was dressed in a long sleeved t-shirt and sweatpants. Watkins acted like he was with his family, and he did not need to do anything to impress anyone present.

profile on the Christian Coalition voter guide in 1994 indicated that view. However, by 1996, Watkins had changed his position on abortion.³³ While not avowing the position shared by Reps. Coburn and Largent, that abortion was only permissible in cases where the mother's life is in danger, Watkins declared that abortion should be prohibited except in cases of forcible rape, incest, and where the life of the mother is at stake. Tony Lauinger, executive director of Oklahomans for Life, asked Watkins why he changed his position on abortion. Watkins told him that he had been rethinking his position on abortion for some time, and that watching his grandchildren convinced him that his previous position was wrong (Lauinger 1998). This allowed Watkins position on abortion to be stated as pro-life, both on the Oklahomans for Life and Christian Coalition voter guides.³⁴

While Watkins did not verbally affiliate himself with the Christian Right as some other members of the delegation had, with his change of position on abortion, he was acceptable to the Christian Right. His issue positions were conservative, and his campaign literature included references to faith in God.³⁵

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If there is one litmus test for acceptance by the Christian Right, especially the social movement leaders, the issue is abortion. If Watkins retained his pro-choice perspective, all of the other issues with which he was in agreement with the Christian Right would be for nothing. A pro-life position is imperative for acceptance and support by the Christian Right. Watkins did not indicate a pro-life stance on his campaign literature.

³⁴See Appendix page 357 for samples of the 1994 and 1996 voter guides.

³⁵

In Watkins's campaign literature, one of the qualifications he listed under the category of Businessman/Public Leader was that he was President of the U.S. House Prayer

Watkins would only campaign on Sundays after attending church. For Watkins, like the other Republicans in the House delegation, his religious beliefs seem to be an important part of his life.

The third district race was the closest of all the Oklahoma House races. Watkins emerged victorious, with 51% of the vote, Roberts gathering 45% and the rest going to an independent candidate. Watkins's percentage was about the same as Coburn had secured in 1994 in the heavily Democratic second district. The Oklahoma House delegation was now completely Republican, with Watkins to be its most senior member, and receiving the coveted Ways and Means seat. The gain of one Republican seat in Oklahoma helped counter Republican losses in other areas of the country.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

Within certain constraints, social movement organizations of both the right and left interject themselves into electoral politics. The scorecards issued by Christian Right groups such as Christian Coalition and James Dobson's family policy councils address issues that are important to their constituents. As usual, the Christian Coalition published scorecards on the votes of the previous legislative session. On the Christian Coalition scorecards, all of the Oklahoma Republicans received 100% ratings for voting with the Christian Coalition position during the 1995-96 session. Retiring Rep. Brewster received a 77% rating.

Breakfast. This position obviously is from his previous service in the House.

In 1996, the Christian Coalition again created voter guides for every congressional district in the nation. In these voter guides, it was apparent which positions Christian Coalition supports. The questions on the voter guides were designed for one word answers, which accentuated the differences between liberal and conservative candidates. The questions included in the voter guides are also carefully chosen, and the ones that address issues that are the most sensitive and provoking in each individual congressional district chosen. For liberal candidates who chose not to respond to Christian Coalition's questionnaire, issue positions were, as in previous elections, taken from press releases and congressional voting records. In cases in which the candidate did not respond, and no position could be determined, No Response was placed on the voter guide.

Even in the wake of the Federal Election Commission lawsuit involving the Christian Coalition, the Coalition did not decrease its activities in the 1996 election. In fact, the voter guides were more sophisticated in 1996 than they were in 1994. In 1994 the voter guides included the gubernatorial race, the United States Senate race, and the individual congressional races in each of the six congressional districts. So the Christian Coalition only had to publish six versions of the voter guide for Oklahoma. The 1994 voter guides were half of an 8 1/2 by 11 sheet of paper. In 1996 the voter guides were full sheets of paper, folded in half. On the front was the presidential race, and the United States Senate race and the candidates for the particular House district race were on the

back. However, on the inside were voter guides for the members of the state legislature, both state House and state Senate, Oklahoma Court of Appeals, and Oklahoma Supreme Court.³⁶

Because of the number of state House and Senate seats, it was impossible to create only one voter guide for each congressional district, as was done in 1994. The extensive coverage of state races in the voter guides meant that there were at least two voter guides for each congressional district. This made distribution more complex. In the past, it was only necessary to transport the voter guides to the appropriate congressional district for distribution. Now it was necessary to be sure that the voter guides went to the portion of the district corresponding to the state offices for which they were created, not just for the congressional district.³⁷ The increasing organizational growth of the Oklahoma

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For the candidates for executive and legislative offices, both state and national, the voter guides provided the usual identification of various issues, and a Supports, Opposes, or No Response answer. For the Oklahoma Court of Appeals and Supreme Court, particular cases that had been heard in the particular court were briefly explained, and the choice of responses were Supported decision, Opposed decision, or Did not hear case. The issues in the cases concerned child custody and homeschooling (child removed from parent's custody because child was being homeschooled) and homosexual issues. Homeschooling, especially the right to homeschool, is a very important issue to the Christian Right. In fact, Dobson states that if he now had school-aged children, he and his wife would homeschool them.

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The 1996 voter guides indicated a new level of sophistication for the Oklahoma Christian Right. Not only was the Coalition attempting to influence the outcome of races impacting the national government, but they were working at the state government level as well. Depending on the county, there were 8 1/2 by 11 inch half sheets that could be inserted into the larger Christian Coalition voter guide that covered the county races. I saw one of them prepared for Cleveland county.

Christian Coalition meant that the more complicated distribution would not be a problem. The staff indicated that they would be able to distribute one million voter guides in 1996 in a timely fashion. This meant that approximately 167,000 voter guides were distributed in each congressional district. Again, distribution does not mean that every voter guide got to a voter, but if even half of these guides were distributed in each congressional district, the amount of easily obtained information (Downs 1957) that was designed to motivate individuals to political action (McAdam) was notable. The issues featured in the congressional portion of the voter guides were again hot button issues in Oklahoma, including a balanced budget amendment, raising federal income taxes, abortion on demand, gays in the military, federal control of health care and term limits for Congress.³⁸

The Oklahoma Family Policy Council, formerly the Resource Institute of Oklahoma, the state family policy council affiliated with Dobson changed its name in May 1995. The director and board did not believe that the old name accurately represented the goals of the organization.³⁹ In 1994, they assembled a voter guide that was distributed via the state's two major newspapers, the *Daily Oklahoman* and the *Tulsa World* on the Sunday before the general election. Their guides were more extensive than Christian Coalition's, covering all of the

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See Appendix pages 358-61 for a sample of both the national and state portions of an expanded Christian Coalition voter guide.

³⁹

This organization and the Republicans are interconnected. Bob Hudspeth, second district congressional committee chair, is a member of this board (Hudspeth 1995).

state legislative races as well as the statewide, senate, and congressional elections. Since the Christian Coalition's voter guides in 1996 were more extensive and covered all of the state races, and the production of voter guides is expensive, the Oklahoma Family Policy Council decided not to produce and distribute a voter guide. However, feedback received by the council indicates that their voter guides are acceptable with pastors who do not agree with the approach and methods of the Christian Coalition. It is probable that Oklahoma Family Policy Council will be producing voter guides in the future (Dunn 1997).

The most notable action in the realm of activities of Christian Right social movement organizations was not an organizational action, but an individual one. James Dobson of Focus on the Family and Rep. Tom Coburn have become acquainted since the 1994 election, and Dobson is obviously impressed with Coburn. On his radio program, and in his newsletters, Dobson often mentions Coburn at or near the top of his list of supporters of the family in Congress. Dobson personally endorsed Coburn for reelection. This endorsement ran on Christian radio stations in the second district,⁴⁰ and was a great gift from Dobson to Coburn. Dobson is one of the most respected individuals within the national Christian Right, because he avoids doctrinal controversies and sticks to family

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As I drove from the first district to the second district on the Thursday before the election I was listening to the local Christian radio station. I listen to Dobson regularly, and his voice is distinctive. Dobson immediately identified himself and stated that this endorsement was personal, and not the view of Focus on the Family. Dobson stated that he was speaking as Coburn's friend, not as president of Focus.

issues. While it is difficult to measure the impact of the endorsement, it had to be valuable.

1998 AND BEYOND

The Oklahoma Republicans affiliated with the Christian Right did well again in 1996. Their Christian faith had an impact on their behavior, while in Washington and campaigning for reelection. None of the candidates identified with the Christian Right wanted to campaign on Sundays, reserving that day for church and family activities. While a very occasional appearance might be considered, the norm was no Sunday campaigning. In addition, the Christian Coalition in Oklahoma was better organized and more active than before the 1994 elections and able to distribute more voter guides. This was significant not only for Christian Right candidates at the congressional level, but at the state legislative level as well. In a Fox News poll after the 1996 election one third of those sampled in Oklahoma identified themselves as a part of the religious right. Because of the religious demographics of Oklahoma, in Oklahoma, religious right means Christian Right. Considering the Fox News polling data, it appears that candidates affiliated with the Christian Right or with positions acceptable to the Christian Right have a strong base in Oklahoma.

The 1998 elections returned all of the Republican House delegation to Washington. Darryl Roberts chose not to run again for state senate in order to challenge Watkins, but Watkins won again. Nickles, running for his third term as U.S. senator, also won reelection, as did the Republican governor, Keating.

With this in mind it is possible to conclude that as long as Christian Right elected officials are responsive to the voters, serve the interests of their districts well, and run professional campaigns, they will continue to be reelected to office. In addition, new candidates affiliated with the Christian Right should also be successful, if they run as strategic politicians using the latest in campaign technology and expertise. If there are other areas in the nation in which there is a similar distribution of Christian Right voters, Christian Right incumbents and candidates should also do well when they operate under the same constraints. Far from being dead, as thought in 1992, the Christian Right, both as officeholders and voters, will be a lively component of American politics for some time to come.

Christian Right activities in Oklahoma have changed the face of politics in Oklahoma during the 1990s. This research indicates that the mobilized Christian Right made a vast difference in congressional politics in Oklahoma. The Christian Right fueled a realignment that changed the congressional delegation from heavily Democratic, with two token Republican seats, to a completely Republican delegation. Not only are they a completely Republican delegation, but they are also a delegation that provides six dependable House votes and two dependable Senate votes for issue positions favored by the Christian Right. In the 1996 Christian Coalition scorecards that tracked voting records in Congress, the only one who did not vote 100% with the Christian Coalition's positions was Democrat Bill Brewster. In the 1998 scorecard, all members of the Oklahoma

delegation, both House and Senate, voted 100% of the time with the Christian Coalition. Oklahoma is the only state in which the entire delegation, both House and Senate, voted 100% with the Christian Coalition.⁴¹ The Christian Right mobilization in Oklahoma also fueled realignment at the state level, with many Republican officials being elected to statewide offices for the first time. The Christian Right made the most of the political opportunity structures that the Oklahoma case presented. How the Oklahoma case adds to the understanding of social movement theory will be addressed in the concluding chapter.

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See Appendix page 362 for copies of the congressional scorecards from 1994, 1996, and 1998.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LESSONS FROM THE OKLAHOMA CASE STUDY

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND POLITICAL SCIENCE THEORY

The initial and continuing success of the Christian Right social movement in Oklahoma allows a further exploration of two theoretical strands that are woven throughout this work. The first is the political process model of social movements developed by McAdam (1982) and the second is the theoretical framework from the political science literature that includes candidate emergence and congressional elections in both midterm and presidential election years. The Oklahoma case allows for a refinement of McAdam's political process model of social movement theory, and indicates that even the involvement of a social movement does not invalidate previous political science research concerning candidates, campaigns, and elections. The Oklahoma case also indicates that the entrepreneurial style of leadership necessary to create and develop social movement organizations is the same type of entrepreneurial leadership that is necessary to undertake a political campaign in a candidate centered era. Thus the social movement leaders and political activists possessed similar leadership styles that enabled them to interact well with each other.

THE POLITICAL PROCESS MODEL

McAdam (1982) grounds his political process model in the political system. McAdam identifies three components to his political process model, the structure of political opportunities, the cognitive liberation of the members of the

social movement, and the indigenous organizational strength of the social movement organizations. The Christian Right is operating in the American political system, and the structure of political opportunities created by the institutional design of the American political system defines the area in which the Christian Right, or any other social movement, may operate. One of the hallmarks of the American political system is the nature of multiple access points into the political system. If it is not possible to access the system in one way, another route can be tried. In the case explored by McAdam (1982), the Civil Rights Movement, many of the early victories of that movement came via the federal court system. This is especially true in the realm of school desegregation. The Christian Right has also attempted to use the federal courts, but with mixed results.¹ Since the election of Bill Clinton, the executive branch has been less than friendly to the Christian Right. In the American political system, that left the Congress as the most likely target of political opportunity for Christian Right success.

¹ The Christian Right has used the courts to attempt to maintain religious rights that the leaders of the various social movement organizations believe need protection. These rights include the rights of students to carry Bibles on public school campuses and to hold student-led prayer meetings. The American Center for Law and Justice, established by Pat Robertson in conjunction with the law school at Regent University (also founded by Robertson), takes cases for Christians who believe that their first amendment rights have been violated. Robertson uses the *700 Club* to raise money for the American Center for Law and Justice, so that Christians who cannot afford to pay for legal services can receive them. The Christian Right does not win consistently in the federal courts, but neither does it lose all the time. The mixed degree of Christian Right success in the courts indicates that other political opportunities must also be exploited.

In Oklahoma, the structure of political opportunities for the Christian Right began in 1994 with the resignations of Rep. Glenn English and Sen. David Boren. This created three open seat House of Representatives races and one open U.S. Senate race. The Christian Right capitalized on these opportunities. Another one of the political opportunities, the Christian Right helped to create. The campaign strategy of Coburn in the second district primary election aided in creation of an open seat race by expediting Synar's loss in the runoff. This generated an open seat race rather than fighting an incumbent in the general election race. In 1996, Brewster's decision not to run for reelection created the final opportunity structure to allow the conversion of the Oklahoma delegation to uniformly Republican and consistently voting in favor of Christian Right positions. Even if the Christian Right had wanted to accomplish these goals, the Oklahoma case indicates that the political process theory (McAdam 1982) is correct, for without the appropriate political opportunities, a social movement will be unable to achieve its goals.²

Cognitive liberation of the members of the social movement is the second component of McAdam's (1982) political process model. Piven and Cloward

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Soper's (1994) comparative study of Great Britain and the United States is applicable here. In Britain's unitary system, if members of a social movement are not elected to the House of Commons, there is no other arena of real influence for them. In the United States, when the White House and the federal courts prove to be less than satisfactory areas to influence there is always the Congress. There are also many other political opportunity structures in the United States, including fifty governors and state legislatures, and countless city governments.

(1979) indicate that cognitive liberation is a three stage process. In the first stage, people begin to lose faith in the legitimacy of the political system, because their concerns are being ignored by the political system. The second stage involves an attitudinal change from fatalistic to asserting one's rights as a citizen. The last stage is a perception of political efficacy that allows members of the group to change their position from noninvolvement in the system to involvement. Cognitive liberation was an especially important component of Christian Right social movement mobilization, because the Christian Right's earlier experiences of political involvement (in the 1920s) were negative. This is particularly true of the Fundamentalist segment of the Christian Right. The negative experiences caused a withdrawal from the political process and it was the task of contemporary Christian Right leaders to convince them that they could be efficacious in the political process. It was primarily the Fundamentalist portion of the Christian Right that needed cognitive liberation, because their doctrine taught avoidance of secular politics (Wilcox 1992).³ Without the cognitive liberation performed by the Christian Right social movement

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The notion of separation from the world so as not to be contaminated by it is an important part of the dispensationalist doctrine of the Fundamentalists,. The only permitted times of interaction with the world took the form of evangelistic outreach, because Fundamentalists are concerned with the spread of the gospel. Since the 1920s, Fundamentalists have created their own institutions, including Christian schools and colleges, to prohibit contamination by the world. To the Fundamentalist the political world is one of the most corrupted and corrupting segments of secular life, and as such, is to be avoided. This is why such extensive cognitive liberation was necessary to mobilize the Fundamentalist portion of the Christian Right.

organizations, Fundamentalist mobilization would not have occurred. McAdam's concept of the necessity of cognitive liberation is also corroborated by the Oklahoma case study.

The indigenous organizational strength of the various social movement organizations is the third component of McAdam's (1982) political process model. In the period prior to the 1994 elections, there were several Christian Right social movement organizations in existence, and they had been in existence for some time. The Christian Coalition, Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council, Concerned Women for America, the *700 Club* and PromiseKeepers were, in a variety of ways, encouraging involvement in the political process. All of these organizations were well organized at the national level, especially the Christian Coalition.

McAdam (1982) identifies members, a structure of incentives to promote group solidarity, a communications network, and leaders as the important components of indigenous organizational strength. While it is difficult to obtain actual member numbers for the various Christian Right organizations, it is apparent that these organizations have a following within the Christian Right community. The popularity of Dobson's *Focus on the Family* and Beverly LaHaye's, *Beverly LaHaye Live* radio programs indicate that both retain their influential positions in the Christian Right community. *The 700 Club* continues to be a popular Christian Right television program, and PromiseKeepers continue to fill stadiums across the country with men who evidence a desire to follow the

tenets of PromiseKeepers. The Family Research Council continues its lobbying activities and its work informing the Christian Right grassroots of important issues at the national level. The Christian Coalition, the most overtly political Christian Right organization, continues to be well organized at the national level, and is developing organizational strength in the states as well. In Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Christian Coalition has, from 1994 to the present, grown from a minuscule level of organizational strength into an organization with full time employees, an office and 37,000 members (Wood 1999). It is apparent that the Christian Right has a membership base, especially in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma case provides proof of the necessity of McAdam's membership component as a part of indigenous organizational strength.

The second factor identified by McAdam as a component of indigenous organizational strength is a structure of incentives to promote group solidarity. These incentives are necessary to overcome what Olson (1965) identifies as the free rider problem. Free riders are those who identify themselves as a part of a particular organization or movement, but are willing to free ride on the efforts of others who are promoting the goals of the group. The free rider problem is a common component of all voluntary organizations. One advantage that the Christian Right has in addressing the free rider problem is that the problem is as common in churches as it is anywhere else. The antidote to the free rider problem is an entrepreneurial leader who is able to move the members of the group from observer to participant status. Pastors of every size church, from

very small to megachurch size, must continually motivate the members of the church to become active in the church to accomplish the ministries of the church.⁴ The entrepreneurial leaders of the Christian Right, whether they are pastors, leaders of social movement organizations, or political candidates, understand the free rider problem and know how to address it. The only way to overcome the free rider problem in voluntary organizations, including social movements, is to develop incentives for involvement.

The various social movement organizations use different types of incentives. *The 700 Club* sends a picture or book as an acknowledgement of a monetary gift. Concerned Women for America also has a magazine and newsletter from Beverly LaHaye for contributors. Focus on the Family sends Dobson's monthly letter and its magazine, *Focus on the Family*, to people who communicate with them. Family Research Council follows Dobson's lead and sends a monthly newsletter free of charge. Both Focus and Family Research Council advertise other resources for purchase in their free materials. PromiseKeepers has made their stadium rallies free, and also has shirts for sale that allow men to proclaim their identity with the movement. All of these things are used to create identification with the movement and to encourage the

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Those of us who are involved in leadership at my church are constantly referring to the 90/10 rule, meaning that in normal voluntary organizations 10% of the people do 90% of the work. A constant effort is made to find ways to move the 90% of those who attend church and do nothing into greater involvement. This means that it is necessary to demonstrate that there are rewards for being involved, and that the rewards are not monetary.

members of the Christian Right to action in their homes, churches, and in the local community.

The Christian Coalition is somewhat different, because it is the most overtly political of all of the Christian Right social movement organizations. The Christian Coalition does have a magazine that comes with a regular monthly membership pledge, but the state organizations do not exclude those who cannot afford to pledge. The state organizations send letters, and the county organizations also communicate with members, to encourage their involvement. All of the publications are a part of the creation of incentives for membership, and work to rally the members to greater involvement. At the local level, the meetings are social events as well. These meetings feature a speaker and a meeting, and afterwards, a period of social interaction with others who share the same religious and political views.⁵ The central message of the newsletters and meetings is the necessity for continued involvement, and the importance of faithful involvement if the society is to be changed in the manner in which the Christian Right believes it should be. The goal of a changed society becomes the incentive for continuing involvement, and confirms the second component of indigenous organizational strength.

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Christians of all types, whether Evangelical or otherwise, refer to what happens after meetings like Christian Coalition meetings as fellowship. Fellowship is a term that encompasses conversing with other believers with the goal of strengthening and encouraging each other in their faith.

Another component of indigenous organizational strength is a communications network. As the various types of incentives for membership were discussed, it is apparent that there is an effective communications network in place utilizing print media. The Christian Right has radio and television stations as well. Obviously, Dobson's *Focus on the Family* and Beverly LaHaye's *Beverly LaHaye Live* radio programs and the *700 Club* television program are other important parts of the communications network. All of the various Christian Right social movement organizations also have web sites. The Family Research Council provides subscriptions to a fax issue alert that sends timely messages to those who are interested in current national legislation that is significant to members of the Christian Right.⁶ Communication is not a problem for the Christian Right, and confirms the third component of indigenous organizational strength in McAdam's (1982) political process model.

The fourth component of indigenous organizational strength in McAdam's model is leadership. McAdam correctly notes the need for leadership, first to facilitate the recognition of the political opportunity structures, and to engage in the task of cognitive liberation of the members of the social movement.

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The Christian Right communications network indicates that there is no fear of contemporary technology, as long as it is properly used and monitored. All of these Christian Right organizations understand the problems with contemporary communications technology, especially the internet. To curb the dangers of internet use, Christian Right internet access is available from multiple sources. All of the Christian Right social movement organizations, especially *Focus on the Family*, advocate filtered internet access and parental supervision for children.

Leadership is a vital component of indigenous organizational strength. The Christian Right social movement, especially the important social movement organizations, provide illustrations of the necessity of strong leaders to rally the faithful, fuel the growth of the social movement organizations, and maintain their growth.

The Oklahoma case study also illustrates the importance of leadership in social movement organizations, and affirms McAdam's (1982) assertion of its necessity. The Oklahoma Christian Coalition provides an excellent case in point. Under the leadership of its first executive director, Bill Caldwell, virtually nothing was done to organize the state. Caldwell had sufficient contacts to engineer the distribution of the voter guides for the special election between Webber and Lucas, but was able to do little else.⁷ When Fred Sellars became executive director in August 1994, he brought to the leadership task a determination to make the Oklahoma Christian Coalition a significant force in Oklahoma politics. He worked diligently to boost membership and create county organizations. He developed the financial base sufficiently to open a permanent office and hire permanent staff. The difference between the two leaders and the results of their leadership is striking, and illustrates the importance of leadership.

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Part of Caldwell's problem with developing the organization was his demanding full time job in the oil business and his residence in the Tulsa area (Caldwell 1994). The job limited the amount of time he could devote to the Oklahoma Christian Coalition, and his location in Tulsa meant that he was not easily accessible to the state capital in Oklahoma City.

The issue of leadership, however, is one of the weaknesses in McAdam's (1982) model. While discussing the importance of leadership, he does not mention the necessity of developing continuing leadership to facilitate the maintenance of a social movement. The case of the Civil Rights Movement is instructive. After the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the Civil Rights Movement did not have another leader of the caliber of King. The social movement organization that King led, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was never as effective under the leadership of Ralph Abernathy as it was under King's leadership. Leadership is an important factor in the continuation of any organization.

One issue that contributes to McAdam's weakness in his characterization of social movement leadership is a lack of identification of the type of leadership that is necessary to establish a social movement organization. Social movement organizations are created from a base of individuals who share views concerning an issue. However, if there is no one to seize the mantle of leadership in an entrepreneurial fashion and create a social movement organization, no organization would be formed. The creation of MADD provides an excellent example. Lightner was certainly not the first mother to lose a child to a drunk driver, but she was the one who acted in an entrepreneurial fashion to start MADD.

Many churches within the Evangelical portion of Christianity are started or built by entrepreneurial leaders. Pastor Dan Sheaffer, profiled in the introductory

vignette of this research, is a perfect example of an entrepreneurial leader. Sheaffer took a small church that was barely able to make its mortgage payments, and transformed it into a multi-million dollar megachurch. Another notable entrepreneurial leader within the Evangelical Christian community is Chuck Smith, the founder of the Calvary Chapel movement. Smith started with one church in southern California in the late 1960s as a part of the Jesus People revival, and now there are hundreds of Calvary Chapels throughout the nation. Entrepreneurial leadership is essential to the growth of Evangelical Christianity, whether at the pastoral level, or the parachurch level. All of the Christian Right social movement organizations explored in this research are classed within Christianity as parachurch organizations.⁸

Christian Right social movement organizations are also established by entrepreneurial leaders. All of the Christian Right social movement organizations explored in this research were started by entrepreneurial leaders who found an issue to address, and created organizations to address them. The great variety of Christian Right social movement organizations illustrates the multipolar nature of the Evangelical world. Dobson's concern was the family, LaHaye's concern was Christian women's issues, McCarthy's concern was the role of Christian men, Christian Coalition's concern was electoral politics and lobbying, and Family Research Council's concern was public policy. *The 700 Club* was the

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The basic characteristic of a parachurch organization is that it is not a part of a denominational organization, and does not receive support from a denomination. It is independent, both in governance, and in the realm of financial support.

only organization that was not initially created to deal with a specific policy area, being at the beginning more of an evangelistic and teaching television program, also including stories to encourage the faith of the Christian viewers. But the *700 Club* has expanded its focus, and now covers news, especially political news.

The notion of entrepreneurial leadership is interesting, and one of the issues concerning entrepreneurial leadership is whether it is possible for the mantle of entrepreneurial leadership to be passed to another leader. Can entrepreneurial leadership be taught and developed, or is it an innate characteristic of the entrepreneurial leader? Or to ensure the continuation of an established organization, is a different kind of leader needed? The second leader of an organization probably needs to be entrepreneurial, but this may be a different type of entrepreneurial leadership than the one who creates an organization possesses. The next leader must be sufficiently entrepreneurial to be able to motivate the members of the organization to remain involved with the organization, in order to maintain it. All of the Christian Right social movement organizations explored in this research have the same leadership that began the organization, with the exception of the Family Research Council and the Christian Coalition. This has not been a problem for the Family Research Council, because the Family Research Council was acquired by Focus on the Family, given time to become established, and then separated from Focus. Gary Bauer appears to be an entrepreneurial leader who has continued to develop the

organization, which has contributed to the continuing growth of the Family Research Council.

The Christian Coalition has had difficulties with leadership. When Ralph Reed, the entrepreneurial founder, left the Christian Coalition to engage in another entrepreneurial venture, the founding of his political consulting firm, there were some problems for the Christian Coalition. Randy Tate, the new leader of the Christian Coalition, was neither as charismatic as Ralph Reed, nor as well connected in Christian Right circles. Within the last year, Pat Robertson's name is again appearing on the letterhead of the Christian Coalition, probably with the intention of using Robertson's visibility in the Christian Right world to encourage the members of the Christian Coalition, and to recruit new members.

Other lessons from Christian Right social movements also indicate the importance of leadership. In 1988, while running for president, Pat Robertson temporarily resigned as the leader of the *700 Club*. During the period in which Robertson was gone, the *700 Club* experienced a decline in viewers and finances. It took Robertson some time after the race to rebuild the *700 Club*. It will be interesting to see if problems of this nature occur with the Family Research Council, because Gary Bauer has resigned to run for president in 2000.⁹ However, evidence from elsewhere in the world of Evangelical

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Whether Bauer is anticipating an unsuccessful presidential run or just keeping his options open, the Family Research Council is being run by the executive vice president

Christianity indicates that when the need for a new leader presents itself, an entrepreneurial leader then rises to the occasion and steps into the leadership role.

Since Dobson's stroke in 1998, the board of directors of Focus on the Family has been dealing with the issue of leadership as well. Dobson devoted his June, 1999 letter to the issue of succession. The intent of the letter was twofold. The first was to reassure those who look to Focus for assistance that the organization would continue, even if Dobson were gone. The second is to describe the type of leader that would replace Dobson. The potential leader of Focus would be a committed Christian, with an unblemished reputation as a Christian and member of one of the helping professions, since Dobson is a psychologist. The potential leader would have demonstrated leadership skills, and a pleasant radio voice. Even though McAdam (1982) does not assert the importance of continuing leadership, at least one Christian Right social movement organization decided that continuing leadership was sufficiently important to the maintenance of the organization to be addressed.

McAdam (1982) argues that there is a surge and decline nature inherent in social movements. A possible cause of the surge and decline nature of social movements is an inability of social movement organizations to recruit and develop continuing leadership. Continuing leadership is necessary to the

in his absence. There is no president currently (1999) listed on the Washington Watch newsletter.

maintenance of indigenous organizational strength and cognitive liberation. If there are no leaders to continue to fuel the cognitive liberation process that motivates members of the social movement to action, the movement will decline. If there are no leaders to maintain the organizations, the organizations will decline and become ineffective. If there are no leaders to evaluate the political opportunity structures presented to the group and direct the members to appropriate political involvement, the movement will decline. A recognition of the essential element of the development of continuing leadership, and the role of leadership in the maintenance of social movement involvement is a flaw in McAdam's political process model that this research on the Christian Right reveals.

Perhaps another problem with the notion of continuing leadership for social movement organizations of any type is the problem of either finding or developing the type of leadership that can take an organization that is not the leader's own organization, and continue to maintain, nurture, and develop the organization. When exploring the various Christian Right social movement organizations, it is clear to see that these organizations are intimately identified with and connected to their founders. Unless a plan is created like the plan by Focus on the Family to address the issue of continuing leadership, with the idea of organizational maintenance in mind, the loss of an entrepreneurial and charismatic leader could easily become the contributing factor to the decline of the social movement organization. And, if any social movement has leaders that

are all within the same age range, the loss of leadership in multiple social movement organizations could contribute to the decline of the movement as a whole. Perhaps this problem will always plague social movements, due to questions regarding the possibility of transferring the mantle of entrepreneurial leadership to a new leader. However, within the world of Evangelical Christianity, new leaders are constantly being identified and developed, both at the congregational level and in the various parachurch organizations. This should insure that as long as the political opportunity structures are present for the Christian Right, entrepreneurial leaders will arise to form organizations to address the new political opportunity structures.

CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS

The stated goal of any social movement is to effect some sort of change within the political system. The current political system is one that is candidate centered, with candidates who are self-starters evaluating the political landscape and making individual decisions when to run for office. Candidate centered politics creates a political system that is dominated by entrepreneurial individuals who want to be elected to office. In the Oklahoma case, the structure of political opportunities in 1994 indicated that the entrepreneurial individuals wishing to run for office should pursue congressional seats. Likewise, the structure of political opportunities indicated that the Christian Right, influenced by the entrepreneurial leadership of the various Christian Right social movement organizations, should focus on congressional elections. First in the special election of 1994, and in

three races during the general election of 1994, opportunities existed to elect individuals who would support the issue positions favored by the Christian Right. While the Christian Right in no way created the opportunity structures that occurred in 1994, the Christian Right was able to take advantage of the opportunities that occurred.

The first issue that must be discussed when exploring congressional campaigns is candidate emergence. For any social movement to impact the political process, there must be candidates who share their views about public policy and will attempt to implement those policy positions if elected. In the exploration of the candidate emergence process, there is no evidence that the Christian Right, either its leaders or others within the Christian Right social movement organizations were active in recruiting candidates. However, there is a good deal of evidence that Coburn, Largent, and Watts all developed their entrepreneurial leadership skills within the context of the church. When these entrepreneurial leadership skills were recognized by Republican elites, then the elites encouraged them to consider running for office. Sen. Nickles, the most influential Republican in Oklahoma, personally encouraged Coburn and Largent to run. Watts was receiving all kinds of encouragement to run, from state Republicans as well as national Republicans. So the Republicans in Oklahoma saw the three candidates affiliated with the Christian Right as attractive political entrepreneurs who could do well in their districts.

Candidates are important, but nominees are even more important. Since the addition of the primary election process, political parties can no longer select the individual who looks like the best nominee to run for a particular office. After the candidates are recruited, the campaigns are completely candidate centered, because the party cannot favor one member of the party over another. In the Oklahoma case, the Republican candidates who became nominees, ran campaigns just like any other candidate would. With the exception of the strange result in the Democratic primary in the second district, all of the victorious nominees ran sophisticated campaigns that used every resource available. One special resource that the Christian Right provided was a volunteer base. This group of volunteers allowed the campaigns to use their resources wisely because the campaigns did not have to pay for services performed by campaign volunteers.

In a conservative state like Oklahoma, it is a possibility that there could be more than one candidate who is either affiliated with the Christian Right or holds policy positions acceptable to the Christian Right in a particular race. In the special election in the sixth district, both the Republican primary and runoff were comprised of multiple candidates who were either affiliated with the Christian Right or held views acceptable to the Christian Right. This was also true in the primary in the second district and both the primary and runoff in the fourth district. In all cases, the candidate running the best campaign won, and in every case except the second district, the defeated candidates supported the eventual

nominee. There is nothing in the political science literature to contradict the notion that the candidate who runs the best campaign wins the election. The impact of the activities of the Christian Right on candidate centered primaries was that the infusion of Christian Right volunteers allowed Christian Right candidates to run the best possible campaigns with the money available. In the Oklahoma case, Christian Right volunteers, directed by sophisticated political operatives,¹⁰ produced well-run campaigns.

An important factor in the creation of these well run campaigns was the entrepreneurial leadership skills that the candidates already possessed. These skills allowed the candidates to readily mobilize large numbers of volunteers, because they had learned these skills in the Evangelical world. In addition, there is an emphasis within the Evangelical world to seek good advice when one has a decision to be made. This factor was also apparent in the campaigns of the sophisticated Christian Right candidates, who readily hired the best political operatives available to them. The entrepreneurial Christian Right candidates took the lessons of leadership learned from their experiences in the Evangelical world, and applied them to the realm of politics.

The second district was an anomaly that is difficult to readily explain. All three Republican candidates, and one Democratic candidate, Cooper, had to be

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Some of the political operatives, notably Terry Allen who ran Largent's campaign, were also members of the Christian Right. In addition, in the current candidate centered political realm, political operatives must also display entrepreneurial qualities. It would be difficult to classify Tom Cole, the founder of his own political consulting firm, as anything other than a political entrepreneur.

identified as Christian Right. However, the differences between Coburn, the Republican nominee, and the other three, were significant. Coburn, while a theologically conservative Christian, most of the time behaved like a strategic politician,¹¹ hiring a professional campaign staff to run his campaign for him. The other three were very unsophisticated, and ran campaigns that were said to be more dependent on God than on human activities. Coburn was an example of a member of the Christian Right who was sophisticated and had some understanding of what needed to be done to run a successful campaign. Cooper and Hill were rustic, and behaved as if they had never heard any of the lessons learned by the unsuccessful Christian Right activities of the 1980s. Perhaps the rural nature of the district contributed to the existence of the rustic Christian Right that was found nowhere else in Oklahoma. Members of the rustic Christian Right did not readily support other candidates when their candidate was defeated. Indeed, some of Republican rustic Hill's supporters helped fellow rustic Democrat Cooper rather than fellow Republican Coburn. This behavior did not occur anywhere else, it was confined to the rustics. The rustic Christian Right appeared to be an anomaly in the second district during the 1994 election, because the rustics were not apparent in 1996 or 1998. The rustic Christian Right in Oklahoma faded because its members were unable to make the strategic political calculations necessary to operate within the existing political

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Coburn still insisted on Mondays as doctor day. He continued to maintain Mondays as doctor day whenever possible, even after elected.

opportunity structures. The rustics obviously did not acquire the entrepreneurial leadership skills within the realm of Evangelical Christianity that would have allowed them to operate in the sophisticated realm of politics. Perhaps the church experience of the rustics, centered in rural life, was not wide enough to sufficiently develop the entrepreneurial leadership skills that would have transferred to political endeavor.

The three Republican Christian Right nominees, Coburn, Largent, and Watts, ran professional campaigns in 1994 that resulted in general election victories. All created district offices to provide constituent services and facilitate reelection. The other Republican nominees in 1994, Istook and Lucas, while not claiming affiliation with the Christian Right, held issue positions that made them acceptable to the Christian Right. None of the five faced a primary challenge in either 1996 or 1998, and easily won reelection.

The next surprise in the Oklahoma case study occurred in 1996. The decision of third district Rep. Brewster not to seek reelection created another political opportunity for the Christian Right. But it was not the Christian Right that produced the candidate that completed the Republican sweep of the Oklahoma congressional delegation. Wes Watkins, a Democrat, turned Independent in 1994, turned Republican in 1996, and captured the third district for the Republicans. In 1994, Watkins had been pro-choice on abortion, the litmus test for the Christian Right. By 1996, Watkins had changed his position on abortion to support for abortion only in cases of rape, incest, and life of the mother. That

position is sufficiently pro-life to be acceptable to the Christian Right. Whether Watkins's change of position stemmed from personal change of heart (Lauinger 1998) or a calculation of political expediency, it made him acceptable to the Christian Right and allowed Christian Right literature to portray him in a favorable light.

An important component that the Christian Right brought to the elections in 1994 and 1996 was a host of volunteers that worked both for the candidates, and for the Oklahoma Christian Coalition. The Christian Right volunteers were church members who learned organizational skills that were readily transferred to the political arena (Verba, Scholzman and Brady 1995). In addition, volunteers reported that they enjoyed political activity and now that they knew how much fun it was, they would continue volunteering. This indicates that the volunteers mobilized by the Christian Right for the 1994 elections may be volunteering for other elections in the future. It is also possible that future candidates for state and local offices will emerge from the volunteers who were mobilized during the 1994 elections.

The results in Oklahoma cannot be viewed as anything but a partisan realignment at the congressional level. When Oklahoma Democrats drew the lines for the congressional districts after the 1990 census, they believed that they would have four secure House seats, after conceding the first and fifth districts to the Republicans. The last thing that Oklahoma Democrats expected was that on election night, 1996, there would not be one congressional district in the state

represented by a Democrat. The Christian Right in Oklahoma provided the candidates, political operatives, and volunteers that helped fuel an unthinkable and complete Republican realignment at the congressional level.

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

An interesting factor in the exploration of the intersection of a social movement and a candidate centered political system is the factor of entrepreneurial leadership. Entrepreneurial leadership is a characteristic of Evangelical Christianity, whether at the level of individual churches or of parachurch organizations like the Christian Right social movement organizations explored in this research. Pastors, Christian Right social movement organization leaders, and political candidates are all entrepreneurial leaders. They have to be, if they are to be successful. In a way, this makes all of these leaders kindred spirits, who understand the motivations of each other. This makes interactions between the Christian Right social movement leaders and the political candidates easier, because both understand the need to rally the faithful and to organize for success. These entrepreneurial leaders also understand that the success of their various undertakings depend on personal initiative and leadership skills. In addition, drawing on Verba, Brady, and Scholzman (1995), an individual who has developed entrepreneurial leadership skills within the church or a social movement organization could easily transfer those skills to the political realm.

CONCLUSION

The title of this work asks a question. The question is whether a social movement can impact the system of candidate centered elections. In the Oklahoma case, the answer is a resounding yes. In Oklahoma, when the appropriate political opportunities were present to allow the intersection of candidate centered politics and the achievement of social movement goals, the Christian Right was able to impact candidate centered politics. In Oklahoma, the Christian Right either provided the candidates, in the cases of Coburn, Largent, and Watts, or identified candidates that shared their views and were worthy of support, like Istook, Lucas, and Watkins. The election of these individuals, over the course of two elections, 1994 and 1996, transformed the Oklahoma congressional delegation in the House and Senate, to the only delegation that has voted for Christian Right positions 100% of the time.¹² The intersection of the Christian Right and candidate centered politics in Oklahoma indicates that a social movement can impact candidate centered elections.

Since it is obvious that a social movement was able to impact candidate centered politics, the more important question is why was a social movement so readily able to impact candidate centered politics. The first issue is that the political opportunity structures existed to be exploited, and the entrepreneurial leaders within the Christian Right recognized them. The Christian Right was also able to capitalize on the indigenous resources that were available within the

¹²See Appendix page 363 for comparative congressional scorecards.

social movement. These resources included the energy and the volunteer ethic that is a part of Evangelical Christianity.

The notion of entrepreneurial leadership as the basis for both social movement organization formation and candidate centered politics provides a likely explanation concerning why individuals from the two spheres were so readily able to work together to succeed. Members of the Christian Right were accustomed to being led by entrepreneurial leaders, both at the congregational and parachurch level. When members of the Christian Right became political candidates, and attempted to motivate them using an entrepreneurial leadership style, members of the Christian Right readily responded. As the political candidates and the leaders of the various social movement organizations interacted, they recognized each other as kindred spirits, not only in their shared profession of a common faith, but in their leadership style. The Christian Right candidates were able to attract members of the Christian Right to political activism as the leadership of the social movement organizations were encouraging the same involvement. Any other social movement able to operate in the same manner as the Christian Right, should be able to follow this pattern and successfully impact the current candidate centered political process.

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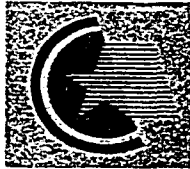
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Christian Coalition
Voter Guide

Oklahoma Special Election

U.S. Congress, District 6

	Frank Lucas (R)	Dan Webber (D)
Increased Federal Income Taxes	Opposes	No Response*
Balanced Budget Amendment	Supports	No Response*
Congressional Term Limits	Supports	Opposes
Abortion on Demand	Opposes	No Response*
Taxpayer Funding for Abortions	Opposes	No Response*
Parental Choice in Education (Vouchers)	Supports	No Response*
Voluntary Prayer in Public Schools	Supports	No Response*
Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes	No Response*
Federal Government Control of Health Care	Opposes	Undecided
Banning Ownership of Legal Firearms	Opposes	Opposes

* Each candidate was sent a 1994 Christian Coalition Federal Issues Survey.

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VOTE AGAINST THE STATE LOTTERY
VOTE **NO ON QUESTION 658**

Vote on May 10

JERRY HILL'S TYPESCRIPT CAMPAIGN LITERATURE
1992 DISTRICT 2 PRIMARY

COMMITMENTS

Be committed to policies based on Biblical principles.

Don't plead for money.

-----Be a statesman, not a politician.

-----A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.-----Proverbs 22:1

Don't borrow money.

-----The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.---Proverbs 22:7

Don't pray to win, pray for righteous leadership.

-----He delivered me from my strong enemy and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.-----Psalm 18:17

-----The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice.-----Proverbs 21:1

-----For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.
-----Psalm 75:6

Don't praise yourself, let other men do it, instead.

-----Let another man praise thee, and not thy own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.-----Proverbs 27:2

-----Lift not up your hands on high; speak not with a stiff neck.-----Psalm 75:5

Don't curse the project, turn your fears into Godly desires.

-----Don't let workers do this, either.

-----He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them.-----Psalm 145:19

Don't react to your critics.

-----Don't acknowledge them.

-----Don't let workers react, either, this sidetracks the campaign.

-----Pray for your opponent.

-----But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

-----Matthew 5:44

Don't place your hopes in your organization.

-----Victory is of the Lord.

-----Our "horses" are our yard signs, mailouts, money, etc.

-----The horse is prepared against the day of the battle: but safety is of the Lord.

-----Proverbs 21:31

-----Victory is of the Lord.

JERRY HILL'S TYPESCRIPT CAMPAIGN LITERATURE
1992 DISTRICT 2 PRIMARY

Don't accept tainted money.

- This includes money from organizations like liquor, gambling, etc.
- Send back the checks or money.
- Let someone with the gift of mercy write the letter when the money is returned.
- It looks bad for Christians to accept tainted money, and opponents will use that decision against you.

Don't form unwise alliances.

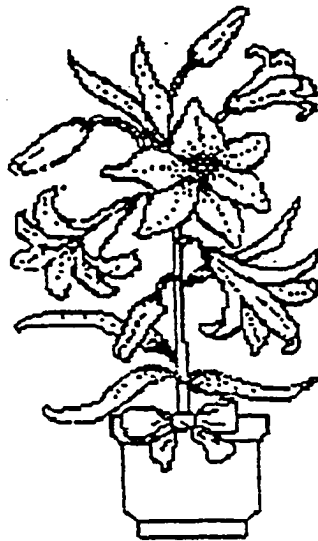
- Choose your advisors wisely.
- Workers should also commit to these principles.
- Light cannot have fellowship with darkness.
- Can two walk together, except they be agreed?-----Amos 3:3

Pray a hedge of thorns around every voter in the district, so that when they hear the truth, they will accept it.

- Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth; evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.-----Psalm 140:11
- So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun-----Isaiah 59:19

Be faithful to Godly commitments you've already established.

- Keep your commitments to your family, church, etc.



Jerry Hill for Congress

'94 Christian Coalition

VOTER GUIDE



OKLAHOMA Congressional District 2



Tom Coburn (R)	ISSUES	Virgil Cooper (D)
Opposes	Raising Federal Income Taxes	Opposes
Opposes	Abortion on Demand	Opposes
Supports	Parental Choice in Education (Vouchers)	Supports
Opposes	Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes
Opposes	Banning Ownership of Legal Firearms	Opposes
Opposes	Strikes by Federal Government Workers	Undecided

*Each candidate was sent a 1994 Federal Issues Survey by certified mail or facsimile machine. When possible, positions of candidates on issues were verified or determined using voting records and/or public statements.

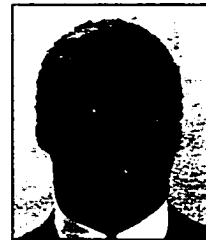
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'94 Christian Coalition

VOTER GUIDE



OKLAHOMA Congressional District 4



David Perryman (R)	ISSUES	J.C. Watts (R)
No Response*	Raising Federal Income Taxes	Opposes
No Response*	Balanced Budget Amendment	Supports
Supports	Abortion on Demand	Opposes
No Response*	Taxpayer Funding of Abortion	Opposes
No Response*	Parental Choice in Education (Vouchers)	Supports
No Response*	Voluntary Prayer in Public Schools	Supports
No Response*	Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes
No Response*	Banning Ownership of Legal Firearms	Opposes
No Response*	Federal Government Control of Health Care	Opposes
No Response*	Term Limits for Congress	Supports

*Each candidate was sent a 1994 Federal Issues Survey by certified mail or facsimile machine. When possible, positions of candidates on issues were verified or determined using voting records and/or public statements.

** Position based on Roll Call Vote 62 in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 17, 1994.

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★ Vote on November 8 ★

DISTRICT 2 AND 4 CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDES - 1996



OKLAHOMA U.S. Congress District 2

No
Photo
Provided

**Tom
Coburn (R)**

ISSUES

**Glen
Johnson (D)**

Supports	Balanced Budget Amendment	No Response*
Opposes	Raising Federal Income Taxes	No Response*
Opposes	Abortion on Demand	Supports
Supports	Banning Partial Birth Abortion	No Response*
Opposes	Homosexuals in the Military	No Response*
Supports	Term Limits for Congress	Opposes

*Each candidate was sent a 1996 Federal Issues Survey by certified mail or facsimile machine. When possible, positions of candidates on issues were verified or determined using voting records and/or public statements.

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Vote on November 5



OKLAHOMA U.S. Congress District 4



**Ed
Crocker (D)**

ISSUES

**J.C.
Watts (R)**

No Response*	Balanced Budget Amendment	Supports
No Response*	Raising Federal Income Taxes	Opposes
No Response*	Banning Partial Birth Abortion	Supports
No Response*	Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes
No Response*	Repeal of the Federal Firearm Ban	Supports
Supports	Term Limits for Congress	Supports

WES WATKINS 1994 AND 1996 CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDES

OKLAHOMA Governor



ISSUES	Frank Keating (R)	Jack Milam (R)	Wes Watkins (I)
Raising State Income Taxes	Opposes	No Response*	Opposes
Abortion on Demand	Opposes	No Response*	Supports
Outcome-Based Education (OBE)	Opposes	No Response*	No Response*
Voluntary Prayer in Public Schools	Supports	No Response*	No Response*
Banning Ownership of Legal Firearms	Opposes	No Response*	No Response*
Special Rights for Homosexuals	Opposes	No Response*	No Response*

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** Position based on Roll Call Vote 62 in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 17, 1994.

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★ Vote on November 8 ★

No
Photo
Provided

OKLAHOMA U.S. Congress District 3



Darryl Roberts (D)	ISSUES	Wes Watkins (R)
No Response*	Balanced Budget Amendment	Supports
No Response*	Raising Federal Income Taxes	Opposes
Supports	Abortion on Demand	Opposes
No Response*	Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes
No Response*	Repeal of the Federal Firearm Ban	Supports
No Response*	Term Limits for Congress	Supports

*Each candidate was sent a 1996 Federal Issues Survey by certified mail or facsimile machine. When possible, positions of candidates on issues were verified or determined using voting records and/or public statements.

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★ Vote on November 5 ★

EXPANDED CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDES - 1996
NATIONAL OFFICES

'96 Christian Coalition

VOTER GUIDE



PRESIDENTIAL Election



Bill Clinton (D)	ISSUES	Bob Dole (R)
Opposes	Balanced Budget Amendment	Supports
Opposes	15% Federal Income Tax Cut	Supports
Opposes	Banning Partial Birth Abortion	Supports
Supports	Taxpayer Funding of Abortion	Opposes
Opposes	Voluntary School Prayer Amendment	Supports
Opposes	Public and Private School Choice	Supports
Supports	Goals 2000 / Outcome-Based Education	Opposes
Supports	Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes
Opposes	Term Limits for Congress	Supports
Supports	FDA Regulation of Tobacco	Opposes

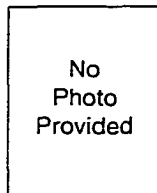
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★ Vote on November 5 ★

OK—District 4

EXPANDED CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDES - 1996
NATIONAL OFFICES



OKLAHOMA

U.S. Senate



Jim Boren (D)	ISSUES	Jim Inhofe (R)
Opposes	Balanced Budget Amendment	Supports
No Response*	Raising Federal Income Taxes	Opposes
Supports	Abortion on Demand	Opposes
No Response*	Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes
Supports	Federal Government Control of Health Care	Opposes
No Response*	Term Limits for Congress	Supports



OKLAHOMA

U.S. Congress District 4



Ed Crocker (D)	ISSUES	J.C. Watts (R)
No Response*	Balanced Budget Amendment	Supports
No Response*	Raising Federal Income Taxes	Opposes
No Response*	Banning Partial Birth Abortion	Supports
No Response*	Homosexuals in the Military	Opposes
No Response*	Repeal of the Federal Firearm Ban	Supports
Supports	Term Limits for Congress	Supports

EXPANDED CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDES - 1996
STATE OFFICES

'96 Christian Coalition

VOTER GUIDE

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 4 NORTH

Each State Legislative candidate was sent a 1996 Oklahoma State Issues Survey by mail. When possible, positions of candidates on issues were verified or determined using voting records and/or public statements.

This voter guide is provided for educational purposes only and is not to be construed as an endorsement of any candidate or political party.

Authorized by the Oklahoma Christian Coalition; United Founders Tower, Suite 1512; 5900 Mosteller Drive; Oklahoma City, OK 73112; 405-840-2156; FAX: 405-840-2157. The Oklahoma Christian Coalition is a pro-family citizen action organization.

Kennette Hughes (R)	State House Dist. 44	Laura Boyd (D)
Opposes	Abortion On Demand	Supports
Opposes	Increased Federal Control of Education	Supports
Supports	School Choice-Public / Private	Opposes
Opposes	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Unclear

Wallace Collins (D)	State House Dist. 45	Steve Byas (R)
No Response	Abortion On Demand	Opposes
No Response	Increased Federal Control of Education	Opposes
No Response	School Choice-Public / Private	Opposes
No Response	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Opposes

Dan Ramsey (R)	State House Dist. 47	Richard Allen (D)
Opposes	Abortion On-Demand	No Response
Opposes	Increased Federal Control of Education	No Response
Opposes	School Choice-Public / Private	No Response
Opposes	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	No Response

Mary Sue Schelle (D)	State House Dist. 53	Carolyn Coleman (R)
No Response	Abortion On Demand	Opposes
No Response	Increased Federal Control of Education	Opposes
No Response	School Choice-Public / Private	Undecided
No Response	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Opposes

EXPANDED CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDES - 1996

STATE OFFICES

Joan Greenwood (R)	State House Dist. 54	Leigh Tucker (D)
Opposes	Abortion On Demand	No Response
Opposes	Increased Federal Control of Education	No Response
Supports	School Choice-Public / Private	No Response
Opposes	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	No Response

Bill Paulk (D)	State House Dist. 92	Eddie Cox (R)
Opposes	Abortion On Demand	Opposes
Supports	Increased Federal Control of Education	Opposes
Opposes	School Choice-Public / Private	Supports
Unclear	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Opposes

Darlene Pointer (R)	State House Dist. 96	Mark Seikel (D)
Opposes	Abortion On Demand	Opposes
Opposes	Increased Federal Control of Education	Supports
Supports	School Choice-Public / Private	Supports
Opposes	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Unclear

Jack Perry (D)	State House Dist. 98	Tim Pope (R)
No Response	Abortion On Demand	Opposes
No Response	Increased Federal Control of Education	Opposes
No Response	School Choice-Public / Private	Supports
No Response	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Opposes

Denise Engle (R)	State House Dist. 99	Opio Toure (D)
Opposes	Abortion On Demand	Supports
Opposes	Increased Federal Control of Education	Supports
Supports	School Choice-Public / Private	No Response
Opposes	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Unclear

J. Alex Greenwood (D)	State House Dist. 101	Forrest Claunch (R)
No Response	Abortion On Demand	Opposes
No Response	Increased Federal Control of Education	Opposes
No Response	School Choice-Public / Private	Supports
No Response	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	Opposes

Rod Cleveland (R)	State Senate Dist. 15	Trish Weedn (D)
Opposes	Abortion On Demand	Opposes
Opposes	Increased Federal Control of Education	Supports
Supports	School Choice-Public / Private	Supports
Opposes	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	No Response

EXPANDED CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDES - 1996
STATE OFFICES

State Senate Dist. 17		Brad Henry (D)	Jerry Puckett (R)
Supports	Abortion On Demand	Supports	Opposes
Supports	Increased Federal Control of Education	Supports	Opposes
No Response	School Choice-Public / Private	No Response	Supports
No Response	Special Minority Status for Homosexuals	No Response	Opposes

OK Court of Appeals		Daniel Boudreau	Keith Rapp	John Reif	Jerry Goodman	Larry Joplin
Case	Decision					
Baptist Bldg. Corp. v. Barnes 874 P.2d 68 (Okl. 1994)	Upheld the ad valorem(property) tax-exempt status of a religious, nonprofit corporation.	Supported decision	Supported decision	Supported decision	Did not hear case	Did not hear case
Smith v. Burkhardt Appeal No. 84,284 (March 19, 1996)	Took custody of child away from divorced parent who had decided to homeschool her learning disabled son. Until the decision, the parent had custody of her son for ten years.	Supported decision	Did not hear case	Supported decision	Did not hear case	Did not hear case

OK Supreme Court		Robert Lavender	Robert Simms	Joseph Watt
Case	Decision			
State Question 642 <i>In re In. Pet. 349,838 P.2d 1 (Okl. 1992)</i>	Denied State Question 642 from appearing on the ballot for Oklahoma voters to decide. SQ 642 is a pro-life measure that would restrict abortion.	Supported decision	Supported decision	Supported decision
Fox v. Fox 904 P.2d 66 (Okl. 1995)	Denied a father's request to obtain full custody of his children on religious and moral grounds after mother was found to be engaged in a lesbian relationship.	Supported decision	Supported decision	Opposed decision
Smith v. Burkhardt Appeal No. 84,284 (March 19, 1996)	Upheld* Court of Appeals decision to take custody of child away from parent who homeschooled. (*Refused to hear case. Denied <i>Petition for Writ of Certiorari</i>)	Supported decision	Opposed decision	Supported decision
Gay Activists Alliance v. Bd. of Regents, Univ. of Okla. 638 P.2d 1116 (Okl. 1981)	Held that the Univ. of Oklahoma must recognize and provide free meeting space and free advertising to a homosexual student organization.	Supported decision	Supported decision	Did not hear case

**1994
ELECTION EDITION**

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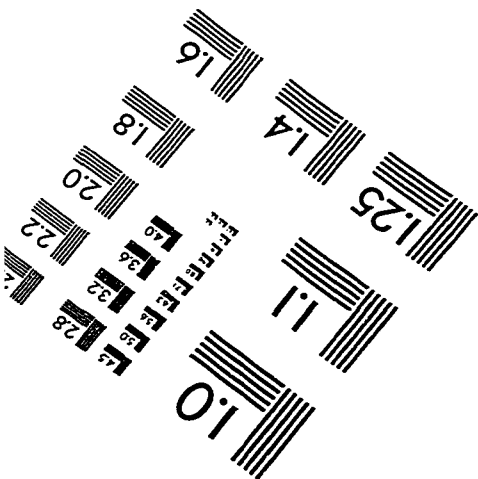
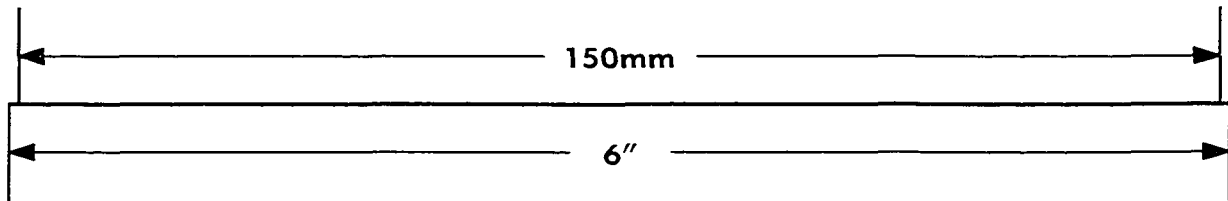
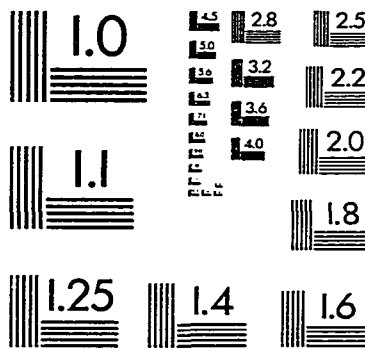
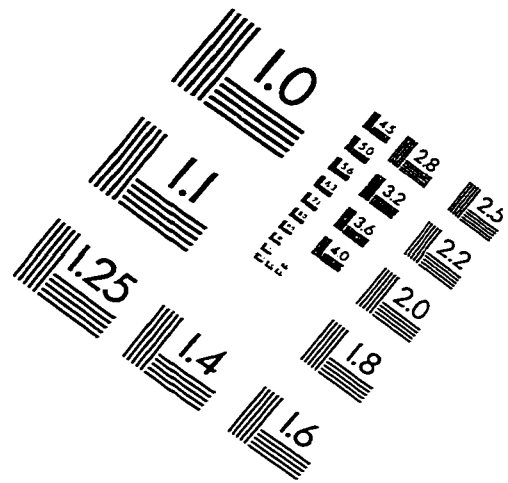
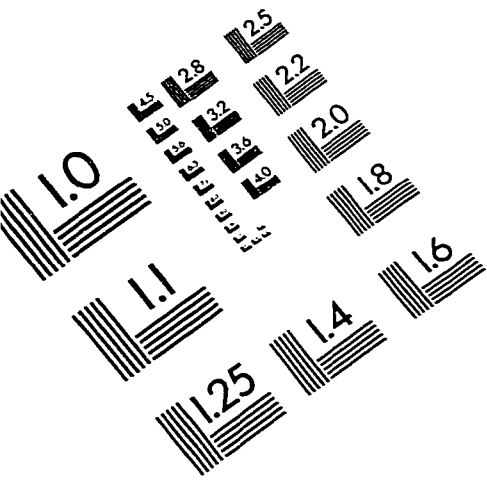
OKLAHOMA									
INHOFE	++		++		++		++		100
NICKLES	++		++		++		++		100

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