UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

STATE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AS CAMPAIGN SERVICE PROVIDERS: A THREE-STATE STUDY OF CANDIDATE AND PARTY PERCEPTIONS

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

JOSHUA STOCKLEY
Norman, Oklahoma
2005

UMI Number: 3203302

UMI®

UMI Microform 3203302

Copyright 2006 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

STATE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AS CAMPAIGN SERVICE PROVIDERS:
A THREE-STATE STUDY OF CANDIDATE AND PARTY PERCEPTIONS

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

BY

_____
R. Keith Gaddie

_____
Thomas E. James

_____
David H. Ray

_____
Cindy Simon Rosenthal

_____
Kelly R. Damphousse

© Copyright by JOSHUA STOCKLEY 2005
All Rights Reserved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank many individuals for helping me put this dissertation together. From my family, I thank my wife, April Stockley, for her patience, sacrifice, and love; my parents, Steve and Lynn Stockley, for their unwavering support and encouragement over the years; my two children, Jacob and Emma, for giving me purpose; and my sister, Rachel, for her encouragement as well. Additionally, I would like to thank my uncle, Uncle Mot, whose contributions are honestly indescribable.

From the University of Oklahoma, I thank my advisor, Keith Gaddie, whose guidance, insights, and comments provided a concise direction and strengthened the presentation of this material. I also thank Tom James for giving me my first opportunity at OU. Other individuals that helped me develop academically were Rick Arrington, Glenn Sanders, Bill Mullins, James Farthing, Carol Humphrey, and last, but not least, Tony Litherland.

My research was aided by information, insights, and recommendations from many citizens, public servants, and legislators in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana. I am incredibly grateful for their willingness to take time from their busy schedules to participate and assist me in this project. I thank you very much.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to two individuals who are no longer with me, Robert and Rovena Stockley. I wish they could have seen the final product because they would have been so very proud.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction & Framework 1
Introduction to the Research Problem 1
Review of the Literature 8
Purpose of the Study 26
The Methodological Framework & Research Design 31
Case Selection 32
Survey Instrument/Data Collection: Procedure & Eligibility 39
Survey Instrument/Data Collection: Instrument & Data Explanation 41
Structure of the Dissertation 53
CHAPTER TWO: Party Campaigning in Louisiana: Every Man is A King 55
A Brief Electoral History 55
The Louisiana Democratic Party – Organization & Development 64
The Republican Party of Louisiana – Organization & Development 75
Data Collection 85
Candidate Recruitment 86
Campaign Management 95
Campaign Communications 111
Fundraising 124
Gauging Public Opinion and Mobilizing Voters 140
Conclusion 160
CHAPTER THREE: Party Campaigning in Texas: Does Size Matter? 170
A Brief Electoral History 170
The Texas Democratic Party – Organization & Development 183
The Republican Party of Texas – Organization & Development 193
Data Collection 203
Candidate Recruitment 205
Campaign Management 216
Campaign Communications 237
Fundraising 255
Gauging Public Opinion and Mobilizing Voters 270
Conclusion 293
CHAPTER FOUR: Party Campaigning in Oklahoma: Belief in No Organized Party 303
A Brief Electoral History 303
The Oklahoma Democratic Party – Organization & Development 317
The Republican Party of Oklahoma – Organization & Development 328
Data Collection 339
Candidate Recruitment 341
Campaign Management 353
Campaign Communications 374
Fundraising 390
Gauging Public Opinion and Mobilizing Voters 406
Conclusion 428
CHAPTER FIVE: A Comparative Examination 435

Introduction 435
Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance compared in Texas, Louisiana & Oklahoma 435
Democratic Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance compared to Republican Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance 446
Influences on Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance 455
Candidate Perceptions of Group Assistance 468
Comparing the Perceptions of Incumbents, Challengers and Open-Seat Candidates 476
Comparing the Perceptions of all Six Party Organizations 487
Conclusion 494
CHAPTER SIX: The Future of State Parties in the New Millennium 498
Louisiana 512
Texas 520
Oklahoma 527
Parting Thoughts 532
WORKS CITED 535
APPENDIX A: Survey Instrument for Candidates 551
APPENDIX B: Survey Instrument for Party Officials 557

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDC	Congressional District Caucuses
CEC	County Executive Committee
DEC	District Executive Committee
DLCC	Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee
DNC	Democratic National Committee
DPEC	Democratic Parish Executive Committee
DSCC	Democratic State Central Committee
HDCC	House Democratic Campaign Committee
IG	Interest Group
LCC	Legislative Campaign Committee
LDP	Louisiana Democratic Party
MANOVA	Multiple Analyses of Variance
ODP	Oklahoma Democratic Party
OHDC	Oklahoma House Democratic Caucus
PAC	Political Action Committee
RCC	Republican County Committee
RCCC	Republican County Central Committee
RCEC	Republican County Executive Committee
RDC	Republican District Committee
RLCT	Republican Legislative Caucus of Texas
RLDCC	Republican Louisiana Delegation Campaign Committee
RNC	Republican National Committee

RPC	Republican Precinct Committee
RPEC	Republican Parish Executive Committee
RPL	Republican Party of Louisiana
RPO	Republican Party of Oklahoma
RPT	Republican Party of Texas
RSC	Republican State Committee
RSCC	Republican State Central Committee
RSHC	Republican State House Caucus
SCC	State Central Committee
SDEC	State Democratic Executive Committee
SES	State Executive Committee
SREC	State Republican Executive Committee
TAB	Texas Association of Business
TDP	Texas Democratic Party
TRMPAC	Texans for a Republican Majority PAC
TSPPO	Traditional State Political Party Organization

ABSTRACT

The advent of the candidate-centered campaign in conjunction with an array of social, political, and economic changes have altered the electoral environment and the way traditional state political party organizations have asserted themselves in campaigns and elections. In response, this study focuses on the electoral relationship between traditional state political party organizations and state legislative candidates in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana. This study poses two questions: Do traditional state political party organizations make a difference in elections? And, are traditional state political party organizations capable of adapting to and surviving in a candidate-centered environment? To answer these questions, a survey was sent to over 400 legislative candidates and interviews were conducted with over 50 past and present members of the state party in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana after the 2002-2003 electoral cycle. Traditional state political party organizations provide many services that can be classified along five dimensions: campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization. Within each category the perceived significance of the state party varies, ranging from significant to insignificant, depending upon factors such as the state, party, candidate status, and competitiveness. Overall, this study finds that candidates perceive parties to have played at best only a slightly important role in only one area – public opinion gathering and voter mobilization. In the other four areas candidates generally find the state political party insignificant and not important to their campaign. Although state political parties provide many campaign services, they are not recognized by candidates to be an important campaign services provider. State political parties have survived and have adapted to our candidate-centered electoral environment but must modify the content and delivery of these services and the structure of their organizations if they are to be a more important campaign service provider in the future. Determining the complex and subtle roles played by the traditional state political party organization in state legislative elections allows us to secondarily assess the ability of our traditional state political party organizations to become or act as responsible governing coalitions. If they are to become responsible governing coalitions desired by so many pluralists, then they must first become significant campaign services providers. This study shows that this key ingredient for a responsible governing coalition is missing.

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction & Framework

Democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties.

- E.E. Schattschneider

Introduction to the Research Problem

Malcolm Jewell surveyed the sub-field of state legislative research two decades ago and liked some, but not all, of what he saw. Jewell advised, "State legislative research should be more theoretical and comparative, and that we should bridge the gap that still exists between congressional and state legislative research" (1981, 1). Since then, many legislative scholars have taken their theories and methods and applied them to the states to determine if state-level trends and theories mirror those previously observed at the national level. Our 50 states provide 50 different laboratories by which to explain and examine variations and subtleties not possible, or readily apparent, at the national setting. The result has been the development of a broad yet eclectic array of subjects encompassing incumbency, coattails, divided government, career patterns, professionalism, turnover, term limits, women/minorities, organizational structure, committees, roles/norms, representation, decision making, and campaign finance (Moncrief, Thompson, and Cassie 1996).

Despite the comprehensive coverage the states have received from political science, many questions like those involving the role of traditional state political party organizations in state legislative campaigns remain unanswered, fragmented, or unknown. A greater focus on state-level offices and traditional state political party organizations is warranted for several reasons. First, state-level offices, such as state representative and state senator, are responsible for public policy that is substantively

important and collectively represents hundreds of billions of dollars in annual expenditures. Despite languishing for the first two-thirds of the last century, state governments have become the initiators of innovative economic development, education, and health care programs and have tackled incommodious national problems like AIDS, poverty, and crime (Van Horn 1996). In addition to their enhanced policy stature, the states have become politically significant. Apart from the fact that four of our last five presidents were previously governors, state legislatures have become more professional as salaries, staffs, and legislative sessions have increased (Moncrief, Thompson, and Kurtz 1996). The "congressionalization" of state legislatures and state legislators has not gone unnoticed (Salmore and Salmore 1996).

Second, the vast majority of elected and party officials are drawn from the state level instead of the national level (Jewell and Morehouse 2001). Over 8,000 candidates are elected to legislative positions at the state level, which stands in stark contrast to the 535 candidates at the national level (Jewell and Morehouse 2001). The dynamics of state elections vary widely from one state to the next, offering political scientists a rare opportunity to observe the various dynamics and relationships that exists between traditional state political party organizations and state legislative candidates.

Third, what happens at these levels is relevant for electoral and partisan politics at higher levels (Frendreis and Gitelson 1999). For example, the incomplete development of the Republican Party is more of a function of what has not happened at the state level than it is of national politics (Frendreis, Gitelson, and Vertz 1990). Beginning in 1994, the Southern Republican Party held the governor's office for some period of time in all but two states. After the 1998 elections, Republicans held 42% of all the seats in

Southern legislatures (Jewell and Morehouse 2001). The amount of contested seats has dropped below 40%, signifying the fact that the parties were becoming far more strategic about running candidates for offices. The Southern Democratic Party, which once ran candidates in almost all districts, has been failing to contest many seats, particularly if they are in heavily white districts (Martorano, Anderson, and Hamm 2001; Aistrup and Gaddie 1999). We see similar trends following forth into Congress from the state capitol buildings.

Fourth, state party leaders themselves believe their organizations are effective in regards to state-level offices (Gibson, et. al., 1989). Looking at the relationship between party strength and electoral success in gubernatorial races, scholars have found evidence that the organizationally stronger of the two parties within a state tends to achieve the higher increments of gubernatorial votes. Furthermore, state parties do in fact relate to governors and legislators in significant degrees and on a variety of consequential matters (Cotter, et. al., 1984). When state parties contribute financially, state parties at times contribute to state legislative candidates more than any other particular office at the national, state, or local level (Gierzynski and Breaux 1998). Thus, one cannot talk about state policies and campaigns without mentioning the role of traditional state political party organizations. And, one cannot talk about traditional state political party organizations without mentioning the work they do for state party leaders and candidates.

Finally, state political parties have seen an unprecedented surge in their organizational and professional capabilities. The modern state party has equipped itself with professional leaders who maintain full-time staffs and manage a complex budget for various party-building programs (Cotter, et al. 1984; Aldrich 2000; Appleton and Ward

1996; Reichley 1992; Bibby 2002). Their professionalism has developed permanence as state parties now have year-round permanent headquarters (Cotter, et al. 1984). In addition, almost all state parties now have computerized voter databases and permanent websites that can be used for fund-raising, mailings, voter registration, voter contact, and volunteer recruitment (Goodhart 1999). Also, the state parties provide important direct and indirect financial resources for campaigns (Jewell and Morehouse 2001).

Unfortunately, the adoption of election reforms, development of technological innovations, advent of candidate-centered campaigns, and array of social, political, and economic factors that have changed the way our state parties have asserted themselves in government and, more importantly, during campaigns and elections, have caused some to mistakenly label this change as "party decline" (Crotty 1984) and bemoan their fall from grace enjoyed during the "golden age" of the previous century (Sorauf 1984). One cannot read political party literature without being inundated with political party obituaries.[1] This is problematic for several reasons: one, political parties are pigeon holed into a "weak-party" stereotype because of unfair comparisons to the party-as-machine model historically emanating from the "Golden Age" of political parties; two, political scientists have quickly bought into a candidate-centered system that leaves little room, if any, for political parties in campaigns; three, the combination of the previous two factors obfuscates the development of an effective model capable of clearly explaining the importance of the campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and

[1] Evidenced by a simple examination of some of the titles of books and articles written since 1969, such as Walter Dean Burnham's "The End of American Party Politics," David Broder's *The Party's Over*, William Crotty's *American Parties in Decline*, Gerald Pomper's "The Decline of Party in American Elections," Jeane Kirkpatrick's *Dismantling the Parties*, Martin Wattenberg's *The Decline of American Political Parties*.

voter mobilization provided for by our traditional state political parties during campaigns. As such, we are unable to explain how party services are delivered and whether these services are consequential.

Despite widespread declarations of their death, national-level studies have shown that America's national political parties play an important role in national politics because they have adapted to the new "candidate-centered" political environment (Herrnson 2002; Gierzynski 2002). Nonetheless, our candidate-centered literature and their concomitant models do not provide any consistent explanation about the role played by the state political party. While we know political parties have transformed themselves from being the employment agencies of the past, there is no coherence regarding the type of agency that exists now. John Aldrich (1995) calls our national parties "service agencies." He writes:

> The party is in service to its candidates and officeholders, it is structured to advance the needs and interests of ambitious politicians…A party in service can only help the candidate, who in principle has other sources for finding such help. The more effective and extensive the services the party offers, however, the more important they are to their ambitious candidates as they seek continual election and reelection. (1995, 289-294)

But, what does it mean to be a service agency? What services does the party provide? Are they effective and deemed to be important? John Aldrich argues the more extensive the resources, the more important the party will be to candidates. If we can understand what the party does, then we can understand its importance to the candidates. His statement lacks specifics, yet it highlights our compelling need for more analysis.

Furthermore, Aldrich's statement illustrates the primary reasons for conducting this analysis. Political parties perform a number of functions that are also vital to our

political system: providing symbols for partisan identification; socializing and educating voters; recruiting and selecting candidates; aggregating and articulating competing interests; organizing opposition; institutionalizing and channeling societal conflict; mobilizing electoral majorities; helping to fashion, legitimate, and implement public policies; and fostering social and political stability (Wattenberg 1998). Hence, "Modern democracy is unthinkable in terms of the parties" (Schattschneider 1942, 1). Regardless, these functions may be described as the tenets of the "responsible party system." In the classic formulation of this goal, only two conditions are seen as necessary. First, parties bring forth platforms. Second, parties carry out these platforms. Party cohesion is the key ingredient, and this cohesion is cultivated, in part, by the actors acknowledging the rewards and advantages of party service, which are in turn fostered by party commitment to elections. In helping their candidates, they contribute to setting the political agenda by having individuals in office who would be sympathetic to party policy recommendations. If parties were strengthened, then it could lead to the development of a party-oriented electorate and a more cohesive party-in-government. Then, and only then, will the conditions for responsible party governance be in place. In assessing the importance of the state political party in state campaigns, a prognosis for the possibility of responsible party government may be given.

In conclusion, traditional state political party organizations are still actors in elections, yet it remains a bit uncertain as to what services our traditional state political party organizations provide and how important these services are in elections. This dissertation proposes to fill in some proverbial "gaps." First, this study offers new evidence about the condition of American political parties at the state level and new

hopes to those who despair that parties are dead. Second, this study provides a description of the state party's role in state legislative campaigns. National studies have ascertained the following important functions: campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization (Herrnson 1988). Yet, how and to what extent does this apply to state political parties in state legislative elections? How does the state party provide funds, recruit candidates, manage campaigns, deliver communications, and mobilize voters? Are their contributions important or marginal? Finally, this study places itself into a larger theoretical debate regarding the prospective role of political parties in electing and governing. In helping to elect candidates, the conditions could be set for a governing party providing a coherent philosophy and, in turn, converting their philosophies into government action. Members would be held responsible for their actions in the legislature and voters could hold the parties responsible for their policy outcomes, hence responsible parties.

By interviewing and surveying the state legislative candidates and party officials involved in the 2002-2003 state legislative elections in Louisiana, Texas and Oklahoma, we hope to determine how the traditional state political party organization addresses campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections. This, in turn, will answer two questions: Do traditional state party organizations make a difference in elections, and Are traditional state party organizations capable of adapting to and surviving in the contemporary political environment?

Having established the research problem, the following section provides a more substantial literature review to more descriptively and more broadly describe what is known and unknown about our parties in order to establish the parameters of this project.

Review of the Literature

The research questions posed in this study – Do traditional state party organizations make a difference in elections, and Are traditional state party organizations capable of adapting to and surviving in a candidate-centered environment – are not just the product of interest but of frustration; frustration with the fact that satisfactory answers to these questions do not exist. Eldersveld writes, "Political parties are complex institutions and processes, and as such they are difficult to understand and evaluate" (1982, 407). Political parties play multifaceted and complex roles in our society. If one combines this with the tumultuous changes that have redefined the status, organization, functions, and services of our traditional state political parties, then one can see the reasons for disparate and incomplete answers. The result is diametrically opposed to literature regarding decay and resurgence that gives researchers little guidance about the role of parties and the services they provide. This is further complicated by a preoccupation with our national parties at the expense of our state parties.

Malcolm Jewell argued for more theoretical and comparative state research. To his credit, state-level research has become more thorough, covering such topics as incumbency, coattails, divided government, career patterns, professionalism, turnover, term limits, women/minorities, organizational structure, committees, roles/norms, representation, decision making, and campaign finance (Moncrief, Thompson, and Cassie 1996). As far as state political parties are concerned, there has been some renewed

interest; however, one notices that scholars have spent an inordinate amount of time discussing the parties' financial activities during elections or their financial relationships with legislative campaign committees and leadership PACs (Shea 1995, Gierzynski 1992, Thompson and Moncrief 1998). Unfortunately, fundraising and finances are but one dimension of political party activities, so other party activities, functions, and services have been neglected (Monroe 2001). In addition, most of these studies are single-state studies, so we have little comparable data about the non-financial activities of the state party and there importance to elections, governance, and politics in general.[2]

This is frustrating for the state politics student because excellent studies have been conducted on our national parties, and one would only presume that these studies could provide the theoretical, analytical, and methodological framework for state-level party research. Despite Paul Herrnson's (1988) surgical examination detailing the importance of a variety of non-financial services provided by the national political parties in national congressional campaigns, such state level studies cease to exist. Yet, state legislative research is not the only field that has struggled to remember our state parties. Our political party literature is also fraught with errors.

Political party literature is inundated by calls of party decline. Even in the newer "candidate-centered" literature, party decline biases and assumptions appear. The recently published *American Political Parties: Decline or Resurgence?* leaves the reader with no solid conclusions. After reading this literature, one realizes there is a need for a more realistic, useable, and solid model of political party functions primarily at the state-

[2] See for example, New York (Dwyre and Stonecash 1992; Stonecash and Keith 1996; Stonecash 1988, 1990), Idaho (Moncrief and Patton 1993), California (Clucas 1992, 1994), North Carolina (Thompson and Cassie 1992), Texas (Thielemann and Dixon 1994), Wisconsin (Mayer and Wood 1995), Minnesota (Donnay and Ramsden 1995).

level. Also, it would be even more beneficial if such a study could provide a cross-state comparison.

Visiting almost 100 years ago, Lord Bryce recorded his observations of American politics during the Progressive Era. Even though his tour coincided with the passage of reforms aimed at crippling the partisan machine, he notes that, as institutions for mobilizing citizens, political parties removed significant impediments to allow for a more effectively functioning participatory democracy. The party reduced constraints on citizen time, structured competing demands for citizen leisure time, and simplified complex political issues (Bryce 1909, in Schier 2000). Apart from winning elections, political parties were responsible for providing symbols for partisan identification; socializing and educating voters; recruiting and selecting candidates; aggregating and articulating competing interests; organizing opposition; institutionalizing and channeling societal conflict; mobilizing electoral majorities; helping to fashion, legitimate, and implement public policies; and fostering social and political stability (Wattenberg 1998). Thus, one can appreciate why Schattschneider proclaimed, "Modern democracy is unthinkable in terms of the parties" (1942, 1).

It was in this "golden age" of the political party that our parties were generally referred to as machines. In his book *Party Campaigning in the 1980s*, Paul Herrnson identifies the two traditional models of political parties: the "party-as-political-machine" model and the "party-as-peripheral-organization" model. Herrnson compares and contrasts these two models along five dimensions that he identifies as the most important to political parties in terms of election-oriented activities: candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, fundraising, and gauging

public opinion and mobilizing the electorate (1988, 8). It is the party-as-political-machine model that we will turn our attention to first.

The party-as-political-machine model holds the party as powerful enough to control and unify the legislative, executive, and occasionally judicial branch at the state and local level of government. In some instances, machines were powerful enough to occasionally influence the federal government as well (Herrnson 1988). The root of the political machine's power was its monopoly upon the electoral process because it controlled the nomination process, possessed the resources needed for organizing the electorate, and provided the symbolic cues that both informed and activated the decisions of voters on election day (Merriam 1923). In terms of candidate recruitment and selection, potential candidates had to secure the blessing of the party officials. This was a long process that began when an individual had been introduced to politics through some ward or local captain and, after time, gradually rose to a position of prominence within the party organization. After developing a reputation and creating his own base of supporters, the individual would then wait to be asked to run for a party nomination. Outside candidates were rare and almost always unsuccessful, as it was unwise to operate independently of the parties if one had serious, long-term political aspirations (Herrnson 1988). Thus, in the party-as-political-machine model, observed in Virginia with Byrd, Chicago with Thompson, New York with Tammany, and Memphis with Crump, the political party had complete control over candidate recruitment and selection.

In terms of campaign management, party organizations bore the responsibility for contesting elections. The goal of any campaign manager is to secure the vote of either those who are not as active or those predisposed to supporting another party without

isolating the solid supporters. For the party-as-political-machine model, Samuel Eldersveld identified what he called a "stratarchy," a network of inducements based on reciprocal cooperation among committees and candidates because they were all pursuing the same voters (1964, 9). Thus, all campaign committees and their respective party officials at all levels worked together through exchanging services, sharing ideas, and providing inducements to stretch the value and reach of any one campaign (Eldersveld 1964). Campaigns rarely operated around any one candidate but operated in concert with the party. For example, rather than one candidate holding his own rally, an entire slate of candidates from the local all the way to the national level participated because they shared the same party label, associated in the minds of the voters the same way, shared the same policy platform, and, consequently, were tied together (Ostrogorski 1964). Thus, under the model of the party-as-political-machine, campaign management was a party-centered activity of cooperation among candidates for all levels of offices (Herrnson 1988).

In the realm of campaign communications, the political party was also in command. Moisei Ostrogorski noted that candidates in some races took no part in campaign communications, deferring to the party organization to distribute party workers, press releases, and advertising – broadcasts, billboards, flyers, buttons – necessary for reaching voters (1964). Like sharing the same rallies, candidates often shared the same messages and themes. Sait writes that most of the early technological innovations in radio and print advertising were a product of the political parties' advertising departments' efforts to meet the challenge of reaching larger segments of the mass public (1927 in Herrnson 1988). So, under the party-as-political-machine model,

party organizations controlled advertising without the candidate's active participation or opinion.

Fundraising is another significant segment of any campaign. Under the party-as-political-machine model, the party organization, usually via the party treasurer, solicited donations from civil servants, business leaders, labor unions, the candidates themselves, and other special-interest groups allied with its particular party (Herrnson 1988). Rarely did the candidate solicit funds for himself, hire independent individuals to solicit funds, or go outside the party for financial help. The money would then be pooled and spent according to the parties' own strategic evaluation of which candidates needed a certain amount of resources (Agranoff 1976). Furthermore, these campaign donations were expected to produce a *quid pro quo* relationship between the donor and the party via the candidate (Alexander 1984, Herrnson 1988).

Finally, the gauging of public opinion and mobilizing of voters were year-round activities also conducted by party leaders. Ward and precinct captains often went door-to-door asking individuals if they were registered, which party they supported, what could persuade them to change their mind, and whether transportation was needed to get to the polls. This information was disseminated to higher party officials, eventually reaching the state party chairman, who used this information to strategically assess what issues needed to be conveyed and how strong the party was in certain areas of the state, county, or city. Candidates did not hire their own pollsters and did not worry about election day turnout or voter registration (Rosenbloom 1973, Sabato 1981). Gauging public opinion and voter mobilization was a political party function performed simultaneously by the same personnel (Herrnson 1988).

In conclusion, the party-as-political-machine model of political parties is a "top-down" approach that holds the state executive committee and its chairmen responsible for candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, fund-raising, gauging public opinion, and mobilizing the electorate. While the political party was central to American elections, there are problems with the so-called "Golden Age" of political parties. First, the golden age of partisan politics was in fact tarnished. As parties became more powerful, they became consumed with serving the needs of the public and less concerned with politics, per se. The parties were in fact employment agencies. The employment – patronage – became tied to graft and other forms of corruption (Schudson 1998). Citizens could easily identify with parties because the issues were simpler and often very directly and indirectly meant jobs. Political parties had been at times less than honest and developed rules to maintain their complete authority over the system. As if that was not enough, parties could control their image with the public through party-controlled, noncompetitive media markets. Thus, the reforms of the electoral process from both within and outside the political parties caused the political parties to loosen their stranglehold over the electoral process and the candidate's campaign. When the nomination rules were changed and alternative media emerged, the authority of political parties broke down, and the partisan machines ceased to run as efficiently and autocratically as in the past (Herrnson 1988, Maisel 2001). Unable to still perform the functions of employment, the political party was forced to redefine its role in American elections. Yet, this was not the only problem with the so-called "Golden Age" of political parties.

The second problem with the "Golden Age" of politics was the development of an unfair standard of strength that would be applied to political parties when assessing the importance of their role in the electoral process. The assumption is that any level of activity by the political parties less than the level maintained during the "Golden Age" constitutes something less than "strong," and anything less than strong indicates party failure. In order for the parties to ever be viewed in terms of strong, then they must somehow replicate the employment powers of the past. The authors of the American Political Science Association Committee on Political Parties' "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System" (1950) took this view and, perhaps, perpetuated this myth. They lamented the inability of the parties to hold their elected officials in line in trying to enact the parties' proposed policies, and they were critical of the lack of distinctiveness in the policy positions of the two parties. This criticism stemmed from the parties inability to hold officials accountable because they had lost their electioneering monopoly (Cohen and Kantor, 2001). Their interceding sentiments were published and drew extra attention toward the changing role of our parties and set the stage for acceptance toward a new model of political parties mentioned in Walter Dean Burnham's article "The End of American Party Politics."

Today's failure to accurately capture the true essence of state political party functions stems from the stereotype of the party-as-political-machine model cultivated by the "Golden Age." Standing in direct contrast to the party-as-machine model is the party-as-peripheral-organization model, whose supporters use the party-as-political-machine model as their basis for comparison. The party-as-peripheral-organization model relegates the political party to the margins of the electoral process and places in its stead a

new candidate-centered system. This model finds its support from many writers of the 1960s and 1970s who witnessed political parties searching for a new identity after a wave of mid-century electoral reforms. In this new model, candidates, not the parties, became the central actors of campaign. Candidates were self-recruited, campaigns autonomously managed, independently promoted, creatively funded, and privately responsible for translating the voters' desires into election-day support. The candidate operated with minimal or, often times, no support and cooperation from party organizations (Herrnson 1988). The party was over (Broder 1971).

In the past, party contacts and their approval were necessary for elective office; in the post-reform era, the decision to run for office became a highly personal decision influenced by local factors. While the decision to run has always been very personal, the political parties began to withdraw from recruitment since they could not guarantee the support, tangible or intangible, as they had before (Wilson 1962). Legal reforms, party rule changes, and cultural transformations drained the vitality of local organizations. Withdrawing from recruitment had obvious impacts on candidate selection. With open primaries, candidates no longer needed to formally or informally secure the blessings of the party organization in order to seek office. Often times a party endorsement, when one was even given, was seen as a curse rather than a blessing (Kazee 1980). Whereas in the past the party was responsible for introducing and teaching the candidates the various nuances of the system, candidates now found other interest groups to be just as effective as a means to develop political contacts, if not more so (Crotty 1984). Creating their own electoral coalitions, candidates found themselves departing from party labels in favor of

issue labels (Herrnson 1988). Under the party-as-peripheral-organization model, the party withdrew form the monolithic role assumed in previous times.

With candidates now running in an open nominating system without a predominant reliance on party organizations, the candidates had to assume control of their own campaigns. Campaign management was being placed into the hands of private consultants – professionals who hired themselves out with the sole purpose of developing a campaign for candidates (Sabato 1981). Candidates developed their own personnel teams and created their own decision-making apparatus. Apart from consultants, candidates began hiring specialists for help with specific services like polling, media, advertising, staffing and fundraising. Only if the candidate hired someone who also happened to serve in some official party capacity would there be any overlap between party and campaign (Agranoff 1976). Party organizations had been left behind in the professionalism movement, surviving only as mercenaries selling their services (Jensen1971). The candidate captured campaign management in the party-as-peripheral-organization era (Herrnson 1988).

Since the parties had been shut out from campaign management, it comes as no surprise that candidates also developed their campaign communications independent from the party. Aside from seeking experts to craft strategies for the campaign in general, specialists were hired to plan and execute communication strategies. These consultants devised the specific medium that would be used, the slogan that would be expressed, and the themes that would be publicized (Sabato 1981). Many teams hired marketing experts from the private sector. Their success with the manipulation of television to advertise products was applied to the electoral sector (Agranoff 1972, 1976).

Local rallies, stump speeches, and home campaigns would no longer solely fit the bill, as candidates were now required to transmit their images and themes more rapidly and colorfully to reach the voter. When examining the expenditures of candidates, this new advertising pulse was consuming 40-70% of the campaign's budget (Salmore and Salmore 1985, Sabato 1981). While going door-to-door and showing up at local festivals and fairs were still kept, such activities became a smaller feature of the campaign. Either way, the party was no longer in charge of campaigns or campaign communications.

Fundraising was also affected by the political party-candidate divorce, as a more professional campaign produced some new costs. As candidates hired specialists to run their campaign and produce its graphic images, these personnel adjustments came with a new need for cash. Consequently, a greater focus had to be placed on fundraising (Alexander 1984). While traditional raffles, banquets, and socials were still maintained, direct mail and phone solicitation were increasingly relied on in order to produce larger returns relative to efforts (Sabato 1981). Furthermore, the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974 had another destabilizing effect on parties. New campaign caps limited party donations and required candidates to solicit more groups to acquire funds. The FECA promoted the rise of PACs, which further diluted the financial power of parties because candidates now had a more diverse fiscal environment. As PACs increased, the party's donation relative to the overall campaign began to shrink (Malbin 1980, 1984; Herrnson 2004). While the FECA explicitly limited finances as it concerned federal candidates, it affected the overall budgets of the national party and limited their transfers to state parties. As a result, state-level party finances declined throughout the late 1970s, and the percentage of parties not giving any contributions increased (Cotter 1983). Not until after

1979 and the discovery of the soft-money loophole would state party finances again increase. The decline of the parties' financial importance only encouraged the candidates and their campaigns to stray from the parties and perceive their relative value to be of less importance (Sorauf 1984, Herrnson 1988). Thus, fundraising in the party-as-peripheral-organization era relegated parties to second-tier status.

Gauging public opinion, like fundraising and consulting, was turned over to hired specialists. The technical nature of this enterprise required hiring consultants who could easily obtain massive amounts of data and transform them into useable statistics (Sabato 1981). Thus, campaigns became information-gathering centers. Nonetheless, the advantages to the candidate were a campaign strategy fine-tuned to the specific needs expressed by certain portions of the electorate. Campaigns no longer relied on ward heelers and precinct chairmen to tell the candidate what the people wanted; rather, the candidate found out this information much more accurately and directly himself (Rosenbloom 1973). On the other hand, despite the separation from gauging public opinion, voter mobilization remained essentially the same labor-intensive enterprise. If the party seemed to retain any resemblance to earlier times, then it would be in its continual emphasis on registration and voting. Party organizations maintained the arduous task of contacting citizens and mobilizing them (Herrnson 1988). The only function left for the political parties was voter mobilization. The other services were removed from party control and placed squarely into the hands of the candidates and their independently operated campaigns.

Interestingly enough, the battering has not ended. The party decline thesis is considered a product of the 1960s and 1970s, and political science has presumably moved

to a new era. It does not focus on the decline of parties but focuses on how our elections are "candidate-centered." Yet, one contemporary popular text begins its discussion of the candidate-centered era with:

> The American Party system is not in the best of health. Apart from a scattering of politicians and academicians, few people take the party seriously. Voters generally ignore the parties, politicians often dismiss them, and the media usually slight them. Almost everyone, it seems, distrusts them – if they think about them at all. (Keefe 1994, xvii)

More recently, Katz and Kolodny (1994) dismiss American party organizations as "an empty vessel" disaggregated by a "proliferation of party bodies, most of which are not responsible towards each other" (23, 28). The authors echo the earlier sentiments expressed by Walter Dean Burnham and other "declinists," who also claimed that the separation of powers, federalism, and party ambivalence assured the parties as second-tier actors. On party government, Katz and Kolodny write:

> Congressional parties also differ from most parliamentary parties in that discipline is virtually unknown. Relatively few votes divide a majority of one party from a majority of the other…Caucus members do not want to be bound by party discipline, and thus do not try to impose it on others. (1994, 40)

While it is possible that the parties have remained unaltered from the time of Walter Dean Burnham to Katz and Kolodny, so many changes have occurred that the possibility of an absence of party change is ridiculous.

Martin Wattenberg also feeds the cliché of alleged decline in our parties. In *The Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics*, he reviews the presidential election of 1984 and concludes that the national parties are languishing in a new era of party disunity. The evidence for decline is found in voter attitudes rather than party characteristics. Voters are found to be increasingly neutral and occasionally negative toward political parties, to

be less influenced by partisan identification in their vote choices, to be less consistent across tickets across time, and, simply put, to see parties as of little relevance to contemporary politics. Voters focus on the candidates through performance evaluations rather than through partisan identification, and Wattenberg blames party bickering for producing an electoral environment filled with contempt and antipathy for our elections and political parties. In *The Decline of American Political Parties*, Wattenberg writes:

> Political parties are not perceived as particularly meaningful in today's political world…The most potentially damaging attitude to the political parties future, however, is the large percentage of the population which sees little need for parties altogether…Most voters now view parties as a convenience rather than a necessity. (35, 45)

Whether or not the political parties have produced the contempt that Wattenberg notes is not the major issue at this time. The problem with his study is the assumption of party marginality. Even if it is true that parties are, at best, marginal actors in presidential elections, he fails to describe the services and resources provided by the parties to authoritatively conclude that the campaigns themselves view the parties as marginal. Wattenberg's analysis is indicative of the literature of the candidate-centered school: one, is assumes that parties are unimportant; two, it accepts these assumptions from the perspective of the voters and not the campaigns. Thus, one quickly sees that the candidate-centered literature echoes the party-decline literature that ripped through the discipline in the previous decades.

Indeed, Wattenberg may be right about the parties being both less visible to the public and the media in national elections and less important to the electorate. Yet, focusing on the parties from the vantage point of the electorate does not tell us anything about the actual resources and services provided by the parties and the importance of

these resources and services as judged by the campaigns themselves. When we read the same line over and over, we come to accept the stereotype as reality and gradually adopt the vague sentiment "candidate-centered politics" to explain the role of the party and party activities during elections.

Wattenberg's belief that American parties are weak was widely shared in the 1980s. Indeed, it was so much the conventional wisdom that scholars were impressed, perhaps even relieved, when Cotter and his associates disputed the fashionable belief that parties were on the verge of extinction (Gibson et al 1983, Cotter et al 1984, Gibson et al 1985). They conclude that "the new phase is not one of partyless politics, but of the continuing party system composed of parties which operate within a framework of public regulation and support which protects more than weakens the existing parties" (1984, 168). They agreed that candidates had been freed from the party organization by the adoption of primaries, hiring of independent consultants, and electoral partisan indifference. Yet, they found conclusive empirical evidence of renewed party organizational strength. They divided party activities into two groups: institutional support –fundraising, mobilization, issue leadership, publications, public opinion polling; and candidate-directed – financial contributions, provisions of services, recruitment, delegate selection, and endorsements. They discovered that, during this epoch of reputed party decay, state and local parties increased their activities, and, rather than experiencing decline, have undergone steady growth over the last several decades (Cotter et al 1984). An anecdotal observation that lends credence to their study are the presidential campaigns of 1988, 1992, and 1996, when Dukakis and Clinton often ran their campaigns in certain states through state party organizations (Pomper 1997).

The Cotter studies are significant for several reasons. First, in discovering renewed party strength, they cast the shadow of doubt on the decline school of thought. Cotter and his colleagues refused to fall into the trap of the decline theorists, which held that party studies were linked to electorate studies. Rather, party scholars needed to focus on organizational structure and functions. The party decline thesis finds American political parties to be weaker because the empirical evidence displays a decrease in voter identification and increase in ticket-splitting. The problem is that this thesis of party decline, regardless of the empirical evidence, is fundamentally flawed because it rests on an erroneous theoretical foundation – that the American political party is a collection of voters. The problem with this fact is that historically, and even into more modern times, political parties have not been defined in such a fashion. Consider the founding party theorist, Edmund Burke, who defined a party as "a body of men united, for promulgating by their joint endeavors the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed" ([1770] 1839, 317). While Burke's inclusion of principle has been well-ridiculed, even his detractors, when leaving out principle, arrive at a similar definition. For example, Joseph Schumpeter wrote, "A party is not…a group of men who intend to promote public welfare 'upon some principle that they are all agreed'…A party is a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for political power" (1942, 283). E.E. Schattschneider takes a more blunt approach: "A political party is first of all an organized attempt to get power" (1942, 35). Similarly, Anthony Downs defines a party as "a team seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election" (1957, 25). More recently, Leon Epstein, in the midst of an extensive historical discussion of the uniqueness of American political

parties, defines the party to be "any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect governmental office-holders under a given label" (1980, 9). This is not to suggest that there is no relationship between the activities of the party and the attitudes of the voters, but that the voters are not adherents of the party organization but rather its clientele. This view of party, Schlesinger correctly emphasizes, "must exclude the voter…voters are choosers among parties, not components of them" (1984, 377). The Cotter studies removed the voter from the party definition.

Second, the Cotter study was the first significant and organized attempt to gather information about non-national party entities. The combined effect of the flourishing of voting behavior and attitude studies with V.O. Key's assertion that our state parties "were virtually dead" precipitated decades of a lack of interest in our parties (1956, 287). Breaking the hold of neglect, their works significantly brought the state party and its organization back into party studies. They found that state and local parties had increased their organizational strength, that this strength affected campaign competition, that they increased integration with the national parties, and that they had increased linkages with officeholders. The "decline" scholars, and all scholars for that matter, had focused exclusively on the national parties to the extent that nothing could be ascertained about what role the state party played in our elections or government. It was assumed that the state party, what little was left, were subjugates of the national committees. On the contrary, Cotter and his associates discovered that the state and local parties, especially in the Democratic Party, have independently taken steps without national guidance to contributing to their own organizational successes (1984, 79-80). In other words, national stimulation is not a necessary precursor to state organizational growth

because our state parties are independent creatures sustaining themselves and can be serviced by national parties or be of service to our national parties.

Third, their study provides an initial description of broad categories of services the state parties provide during elections, though these initial descriptions are brief and weak. The Cotter studies intended to focus more on structure and how organizational strength produces electoral competition. Since their focus was on *structure* and its effect on electoral successes, they are unable to provide much explanation regarding the *services* the party provides to legislative campaigns.[3] Party organizations produce competition, but this alone does not tell us what services the parties provide to state legislative candidates and whether these party services create more than competition. Do parties create victories? If they do not create victories, then, at the very least, do they make a difference or do candidates perceive them as important? The Cotter studies give us some clues, but not many. The most valuable information they provide are in regards to the two categories of programmatic activities: institutional support – fundraising, mobilization, issue leadership, publications, public opinion polling; and candidate-directed – financial contributions, provisions of services, recruitment, delegate selection, and endorsements. The resulting four pages of their work entail explanations of what each item means but lack any substantial interpretation regarding the role of these activities in campaigns. While we may know the broad types of services, they do not

[3] This study affirms Robert Huckshorn's *Party Leadership in the States*, where he concludes that state parties have had their good and bad times, but "state party organizations today show signs of increasing maturity and self-renewal" (1976, 2). Huckshorn describes career development, length of service, types of leadership, political roles, and organizational roles. He finds some valuable information regarding the functions of the chairman as an extension of the state political party, and that chairmen are fulfilling "old" roles – recruitment, patronage, campaign manager, platform developer; and "new" roles – polling, newsletters, and fundraising. Unfortunately, Huckshorn, like Cotter, simply provides brief explanations absent of elaboration as to how these activities are promulgated during campaigns and whether these activities are of any importance to the campaign.

address how these services translate into electoral success and whether campaigns view these as important to their campaigns. By focusing on *structure*, the *services* are minimally treated. While we know parties are not in decline, are organizationally stronger, and are more important than previous literature suggests, we still do not know the extent of this importance. This new literature has not sufficiently given the answers for a new model, nor has the old literature given us valuable information for a new model.

Purpose of the Study

Without a doubt, our political parties have seen their political power ebb and flow within the last century. A constant in the midst of change has been our preoccupation with their impact upon government. Specifically, our concerns have been framed in terms of "responsible party government" and scholars have been on a "search for responsibility" (Ranney 1954). The apex of this thought is expressed in the Report of the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association's "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System (Committee on Political Parties 1950). Here, political science and political party scholars publicly fused two classical debates: one, what parties should do; two, what parties actually do (Green and Herrnson 2002).

American parties are concerned primarily with controlling government by winning elections (Epstein 1967). Politicians created parties for this very purpose and have altered them over time to improve their electoral prospects (Aldrich 1995). Such organizations exist outside of formal governmental institutions, although they are often subject to government regulation and elected government officials are usually involved in their management activities (Epstein 1986). This explains our parties' involvement in

critical tasks including campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization.

In addressing the role political parties play in campaigns, this study attempts to contribute to a discussion regarding the ability of our state political parties to play the desired role prescribed by the report's authors. Responding to the perception that political parties were declining in importance and power, this report called upon the parties to solidify their policy views and modify their institutions to foster conditions for party discipline. Among the recommendations were the creation of a party council to hold platform meetings or punish deviants, the advocacy of greater control over the collection and distribution of funds, and the enhancement of recruitment policies. Members would be held responsible for their actions in the legislature, and voters could hold the parties responsible for their policy outcomes, hence responsible parties. The APSA Committee assumed that such reforms would create a governing party that could provide a coherent philosophy and, in turn, convert their philosophies into government action. This reflects the beliefs on the part of the committee that political parties *should* and *could* play. Ultimately, they believed that such an arrangement would "preserve our democracy" (Beck and Hershey 2000).

Interestingly, even though the report focuses primarily on our national parties, it was still expected that our state and local party would perform many of the functions of the national party organization and in the same fashion. It offered no detailed recommendations for state and local organizations, but did suggest that the state and local levels were the one example of party strength in their day (Green and Herrnson 2002).

The report did not completely omit any prescriptions for state party revitalization. It suggested the frequent holding of issue-oriented meetings and presumed the rank-and-file would develop tools and information for platform writing and issue clarification. It was hoped that the state platforms would be consistent with the national platforms, this consistency being seen as a key towards promoting party cohesion. The report also called for state parties to be given special tasks, one example was the maintenance of professional machinery for general election campaigns. Thus, the report did not ignore the crucial fact that state parties had to maintain vital roles in the midst of the campaign to allow responsible party development to occur because responsible party government could not be a national concept under federalism. This responsible party model reflects a programmatic view of parties.

The programmatic school of thought owes much of its existence to E. E. Schattschneider, who is credited with the idea that it is impossible to think of democracies without thinking of political parties. Schattschneider clearly believed that political parties were the primary actors in American politics. He writes, "The parties, in fact, have played a major role as makers of government; more especially they have been the makers of democratic government" (1942, 1). Occupying the zone between citizens and the government, Schattschneider saw the political parties as the fillers of the "blind spot" in the constitutional system. The political party was not simply an association of voters responsible for supporting candidates but an entity responsible for controlling and stabilizing government. While he concedes that this has manifested itself most clearly in elections, he notes that parties do this with the intent of organizing government. Winning elections is not seen as an end but a means by which to control government for the end

purpose of creating coherent policy. This view is not original but reflects Edmund Burke, who wrote, "Party is a body of men united, for promulgating by their joint endeavors the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed" (1839, 375). Thus, policy needs and programmatic needs drive the political parties and structure their behavior before, during, and after elections. Programmatic scholars do not deny the preoccupation with elections, but they suggest that is but one of many goals of political parties.

Many party scholars reject the programmatic of thought and its governing premise of political parties. Instead, they offer a pragmatic view of political parties and draw upon the writings of Anthony Downs, who argued that political parties are exclusively concerned with winning elections. His definition of political parties, "a team seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election," reflects a pragmatic orientation (1957, 25). As a rational choice theorist, Downs posited that actors are goal seekers and their actions, and eventually institutional arrangements, are the products of their goals and ambitions. Consequently, Downs is skeptical of the ability of political parties to collect unified ideologies and present coherent policy choices because it may interfere with the ambitions of legislators. Although his argument concedes the possibility of political parties concerning themselves with governing, unfortunately political realities make this difficult and, when faced with a choice, political parties will choose election concerns first. Decline scholars could be found in the pragmatic school because they held that parties were so organizationally bereft and incapable of offering policies, organizing coherent governing coalitions, or even electing

people to office. Yet, the late 20th Century was a period of dramatic renewal for party organizations.

Today, party organizations have expanded their organizational capacity and increased their financial prowess. State parties have created permanent headquarters, developed formal membership drives, upgraded their technology, and encouraged activists to participate in party decision making. In addition, they are coordinating their efforts with candidates and their campaigns. In accordance with the report, such activities constitute a movement towards a responsible party rubric. Yet, a more detailed understanding of the overall role of parties in campaigns is necessary in order to assess the capacity of our state parties to become responsible actors.

The events surrounding the 1994 election and the 104th Congress reveal a possibility for responsible party government. First, House Republicans developed a platform, the Contract With America. The Contract With America was not just an issue platform but also an election platform. Second, the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC), Republican National Committee (RNC), GOP consultants, and allied interest groups worked with a strong House leadership, led by Newt Gingrich, to disseminate the contract so as to stand in stark contrast to Democratic campaigns (Gimpel 1996). The NRCC and RNC then delivered $14 million to state political parties for party building, campaign advertising, voter-list development, and voter mobilization efforts (Herrnson 2004). This impressive campaign was historical by modern standards in the number of freshman Republicans sent to Congress. And, it shows the potential power possessed by state and local parties. In absence of this historical mobilization, what do our state parties regularly do today and do they mirror the effects of 1994? If we can

begin to understand the role and functions played by the state parties and their perceived importance to the campaigns themselves, then we can begin to address the question, in absence of historical mobilizations, Do our state party possess the capacity to promulgate the conditions desired for responsible party government? Admittedly, such resources do not guarantee that parties would behave responsibly, but, at the very least, we know that resources are a prerequisite for party government.

The case had been made for a research problem, and the literature review provided substantial evidence regarding how this project satisfactorily adds to the current body of knowledge. This dissertation now shifts towards the research design. Here, the framework, case selection, and methodology are presented.

The Methodological Framework & Research Design

State political parties are significant organizations that have the capacity to play complex and substantial electoral roles. While previous research has divided national party services into the categories of candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, fundraising, and gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters, it remains relatively uncertain how traditional state political party organizations (TSPPOs) provide these individual services during state legislative campaigns. This dissertation: one, investigates the role of TSPPOs in state legislative elections; two, uncovers where TSPPOs invest most of their resources; three, compares the influence of these services to other major actors. These questions will reveal the types of services provided by TSPPOs and how important the services are in campaigns. Furthermore, this approach should answer the major research question of this

dissertation, Do traditional state political party organizations make a difference in elections?

In order to answer these questions, it is imperative to create a sufficient research design that can properly isolate the types of services provided and the importance of these services. In this situation, a comparative state analysis offers the advantage of capturing the varying degrees of the type of services provided by TSPPOs and the importance of these services within a relatively controlled environment. It follows from this that we can compare and contrast the ways TSPPOs have adapted and survived in the modern electoral environment. Finally, the most appropriate data for this would be derived from the candidates and party officials themselves; hence, this dissertation collected data via semi-structured interviews and survey questionnaires in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana

Case Selection

This dissertation studies state legislative campaigns in the states of Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana. First, these states have never before been the subject of this research question, so the data collected from these states for this dissertation are entirely new. Thus, this dissertation, to use a colloquialism, proposes to "kill two birds with one stone." It offers scholars a systematic comparison of traditional state political party organization behavior in state legislative campaigns across three states, three states that scholars have never used to systemically ascertain the type and importance of party services during state legislative elections. While it is nice to select states that have not been the subject of this type of study, there are some other important factors that justify the selection of these three states and make their inclusion appropriate.

Each of our fifty states has a distinctive political system; yet, at they same time, they share many similarities and are affected by similar national and regional forces. While this study has as its dependent variable the political campaign and not the state, care still needs to be taken in choosing states in order to precisely isolate how traditional state political party organizations distribute their resources and the importance of this distribution, without being entangled by outside or unforeseen forces. The political system is directly affected by a number of provisions, ranging from the constitutional and legal factors to social and economic factors (Morehouse and Jewell 2001). These subtle and not-so-subtle forces shape elections. Consequently, at the risk of sounding obvious, it should be emphasized that each state's electoral processes and relationships are different. Nonetheless, it is still possible to identify the similarities that justify their inclusion into the same comparative analysis. While Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana are different, they share many similarities in several key areas.

Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana constitute three of the four traditionally recognized "oil-patch" states of the United States, so named for the fact that the majority of the United States' petroleum and natural gas production is within this region.[4] The portion of these state economies that is not driven by what is pulled from beneath the soil is made up substantially by what is produced with the soil. Thus, agriculture and oil link these states economically. Even though urbanization and immigration have more recently begun to exert new socio-economic pressures and have vastly changed the complexion of Texas, more so than Oklahoma and Louisiana, these economic changes have not yet exerted substantial changes to the political systems and order of these states (Jewell & Morehouse 2001, Gray 2004). Thus, in many ways, Texas politics in 2004

[4] The fourth state being Arkansas.

remains substantially the same politics witnessed in 1984 or 1964 and, subsequently, retains similar dynamics as Oklahoma and Louisiana. More importantly, the shared economic cultures of these three states have contributed to similar socio-political conditions.

The socio-economic similarities among these states should not be ignored because research shows that states with similar socio-economic conditions display similar political values, beliefs, and symbols (Verba 1965). Daniel Elazar termed this "political culture," defined as "the historical sources of such differences in habits, concerns, and attitudes that exist to influence political life in the various states" (1972, 85). These habits, concerns, and attitudes are the products of generations of history and tradition. As such, they are slow to change and can survive through the most disruptive perturbations. Though urbanization and immigration have recently exerted powerful pressures on Texas, more so than Oklahoma and Louisiana, these recent changes have yet to largely affect the political culture. Elazar identifies three cultures: individualistic, moralistic, and traditionalistic, with the last of these comprising all the Southern states. The traditionalistic culture is demarcated by market and commonwealth ambivalence; therefore, political competition occurs largely between factions of elites who use government to maintain a social and economic hierarchy to which ordinary citizens need not apply.

Erickson, Wright, and McIver (1993) show that political culture and policy are inextricably linked. They find that states with similar types of cultures display similar levels of ideological identification and policy liberalism. Erickson, Wright, and McIver show that Oklahoma, Texas and Louisiana are states with populations that lean similarly

towards the conservative side of the ideological scale; as such, they create similarly more conservative policies. The most obvious product of political culture, though, is partisan identification and party control. The traditionalistic culture of these states explains their partisan similarities.

Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana were once members of the solid, one-party, Democratic South and are experiencing current transformations towards two-party competition (Bullock and Rozell 2003).[5] No one better captured the meaning of the Democratic Party to Southerners than W.J. Cash, who wrote:

> The world knows the story of the Democratic Party in the South; how, once violence had opened the way to political action, this party became the institutionalized incarnation of the will to White Supremacy. How it ceased to be a party *in* the South and become the party *of* the South, a kind of confraternity having in its keeping the whole corpus of Southern loyalties, and so irresistibly commanding the allegiance of faithful whites that to doubt it, to question it in any detail, was *ipso facto* to stand branded as a renegade to race, to country, to God, and to Southern Womanhood. ([1941] in Black and Black 1987, 4)

The pervasiveness of the party *of* the South, in part, caused Will Rogers to joke, "I don't belong to an organized political party; I am a Democrat" (Gaddie and Copeland 2003, 231). His humorous expression reiterates what V.O. Key systematically witnessed in his treatise, *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, where he writes:

> The Democratic party in most states of the South is merely a holding company for congeries of transient squabbling factions, most of which fail to meet the standards of permanence, cohesiveness, and responsibility that characterize the political party…the South really has no parties. (16, 299)

[5] Critics argue that Oklahoma is not a Southern state if politically defined by the classic criteria as a state that seceded and held Confederate membership. While Oklahoma was not a state and did not officially secede, several Indian Nations, the largest being the Cherokee Nation, were given seats with voting rights in the Confederate Congress. While Oklahoma may stand at the fringe of being Southern in a classical sense, researchers have poignantly made clear that its political culture and history mirrors that of its Southern neighbors (Morgan et al 1991, Gaddie and Copeland 2003).

Understanding the South, and Southern states for that matter, requires acknowledging Southerners' captivation with the Democratic Party, reluctance to embrace national policy change, and the recent arrival of two-party competition. Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana were all single-party states that lacked two-party competition that obfuscated Democratic Party organizational development. Recently, however, they have collectively witnessed a similar transition towards a more competitive two-party system.

The Democrat Party had retained complete control in all three states since the 1962 *Baker v. Carr* apportionment, but this legislative dominance is eroding. The Democrats, until 2004, have always maintained legislative control of both houses in Louisiana and Oklahoma (Gaddie and Copeland 2003, Parent and Perry 2003). In 2004, the Oklahoma legislature became a divided legislature. Texas became a divided legislature in 1996 when Republicans captured the State Senate but now is a one-party legislature because Republicans seized control of the State House in 2002 (LaMare et al. 2003). Although Louisiana's legislative bodies still remain in the hands of Democrats, Republican membership is at an all-time high, and the gap is quickly closing. The commonality of the consequence of one-party dominance was a Democratic Party in each of these three states lacking a real organization in deference to factions (Key 1949). As a result, these states have had weak party systems demarcated by factionalism and an absence of a "steady corps of leaders in either party" (Jewell and Morehouse 2001, 96). In these states one found, and still finds, pre-primary, primary, and post-primary fights with few attempts by party leaders to influence the election contests. In contrast, strong party systems are identified as states where leaders take strong roles in influencing election contests and make endorsements (Jewell and Morehouse 2001). Either way, the

overall party system is not considered to be strong, the product of years of one-party dominance.

Nonetheless, the following table shows that competition has arrived in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana (see Table 1.1). While these states still do not have strong party systems, all three are witnessing a shift at the local level towards the Republican Party.

Table 1.1: Two-Party Control and Competition in Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas[6]

State	Party Control (1980-1998)[7]	#	Party Competition (1990-98)[8]	#	Party Control (1964-78)	#	Party Competition (1964-78)	#
Louisiana	.772	5	.728	45	.936	1	.564	49
Texas	.623	18	.877	25	.848	6	.652	44
Oklahoma	.674	13	.826	30	.741	11	.759	39

If one were to look not just at the offices won but at the partisan registration figures, one would see that Republican revival is not just reflected in who is winning the seats, but how people are registering. In Oklahoma, Democratic registration has declined 25%, while Republican registration has increased 15% (Gaddie and Copeland 2003, 228). In Louisiana, Democratic registration has declined 40% and Republican registration has increased 13% (Parent and Perry 2003, 115).[9] Finally, Texas Republicans have seen a 20% increase in registration as opposed to a 35% decrease for Texas Democrats (LaMare

[6] Data compiled by Jewell and Morehouse 2001, 30-32.
[7] Party control scores range from 0 to 1, with 1 equating to 100% Democratic control of all legislative seats and the governorship and 0 equating to 100% Republican control of all legislative seats and the governorship.
[8] Party competition ranges from 1 to .5, with 1 being most competitive and .5 being least competitive. It is calculated by determining the percentage of vote for the governor, proportion of Senate seats won, proportion of House seats won, and proportion of year controlled by one party (also known as the Ranney Index).
[9] Giles and Hertz (1994) find that the large shift in voter registration in Louisiana between 1976 and 1990 was related to the black concentration within the voting-age population. The larger the percentage of black registrants in a parish, the larger the increase in the percentage of whites registering as Republican. Consequently, some of the shift in Louisiana can be accounted for as the product of racial threat as opposed to Republican Party development.

et al. 2003, 271). Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana are experiencing an increase in Republican Party popularity, as measured by partisan control of legislature and partisan registration. Apart from sharing similar economic and cultural patterns, these state are experiencing similar political trends.

Finally, another important variable to note is legislative professionalism because research demonstrates that the level of professionalism can have an important impact on the styles of campaigns (Rosenthal 1998). As with political cultures, scholars have identified three types of legislatures: professional, citizen, and hybrid. High salaries, extensive institutional resources, higher election costs, large populations, and large state budgets characterize more "professional" legislatures. All these factors drive up the political stakes of electoral outcomes, causing most of the races in these states to be highly competitive. On the opposite end are "citizen" legislatures. These legislatures are usually found in less populous states with small budgets. As such, the salaries are small, sessions are short, and institutional resources are scarce. Most elections tend to be uncompetitive and unsophisticated. "Hybrid" states fall somewhere between citizen and professional status (Thompson and Moncrief 1998). Currently, there are 9 professional, 16 citizen, and 25 hybrid legislatures, with Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas all being hybrid legislatures (Morehouse and Jewell 2003). Therefore, their similar legislative status makes comparisons more appropriate.

In conclusion, in order to ascertain the relationship between legislative candidates and traditional state political party organizations, this study utilizes a "most similar systems" comparative research design (Przeworski & Teune, 1970). These states possess strong similarities on the important social, economic, and political variables in order to

minimize the differences and, as much as possible, account for observed variations between traditional state political party organizations and state legislative campaigns between states. While some differences still exist, and as any research design cannot possibly account for every difference, there are not so many differences to make the selection of Oklahoma, Texas and Louisiana inappropriate. It should be re-emphasized that these three states have not been the subject of this type of analysis before; therefore, this study will collect previously unrecorded data that will be of value for all political party and state legislative scholars. Having justified the comparative research design, it is necessary to turn our attention to some data concerns, specifically the type of data that will be collected and how this information will be collected.

Survey Instrument/Data Collection: Procedure & Eligibility

This study addresses the relationship between state political parties and state legislators in Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas. As such, it is essential to determine the resources state political parties provide for legislators in their campaigns in the following major categories: candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, fundraising, and gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. For each of these categories, with the exception of fundraising, the data for this study was derived exclusively from two sources: state legislative candidates and state political party officials who participated in the 2002-2003 state legislative elections. The information of those state legislatives candidates and state political party officials who participated in the 2002-2003 state legislative elections were obtained in two forms: surveys and non-taped interviews (see Appendix B & C for the survey instruments). I first surveyed state legislative candidates via questionnaires and then verbally interviewed state political

party officials and state legislatives candidates after reviewing the survey results. The individuals who participated in the surveys were assigned identifiers unique to each participant to track those who had submitted surveys and those who had not.[10] This allowed me to send two more rounds of surveys to those who did not return their surveys or consent forms the first time.[11]

The non-taped, semi-structured interviews were conducted both in person and over the phone when in-person interviews were inconvenient. In all cases, the consent of the participants was acquired, and the individuals who participated were kept confidential in this dissertation. The interviews ranged from half an hour to four hours. Additionally, some state legislative candidates were interviewed to obtain more in-depth information and anecdotes that not captured by the questionnaire. Direct quotes were used only from interviewees who had explicitly given their consent to use quotes as denoted by a box on the consent form.[12]

The last major source of information was campaign finance data collected by The National Institute on Money in State Politics, which maintains an online database available to anyone.[13] They have collected this data from the various states' Ethics

---

[10] Individuals who qualified as participants were contacted about the research and their consent was obtained via consent forms before being allowed to participate. A file linking the unique identifying number with the actual participant was kept locked in my drawer and was destroyed after acquiring a sufficient number of surveys. The surveys have become permanently anonymous and confidential.

[11] Similar surveys and interviews were conducted by Monroe (2001), Herrnson (1988, 2004), Shea (1995), and Gierzynski (1992) and used a 20% threshold for return rates. Thus, I initially set a 20% return rate in this study because it was identical to the minimum comparable standard established by previous scholars. While such a return rate would normally rank as suspect, I was unable to uncover any criticism of the low response rate from the previous works and, thus, assumed the use of a 20% threshold here would be appropriate. Nevertheless, I surveyed three times and achieved a response rate that exceeded 50%.

[12] Additionally the University of Oklahoma's IRB also required that all interviews remain anonymous and required consent before publishing quotes.

[13] According to its website, "The National Institute on Money in State Politics is a nonpartisan, nonprofit program dedicated to accurate, comprehensive and unbiased documentation and research on campaign finance at the state level. The Institute is led by Samantha Sanchez, a tax-law expert whose background includes 15 years on the faculty of Catholic University Law School, teaching and serving as Associate

Commissions which are public domain and readily available to the public. While some of the interview and survey questions addressed fundraising practices, ideas, and rationale, financial data was still used to independently verify and contrast with official responses.

Survey Instrument/Data Collection: Instrument & Data Explanation

The central research question is, "Do traditional state party organizations make a difference in elections?" This was answered by determining the *type* and *importance* of services provided for by the traditional state political party organizations during state legislative elections. Thus, this study utilized a two-pronged research strategy. First, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with political party officials. This required using an open-ended research survey to allow for a full range of responses in order to capture the multitude of activities. The interviews conducted with party officials delineated the candidates' views of the elections from party officials' views, as there were likely to be differences in perceptions regarding the role played by their state political party organizations during state legislative elections. The semi-structured oral surveys accomplished finding out the *type* of services that were provided. As for verifying the *importance* of these services, a questionnaire survey was used to capture the reception of these resources in terms of whether they were extremely important or not important for the candidate's campaigns from the perspective of candidates. Using a structured questionnaire captured, in a more systematic fashion, not just the roles played

---

Dean for the last 6 years. The Institute is an outgrowth of collaboration between the Western States Center, the Northeast Citizen Action Resource Center, and Democracy South. As an independent project, the Institute is led by a working Board consisting of representatives from each founding organization. Based in the Rocky Mountains in Helena, Montana, the Institute is funded primarily through foundation support and has no relationship with any political party, partisan issue group or elected official. We invite you to explore our Web site and learn more about our history, staff, board and funding."

by party organizations from the perspective of the candidate, but also the relative importance of these services compared to other actors.

Interviews *told* what they do, but the surveys provided precise information regarding the candidate's perception of the *importance* of what they do. Furthermore, the questionnaires formed a foundation for a systematic cross-state comparison of the electoral influences of party organizations. With this design, this dissertation was able to examine the role of the traditional state political party organization (TSPPOs) in campaigns, determine how and where TSPPOs invested resources, assess the TSPPOs' relative importance to other actors during campaigns, and compare the results of one state to the others.

The survey questionnaire (Appendix B) was modeled after the survey used by Paul Herrnson in his book *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington* and *Party Campaigning in the 1980s*. The first part of the survey (questions 1-4, 6-7) provides demographic information to control for party membership, type of campaign, election outcome, and candidate experience. Research suggests that different types of elections, especially open-seat elections, see different levels and types of resources than other races (Herrnson 1988, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998, Hogan and Hamm 1998). Furthermore, incumbents and challengers, with their respective amounts of political experience, are not treated the same by political party organizations. Experienced challengers and incumbents are more likely to receive party support (Herrnson 1988, Magleby 2002). Thus, questions 1-4 and 6-7 are designed to create controls. Question 5 – "How important do you believe the following factors were in determining the outcome of the election" – is used to account for what the candidates

believe may have been the deciding factor(s) in the election (e.g. determine if there were possible coat-tail effects in these elections, incumbency effects, or personal effects). Research suggests that some candidates are refused resources at times because their views are not considered to be consistent with the party or, in general, the state (Kuzenski 1995). Question 24 – "How would you describe the view of you/your candidate on most political matters compared to those of your state" – and question 25 – "How would you describe the view of you/your candidate on most political matters compared to those of your state party" – indicate whether the candidate was compatible with the electorate or the party, another control variable to explain possible deviances. These two demographic questions are placed at the end to avoid contamination from negative survey effects (Bardes and Oldendick 2003). At this point, the survey shifts its focus from control-oriented questions to substantive-oriented questions.

This dissertation focuses on the types of services provided for by the traditional state political party organization in the major categories of candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, fundraising, and gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. In addition, the relative importance of such services (e.g. if these contributions matter or if they were even noticed) needs to be ascertained as well. As such, the questionnaire includes questions within each of these areas designed to capture the importance of these services from the candidate's perspective in relation to other actors. For candidate recruitment, question 8 – "How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your/the candidate's decision to run for office" – asks the candidates to assess and compare the groups that contributed towards the decision to run. This question determines whether

the decision to run is highly personal or if any other groups had any influence – e.g. did the party play a role in recruitment.

In regards to campaign communications, two questions are used (numbers 12 and 15). Question 12 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image" – seeks to determine if the party had any relative influence in developing an image for the purpose of advertising. Question 15 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in selecting your/the candidate's issue positions" – addresses the role and relative influence of the party in developing the message of the campaign. In other words, are the state political parties' issue research and mass media advertising programs used by candidates and did they have any effect upon elections?

Gauging opinions and mobilizing voters was at one time a simultaneous activity, but has since been broken into two largely separate functions. Gauging public opinion, the act of capturing the mindset and concerns of the voter, is addressed with question 10 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with information about voters." This question tells us the relative role and effect of the political parties on supplying the campaigns with information to help the campaign gauge public opinion. Mobilizing voters involves get-out-the-vote drives and physical transportation. Question 11 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day" – will provide us with the relative importance of this political party activity. Mobilization requires manpower, so question 16 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with volunteer workers" – assesses the role of and importance of

the party in recruiting volunteers for the campaign. Thus, questions 10, 11, and 16 are used to capture the parties' role in gauging opinion and mobilizing voters.

Compiling the actual fiscal contributions by political parties to the campaigns tells us how much they give, but it is also important to assess the relative value and importance of these donations rather than the total amount of the donation. Campaign donations are only half of the financial puzzle; parties often may not raise the money themselves but, at the very least, introduce candidates to individuals who do have monetary resources (Hershey and Beck 2003). Thus, question 14 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising, including introductions to potential campaign contributors and developing a direct-mail fundraising system" – provides the question that will answer the aforementioned question. Question 13 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with accounting and filing reports with the state ethics committee" – ascertains whether the political party also plays the role of auditor. In addition, question 22 – "When did your campaign receive most of its contribution" – ascertains when candidates received most of their funds. The overall impact of party importance may be less a condition of how much was received but when it was received. Question 20 – "Overall, how difficult did you feel it was to raise money in this election" – and question 22 – "How much difficulty did you/candidate have raising money during each of the following stages" – are included to determine if conditions of scarcity or surplus affected positive or negative assessment of party donations. Candidate appraisals reflect the environment under which the party operates (Herrnson 1988, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998).

The final dimension being measured in this survey is campaign management, and this survey uses two questions to determine its importance in elections. Question 17 – "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with the formulation of a campaign strategy" – deals more broadly with the parties' role in the direction of the campaign, asking who is responsible for developing the campaign strategy. The other question addresses a more hands-on campaign management role, asking (question 18) "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management." Apart from the individual activities that encompass campaign management, what did the campaign think of the overall influence in campaign management? Thus, the preceding questions are part of an effort to capture the parties' role in campaign management, the most complicated of the dimensions on the survey.

The scales/answer choices in this survey captured precise pieces of empirical data that allowed for mean scores, t-tests, and significance level scoring.[14] This empirical data was divided into appropriate groups (party, type of contest) and sorted for comparisons and analysis. In some cases, simultaneous comparisons were drawn between multiple groups of candidates and a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted. The MANOVA was computed and the appropriate multiple F value was recorded.[15] T-tests were also conducted to test for the significance of differences between mean scores within groups. Some researchers object to using parametric tests on ordinal level data (White 1999); however, parametric tests with ordinal level data are highly robust and

[14] Answer choices for this question and all other questions in this analysis were (5) extremely important, (4) very important, (3) moderately important, (2) slightly important, (1) not important.
[15] The following link contains an extended discussion of MANOVA: http://www.richmond.edu/~pli/psy538/MANOVA/

capable of producing accurate results (Reynolds 1971). In addition, means and parametric tests are more easily interpreted and produce results that are more substantively interesting than alternatives (Herrnson 1988; White 1999).

In conclusion, the questions used within the mailed surveys systematically uncovered the importance of services provided for by party organizations from the perspective of the candidate in the areas of candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, fundraising, and gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. More importantly, they determined their importance, as felt by the candidates, relative to other electoral actors. Each question was linked to its respective topic to show how and what type of information was collected and why this information was needed. Most importantly, this structured questionnaire allowed for a systematic cross-state comparison of the data.

The second instrument used was a guide for interviewing political party officials to determine the type of services the parties provided to candidates (see Appendix C). In this study, the state party was broken into various committees (e.g. state, district, and county) and attempts were made to interview the appropriate personnel from each committee.[16] Herrnson used five basic questions, asking the party officials to describe their activities in candidate recruitment, campaign management, campaign communications, fundraising, collecting voter information, and mobilizing the electorate. He started with these five broad questions and would depart as issues arose and further questions developed from these discussions (Herrnson 1988). J.P. Monroe created a different instrument but used Herrnson's five themes as a rubric. Monroe used more

[16] These units are defined in later chapters because each state defines these units differently. I generally followed the framework in Paul Herrnson's *Party Campaigning in the 1980s* and J.P. Monroe's *The Political Party Matrix*.

structured questions to reduce the free-flowing nature of Herrnson's model (Monroe 2001). Thus, a semi-structured interview similar to Monroe's was used in this dissertation but divided into sections according to Herrnson's five-part rubric to ferret out more precise pieces of information.

The interview instrument begins with six general questions:

1. How did you get your position?
2. How long ago did you become involved in politics?
3. Did someone cause you to become involved or was it by your own design?
4. Have you ever held an elected position?
5. Have you ever worked on the staff of an elected official?
6. Would you like to hold public office some day?

These questions were used to gain some general understanding of the background of these party officials. While this information did not directly answer the more relevant questions relating to the importance of TSPPOs in state legislative elections, the information allowed this study to control for a party member's own political ambitions (Monroe 2001). Such a presence, or lack of presence, helped explain the parties' interest in political campaigns and lack of or presence of importance. It is the actors that must reconcile the desires of their interests with the parties' activities. After all, Max Weber noted, "either one lives 'for' politics or one lives 'off' politics" (1958, 77-128). Thus, the political party plays an incentive for future participation and future political gain. It would stand to justify that parties have a vested interest, for more than one reason, to see candidates succeed. This information also supplied some general information for possible future research extensions.

The interview shifts to candidate recruitment. Questions 7-14 reveal the exact nature of political party involvement in recruitment:

7. Describe you/your organization's activities in candidate recruitment.
8. Have you/your organization ever encouraged anyone to run for office for the first time?
9. Did the party give this person help?
10. Who requested the support, you, the party or the candidate?
11. Have you/your organization ever encouraged a current officeholder to seek another office?
12. Did the party give this person help?
13. Who requested the support, you, the party or the candidate?
14. Have you/your organization ever discouraged anyone from running or seeking a higher elected office?

Question 7 allowed party officials to introduce the various ways TSPPOs participated in recruitment. The follow-up questions, 8-14, directly addressed whether the TSPPO was directly involved with encouraging or discouraging individuals, and then the follow-up questions tracked the resultant help, or lack of help, provided after the recruitment. These questions gathered information that allowed the respondent to generally explain the various forms recruitment takes but are buttressed by specific questions regarding the classical form of direct recruitment and help after recruitment.

The next topic is that of campaign management. As previously mentioned, campaign management encompasses many dimensions that must be captured from a variety of angles. In the survey questionnaire, there are more questions dealing with campaign management than any other subject to capture the subtle and various roles that parties played in the management of campaigns. The questions dealing with campaign management, questions 15-24, were as follows:

15. Describe you/your organization's activities in campaign management.
16. Did you/your organization help staff campaigns and hire party workers?
17. Did you/your organization assist the campaign with accounting or filing ethics reports?
18. Did you/your organization talk with or work with candidates/campaigns?
19. How often and what did you talk about?

20. Did you/your organization talk with or work with candidates/campaigns in developing strategies?
21. Did you/your organization work on specific projects with candidates/campaigns?
22. How often and what type of projects?
23. When it comes to making important decisions for the campaign, how much influence do you think you/your organization had on campaigns?
24. How would you describe your/your organization's relationship with candidates?

Similar to question 7, question 15 is a very broad question that allowed respondents to generally self-identify the ways TSPPOs contributed in the realm of campaign management. After allowing them to expound on these services, questions 16-23 asked them about specific types of activities: hiring/staffing decisions, filing reports, formulating strategies, talking with candidates, developing projects, or making important decisions. Finally, question 24 sought to gauge the general receptivity of the campaign with the TSPPO.

Regarding campaign communications, three questions addressed this area:

25. Describe you/your organization's activities in campaign communications.
26. Did you/your organization help develop a candidate's public image?
27. Did you/your organization help with media advertising?

Question 25 is the general introductory question that allowed respondents to bring up issues that have not been previously thought of or suggested by previous research. Question 26 and question 27 are more specific follow-up questions aimed at detailing the work done regarding public image and advertising.

Moving to fundraising, six questions were used to capture the ways TSPPOs interact with campaigns. The following questions addressed fundraising:

28. Describe you/your organization's activities in fundraising.

29. What type of campaign (challenger, incumbent, open seat) do you think you supported most in the last electoral cycle and why?
30. Did you assist a candidate/campaign in raising funds?
31. If so, what type of assistance did you provide?
32. If not, why not?
33. Where would you guess most of your resources came from?

The first question allowed the interviewee to identify the general manner TSPPOs participate in or contribute to fundraising. The follow-up questions gathered more specific and useful information such as which types of campaigns received the most funds and why, explanations for why candidates were less likely to receive funds, the nature of the assistance (e.g. direct fundraising, indirect fundraising, negative fundraising). Finally, the last question focused less on what they did for the campaigns and more on determining where the state parties received their resources from – private individuals, national parties – to assess their possible influence on contributions.

Finally, the last major group of questions in this survey solicited information regarding public opinion and voter mobilization. The three questions were:

34. Describe you/your organization's activities in collecting voter information and mobilizing the electorate.
35. Did you/your organization collect information about the voter and distribute it to the campaigns?
36. Did you/your organization register voters and get them to the polls on Election Day?
37. Did you/your organization help recruit volunteers for campaigns?

Question 34 helped capture the variety of activities that comprise public opinion and voter mobilization and how TSPPOs helped collect information and mobilize voters. Question 35 specifically requested the interviewee to describe how the TSPPO collected and disseminated state and district information about the electorate to campaigns, while

question 36 addressed whether the TSPPO performed any traditional registration or get-out-the-vote activities.

The final question of the survey – "what are some party building strategies that you would like to initiate or see initiated in the future" – allowed party officials to assess the future of TSPPOs and supply recommendations for future elections. This endowed the dissertation with some support for a prospective discussion about the role of the state political party in future elections and possibilities for responsible parties. The interviews thereby provide descriptions, anecdotes, and quotes that cannot be captured in a written survey questionnaire.

In conclusion, this study examines the resources state political parties provide for legislators in their campaigns in the following major categories: candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, fundraising, and gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. For each of these categories, with the exception of fundraising, the data comes exclusively from two sources – surveys of state legislative candidates and interviews with state political party officials and state legislative candidates. Surveys and interviews described the type and importance of campaign services provided by traditional state political party organizations during state legislative elections. This yielded qualitative and quantitative information that is analyzed and presented in the following chapters. The comparative research design utilized in this study isolates the similarities and differences between states to explain differences in party activities.

Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 begins describing the partisan environment and trends of Louisiana in order to understand the nature of the organizational development of Republicans and Democrats. After the explanations of the party organizations, the chapter discusses the types of services traditional state political party organizations provided during state legislative elections in Louisiana. Interviews with the state party leadership, state executive committee, state central committees, and other committees regarding the last state legislative elections unveiled the methods by which the parties recruited and selected candidates for office, provided campaign management, assisted in campaign communications, garnered funds and organized fundraisers, and gauged public opinion and mobilized the voters. The analysis provides an insider's view of the manner in which our traditional state political party organizations assisted state legislative campaigns. The chapter also focuses on the importance of these services. Since we have a description of how parties recruit and select candidates for office, provide campaign management, assist in campaign communications, garner funds or organize fundraisers, mobilize the voters, and gauge public opinion, we can then determine the importance of these services from the perspective of the actors who receive this assistance. This information supplies the necessary data to answer the question, "Do traditional state political party organizations make a difference in elections?" Chapters 3 and 4 are organized the same way and cover Texas and Oklahoma, respectively.

Chapter 5 compares the findings of Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas. This chapter compares and contrasts the similarities and differences of the services provided by traditional state political party organizations, showing the variety of roles played by

different party organizations in different state in different state legislative campaigns. Here we catch a glimpse of the varying, but relatively minor, importance party organizations play in state campaigns. Together, this study shows that the traditional state political party organizations have adapted, are capable of surviving, but still have a tremendous way to go in state legislative elections. This chapter highlights the areas of failure and success. Also, this comparative research design allows us to identify the factors that enhanced or inhibited traditional state political party services in state legislative campaigns.

Chapter 6, the last and concluding chapter, summarizes the findings of this study and places them into a broader context. Chapter 6 reveals the services traditional state political party organizations provide effectively and offers solutions for future party survival and adaptation. If the traditional state political party organization is not an important actor in state legislative elections, then what barriers need to be removed or changes implemented to allow them to be more significant actors as in the past? In addition, what are the implications of the party-as-campaigner for the party-in-the-electorate or, more importantly, for the party-in-government? Thus, this chapter speaks to the likelihood of a more responsible two-party system emerging at the state level. The necessary minimum ingredients for responsible party government are present but are underdeveloped at this time. What changes can be made for responsible party government to occur?

CHAPTER TWO: Party Campaigning in Louisiana: Every Man is A King

We have active parties, during Mardi Gras.

- Anonymous Interview[17]

A Brief Electoral History

The state of Louisiana, like its southern counterparts, enters the 21st Century with a competitive two-party environment after being part of the solid Democratic South for most of the 20th Century. Yet, Louisiana is distinguished from its southern neighbors, especially its Deep South cohorts, in that the emergence of its two-party system has been particularly sluggish in spite of the 1994 southern Republican revolution. While the Republican Party made major gains throughout the rest of the South, Democrats in Louisiana still managed to control the governorship, a majority of statewide offices, both houses of the state legislature, both Senate seats, and a majority of the congressional delegation (Parent 1997). Louisiana's first significant Republican advance did not occur until 1995 when Mike Foster became the second Republican governor since Reconstruction and Republicans convinced two Democrats to defect resulting in the first post-Reconstruction Republican congressional delegation majority. The prospect of imminent Republican dominance was dimmed by the Democrats' ability to maintain control of other state offices (Renwick et al 1999).

Louisiana is a state in transition at the federal and state level. Republican gains are most visible at the federal level, as the state cast over 50% of its electoral votes for Bush in 2000 and 2004. Also in 2004, Republicans finally broke the Democratic monopoly on the U.S. Senate in Louisiana when David Vitter became the first Republican Senator since Reconstruction (Keller 2005). Republicans benefited again

[17] Interview with Author June 7th, 2004.

when Congressman Rodney Alexander defected to the Republican Party five minutes before qualifying ended to increase its congressional delegation majority in the U.S. House to five seats (Hurt 2004). Nevertheless, Democrats maintain control at the state level. In 2003, Democrats regained the governor's mansion and won every statewide office except for one (Brown 2003). Democrats also held a decisive 67-37 majority in the state House and a 24-15 majority in the state Senate.[18] Additionally, 55% of all Louisianans are still registered as Democrats. Despite this, Republicans are gaining ground. Official Republican registration is at 24%, up from 1% in 1960.[19] 2004 exit polls reveal the gap is closer, as 41% of those who voted identified themselves as Republicans versus the 42% that identified themselves as Democrats.[20] Thirty years ago there were no Republicans in the state legislature. Since 1990 Republicans have doubled their membership in the state House and tripled their membership in the Senate. (Parent and Perry 2003). The Louisiana Republican Party has been able to transform itself from a rag-tag collection of anti-Democrats into a coherent, permanent, and viable organization. Republicans have grown as a party-in-the-electorate, as a party-in-government, and as a party organization. Republican growth has increased competition; this increased competition and subsequent electoral threat has forced the Louisiana Democratic Party to organizationally mature from a bi-factional network of pro-Long and anti-Long personalities (Key 1949, Renwick et al 1999).

To assess party development in Louisiana, one must understand some unique Louisiana legacies: one, the Long political machine; two, the open primary; three,

[18] Legislative Research Library, House Legislative Services, Louisiana House of Representatives.
[19] All Louisiana Registration statistics courtesy of the Louisiana Secretary of States' Elections Division: http://www.sos.louisiana.gov/elections/elections-index.htm.
[20] Edison/Mitofsky exit poll: http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/LA/S/01/epolls.0.html.

election laws; four, Louisiana's constituency.[21] In addition to being a solid one-party state, Louisiana was a solid one-family, one-party state for most of the 20th Century. Democrats Huey and Earl Long dominated and defined Louisiana politics with a masterful blend of Southern demagoguery playing on the social and economic fears of poor and working class whites. The anti-Long "reformers" – Sam Jones, Judge Robert Kennon, Jimmie Morrison – copied the social and economic appeals of Huey and Earl Long and did so from within the Democratic Party (Key 1949, Liebling 1970). Opposing Huey and Earl Long as a Republican was not an option because the Republican Party still bore the stigma of being the party of Reconstruction and the party of big business (Lamis 1990). Louisiana also had closed primaries – a mechanism designed to prevent African Americans and Republicans from winning elections while insuring Democratic registration – which forced voters and candidates to choose a party and were restricted to participating in the primaries of their registration. The primary election was the real election, the general election was a formality, and registering or competing as a Republican was not an option. Consequently the reformers were forced into the same party as the Longs', and a pro-Long, anti-Long bi-factional system existed within the Democratic Party. Each of these two individual factions displayed incredible unity, cultivated candidates, assisted campaigns, maintained voter loyalty, and developed organizations much like a party. Neither faction spent any time attempting to control the official Democratic Party because it did not offer anything they did not already need or

[21] It should be noted that this chapter hereafter refers to Louisiana's election system as an open primary because that is the common phrasing used in Louisiana. Nonetheless, it is not properly a primary system at all in the sense of the terms "open primary" and "closed primary" titles used in other states to denote an election before a general election. The open primary of Louisiana is actually the general election.

have (Key 1949, Liebling 1970). This bi-factionalism stymied organizational development of the Louisiana Democratic Party until 1979 (Lamis 1990).

Although the organizational development of the Louisiana Democratic Party did not proceed until 1979, cracks in Democratic power allowing for the organization of the Republican Party of Louisiana appeared much earlier. In the 1950s, Dwight D. Eisenhower became the first Republican to win electoral votes from the Deep South because his opponent, Adlai Stevenson, believed that the federal government, not Louisiana, controlled the tidelands and the oil deposits found within them (Black and Black 1992). While that ruffled the feathers of the educated white voter, it was not the only issue that caused white voters to question their Democratic loyalty. Stevenson also failed to campaign in the South until the last minute, and he endorsed the national party platform regarding civil rights – though he never broached the subject of race during his one stop to New Orleans. Also, many Louisiana voters were waiting for notable Southern Democrats, like Richard Russell, to give their endorsement for Stevenson, which did not arrive until the waning days of the campaign. The combination of oil leases, civil rights, and southern neglect allowed Eisenhower to take 50% of the Southern white vote and carry the state of Louisiana (Black and Black 1992, Bartley 1995). Yet, it is Goldwater's candidacy that is more historical because he persuaded upper-, middle-, and lower-class whites in Louisiana to simultaneously vote Republican for the first time (Cosman 1966).

Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign not only shook Southern allegiance to the Democratic Party, but also finalized the death of the Long faction in Louisiana. The anti-Long machine, led by Jimmy Davis, wrested control of the

governor's mansion from the pro-Long faction through the issue of race and support for massive resistance. Although Earl Long and his faction were not integrationists, they refused to engage in the race-baiting that drove the popularity of anti-Longs' like Jimmy Davis and Judge Leander Perez. Since Earl and his faction refused to directly address the issue of race and refused to participate in race baiting, their popularity and power eroded. Louisiana whites were less concerned with fighting oil companies and more preoccupied with maintaining segregation (Liebling 1970, Bartley 1995). Goldwater's racial conservatism attracted lower-class whites, and his fiscal conservatism attracted middle- and upper-class whites into the Republican Party in a manner that escaped Huey and Earl Long. In 1964, 73% of the black belt voted for Goldwater, a 30% increase over Eisenhower and Nixon. This number is even more amazing when one considers the fact that Goldwater only attracted 60% of the vote from traditional Republican enclaves (Cosman 1966). The Goldwater campaign cemented the Democratic loyalty of African Americans and destroyed the Democratic loyalty of white southerners. Since the Goldwater campaign, the white Southern middle-class has become a permanent fixture in federal Republican voting blocks (Black and Black 1992, 2004; Bartley 1995). Ronald Reagan and Newt Gingrich's conservative religious, social, and economic agenda not only held together lower- and middle-class whites, but appealed to the protestants in the North and, simultaneously, to the pro-Life Catholics in the South. Alone, this is a truly amazing feat for any politician within Louisiana; it is an even more amazing feat for a politician from outside Louisiana. Nevertheless, the Long legacy was so powerful it took Republicans and Democrats in Louisiana four decades to overcome it (Black and Black 2002, Parent 2004).

The absence of the Long machine was one key variable allowing for Republican organizational development, but the legal adoption of a new primary system in 1975 is the second important variable. As if the legacy of the Long dynasty were not enough, Louisiana added even more flair to its politics by changing its primary system. Louisiana had used a closed primary system. Effectively, this Southern electoral structure acted as a caste system that encouraged Democratic Party registration, preserved Democratic majorities, and fostered intense, divisive, and expensive Democratic primaries. Previously, divisive Democratic primaries were not a concern because Republican opposition, if any, was token opposition at best. After Goldwater's candidacy in 1964, the Republican Party gained adherents and Republican candidates became increasingly competitive in statewide elections (Parent 1997). In 1971, Edwin Edwards became increasingly concerned with the strength of Republicans after beating David Treen with "only" 57% of the vote. A comfortable margin in most states, it was historically closer than Democrats and Edwards were accustomed to in Louisiana. While Democrats were battering each other, Treen was quietly raising funds and preparing for a general election. Democrats were waging two costly campaigns instead of one, and the Democratic primaries were costing the party crossover votes in the general election. Edwards wanted Republicans to face the same intensity, divisiveness, and financial burdens of Democrats; thus, he proposed an open primary system, whereby all candidates, regardless of party affiliation, were placed into the same contest (Kuzenski 1995). To win, a candidate must obtain a majority. In absence of a majority, the top two vote getters compete in a runoff. This system could allow Democrats to win outright with only one campaign (Parent 1997, Kuzenski 1995). Since Louisiana was 95% Democratic by registration, it was

equally possible for the top two candidates in the runoff to be Democrats, an equally advantageous scenario (Parent and Perry 2003). Unfortunately for Edwards and the Louisiana Democratic Party, the open primary actually facilitated the top-down advancement of Republican Party growth in Louisiana in the long run (Parent 2004).

What Edwin Edwards failed to predict was partisan defection and Republican Party discipline. Democratic chair James Brady said:

> When that bill was introduced, we knew it would cause a large number of Democrats to become Republicans…We've always had a Republican wing of the state Democratic Party, but they were so small and so weak. They knew if they switched, they wouldn't be able to…get anywhere in Louisiana politics. But with the adoption of that bill, yes, attrition came true. (Kuzenski 1995, 8)

In addition to partisan defection, the Louisiana Republican Party also altered party bylaws to legally allow for pre-primary endorsements and began using all available party tools to dissuade multiple Republicans from filing and dividing the Republican vote. Since independent voters could participate and crossover voting was not inhibited, the presence of organizational solidarity increased the possibility of Republicans making a run-off or, if enough Democrats divided the vote, producing an outright Republican victory. While the open primary did not necessarily guarantee Republican success, it sufficiently increased the conditions for Republican Party growth and development by increasing the competitiveness of the Republican Party (Kuzenski 1995, Parent 2004). Ironically, the open primary was adopted in 1975 and, in the first gubernatorial election afterwards, Republicans elected their first post-Reconstruction governor, David Treen, in 1979 (Parent 1997).

These two seemingly unrelated items created an environment favorable to Republican growth. Republicans discovered that when they combine the appeals of pro-

business conservatism with social-religious conservatism, they could compete in, if not win, elections in Louisiana. Without the Long machine, personalities were de-emphasized and issues re-emphasized. Republicans benefited not only by finding a platform capable of producing numerical majorities, but also benefited from an electoral system that allowed Republicans greater opportunities to be competitive. Depending on the year and electoral environment, Republican candidates could force their way into a run-off, if not win outright, if enough Democratic candidates split Democratic voting blocs and independent voters crossed over to support the Republican. The open primary does not guarantee Republican success, but it does allow for competition and an environment where Republicans can succeed.

The laws in Louisiana, and in most states, work to the advantage of the Democrat and Republican Party. For many years, Louisiana law distinguished in enforcement among parties that exceeded 25% voter registration and those that fell below 25% voter registration. Effectively, the law subjected the Democratic Party to more regulation than the Republican Party in terms of committee membership, elections, and vacancies. Nevertheless, the two parties still created very similar organizations. Today, regardless of party, state law equally regulates the existence and activities of parish committees for both parties. Recently, Louisiana amended state laws recognizing and regulating parties that secure over five percent of the vote in either a statewide or presidential election.[22] Thus, the Republicans and Democrats are now equally regulated under new state laws, but the legal changes merely confirm the state's *de facto* practice of two-party monitoring, restriction, and regulation. Despite past laws and recent amendments to the

[22] Louisiana Secretary of State @ http://www.sos.louisiana.gov

law, the Republican and Democrat Party closely resemble each other in structure and function (Parent 1997).

Louisiana's unique constituency also plays a role in party development. While most states have simple cleavages – conservative versus liberals, suburban versus urban, blacks versus whites – Louisiana has three additional unique cleavages that refuse at times to vote in simple and predictable voting blocs. This has made a mess of party politics. Dividing the state of Louisiana is I-10, a major expressway that intersects Houston, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Biloxi. North of I-10 is the traditional white, Protestant, conservative, Southern constituency eating chicken-fried steak, drinking lemonade, and attending Baptist churches. Northern Louisiana has a smaller African-American population and has been voting the longest for Republicans at the federal, state, and local level (Key 1949, Parent 2004). South of I-10 one enters the Cajun, French, black-belt; observers of Mardi Gras, devotees of Catholicism, and vigilant consumers of gumbo, jambalaya, and anything that crawls out of the bayou (Renwick et al 1999). While the relationship between Catholicism and Democratic voting patterns has declined precipitously, a majority of the whites in the southern part of Louisiana maintain registration in the Democratic Party – one of the few places in the South where white Democrats outnumber white Republicans (Renwick et al 1999, Parent 2004). While the northern half of the state is most likely to vote straight-ticket Republican, the southern half of Louisiana goes either way. For example, in 2004 the two Southern districts – the 3rd and 7th – reversed their party of representation in Congress. The 3rd congressional district elected a Democrat, after supporting a Republican for twenty-two years, and the 7th congressional district elected a Republican after supporting a Democrat for six years.

These districts also helped elect Republican Governor Mike Foster and, simultaneously, Democratic Governor Kathleen Blanco (Barone et al 2003). The swing votes can usually be found in southern Acadian parishes (Parent 2004). Finally, there are the African Louisianans of New Orleans. The African Americans of New Orleans are among the most urban and politically active of any Southern state, and have created active and powerful urban political organizations like BOLD, SOUL, and LIFE. African Americans remain a significant and cohesive voting bloc for Democrats, though their relative power within the party has declined. Although African Americans largely occupy New Orleans' political districts at the federal, state, and local level, an African American has not yet won a statewide office. This is a sensitive fact that constantly simmers within the Louisiana Democratic Party (Parent 2004).

The diverse citizenry, history of flamboyant populists, and unique electoral system destabilize Louisiana's politics and complicates traditional state political party organizational development. Yet, one must first have some knowledge of Louisiana's political culture, structure, and history in order fully understand the development and structure of the Louisiana Democratic Party and Republican Party of Louisiana. This chapter now discusses the structure and history of these two party organizations.

The Louisiana Democratic Party – Organization & Development

The Louisiana Democratic Party (LDP) is organized in a traditional, hierarchical manner around a chairperson who delegates authority and responsibility.[23] The chair is allowed by the state bylaws to appoint "any persons deemed necessary for management of the Party," which now includes an executive director, financial assistant,

[23] All discussions of the party organization are derived from the "Louisiana Democratic Party Constitution" and the "Louisiana Democratic Party By-Laws" unless otherwise noted.

communications director, political director, technology director, comptroller, outreach assistant, and office manager.[24] Staffing privileges, combined with being the legal head of the LDP, make the state party chair the unequivocal guiding figure of the state party. The chairperson's primary responsibility is fundraising, followed by setting the policy direction. The current chair is Jim Bernhard, who recently replaced Mike Skinner (the chair during the 2003 election cycle that is covered in this study). The day-to-day governing body of the LDP is the Executive Committee, which is staffed by a series of officers: chairperson, five vice-chairpersons (at least one of which must be female, one of which must be a minority), treasurer, secretary, legal counsel, clerk, parliamentarian, members of the Louisiana DNC, plus two members (one male, one female) from every congressional district in the state. Statewide elected officials and members of Congress are granted automatic membership in the Executive Committee, though not as voting members. The Executive Committee is primarily an administrative unit concerned with management and functional issues.

Assisting the Executive Committee is the Democratic State Central Committee (DSCC). The DSCC is comprised of 210 members, two (one male, one female) from each of the state's 105 legislative districts. The DSCC is charged with electing Democrats in state and local elections, conducting delegation selection processes, formulating party policies, maintaining the party staff, maintaining relationships with other Democratic committees, promoting "party development," and approving the budget of the Executive Committee.[25] Promoting party development includes, but is not restricted to, raising funds, supporting political research, disseminating party information,

[24] LDP Constitution, Article IX
[25] LDP By-Law, Article I, Section 1.

and developing public relation programs. The LDP's DSCC is explicitly charged with more campaign-related activities than any other state's central committee examined in this study. Nevertheless, its size and infrequent gatherings prevent the DSCC from acting as a coherent, unified committee.[26] Its primary functions include making party endorsements, approving party expenditures, and recommending party resolutions.

Most state parties have a district-level party organization; however, the LDP's district-level organization is the least developed, on paper, of the three states. The LDP has Congressional District Caucuses (CDC), which are comprised of the chair and vice-chair of every parish executive committee within each of the seven congressional districts. The CDC is presided over by a chair, vice-chair (must be the opposite sex of the chair), and a secretary. The chair and vice-chair serve on the LDP Executive Committee. The LDP's CDC are not officially charged with any campaign functions nor are they required to meet a minimum number of times per calendar year, except during convention years. Thus, they are only as active as the officers they elect – some are very active and some are inactive.[27] The primary reason CDC still exists is to elect delegates during convention years.

Subservient to the DSCC and CDC is the Democratic Parish Executive Committee (DPEC), whose districts correspond to the 64 parishes in Louisiana. A chair, vice-chair, and secretary govern each DPEC and are responsible for directing the affairs of the Democratic Party on the local level. Such activities include assisting with the election of local and statewide candidates, encouraging voter registration, maintaining parish party organizations, assisting other local party organizations, raising funds for the

[26] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.
[27] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.

parish and state committee, and educating voters.[28] The number of members within a parish's DPEC is determined by the number of legal districts as dictated by state and parish laws of Louisiana, not the state party. Therefore, Bienville's DPEC has only eight members, while Orleans' DPEC has 70 members. All members of the Executive Committee, DSCC, CDC, and DPEC serve four-year terms and must be members of the LDP. LDP membership extends to any "citizen in Louisiana eighteen (18) years of age or older, who registers to vote as affiliated with the Democratic Party."[29] Thus, any registered Democrat in the state of Louisiana, regardless of length of tenure, is eligible for LDP membership and any LDP office.

The history of the Democrats is far more substantial and complex than the Republicans due to the their dominance in governance after Reconstruction. Nonetheless, one should not confuse the historical richness of Louisiana Democrats with a concomitant historical richness of the Louisiana Democratic Party. In Chapter 1 it was noted that parties generally exist to assist their candidates in state and local elections through campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections (Herrnson 1989). Unfortunately, the history of the LDP in these five areas is incomplete though, because it is non-existent. V.O. Key (1949) writes that the bi-factional nature of the Democrats into pro-Long and anti-Long camps stymied organizational development of a Louisiana Democratic Party. These factions, in lieu of the party, cultivated their own candidates, ran their candidate's campaigns, established factional platforms, and maintained voter loyalty (Key 1949). These factions operated

[28] LDP By-Laws, Article II, Section 1.
[29] LDP Constitution, Article IV.

like the political machines, and neither faction wasted any time with the official Democratic Party. The party could not intervene in primaries because it would have alienated itself from its own adherents. The party could have played a post-primary role, but the absence of a viable Republican opposition and the presence of well-organized faction organizations did not necessitate party involvement or party development. An LDP existed in name only (Parent 1997, 2004).

The post-1975 operation of the LDP had the potential for not being substantially different from their pre-1975 operations because the open-primary created a similar electoral environment problem. Party support in most states and cases occurs when there is only one candidate of that party on the ballot, which means that pre-primary party involvement in most states and cases is very rare. Louisiana's open primary is the general election, but very rarely in statewide or federal elections is there only one Democratic candidate on the first qualifying ballot. In cases of two or more Democratic candidates, open party support is often inappropriate or carries the risk of alienating vast segments of the party to the detriment of future party unity. If the first election produces a run-off (as many Louisiana elections do), then three results are possible: one, a Democrat versus Republican; two, Democrat versus Democrat; three, Republican versus Republican. It is only in the first scenario, Democrat versus Republican, that party involvement is obviously necessary or appropriate. Thus, the party appears to be limited to helping candidates for only three weeks between the primary and runoff only in cases where a Democrat is running against a Republican. This does not provide many opportunities for substantial and sustained party campaign involvement. Initially, the LDP did not engage in pre-primary support when multiple Democrats were on the ballot;

however, the Republican Party of Louisiana had been experimenting with pre-primary practices of endorsement immediately after the 1975 rule change in order to keep multiple Republicans off the ballot. The Republicans found that Democratic infighting and Republican unity allowed Republicans to make runoffs, if not allowing them to win it altogether (Kuzenski 1995). Such tactics proved successful in 1979 when David Treen was elected governor (Parent 1997). In response, the Louisiana Democratic State Central Committee finally changed its endorsement process in 1985 to allow the party to support Democrats in multiple-candidate situations and undertake activities, like withholding funds, to reduce the number of Democrats filing for a particular office. Unfortunately, the largess of the Democratic Party has still prevented it from being effective by preventing renegade candidates from emerging, thus making party sanctions, in Kuzenski's words, a "paper tiger" (1995, 10). While the Republican Party of Louisiana had no more tools at their disposal than the LDP, the homogeneity of the Republican Party generally causes its efforts to be more successful (Kuzenski 1995).

Despite organizational lag and structural impediments, evidence suggests that the Democratic Party has become much more active in Louisiana over the past decade. Louisiana politics scholar Wayne Parent argues that the LDP is more active and has developed structurally for a couple reasons (Parent 1997, 2004).

First, the LDP faces an electoral threat from Republicans. Without a dominant and stable political personality, increased competition has forced the LDP to pay attention to organizational permanence. The LDP is being seriously challenged in races across all levels of government for the first time in its history. Goldwater's urban and racial conservatism; rural Democrat abandonment; middle-class Republican growth;

Reagan's fiscal, social, and religious conservatism; and Gingrich's congressional revolution gave the Republican Party of Louisiana enough impetus to produce Republican grassroots growth at the expense of the Democratic electorate. The seeds of discontent planted by Goldwater in the 1960s sprouted into a fully mature Republican strategy that gave rise to Southern Republicans. Thus, the LDP had to transform itself from a faction to an organization to stall top-down Republican advancement from permeating every aspect of Louisiana politics. That meant maintaining a permanent organizational apparatus occupied by financially and politically savvy chairmen capable of producing long-term plans for party development (Parent 1997; Parent and Perry 2003).

Second, LDP organizational development comes in response to successful organizational practices by the RPL. The LDP has largely operated as a reactionary institution, often responding to and copying successful Republican techniques. The decision by the DSCC in 1985 to initiate pre-primary endorsements was created in response to similar and successful RPL efforts (Kuzenski 1995). The creation of an executive director, financial assistant, communications director, political director, technology director, outreach assistant, comptroller, outreach assistant, and office manager came after the RPL created similar offices. Legislative Democrats did not create their first permanent legislative campaign committee until fifteen years after Republicans.[30] While the few Republicans at the top of the ticket had always worked with the RPL, Democrats at the federal and state level ignored the party until John Breaux was elected in 1986.

[30] Interview with Author July 15, 2005.

Democrats took party development more seriously after 1986 with John Breaux's unexpectedly competitive election for U.S. Senate. Breaux and twelve other Democrats divided the vote so much that the major Republican candidate, Rep. Henson Moore, almost won outright. Breaux limped into a runoff and barely defeated Moore by a 53% to 47% margin. The RPL successfully used strong tactics to prevent other Republicans from filing. Since Moore did not have to fend off attacks from and compete with fellow Republicans, he quietly secured the independent and Republican voting bloc while Democrats attacked each other in an effort to secure the Democratic voting bloc. The RPL successfully persuaded other Republican committees at the local, state, and federal levels to simultaneously assist the Moore campaign by coordinating their fiscal resources and campaign services. Meanwhile, various Democratic committees split their allegiances and services among the various Democrats. The RPL displayed remarkable unity and coordination, and, consequently, almost helped Moore win (Kaplan 1986). In fact, Henson Moore would have won if an internal RNC memo to the RPL detailing a pilot program called "ballot integrity" had not been released to the public. The ballot integrity program involved mailing a postcard stamped with "do not forward" to voters throughout Louisiana, though mainly in New Orleans. Returned postcards indicated a voter had moved and was no longer eligible to vote in that precinct, and the RPL would move to disqualify that voter from voting lists. The program itself, though controversial, did not raise eyebrows until a memo detailing the advantages of this program came to light. The RNC memo claimed the ballot integrity program would purge 60-80,000 African American voters. Just days before the run-off, this memo leaked and a public backlash drove up African American and Democratic turnout. Breaux won by only

77,000 votes (Kaplan 1993). Most importantly, this campaign revealed the incredible sophistication of the RPL and, simultaneously, the glaring organizational deficiency of the LDP. Breaux's intense struggle highlighted the need for additional organizational support beyond the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC). Breaux realized that the DNC and DSCC could not be responsible for sustaining grassroots Democratic appeal in Louisiana, so he began coordinating campaigns between the LDP and statewide candidates. Breaux also took an active role in placing his friends, activists, and businessmen into budgeting, staffing, and communication positions within the LDP. Breaux believed that if the Democrats were to compete with Republicans, they needed successful, stable, and permanent organizational support like the Republicans (Parent 1997).

Breaux's hands-on involvement in the organization of Democrats in Louisiana had a profound impact on party development. One immediate area that Breaux affected was the legislative organization of Democrats. Although the Republicans had operated caucuses in the state legislature since the 1970s, the Democrats finally formed their first legislative caucuses in the late 1980s and formed their first LCCs in late 1990s. While hamstrung by multiple floor leaders, today's Democratic legislative campaign committees provide campaign advertisements, fax weekly updates, articulate political positions, formulate policy statements, meet regularly, and raise funds for their congressional members. Unfortunately, the LDP does not maintain a close relationship with the Democratic caucus or LCC (Parent 1997, Parent and Perry 2003). Breaux has also stressed stable leadership. In the late 1990s, the LDP benefited from stable and effective leadership when Ben Jeffers served as chair from 1997 to 2003. Under his

leadership, the party amended its constitution, created new and specialized staffing positions, sent out issue statements, endorsed and recruited candidates, and became more active in local, state, and federal campaigns. Jeffers focused on maintaining LDP-DNC relationships in order to facilitate party development in areas like political communications, issue research, and database technology. Jeffers, with the financial and professional support of Breaux, transformed the LDP from a weak election monitor into a more active and modern grassroots organization. As such, the LDP was more capable of being an active campaign element and became an active campaign organization at the federal, state, and local level. Jeffers and the LDP significantly contributed to Landrieu's victory in 2000 and Rodney Alexander's stunning victory in 2002 (Crouere 2003). Jeffers and the LDP also spent time assisting state legislative elections and emphasized the coordination of state campaign efforts, modeled after the coordinated campaigns run by the DNC in other states. Jeffers was so successful with the LDP he was elected chair of the DNC's Southern Caucus in 2003 and resigned from his LDP post (Bland 2003).

Mike Skinner replaced Jeffers as chair halfway into the 2003 campaign season. Skinner struggled to find a niche for the party in the 2003 legislative and gubernatorial elections, which sparked, among other things, an adversarial relationship with Kathleen Blanco. The two maintained different ideas about the proper role of the party during the 2003 campaign because Blanco felt the LDP should supply more resources and play a more active a role in her campaign. Skinner did primarily assist the governor's campaign but felt compelled to reserve some party resources to other statewide and legislative races. Although Democrats won the governor and all but one of the statewide races, Democrats lost seats in the House and Senate, elevating tensions between Skinner,

Blanco, and the DSCC. In the 2003 election, Skinner's state legislative campaign strategy included hosting campaign workshops and organizing a coordinated campaign. The coordinated campaign provided registration, polling, fundraising, and advertising assistance to some legislative candidates. For example, the coordinated campaign sponsored a poll that was available for candidates to use, funded targeted generic Democratic mailings, supplied volunteers for phone banks, and organized registration drives in targeted districts and precincts.[31] Throughout 2004, Skinner insisted on keeping the LDP organizationally independent from the governor's mansion, which did not further endear himself to Governor Blanco. As chair, Jeffers' mark had been made with his success in federal elections; however, in 2004 Democrats lost a U.S. Senate seat and two U.S. House seats. The LDP, specifically Mike Skinner, was blamed for these losses. Although Skinner attempted to continue with Jeffers' practice of active party involvement in all elections, Skinner struggled to replicate his success.[32] For example, Skinner approved the use of LDP funds for a Democratic unity postcard in the 7th district with Democratic candidate Willie Mount on the cover, though another Democrat, Don Cravins, was still in the race. Cravins lost the primary, refused to endorse Mount, and urged his supporters not to vote in the runoff. Republican Charles Boustany subsequently captured the Democratic-leaning district. Several LDP officers felt that Skinner failed to provide direction and leadership, forcing the DSCC to act on their own and without unity (Tagaris 2004). The strained relationship with the governor, the loss of the 7th district,

[31] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.
[32] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.

and the growing number of disgruntled DSCC and DPEC officers contributed to Mike Skinner's resignation in 2005.[33]

Today the LDP is a more permanent and stable organization than in the 1980s, though diversity, finances, leadership, and an open primary prevent it from being a more effective and unified campaign instrument. While state legislative elections are not currently the priority of party efforts, the LDP does attempt to play a role in them. Nevertheless, before assessing the impact of the LDP in state legislative elections, the organizational development and campaign activities of the Republican Party of Louisiana must be discussed.

The Republican Party of Louisiana – Organization & Development

Like his Democratic counterparts, a party chairman delegates authority and responsibility in a hierarchical fashion over various committees and governs the Republican Party of Louisiana (RPL). This chairperson presides over a series of committees; the first and foremost of these is the Executive Committee. Though similar in function to the LDP's Executive Committee, it is much smaller and comprises only a chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, national committeeman, national committeewoman, and a representative from the Louisiana Federation of Republican Women. The Executive Committee acts as an administrative assistant for the chair and is more concerned with the daily operations and continuity of the RPL. If more daily help is needed, then the chair may appoint any number of deputy chairs to "assist him in his duties or to perform specific tasks or projects delegated by the Chairperson."[34] The only

[33] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.
[34] Bylaws of the State Central Committee of the Republican Party of Louisiana, Article V Section 1. All discussion of party structure, unless otherwise noted, comes from this document and is hereafter referred to as RPL Bylaws.

current deputy chair is the Finance chairman, whose primary obligation is to assist in the planning of fundraising activities, disbursing of party funds, and determining financial needs of the party. Additionally, an Executive Director assists the chair in the day-to-day administration and management of the party. The Executive Director has the authority to hire and fire any staff members or party consultants, though all financial commitments are subject to final approval by the Executive Committee. The presence of an Executive Director and Finance chair reduce the workload of the RPL chair and frees him to concentrate more on party fundraising. Although the RPL lacks a large Executive Committee, it does maintain nine permanent committees – Credentials Committee, Bylaws Committee, Resolutions Committee, Audit Committee, Organizational Committee, Finance Committee, Ballot Integrity Committee, Voter Registration Committee, and Voter Outreach Committee. The precise jurisdictions of these permanent committees create a division of labor within the party and allow the Executive Committee and Party Chairman to concentrate on other daily matters. The Executive Director, Finance chair, and chair of these permanent committees are accorded Executive Committee membership but are not extended voting privileges.

This Executive Committee generally supervises the party in between meetings of the Republican State Central Committee (RSCC), which consists of 230 members based on Louisiana's state legislative districts. The RSCC is a weaker committee because of its size and infrequent meetings. It is formally charged by the bylaws with approving party finances, but the RSCC's most critical function is determining whom to endorse before elections. All RPL endorsements must be approved by a majority of the RSCC, which is important for many Republican candidates because of the historical practice of the RPL

to actively utilize all party means to place Republicans in runoffs. The other substantial role of the RSCC is to adopt resolutions for the party platform. Unlike the LDP, the RPL has no party organization based on or primarily responsible for monitoring its seven congressional districts. Thus, RSCC members simultaneously serve as state-level representatives, district-level representatives, and parish-level representatives.

Representing the RPL at the local level is the Republican Parish Executive Committee (RPEC), whose districts correspond to the 64 parishes in Louisiana. A chairperson and vice-chairperson head each parish committee, and membership is set according to state laws and parish political districts. It is not uncommon for RPEC members to also serve as RSCC members and the RPEC operates largely independently from the RPL. The RPL bylaws, unlike LDP bylaws, do not delegate any specific functions for its RPECs. Consequently, RPECs are only as active as their members and operate without much supervision.

The organization of the RPL is very similar to the LDP, though there are some subtle nuances. Like the LDP, all members of the RPEC, RSCC, and Executive Committee serve four-year terms and must be registered Republicans. Yet, the RPL differs from the LDP in its requirements to hold office, because to qualify as an elected member of the party one must be "a resident and a registered Republican voter of the district from which he or she is a candidate for at least six months prior to Election Day."[35] Thus, the RPL discriminates between recent members and tenured members; only tenured members are eligible to be an officer. The LDP and RPL both recognize federal and statewide officials and grant automatic party membership to them. Another difference is that if the governor is a Republican, then the RPL grants him or her

[35] RPL By-Laws, Article III.

automatic membership and voting privileges in the Executive Committee. This privilege is not extended to any other official, nor it is granted by the LDP.[36] Historically, Democratic and Republican governors have stayed out of the politics of the party organization, though this rule allows the RPL to procedurally be more vulnerable to governors at the expense of the party chair. Depending on the source, some suggest Republican Governor Mike Foster was more active in RPL affairs than his Democratic or Republican counterparts, as attributable to RPL by-laws.[37] Others suggest that Foster generally ignored the party in favor of developing his own electoral coalition (Parent 1997). Given the fact that Foster switched his party affiliation at the time of qualification, this conclusion also has its merits.

The history of the organizational development of the RPL is a fairly modern and limited one. Although there had been a recognized political party called the "Republican Party of Louisiana" since Reconstruction, prior to the 1970s it had no impact on state politics. Stella Theodoulou gives us the most comprehensive examination of the growth of the RPL in her book, *The Louisiana Republican Party, 1948-1984*. Theodoulou describes a Republican Party that began as a loose coalition of individuals trying to take advantage of national political trends. For example, in the 1950s Republicans focused their efforts exclusively on presidential elections because of weak Democratic presidential nominees. Republicans managed to obtain some support for Eisenhower in 1952 and delivered the state to Eisenhower in 1956. Although the Eisenhower victory is historical, the vote for Eisenhower was less a vote for the Republican Party and more of a protest vote to Adlai Stevenson's position on race and oil leases. Louisianans felt

[36] RPL By-Laws, Article III.
[37] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

betrayed by northern nominees, but the vote for Eisenhower did not create a permanent shift to the Republican Party nor did it indicate acceptance of the Republican Party of Louisiana (Theodoulou 1985). Organizationally, the RPL was in its infancy.

Organizational permanence requires more than a personality that attracts or detracts followers once every four years. Aside from presidential election trends, the story of the Republican Party is really a story of three men – Charles Lyons, George Despot, and Tom Stagg. Theodoulou notes that locally the Republicans in Louisiana at this time were essentially urban fiscal conservatives and, later, anti-civil rights conservatives. These Shreveport businessmen traveled the state looking for people who would be willing to run for any level of political office on a platform of limited government and conservative fiscal policy. Unfortunately, their calls for urban fiscal conservatism found a fairly small audience, thanks in part to the absence of a large middle class or upper class. As such, Republican Party growth in the 1950s was small. Two developments altered the RPL: the creation of a party committee and the development of a grassroots anti-civil rights movement. In the 1960s, an anti-civil roots movement was generated in response to the civil rights movement and energized the party. The anti-civil rights movement grew quickly among rural conservatives who previously had been Democrats, which gave the Republicans a larger electoral base to build on. Goldwater's fiscal conservatism appealed to the non-Southern, non-traditional middle class moving into the state and the upper-class businessmen already in Louisiana. Goldwater's racial conservatism also appealed to rural and lower-class whites who traditionally found solace in the Democratic Party (Theodoulou 1985; Parent 1997). The merger made Republican numerical majorities possible.

As the Republican electorate grew and as the Republican platform incorporated more issues, the Republican Party attracted more adherents. Some of these adherents were successful businessmen with organizational leadership skills. These businessmen realized that permanent Republican gains could be made only with a permanent structure, so they formed the Republican State Central Committee in 1965 that structurally looked exactly like the Democratic model (though staffing was far more problematic). The RSCC's first order of business was the establishment of an Executive Committee essentially modeled after the Executive Committee in the LDP, and George Lyon was made the party's first Chairman. In the past, the departure of pronounced leadership would have left a vacuum in party energy and activity, if not altogether dissolution of the party itself. Yet, when Lyons left, the party escaped implosion because a party leadership had been securely anchored to a permanent central committee that rested on a more secure electoral foundation with a permanent budget. Lyons stabilized party finances, developed a party platform, and created party services. And, in 1979, this foundation took advantage of reformed electoral laws to help sustain the first successful statewide campaign and elect the state's first Republican governor, David Treen (Theodoulou 1985). Treen's success immediately enhanced the viability of the RPL and its organization.

Treen's victory gave the RPL momentum and provided a framework that the RPL would codify in the 1980s through practice and bylaws. The RPL moved to solidify an endorsement mechanism where it used all resources at its disposal to recruit and endorse one major Republican per race. The RPL realized that Republicans were more likely to win in a field with multiple Democrats fragmenting the Democratic electorate than with

multiple Republicans fragmenting the Republican electorate. If the Republicans could simply get a candidate into the runoff, chances for victory were obviously greater. The small, homogenous nature of Republicans allowed the RPL to act as a more coherent and viable party organization and gave RPL endorsement mechanisms and party sanctions more leverage (Kuzenski 1995). The Treen victory, open primary, and RPL endorsement procedures slowly transformed the party into a viable campaign resource. At this point, the RPL only needed more Republicans to contest more elections and fill committee vacancies. The goal of the party became voter outreach and candidate recruitment. The desperation of the RPL for increased membership and party development placed it in a catch-22 with the arrival of David Duke (Kuzenski 1995, Bridges 1999).

The vulnerability of the RPL is no better reflected than in its relationship with David Duke in the 1980s and 1990s. The RPL benefited from Reagan's social and economic conservatism, but this message lacked the energy to attract the swing rural and lower-class voting blocs. David Duke brought back the racial conservatism that so profoundly attracted white voters to Goldwater in 1964. In the eyes of some members of the RPL, though never admitted publicly, Duke appeared as a second Goldwater who could possibly infuse the party with enough energy and popularity to accelerate Republican registration and momentum (Bridges 1999). Even though Duke's past was laden with racist messages and Klan imagery, the RPL saw that many frustrated whites, still suffering from the oil shocks of the 1980s, found relief in Duke's anti-welfare and anti-affirmative action messages (Kuzenski 1995, Bridges 1999). In 1989, Duke became a candidate for the State House and attracted the ire of RNC Chairman Lee Atwater. The RNC, former-President Reagan, and President George H. Bush all threatened intervention

in this state legislative contest; however, no such intervention occurred at the behest of RPL Chairman Billy Nungesser. He convinced the RNC to stay out for fear that it might discourage pro-Duke Democrats from switching their party registration (Bridges 1999). One RSCC member, Beth Rickey, tried twice to censure Duke – the first motion was tabled and the second motion garnered only twenty-five percent support (Powell 2000). Once elected, 15 of the 18 Republicans in the House voted to seat Duke, and Emile "Peppi" Bruneau, chair of the Republican caucus, helped Duke draft bills, taught him parliamentary procedure, and featured him in the caucus newsletter (Bridges 1999). The RPL and Republican Caucus embraced David Duke as a way to advance registration and fill committee slots. Though Duke lost to J. Bennett Johnston for Senate in 1990, he still pulled 60% of the white vote. Later in 1991, Duke beat out Buddy Roemer for second in the governor's race by again attracting a large percentage of the white vote. Shortly thereafter, Duke's increased national popularity bright a huge public backlash. The RPL at this point distanced itself from Duke but did benefit from a short-term infusion in popularity among white conservatives in the state (Kuzenski 1995). Some argue that Duke's endorsement of Foster in 1995 secured the white, conservative vote for Foster and contributed to Foster's victory (Bridges 1999). The organizational impact of David Duke on the RPL was two-fold: one, the RPL became more than the party of David Treen, who very much despised Duke; two, it taught the RPL to be very careful in its endorsement of organizational proceedings because renegade candidates could "capture" the party.

Since the mid-1990s, the Republican Party in Louisiana has become even more active in campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during

elections. Despite a litany of chairs, the RPL has slowly developed voter and walking lists, written campaign literature, hosted campaign schools, advised candidates, recruited and endorsed candidates, and honed fundraising practices. More recently, campaign schools, where candidates meet fundraising specialists, media experts, committee officers and chairman, and GOTV specialists, have been emphasized.[38] In 2003, RPL chair Pat Brister developed a research and development workshop to assist candidates with interpreting polls, information, and facts, and educated candidates on how to manipulate this information for campaign use. These workshops also taught candidates how to conduct opposition research. Her efforts won her election as Chair of the RNC Southern Republican Caucus (Bland 2003). Nungesser emphasized recruiting and using party services to get candidates in runoffs. Brister emphasized developing techniques to educate candidates on how to run better campaigns. The current chair, Roger Villere, has thus far emphasized technology, fundraising, and parallel campaigns.[39] All of these chairs have applied these services to federal, statewide, and legislative races.

The RPL's problem lay in stability of leadership and keeping committee slots filled. The RPL historically has struggled to maintain full membership within the RSCC, as the number of registered Republicans is still low. The party has already had three chairs this decade – Mike Francis (1997-2000), Pat Brister (2000-2004), and Roger Villere (2004 to present). The RPL chair has been a precarious position – Mike Francis was swept out after the 2000 caucus debacle and Landrieu's U.S. Senate victory; Pat Brister was forced out after Republicans were swept in statewide elections in 2003. Francis, Brister, and Villere have also had to deal with the growing schisms between

[38] Interview with Author July 13, 2004.
[39] Interview with Author July 13, 2004.

religious conservatives and fiscal conservatives. More recently, the religious-fiscal rivalry has manifested itself in the Vitter-Treen rivalry, which threatens to further erode the homogeneity of the RPL. In fact, since the chairmanship of Mike Francis, the party has struggled to maintain the homogeneity it displayed in the 1970s and 1980s.[40] In 2003, the RPL, in conjunction with the RNC, successfully persuaded four Republican gubernatorial hopefuls to drop out and endorse Bobby Jindal as the "Republican appointee" in 2003.[41] Indications are the RPL is still a significant player in state elections and is still adept at shaping the Republican field (Tagaris 2004). Today more candidates are running as Republicans, Republicans are more competitive in Democratic-leaning districts, and Republicans are winning more offices. This has further increased the number of elected officials who participate in party politics and has swelled the pool of candidates for RPL vacancies. The growth of the party-as-organization has filtered over into the party-in-government, as a Republican caucus with campaign committees resides in both chambers of the state legislature. The growth of the party-in-government and party-as-organization has also further assisted the growth of the party-in-the-electorate. The finality of this growth is a larger tri-partite Republican machine (Parent 2004).

The LDP and RPL have become more viable party organizations and have developed campaign services over the last couple decades. The task now is to determine if the organizational development of the party and the concomitant incorporation of campaign services are deemed important to candidates campaigning for state legislative offices in the state of Louisiana.

[40] Interview with Author July 13, 2004.
[41] Interview with Author July 13, 2004.

Data Collection

There is very little literature available describing the types of services and the importance of party services during state legislative elections in Louisiana. As a whole, we know that party organizations have come a long way; they are stronger, more influential, and more active during legislative campaigns than in the past (Cotter, et al, 1984, Parent and Perry 2003). Thus, an examination of the campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization performed by the party during state legislative elections is justified in order to determine the importance of this current role.

Prompting them to recall the nature of assistance they received from state party organizations, their legislative and national affiliates, PACs, interest groups, unions, and family and friends, a questionnaire was mailed to all qualified candidates for the state legislature who faced opposition during the 2003 electoral cycle. The questionnaires were mailed out three times from January to June of 2004, for a total response rate of 60%. Table 2.1 shows that the survey sample for Louisiana is comparable to the actual population. Since the return rate among state Senate candidates was much lower, as was the eligible pool, only the responses of House candidates were utilized in this analysis to avoid any unintentional contamination of the data with possibly divergent state Senate results. Additionally, 13 interviews were conducted with past and present party officials and 11 interviews were conducted with past and present legislative candidates during June of 2004. In summary, the following section summarizes the data acquired through questionnaires and interviews with state legislative candidates for the Louisiana House of

Representatives during the 2003 election cycle in order to determine the importance of the state party in state legislative elections.

Table 2.1: Survey Response Rate by Groups as Compared to Eligible Population

LA	# Eligible	%	# Surveyed	%
Democrats	101	60%	56	55%
Republicans	66	40%	45	45%
Incumbents	48	29%	46	46%
Challengers	66	40%	35	35%
Open seats	53	32%	20	20%
Winners	55	33%	43	43%
Losers	112	67%	58	57%
N	167		101	60%

Candidate Recruitment

No other party activity in the election process is probably as tough to discern as the area of candidate recruitment. The reasons for this are three-fold: first, candidate recruitment often occurs behind the scenes and is often invisible to the candidates themselves; second, recruitment is a complicated process that involves more than simply asking people to run for office; third, it is often difficult to distinguish the level of the party organization involved in the process or whether the recruitment is on behalf of individuals who happen to be party members or individuals on behalf of the party (Herrnson 1988).

On the first difficulty, candidate recruitment occurs behind the scenes and is often invisible to the candidates themselves. For example, one legislative candidate discussed his particular experience, which gives us a perfect example of the complexity of

recruitment.[42] This candidate had been approached by members of the RSCC and encouraged to run, but the candidate and his family were waiting to declare his intention of running only if another prominent, prospective Republican was not going to run. When the individual was informed that the prominent, prospective Republican was not going to run, he made his candidacy official. This individual acknowledged he would have circled "slightly important" or "not important" on my survey when asked about how important the party was in his decision to run. Unbeknownst to him at the time, while he was waiting for the prominent, prospective Republican to make his decision, the same members of the RSCC pressured the other individual not to run. Thus, with the knowledge of this fact, he gave the party a higher ranking on this survey. Yet, without this knowledge the candidate would have assuredly downgraded his assessment of the state party.

Both parties in Louisiana work behind the scenes to influence and winnow the potential field of candidates, which reminds us that candidate appraisals may actually downplay the importance of party influence. Another example indicates that the Republican Party of Louisiana has often used party membership as a recruitment tool. A previous ranking member of the RPL indicated he would convince (and still convinces to this day despite his official absence from RPL activities) activists to become involved in the party at either the state or parish level. By meeting the party structure, other party activists, and party-allied groups, the individual becomes exposed to the party network and more active in state politics.[43] This exposure and activism will propel party members to consider candidacies when vacancies arise in their legislative districts. Thus,

[42] Interview with Author June 14th, 2004.
[43] Interview with Author July 13th, 2004.

recruitment can occur by encouraging party membership. Surveys may not fully capture party membership as an indirect path for candidate recruitment, but it is a recruitment tactic for at least one individual in the RPL.

Second, candidate recruitment involves more than the active solicitation of potential candidates. Herrnson identifies three types of recruitment: passive recruitment, active recruitment, and negative recruitment (1988). Interviews suggest that all three forms occur in Louisiana. Passive recruitment covers the general activities designed to encourage potential candidates to run for public office simply by making them aware of election opportunities and services available from various party and non-party organizations. These include, but are not wholly restricted to, candidate training seminars, fundraising seminars, mass media services, and meet-and-greets with potential donors. One party official described passive recruitment but called it "party reaffirmation."[44] Party reaffirmation is the positive reinforcement towards prospective candidates suggesting that if they run, there is "stuff" out there to help their candidacy.

Sometimes the parties go beyond making candidates aware of available resources and will crossover into guarantees, assurances, or promises of providing certain services if they run. This constitutes active recruitment. Both the RPL and LDP participated in these activities, but active recruitment does not occur as often as passive recruitment. One reason for occasional active recruitment in Louisiana is the open primary because others could interpret the open recruitment of individuals as a party endorsement. This is problematic if an individual from the same party has already filed for office or is publicly making known his intention of filing. Active recruitment is also rare because party officials are reluctant to make substantial assurances, guarantees, or promises, knowing

[44] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.

promises are difficult to maintain in light of constantly changing political circumstances. Thus, active recruitment is often difficult or inappropriate.

Negative recruitment is the category of activities designed to discourage candidacies. While negative recruitment is rarely openly discussed and rarely admitted, a couple of "semi-retired" party members described it as an equally important, though more difficult, recruitment tactic.[45] The goal is to avoid bitter, fractious contests that could, under Louisiana's open primary, create an outright winner or run-off of the least desirable options – two members of the opposing party. Negative recruitment is as straightforward as the solicitation toward prospective candidates not to run, or as subtle as "suggestions" that artificially bolster the reputation of a particular opponent. While candidates make decisions to run based on any number of things, they may be unaware of the extent that parties played in creating the environment that indirectly caused candidates to favorably assess their campaign opportunities.

On the final difficulty of recruitment, candidates occasionally fail to draw distinctions whether the recruitment is on behalf of individuals who happen to be party members and whether the recruitment is by individuals on behalf of the party. Are candidates always capable of knowing if an individual is recruiting them as an individual who also doubles as a ranking member within the party, or if an individual is recruiting as a party representative with the permission to use the party name as the recruiter? Additionally, it is difficult for candidates to distinguish which level of the organization is trying to recruit them, as the parties have been organized at the state level, district level, and parish level in Louisiana. Both parties have an array of groups – divided according to gender, race, interests, parish, region – that hold a subsidiary relationship with the

[45] Interview with Author June 8th and July 13th, 2004.

party, though they are not official extensions of the state party. Finally, legislative parties and their respective legislative campaign committees (LCCs) engage in recruitment from time-to-time, but their organizations operate independently from traditional state political party organizations. Thus, the candidate may have difficulty distinguishing who is recruiting them and on whose behalf they are recruiting them.

To obtain answers regarding the importance of various groups on the decision to run, all surveyed candidates were asked the following question, "How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office?"[46] Table 2.2 displays the results. The decision to run for a state legislative office is a highly personal one. Past legislative studies suggest that the decision to run is largely a personal decision and, with mean scores ranging from 4.80 to 3.07 out of 5.00, this survey does not deviate from past findings (Hogan 2002, Gaddie 2004). Regardless of party, seat type, and competitiveness, all candidates consider friends and family to have been "moderately" to "extremely" influential in their decision to run for office. After friends and family there is a significant reduction in the mean scores, indicating that all other groups are far less significant, far less important, or far less consistent in their influence on the decision to run.[47] Yet, this table shows that after friends and family, there is a decidedly mixed review regarding the secondary influences on the decision to run for office. A multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) test indicates that depending on the candidate status, party affiliation played a factor in the decision to run. The data

[46] Answer choices for this question and all other questions in this analysis were (5) extremely important, (4) very important, (3) moderately important, (2) slightly important, (1) not important. Thus, a 5.0 is the highest possible score and a 1.0 is the lowest possible score.
[47] T-score for friends & family versus all groups exceeded $t = 5.000$ (LDP) and 5.449 (RPL) for $p < .001$.

Table 2.2: How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.17	5.00	3.89	3.07	2.50	3.44	4.50	4.40	5.00	4.13	4.00	4.17	4.80	5.00	4.67	4.11	3.96	4.80
Parish	1.92	1.67	2.00	1.60	1.17	1.89	1.50	1.40	2.00	2.25	2.00	2.33	1.75	1.50	1.92	1.46	1.48	1.40
State	1.67	1.00	1.89	1.80	1.50	2.00	1.33	1.33	1.33	2.00	1.50	2.17	1.70	1.63	1.75	1.36	1.35	1.40
LCCs	1.83	1.00	2.11	1.67	1.50	1.78	2.83	2.60	4.00	2.13	1.50	2.33	1.65	1.00	2.08	2.57	2.57	2.60
National	1.08	1.00	1.11	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.28	1.27	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.29	1.30	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.13	1.00	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.25	1.13	1.33	1.43	1.43	1.40
IGs	1.50	1.33	1.56	1.33	1.50	1.22	1.67	1.53	2.33	1.75	1.50	1.83	1.90	1.25	2.33	1.89	1.91	1.80
PACs	1.67	1.00	1.89	1.53	1.50	1.56	2.00	1.80	3.00	1.88	1.50	2.00	1.45	1.13	1.67	1.96	1.96	2.00
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 1.795, p< .030; Party F = 1.745, p< .092; Competition F = 1.108 p< .367, Seat Type F = 2.838, p< .000

confirms that political parties, when they do recruit, focus on challengers and open-seat candidates but not incumbents.

Regardless of their perceived competitiveness, both Democratic and Republican incumbents cited their respective legislative campaign committees, the Louisiana Republican Delegation Campaign Committee (2.83) and House Democratic Campaign Committee (2.57), as influential in their reelection decision. Significantly trailing the RLDCC and HDCC were political action committees (2.00 and 1.96, respectively).[48] Among Republicans, the higher scores do not come as a surprise given the fact that their LCC is a decade older and its founder, John Hainkel, is still the head of the RLDCC. In fact, one incumbent indicated that John Hainkel inquired at least twice and took an obvious interest in his public reaffirmation for reelection, while being reassured that he was a valuable member of the Republican state legislative delegation.[49] Interestingly, incumbents even cited interest groups as being more important than the state political party organizations. This confirms that among incumbents, the state political party appears to have had no influence on the decision to run.

For challengers, the most noted influence behind friends and family is the political party, though there are some discrepancies between Democrats and Republicans. Democratic challengers equally cited their parish-level committees (1.75) and state-level committees (1.70) as playing small roles in their recruiting decision. Competitive Democratic challengers indicate more support from parish-level committees (1.92) and state-level committees (1.75) than noncompetitive Democrats (1.50, 1.63).[50] Although the difference is not significant, it does suggest that the LDP emphasizes competitive

[48] $t = 3.073$, $p < .007$; 2.756, $p < .010$.
[49] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.
[50] $t = 1.531$. $p < .101$.

candidates more and are more effective with competitive candidates than noncompetitive candidates. A more important overall recruiting influence was made by interest groups (1.90), with a mean score exceeding the LDP (1.70). Consistent with a goal to obtain access (Herrnson 2004), competitive challengers (2.33) may have received more attention, and, at the very least, found interest group influence more important than noncompetitive challengers (1.25).[51] Republican challengers indicated that the state committees (1.80) played a larger role than the parish-level committees (1.60), and competitive candidates (2.00, 1.89) found this role more important than noncompetitive candidates (1.50, 1.17). Unlike the Democrats, Republicans did not seem to have been the recipients of effective interest group recruiting (1.33). In both parties, competitive challengers indicated more important influences than noncompetitive challengers. This should not come as a surprise, as their noncompetitiveness indicated some condition, whether it was the quality of the individual or quality of the competition, which sparked fewer people to encourage their candidacy. This data is verified by interviews and past studies that show political parties do make decisions, even recruiting decisions, based on the candidates' perceived chances of success (Herrnson 2004). Adherents of both the LDP and RPL stressed the importance of simply challenging elections; however, this survey indicates that their efforts are neither effective nor significantly important.

Indicating the heightened value of open-seat elections, open-seat candidates singled out both party organizations and legislative campaign committees as being influential in the decision to run. Open-seat Democrats cited parish-level committees (2.25), the HDCC (2.13), and state-level committees (2.00) as the most influential factors in the decision to run. Although the scores are lower than Democrats', open-seat

[51] $t = 2.422$, $p < .038$.

Republicans also mentioned parish-level committees (1.92), legislative campaign committees (1.83), and the RPL on the decision to run (1.67).[52] The means for party groups and party-allied groups are higher with open-seat candidates than challengers, indicating the heightened targeting of and increased attention given to open-seat contests. Scores also vary significantly according to the perceived competitiveness or noncompetitiveness of the candidate, which further shows that this targeting is strategic and reserved for contests where candidates are more likely to succeed.[53] Another noticeable fact is the nonexistence of national parties and unions in candidate recruitment; however, national committees rarely preoccupy themselves with state legislative elections, and unions are notoriously weak in the South (Francia et al 2003, Hogan 2003). The comparatively higher scores coming from friends and family and parish-level committees reaffirm the observation that the decision to run for legislative office is a local decision.

In conclusion, the decision to run in Louisiana is a highly personal decision made in conjunction with friends and family. Because state legislative politics is local, so too is the decision to run for office. Over 90% of the candidates surveyed relied on their friends and family; however, only 36% of the Democrats and 43% of the Republicans surveyed acknowledged being recruited by the state party. And, though the percentage of candidates claiming to have heard from the parties appears high, the candidates on average find this support only "slightly" important. Another interesting observation is that though the RPL appears to have contacted more candidates, the higher mean scores for the LDP indicates that this limited contact created a more influential impression on

[52] Democrats: $t = 3.910$, $p < .006$; $t = 4.123$, $p < .004$; $t = 3.747$, $p < .012$. Republicans: $t = 5.480$, $p < .000$; $t = 5.007$, $p < .000$; $t = 5.334$, $p < .000$.
[53] Party $t = 2.216$, $p < .040$, LCC $t = 1.981$, $p < .063$.

candidates. Therefore, the LDP appears to have been more effective than the RPL recruiting candidates. When the parties recruit, it is the parish-level committees, not the state-level committees, which are more effective. According to the interviews and surveys, the RPL and LDP appear to have very little contact with legislators, who tend to rely more on LCCs and PACs. Finally, open-seat candidates generally received more attention from all external groups; however, the possible impacts of party recruiting are muted by this increased and heavier attention from other groups. Overall, the Louisiana Democratic Party seems to have played a small, though noteworthy, role in recruiting, while the Republican Party of Louisiana did not.

Campaign Management

At all levels, campaigning has become increasingly complicated because campaigns are more expensive, campaign finance laws are more complex, technology is becoming more sophisticated, and electorates are rapidly changing (Francia et al. 2003). With increased complexities come new difficulties; with the new and increased difficulties comes an increased reliance on other individuals for campaign management. Campaigns must become more precise if they are to be successful, and such precision requires increased levels of technical knowledge that are not necessarily nor automatically possessed by local candidates. At the national level, to help candidates cope with complexity while simultaneously increasing the importance of their organization, national parties and national campaign committees maintain lists of managers, media consultants, direct-mail specialists, and other campaign professionals for disbursement among their candidates. They hold workshops to disseminate information and to advise candidates how to assemble campaign organizations. While

most campaigns are still in the hands of the candidate, more and more statewide and federal candidates are turning over various aspects of their campaigns to outside, paid groups. Thus, at the federal level, the parties have converted themselves into campaign management networks that connect candidates to consultants and pay-for professionals, with some workshops interspersed throughout the year designed to recommend strategies, tactics, and management techniques (Aldrich 1995, Herrnson 2004). Herrnson argues that national parties and party-allied groups are taking a more hands-on approach to management at varying degrees, though the candidates still remain opposed to handing over total control of their own campaigns (Herrnson 1988, 2004).

National parties and national campaign committees have contributed to the strengthening of the state parties by passing down many of the techniques and lessons learned at the national level to state parties for statewide elections. One resource state parties provide is experience; parties draw on previous elections to offer advice to candidates on potential problems they may incur (Francia et al 2003). Another resource state parties provide is administrative advice. Peter Francia found that committees in some states have assisted campaign organizations with the hiring and training of campaign staff and assisted campaigns with tactical decisions (Francia et al 2003). State parties also connect candidates to experienced professionals. J.P. Monroe finds that at the local level, parties have created networks to connect candidates to consultants in addition to providing education on campaign management for candidates (Monroe 2001). Most commonly, state parties recommend professionals to state legislative candidates who are experienced with legal advice, polling, campaign management, fundraising, media communications, and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) drives (Frendreis et al. 1990,

Gibson and Scarrow 1993, Monroe 2001, Francia et al. 2003). Despite this trend, state legislative candidates still like to control their campaigns and are generally reluctant to yield control to other people, especially parties. In recent years, the growth of the political consulting industry has forced candidates at all levels to shift their management burdens to paid professionals (Thurber and Nelson 2000). In fact, Kolodny (2000) found that 95% of all party chairmen have advised candidates to hire professional consultants. There is some evidence that parties occasionally attempt to handle the responsibility of management for campaigns, but clearly they are better suited to connecting candidates to political, polling, and management consultants and other professionals that can provide management services. As we will see, Louisiana is not much different from these other states.

Louisiana elections have grown more challenging with changing finance laws, rising campaign costs, and evolving districts characteristics. Nonetheless, relatively speaking, legislative elections remain simpler than other statewide campaigns. With an average of only 43,000 people per district, Louisiana legislative districts are still relatively homogeneous in terms of population. Yet, one party official noted that even though Louisiana has only 4.4 million people, the state is still too diverse for an official in Baton Rouge to know what is best for all 105 legislative districts spread across 64 different parishes. Citing constant committees shortages from certain areas of the state and battles with budgetary shortfalls, this official argued that the state party is relatively ill equipped to play an active role in the overall management of campaigns. Interviews also suggested that not only are parties unprepared to assume campaign management roles, few have expressed any prospective desire to take an active, hands-on approach in

managing state legislative campaigns.[54] While state parties appear relatively unwilling to take a hands-on approach in overall campaign management, interviews reveal that the parties are taking steps to provide assistance by building relationships between the candidates, parish committees, and paid consultants and professionals. At the federal level, the parties have converted themselves into service networks. At the state level, state parties are trying to create service networks.

During the 2003 election cycle, both the Louisiana Democrat Party and Republican Party of Louisiana offered candidate training schools to educate candidates on the basics of campaigning. The RPL offered campaign seminars designed to educate candidates on how to develop strategies, to educate campaign managers with assisting candidates, and to educate candidates and campaign managers with organizational/personnel management strategies. The RPL also provided tips on how to research opponents and how to develop issue positions in response to opponents. One former party official stressed that the state party does not try to impose any authority on candidates; rather, it tries to provide advice regarding campaign aspects that most challengers are unaware of or do not bother with. In closing with this area of the discussion, he said, "You cannot have a one-size-fits-all philosophy, but we do make the assumption that successful candidates must have certain things." Finally, at these schools the business cards and contact information for party-friendly experts and consultants were disseminated.[55] The verbal praises of RPL campaign schools seems to have had an impact on the Louisiana Democratic Party. Responding again to organizational improvements of the RPL, in 2003 the LDP attempted to coordinate the campaigns of

[54] Interview with Author June 25th, 2004.
[55] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004.

what they perceived to be competitive candidates in targeted state legislative races. One party official discussed a concerted effort to assist contested races by supplying information about the district obtained from statewide polling, formulating policy points based on this data, providing mailing lists, suggesting personnel structure/management strategies, and recommending campaign consultants both inside and outside of the state.[56] While training seminars are newer to the Louisiana Democratic Party, they are not new to Democrats. Organizations like BOLD, SOUL, and LIFE have hosted workshops since the 1990s.[57]

Both parties have made concerted efforts to structure or influence the management of campaigns, introduce candidates to consultants, and provide information regarding effective strategies. Yet, how did the candidates perceive this assistance? One Democratic party official thought that LDP efforts were "very beneficial for some candidates, repeat information for others."[58] Another Democrat clarified this statement when he said, "I think they work for some candidates, but not all…Some [African Americans in New Orleans] have organizations [BOLD, SOUL) who have been hosting training seminars for years. We can't give them anything they don't have, but others definitely learn something from us."[59] Yet, were they successful? One Republican state party official felt that such RPL efforts were well coordinated and well presented, but he expressed some skepticism about whether the efforts were positively and well received because turnout was "light" and the workshops lasted one day.[60] One would expect

[56] Interview with Author June 25th, 2004
[57] Interview with Author June 10th, 2004.
[58] Interview with Author June 25th, 2004
[59] Interview with Author June 10th, 2004.
[60] Interview with Author June 8th, 2004

current party members to inflate the impact of the party, but did the candidates agree that such support was important?

Interviews with candidates suggest that local elections still utilize a "friends and neighbors" campaign system, where friends and neighbors assist the management of their campaign. In fact, most state legislative candidates did not hire campaign managers for budgetary reasons, and others expressed, budgetary reasons aside, a reluctance to relinquish control of management. Incumbents were more likely to have a campaign manger, but it was usually a legislative assistant that occupied the position. Nonetheless, were party strategies to provide candidate schools, distribute consultant information, and suggest management strategies effective?

In light of the parties increased interest in campaign management, this survey asked candidates three questions to gauge the importance of party influences in this area. The first question on the survey ascertains whether the training schools, seminars, and various materials provided by different groups helped candidates formulate a campaign strategy. Table 2.3 presents the responses to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with the formulation of a campaign strategy?" Campaign strategies are a less intrusive facet of campaign management, so this survey also asks if the parties were more intrusive and actually assisted the candidate with the overall management of the campaign. Table 2.4 presents the responses to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?" Finally, literature and interviews suggest that parties are often unwilling to play any role in campaign management and instead prefer to recommend professionals. Since the use of professionals in campaigns is

increasing, a third question asks, "How important were the following groups in assisting you in hiring pollsters, media consultants, and other campaign professionals?" Table 2.5 shows the results of this question.

Table 2.3 shows that friends and families are the most influential individuals, outside of the candidate themselves, on the formulation of campaign strategies. Although the means vary widely across groups (2.40 to 4.63), the assistance of friends and family outranked other groups. The MANOVA test for this question indicated that the importance of party assistance in formulating campaign strategies was contingent on the party and, more importantly, the seat type. First, incumbents in both parties give comparatively higher scores to their respective legislative campaign committees. Democrats give "moderate" scores to friends and family (2.71), but their acknowledgment of the importance of the House Democratic Campaign Committee (2.00) was second. The same trend, albeit with higher mean scores, was noticed among Republican incumbents (3.67 for friends and family versus 3.28 for the RLDCC). The LCCs have become helpful and relatively important organizations for incumbents in formulating a reelection strategy. Interest groups and PACs play minor and secondary roles in the formulation of strategies. Incumbents cite the influence of these groups to a varying and minor degree, but taken together these results demonstrate that incumbents generally acknowledge the state party organizations had little influence in formulating strategies.[61] Interviews verify this claim, as one RPL official admitted to not making overtures to assist incumbents and incumbents admit to not soliciting parties because they have legislative campaign committees. The story is different for challengers.

[61] $t = 3.095$, $p < .005$.

Table 2.3: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with the formulation of a campaign strategy?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.58	4.67	4.56	2.40	2.00	2.67	3.67	3.60	4.00	4.63	4.50	4.67	4.50	4.25	4.67	2.71	2.57	3.40
Parish	1.58	1.67	1.56	1.47	1.17	1.67	1.50	1.53	1.33	1.50	1.50	1.50	2.05	1.50	2.42	1.57	1.52	1.80
State	1.75	2.00	1.67	1.53	1.50	1.56	1.61	1.67	1.33	1.88	2.00	1.83	1.75	1.38	2.00	1.21	1.17	1.40
LCCs	1.58	1.00	1.78	1.33	1.33	1.33	3.28	3.20	3.67	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.55	1.00	1.92	2.00	1.52	4.20
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.78	1.93	1.00	1.13	1.00	1.17	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.04	1.00	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.75	1.50	1.83	1.25	1.13	1.33	1.50	1.48	1.60
IGs	1.25	1.00	1.33	1.80	1.50	2.00	2.22	2.00	3.33	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.40	1.00	1.67	1.61	1.52	2.00
PACs	1.25	1.33	1.22	1.53	1.33	1.67	2.00	1.80	3.00	1.38	1.50	1.33	1.40	1.00	1.67	1.57	1.35	2.60
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 1.944, p< .016; Party F = 4.075, p< .000; Competition F = 2.484 p< .015, Seat Type F = 5.787, p< .000

Challengers differ from incumbents in the groups cited as being influential. While legislative campaign committees bestow a lot of resources to incumbents, these groups generally ignore challengers.[62] Democrats indicate that party efforts at the parish level (2.05) were slightly important; however, state-level (1.75) attempts trailed the parish in terms of influence.[63] When asked about this, one challenger said, "They [state party] may know what they are talking about, but the seminars were too generic. Do they really expect to help me when they say things like, 'Set up an effective structure', 'Create goals', 'Define your campaign', 'Make your campaign manager do the work.' Well, duh."[64] Beyond that, Democrats do not indicate any influence by other groups in formulating campaign strategies. Republican challengers seemed to accord remarkably minor levels of influence by all groups on strategy formulation. As a whole, Republican challengers cited only interest groups (1.80) as the second most influential group in formulating strategies. When removing noncompetitive candidates from the pool of Republican challengers, the mean score jumps to 2.00, with parish-level committees (1.67) and political action committees (1.67) trailing.[65] Regardless of party, challengers note low levels of influence by the state parties on the formulation of campaign strategies.

Regarding the influences on campaign strategies, open-seat candidates generally acknowledge higher levels of influence than challengers. For example, both Democrat (1.88 versus 1.75) and Republican (1.75 versus 1.53) open-seat candidates acknowledge

[62] $t = 3.491$, $p < .001$.
[63] $t = 2.042$, $p < .055$
[64] Interview with the Author June 14th, 2004.
[65] $t = 2.806$, $p < .054$.

greater levels of importance on the efforts of state-level committees than challengers.[66] A small, yet influential role is felt among Democrats from unions. Behind the state committee, Democratic open-seat candidates note unions (1.75) as exceeding other interest groups and party organizations in influence.[67] When separating the noncompetitive from competitive open-seat Republican candidates, the relative value of the LCCs compared to other actors increases (1.78) and surpasses the state party (1.67). LCCs seem to have targeted some competitive open-seat candidates. [68] Among non-incumbent Republican candidates there is a weak general assessment regarding some influence of the state party on the formulation of campaign strategies. While Democrats are similar to Republicans in the overall relatively low mean score assigned to its state parties, the LDP seems to have been slightly more influential in influencing the strategies formulated by campaigns. This is interesting considering that 34% of all Republicans indicated that they received some form of assistance in this area compared with 29% of all Democrats. Thus, while marginally more Republicans are recipients of advice and assistance, they have not been more effective. Part of the problem comes in the frequency of this contact, as one current RPL official remarked, "How much influence would you expect a group to have when you only talk to them once?"[69]

In conclusion, if the parties are making a concerted effort to help formulate strategies, these efforts appear to have been utilized only infrequently and not very effectively. When we move beyond the specificity of formulating campaign strategies to the broader realm of overall campaign management, the mean scores assessing the

[66] $t = .475$, $p < .637$.
[67] $t = 1.528$, $p < .100$.
[68] $t = 3.323$, $p < .080$.
[69] Interview with the Author June 8th, 2004.

relative influence of groups in the overall management of state legislative campaigns are not substantially different.

Table 2.4 provides the results of when candidates are asked about influences on overall campaign management. Once again, incumbents of both parties give higher grades to their respective legislative campaign committees than other groups and generally cite a lack of state party assistance. The MANOVA test verified that seat type and competitiveness are important predictors for the overall level of party activity in campaign management. Republican incumbents give a remarkably higher mean score (2.78) than their Democratic counterparts (1.79).[70] When the mean scores in Table 2.4 are compared with the mean scores in Table 2.3, we see that RLDCC (3.28 and 2.78, respectively) either has been more active in assisting with campaign management or simply more effective in their influence of campaign management than the HDCC (2.00 and 1.79, respectively).[71] Aside from LCCs, Republican incumbents note the relative influence of interest groups (1.94) and political action committees (1.67). Democrats gave higher mean scores to unions (1.75) and interest groups (1.71). In either case across all groups of respondents, incumbents do not generally acknowledge much influence from the state political party.[72]

Challengers did not find any groups very effective in the realm of campaign management. Democrats indicate some minor influence from parish-level organizations (1.65), which does increase (2.00) when removing the noncompetitive challengers.[73] Democratic challengers find the state-level committee (1.46) slightly less important than

[70] $t = 2.517$, $p < .019$.
[71] Republicans $t = 4.123$, $p < .001$; Democrats $t = 1.652$, $p < .110$.
[72] $t = 2.185$, $p < .043$; $t = 3.162$, $p < .006$; state $t = 4.106$, $p < .001$.
[73] $t = 2.427$, $p < .026$.

Table 2.4: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.67	5.00	4.56	2.60	2.00	3.00	3.83	3.80	4.00	4.13	3.50	4.33	4.05	3.88	4.17	3.71	3.78	3.40
Parish	1.50	1.33	1.56	1.40	1.50	1.33	1.61	1.67	1.33	1.75	1.50	1.83	1.65	1.13	2.00	1.39	1.30	1.80
State	1.83	1.67	1.89	1.67	1.33	1.89	1.56	1.53	1.67	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.45	1.00	1.75	1.25	1.22	1.40
LCCs	1.75	1.33	1.89	1.60	1.50	1.67	2.78	2.60	3.67	1.38	1.00	1.50	1.25	1.00	1.42	1.79	1.39	3.60
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.00	1.11	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.09	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.38	1.50	1.33	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.75	1.70	2.00
IGs	1.67	1.33	1.78	2.00	1.83	2.11	1.94	1.80	2.67	1.63	2.00	1.50	1.50	1.25	1.67	1.71	1.61	2.20
PACs	1.75	1.33	1.89	1.73	1.67	1.78	1.67	1.60	2.00	1.63	1.00	1.83	1.40	1.00	1.67	1.14	1.17	1.00
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 1.191, p< .274; Party F = 3.406, p< .001; Competition F = 1.576 p< .136, Seat Type F = 2.707, p< .000

these parish-level committees. Beyond these two groups, the relative influence from groups on the overall management of campaigns is marginal and very weak. Democrats clearly rely heavily on their friends and families, if not themselves, to set up their campaigns. For Republicans, interest groups (2.00) and state-level committees (1.67) receive the highest scores. Since 34% of the Republican candidates sought some help from the RPL and only 27% of Democrats sought help from the LDP, one would hope the RPL was cited as being relatively more important than the LDP.[74] Nevertheless, the overall scores suggest that party support was not important. The RPL even lags behind interest groups in these two areas; however, the LDP does exceed interest groups. The means scores, though, are not significantly different and low. Among open-seat candidates, we see a similar picture.

Open-seat candidates credit both the state party and legislative campaign committees with higher levels of importance than challengers. Similar to the realm of strategy formulation, open-seat candidates appear to receive more attention from more groups, and their efforts were more important to their campaigns than challengers.[75] Democratic open-seat candidates find parish-level committees (1.75) and state-level committees (1.63) the more effective groups; however, these scores are so low as to render their services as unimportant. These are also comparable to the levels of influence recorded in Table 2.3. Republican open-seat candidates give higher scores of influence to state-level committees (1.83) and LCCs (1.75), consistent with the scores in Table 2.3, and at a higher level than challengers. When removing the noncompetitive candidates from the analysis, the mean scores increase and interest groups (1.89) and political action

[74] $t = 2.594$, $p < .015$; $t = 2.360$, $p < .026$.
[75] F-score 2.707, $p < .0001$.

committees (1.89) emerge as being a bit more influential than previously recorded. Unfortunately, the evaluations indicate that state parties are not more influential in assisting with the management of campaigns than other groups and are not important providers of campaign resources. When parties do intervene, they seem to direct their resources more to open-seat candidates than other types of candidates.

In Table 2.5, candidates assess which groups were the most important in connecting them to campaign professionals. A MANOVA test demonstrates that seat type, political party, and competitiveness are all important predictors in indicating the level of support for LDP and RPL activities. In general, Republican legislative candidates give higher scores to the RPL. The mean scores are low, but a significant pattern distinguishes Democrats from Republicans. 52% of the Republican incumbents and 43% of the Republican candidates admitted to receiving some consultant or professional recommendations from the RLDCC and RPL, compared to only 36% of the Democratic incumbents and 24% of Democratic challengers. Republicans (1.67) went to the party organizations for support more, and, consequently, assessed the relative influence of these groups as being higher in importance than Democrats (1.29). What is happening is that competitive Republicans are relying more on outside forms of support than competitive Democrats in Louisiana. Noncompetitive candidates do not seek support because they generally lack the resources to attempt to hire professionals. Lacking the resources, it makes very little sense to inquire about these services and, unfortunately, compounds their noncompetitive status. This analysis shows us that Democrats are not using consultants and professionals as often, nor do they seek party support for these services. When they do look for professionals, the evidence suggests

Table 2.5: How important were the following groups in hiring campaign professionals and consultants?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.17	3.67	4.33	2.67	2.33	2.89	4.33	4.20	5.00	3.88	2.50	4.33	3.60	3.00	4.00	2.14	2.17	2.00
Parish	1.50	1.33	1.56	1.47	1.17	1.67	1.50	1.53	1.33	1.38	1.50	1.33	1.30	1.00	1.50	1.14	1.13	1.20
State	1.67	1.67	1.67	1.53	1.50	1.56	1.78	1.67	2.33	1.50	1.00	1.67	1.40	1.38	1.42	1.14	1.13	1.20
LCCs	1.75	1.33	1.89	1.47	1.50	1.44	2.94	2.60	4.67	1.63	1.00	1.83	1.35	1.00	1.58	1.61	1.39	2.60
National	1.08	1.00	1.11	1.07	1.17	1.00	1.11	1.07	1.33	1.25	1.00	1.33	1.25	1.13	1.33	1.25	1.13	1.80
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.15	1.00	1.25	1.29	1.22	1.60
IGs	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.87	1.33	2.22	1.94	1.80	2.67	1.88	1.50	2.00	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.43	1.35	1.80
PACs	1.17	1.00	1.22	1.60	1.67	1.56	1.89	1.60	3.33	1.38	1.00	1.50	1.15	1.00	1.25	1.04	1.04	1.00
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Party X Comp. F = 1.684, p< .047; Party F = 6.635, p< .000; Competition F = 2.562 p< .012, Seat Type F = 2.816, p< .000

that Democrats are just as likely to go to other actors – interest groups, unions, and parish-level committees – as they are the state-level committee. In both parties, incumbents rely heavily on their legislative campaign committees (1.61, 2.94) for support and not the political party (1.14, 1.78). Since many of these candidates do not end up hiring professionals, the assessed level of importance of various groups in helping to hire professionals is incredibly small. When presenting these results to one candidate in a predominantly rural district, he remarked, "Why should I pay someone to tell me what my district thinks when my friends will do it for free? Many of them have been active in politics in this area for a long time. They can tell me what to do, who to hire, and who to talk to about better than anyone else, in my opinion."[76] Another candidate talked about how he intended to hire someone to direct the campaign, but when fundraising became difficult, the intent to hire a professional/consultant was quickly dismissed.[77] Thus, campaigns are still very much in the hands of the candidate, his friends, and his family. Reliance on professionals and consultants is still relatively rare in state legislative elections in Louisiana, and Republicans seem to be receiving more effective help than Democrats.

In conclusion, the picture that emerges from Table 2.3, Table 2.4, and Table 2.5 is that legislative campaign committees are doing a better job at assisting incumbents with formulating strategies, managing campaigns, and hiring professionals than state parties. Incumbents rarely even seek party support in these areas. LCCs do not assist challengers, so for these groups, state parties take a heightened, though still minor, role. Open-seat candidates are more likely to receive assistance from both the party and LCCs than

[76] Interview with the Author June 7th, 2004.
[77] Interview with the Author June 29th, 2004.

challengers, but the assistance from the party is deemed unimportant. Even though the parties are not major providers of campaign management services, the Republican Party of Louisiana is outperforming the Louisiana Democratic Party along all three dimensions within campaign management. Nonetheless, among all groups of candidates, the mean scores are relatively low and serve as a reminder that campaign management is still personal and candidate-centered. Parties are not significantly more important than other groups, suggesting that current party attempts at campaign management and strategic formulations are not paying dividends and are rarely used by candidates. For candidates, friends and family are the only significant and important group in assisting candidates with campaign management. If the parties want to take a more active role, then clearly they must do something different.

Campaign Communications

Party organizations have not only attempted to increase their ability to provide campaign management-related services, but they also have attempted to take a more active role in communicating messages, themes, and platforms to candidates. Presidential, federal, and statewide elections are often accompanied by a media spectacle; however, state legislative elections remain relatively isolated from the media scrutiny and attention of other races. Larger elections are more dependent on the media, primarily television and radio advertising, to spread their themes, messages and positions. Yet, state legislative elections are unique in that radio and television coverage zones often span multiple legislative districts. The exorbitant costs associated with media, especially with large coverage zones, are difficult to justify to candidates whose goal is to isolate or focus on a very compact constituency within a coverage area. Thus, electronic forms are

largely inefficient. Instead, campaign communications become literature-oriented in state legislative elections; effectively targeted flyers and postcards are of paramount importance (2002). According to The Campaign Assessment and Candidate Outreach Project, some state and local organizations now own printing presses, write direct mail, copy direct mail, print direct-mail letters, and mail them to voters in an attempt to take control of state campaign communications. Despite this, their surveys found that state organizations still rarely take responsibility for a candidate's campaign communications (Francias et al. 2003). The state parties in Louisiana neither own presses nor attempt to control campaign communications, but they do provide direct mail templates, may partially subsidize mailings, inform candidates about available advertising strategies, disseminate talking points, provide lists of media outlets, and supply sample press releases.

Modeling themselves after the National Republican Senatorial and Congressional Campaign Committees (NRSC, NRCC), the Louisiana Republican Delegation Campaign Committee has developed electronic weekly email updates pointing out issue positions, suggesting certain strategies, and stressing certain talking points or "buzz" words. Occasionally the RLDCC will make this information available to the RPL; other times the RPL purchases this information from the RNC. The LDP, House Democratic Campaign Committee, and Senate Democratic Campaign Committee (SDCC) have all copied these strategies to some degree, though with less recorded regularity.[78] Both the LDP and RPL have semi-regular email updates for all members regarding certain happenings within the party, but also containing, to some implicit degree, consistent themes and discussions. The campaign workshops and meetings held by the state parties

[78] Interviews with Author June 7th, 8th, & 25th, 2004.

discuss communication strategies, how to advertise, how to package issue points, and provide lists of party-friendly advertising companies available to candidates. Such lists, issue positions, and talking points disseminated both electronically and verbally indicate a certain desire to take a greater role in improving the substance and consistency of campaign communications. One party official described how he had assisted several candidates with formulating ideas, converting ideas into issues, and advertising strategies to disseminate these issues. He indicated the party could provide these services to those who request them; however, the parties will not actively solicit candidates with this service nor will the party enthusiastically provide this service equally to all candidates. Many times, as a result, candidates do not even know about these party services. Party officials have been known to discriminate by eagerly assisting candidates who are competitive and viable but trying to avoid wasting their time and efforts with candidates who are deemed uncompetitive or not viable.[79] A campaign manager for a losing candidate expressed his disappointment with this line of reasoning. In his opinion, the candidate was declared uncompetitive, the quality of assistance from the party was poor, and the candidate ended up losing to an incumbent by over 30 points. Yet, the same candidate argued that had he received the full attention and support of the party, he may have had a better campaign and may have been even more competitive.[80] If the candidates do not know about these services, then the candidates will not get these services. Candidates must go to the party.

The LDP and RPL are attempting to take a more active role in campaign communications. Nonetheless, the state party is not trying to directly control the

[79] Interview with Author June 7th, 2004.
[80] Interview with Author August 15th, 2004.

messages by serving as a communication director for candidates or demanding the candidates do things a certain way because the fact is that the state of Louisiana, whether between North and South or between urban and rural, is a very diverse state with, concomitantly, very different issues affecting different constituencies. For example, all the candidates in southern Louisiana repeatedly talk about coastal erosion, the sugar industry, and maritime development. Yet, all these issues mean very little to candidates in Shreveport or even New Orleans. The unique constituencies within each district and the more important goal of obtaining/maintaining a legislative majority by any means hamstrings the parties in the amount of control they attempt to or can exert over candidates. As one interviewee confessed, "I don't give a [crap] what they say if it gets them to Baton Rouge."[81] Though the parties seem indifferent, an effort has been made to influence campaign communications by providing advertising and encouraging a consistent dissemination of certain issue positions. Whether these campaign communication activities have had any influence on the candidates has yet to be determined.

In order to address this deficiency, two questions addressing the theme of campaign communications were asked of all candidates. First, respondents were asked, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image?" The results of this question are presented in Table 2.6. A second question asked respondents, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in selecting your issue positions?" Table 2.7 summarizes this information.

[81] Interview with Author June 7th, 2004.

Some groups of candidates seem to be mildly influenced by certain groups when trying to acquire media advertising or shape their public image. The MANOVA test for Table 2.6 indicates that party and seat type were predictors of party activity in providing the campaign with media advertising and developing images. Democrats were far more likely to use state party services than Republicans. 75% of the Democrats in this survey indicated that they went to the state party at some point for assistance in media advertising and developing images versus only 54% for all Republican candidates. As such, Democrats gave higher scores (1.66) to the state party than Republicans (1.60); however, these overall scores indicate party assistance is not too important and trails interest groups, political action committees, parish-level committees, and legislative campaign committees.

For incumbents, legislative campaign committees are significant providers of media advertising and image strategies. Republican incumbents give the RLDCC a higher mean score (3.33) than Democratic incumbents gave to their party committee (2.39).[82] Interestingly enough, these Democrat incumbents also indicated that other important influences were interest groups (1.68) and state-level committees (1.75).[83] Although this influence is small and not notably important, this is the first instance where the state party appears within the top three for incumbents, with a higher score than challengers and open-seat candidates. When asked to explain why, a member of the LDP indicated that incumbents were more likely to be able to afford party mailings and

[82] $t = 2.793$, $p < .008$.
[83] $t = 4.423$, $p < .000$; $t = 3.204$, $p < .003$.

Table 2.5: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.42	3.00	3.56	2.80	4.00	2.00	3.94	3.93	4.00	4.63	3.50	5.00	3.80	4.00	3.67	2.71	2.69	4.20
Parish	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.40	1.33	1.44	1.28	1.27	1.33	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.60	1.50	1.67	1.46	1.43	1.60
State	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.67	1.50	1.78	1.56	1.53	1.67	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.55	1.25	1.75	1.75	1.74	1.80
LCCs	1.75	1.33	1.89	1.07	1.00	1.11	3.33	3.40	3.00	1.88	2.00	1.83	1.40	1.00	1.67	2.39	2.17	3.40
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.00	1.11	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.36	1.43	1.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.38	1.50	1.33	1.40	1.13	1.58	1.57	1.61	1.40
IGs	1.83	1.33	2.00	1.93	1.50	2.22	2.61	2.40	3.67	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10	1.88	2.25	1.68	1.48	2.60
PACs	1.75	1.33	1.89	1.67	1.50	1.78	1.94	1.80	2.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.55	1.25	1.75	1.43	1.35	1.80
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Party X Comp. F = 1.204, p< .263; Party F = 2.191, p< .031; Competition F = 1.001 p< .442, Seat Type F = 3.597, p< .000

templates. Unless they were in a targeted district of the coordinated campaign, candidates had to pay for these resources.[84] When asked to verify the survey data, an incumbent mentioned that he did not use state party resources but knew of a couple that did because they could afford direct mailings. Although the interviewee was unable to account for why the state party would have been selected over the HDCC, he did casually suggest, "Maybe he simply liked them [state party] better." Thus, Democratic incumbents will use party resources, such as direct mailing assistance, if they feel it is better than the resources offered by the or LCCs.[85] In contrast, Republican incumbents rely on the RLDCC (3.33), interest groups (2.61) and political action committees (1.94), but not the RPL.[86] When removing noncompetitive incumbents from the analysis, a considerable increase in the mean scores occurs for these two groups. Competitive Republican incumbents receive relatively more support from interest groups and legislative campaign committees than noncompetitive candidates, but both groups do not rely on the RPL.

Challengers paint a different picture than incumbents. Whereas incumbents seemed fairly complimentary in noting the importance of many groups on media advertising and developing images, challengers are less complimentary of all groups. For Democrats, though friends and family are still the most important group (3.80), interest groups (2.10) are the only other group that receives any significant mention of being important or consequential.[87] Some Democratic challengers clearly felt that the advertising by special interests within their district was slightly important. Only when

[84] Interview with the Author June 27th, 2004.
[85] Interview with the Author June 27th, 2004.
[86] $t = 1.913$, $p < .073$; $t = 4.276$, $p < .001$; $t = 7.518$, $p < .000$.
[87] $t = 4.271$, $p < .000$.

accounting for competitiveness does the state party suddenly obtain a noticeable level of importance (1.75); however, tests did not confirm the higher ranking to have been statistically significant, and it still trails interest groups. After interest groups, all other groups, including the state party, receive incredibly insignificant and negligibly low mean scores. Republican challengers also found interest group assistance to have been slightly important (1.93). Interest groups receive higher scores from incumbents because interest groups concentrate more on them, consistent with previous research suggesting that the primary strategy of interest groups is access, and access occurs by assisting winning candidates. Since challengers rarely win, interest groups are less likely to provide assistance to challengers unless they are competitive or run in open seats. Though challengers have smaller odds and interest groups do not help them very often, competitive challengers may still receive some interest group support because of the potential for access if they are successful (Langbein 1986, Hall and Wayman 1990, Herrnson 2004). Therefore, interest group involvement in Louisiana is consistent with the literature. Turning our attention to Republican challengers, they give relatively low mean scores to all groups, especially the party (1.67), for media advertising and image developing. Even friends and family receive a very modest mean score (2.80). After interest groups (1.93), no one else scores high enough to merit any mention.[88] Interestingly enough, even when the noncompetitive candidates are removed from the distribution, the mean score does not increase significantly relative to other groups for Republicans. Thus, across the board, Republican challengers appear to have received very little help from the state party with selecting media advertising and developing public images. Inquiring as to why challengers gave the parties low scores, one candidate

[88] $t = 3.323$, $p < .080$.

indicated he was not aware that the party provided such services, and another indicated that he could not afford such services. Those most likely to have benefited were those who fell within targeted areas of the coordinated/parallel campaign.[89]

Open-seat candidates exhibit characteristics that compare and contrast with incumbents and challengers. Much like incumbents, open-seat candidates in both parties have been similarly influenced to some degree more by LCCs (1.88 and 1.75) than by the state parties (1.55 and 1.58).[90] Although the mean scores for LCCs by open-seat candidates are lower than incumbents, the mean scores assessed to state parties by incumbents and open-seat candidates are comparable. It would appear that the LCCs are doing a good job, comparatively speaking, of assisting in media advertising and image development, but these resources are being expended more on their legislative members than non-legislative members. From the vantage point of the candidates, the state parties do not discriminate between open-seat candidates and challengers in their level of assistance, but both groups of candidates have deemed this assistance relatively insignificant in comparison to the assistance received from other groups. Across all groups, interest groups and political action committees are as influential, in some cases more, as the RPL and LDP. In conclusion, the state parties are not doing a good job assisting candidates with obtaining media advertising and developing public images in comparison to legislative campaign committees and interest groups. In fact, only 20% of the state legislative candidates in this survey indicated they even approached the parties about this subject. Though the overall mean scores indicate party assistance is unimportant, the LDP may be doing a better job than the RPL.

[89] Interview with the Author June 7th, 2004.
[90] T-score not statistically significant.

While one aspect of campaign communications consists of developing images and assisting with media advertising, it is not the only aspect of campaign communications. Candidates will also look for support in developing issue positions. Table 2.7 indicates that the RPL, and to a lesser extent, the LDP, does a better job influencing issue positions than developing images and providing advertising, and the MANOVA test indicates that the candidate's party is a significant predictor of the level of state party activity. The Republican Party of Louisiana is more important, effective, and influential in developing issue positions than the Louisiana Democratic Party. The relative homogeneity of Republicans in Louisiana makes it easier for the RPL to produce, disseminate, and convince candidates to use certain standard issue positions, talking points, and "buzz" words. Interestingly, one pattern thus far has been candidates indicating moderate to extremely important influences from friends and family on various aspects of campaigning, but incumbents note a reduced role from them when developing issue positions. Democratic incumbents give only a "slightly important" mean score of 2.32 to friends and family, while Republicans give a "moderately important" mean score of 3.33. While still the largest recorded influences for either group, these scores are considerably lower than what we have witnessed thus far. The HDCC (2.39) made a considerable impression on legislators in developing issue positions; trailing the LCCs are interest groups (2.20).[91] Republican incumbents, regardless of competition, also give high scores to LCCs (2.72). Significantly trailing the RLDCC are political action committees and interest groups with "slightly" important mean scores of 1.94.[92] Thus, indications are that when incumbents are developing issue positions, they have been influenced and assisted

[91] $t = 1.933$, $p < .075$.
[92] $t = 2.063$, $p < .045$.

Table 2.7: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in selecting your issue positions?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.58	4.00	3.44	3.47	2.67	4.00	3.33	3.40	3.00	4.13	5.00	3.83	4.35	4.38	4.33	2.32	2.22	2.80
Parish	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.80	1.50	2.00	1.44	1.47	1.33	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.29	1.26	1.40
State	1.75	1.67	1.78	2.00	1.67	2.22	1.67	1.73	1.33	1.75	1.50	1.83	1.70	1.38	1.92	1.50	1.48	1.60
LCCs	1.92	1.00	2.22	1.53	1.50	1.56	2.72	2.80	2.33	1.88	1.50	2.00	1.25	1.00	1.42	2.07	1.78	3.40
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.22	1.20	1.33	1.13	1.00	1.17	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.14	1.09	1.40
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.38	1.50	1.33	1.60	1.50	1.67	1.39	1.35	1.60
IGs	1.75	1.67	1.78	1.87	1.83	1.89	1.94	1.93	2.00	2.13	2.00	2.17	2.00	1.75	2.17	1.82	1.74	2.20
PACs	1.42	2.00	1.22	1.67	1.50	1.78	1.94	1.80	2.67	1.38	1.00	1.50	1.40	1.00	1.67	1.46	1.39	1.80
N	12.00	3.00	9.00	15.00	6.00	9.00	18.00	15.00	3.00	8.00	2.00	6.00	20.00	8.00	12.00	28.00	23.00	5.00

MANOVA: Competitiveness X Party F = 1.037, p< .419; Party F = 3.351, p< .002; Competition F = 1.224, p< .292, Seat Type F = 4.455, p< .000

by LCCs, PACs, and interest groups. Receiving unsubstantially low mean scores are the state parties, national party, and unions.

Challengers rely on other groups for developing issue positions, which is good for the state parties. Here, the party differences are more prominently noted, with the RPL receiving a higher score than the LDP. Among Democrats, they are just as likely to acknowledge noticeable levels of support in developing issue positions from parish-level organizations (1.75) than from the state party (1.70), yet both of these party organizations trail interest groups in relative influence (2.00).[93] A different pattern emerges among Republican challengers. Republican challengers assess the RPL as being more important in helping with issue positions than any other group, with the state-level committee being more effective (2.00) than parish-level committees (1.80). Thus, the RPL has done either a much more effective job at developing issue positions, concentrated more on developing issue positions, or has less competition from other Republican groups in this area. Additionally, the homogeneity of the party might make uniform policy positions and statements more amenable to statewide use. Across both parties, competitive challengers generally acknowledge more important assistance from all groups in formulating issue positions than noncompetitive challengers, and all challengers do not receive much assistance from the LCCs, political action committees and unions.

Open-seat candidates acknowledge receiving "slightly" important assistance formulating issue positions from interest groups and legislative campaign committees, but the state political parties are not too important. Democratic open-seat candidates, outside of their friends and family, note interest groups (2.13) to have more influence

[93] $t = 2.042$, $p < .051$.

over issue formulation than LCCs (1.88) and the state-level committees (1.75).[94] Republican open-seat candidates give consideration to LCCs (1.92) before the interest groups (1.75) and RPL (1.75).[95] Within both parties, the means were higher among competitive open-seat candidates than noncompetitive open-seat candidates. Among Democrats, groups generally provided more influence and were more important to open-seat candidates than challengers.[96] The data shows that the presence of an open seat influenced parties, LCCs, and interest groups to intervene, which is a rational strategy and verified by past research (Gaddie and Bullock 2000, Francia et al 2003, Herrnson 2004). For Democrats, the state parties have not been relatively important to open-seat candidates in assisting with issue positions. A different scenario unfolds among Republicans. Competitive Republican challengers and open-seat candidates have comparable mean scores. Although the difference is small, it suggests that challengers received as much, if not more, assistance in developing issue positions as open-seat candidates. The more significant variable appears to be competitiveness.

Overall, the Republican Party of Louisiana appears to have been more helpful in formulating issue positions than the Louisiana Democratic Party; however, the Louisiana Democratic Party did a better job, albeit barely, at providing media advertising and developing images. Those most likely to find party assistance helpful are competitive open-seat candidates and competitive challengers; however, the overall mean scores for the RPL and LDP are so low that it suggests this assistance is not significantly more important than other groups. The RPL is doing a better job than the LDP, but both state organizations trail friends and family, interest groups, and, among incumbents, legislative

[94] $t = 2.049$, $p < .080$.
[95] $t = 1.000$, $p < .339$.
[96] F-score 3.351, $p < .002$.

campaign committees. Yet, when one compares the mean scores in campaign communications to the mean scores in campaign management, one realizes the party is having more success in the area of communications than with management. Perhaps candidates are less amenable to suggestions on how to run a campaign than they are to suggestions on how to disseminate campaign platforms, ideas, and issues. Or, maybe parties are simply more effective in the area of communications than management. This may not be a bad thing. If the parties were concerned with trying to become more responsible parties, then it would be more important to make sure certain themes are being distributed and received before campaigns are being similarly run according to some standard rubric.

Fundraising

Party financial services come in active, passive, and negative forms. Examples of active financial services are direct contributions, party-candidate fundraisers, and direct-mail programs. Direct contributions and fundraisers are hands-on attempts to give or raise money. The parties will occasionally write checks to candidates, but this does not happen very often (Gierzynski and Breaux 1993, 1998; Gierzynski 2002). Party fundraisers and direct-mail programs for candidates also do not occur very often because political parties usually expend energy on these events to raise money for themselves (Gibson and Scarrow 1993; Francias et al. 2003). Passive party financial services include "meet and greets," disseminating donor lists, and recommending financial professionals. Meet and greets are functions, coordinated with a series of candidates, designed to introduce candidates to potential donors (Herrnson 2004). In addition, parties keep lists of party-friendly PACs and donors available on request for candidates or will recommend

them to candidates to hire for their fundraising (Kolodny 2000). The final type of party financial services are classified as negative, where the party will attempt to dissuade PACs and donors from donating to a particular candidate in favor of another candidate (Herrnson 1988). The latest studies indicate that less than 5% of all candidates primarily rely on state parties for financial services, a number that has declined each year since 1994 (Francias et al. 2003). While this may be bad for parties trying to increase candidate-party relationships, studies show that candidates relying on professionals generally raise more money and stand a better chance of winning than when relying on amateur or party services (Herrnson 1992, 2004).

The Louisiana Democratic Party and Republican Party of Louisiana lack the financial contributions, financial expenditures, and operating budgets of their national counterparts, but they have become more viable financial entities. The growing financial capacities of the RPL and LDP are explained by an increased organizational emphasis on campaign finance and relatively lax financial regulations in Louisiana. Both parties have created permanent finance committees and have a finance chairman or finance assistant on staff. The finance committees are the less important of the two, as they largely "advise and consent" to larger financial expenditures and audit parish executive committees. More importantly, the finance chairman organizes fundraisers, solicits financial contributions, networks with financial consultants and professionals, provides financial recommendations to the Chair and Executive Committee, assists in long-term financial planning, and monitors the day-to-day financial commitments of the party. The presence of full-time, paid Executive Directors – responsible for monitoring the day-to-day administrative activities of the party – also frees the party chairman from mundane

operational concerns in order to concentrate more on fundraising. As party leaders, the chairmen, more than any other party official, is directly responsible for the financial vitality of the party. These organizational changes demonstrate a commitment to financial affairs and aim to increase the financial viability of the LDP and RPL.[97]

Louisiana's campaign finance regulations do not restrict the parties but favor them. The State of Louisiana maintains four sets of campaign financial regulations for major offices, district offices, "other" offices, and PACs. State legislative elections are categorized as district offices and have financial caps that are lower than major offices but higher than "other" offices.[98] Contributions by political party committees to district candidates are not limited, but contributions from other sources are limited. Thus, party committees have an advantage over other groups in that they are capable of donating more money than other groups. Corporations and labor unions are forbidden by law to give directly to candidates but are allowed to contribute to PACs; however, PACs have a $5,000 contribution limit to candidates and a $10,000 contribution limit to other PACs per election cycle.[99] Individuals have a $2,500 contribution limit per candidate per election cycle. Additionally, a candidate may receive no more than $60,000 total from PACs in a primary and general election cycle. The only regulation the RPL and LDP contend with is a $100,000 limit from individuals, PACs, corporations, and unions per four years. One past Finance Chairman did not find the $100,000 limits at all an issue and instead cited McCain-Feingold. He said, "McCain-Feingold reduces funneling and is making it harder for us to raise money. We will continue to raise more money, it just

[97] Interview with Author June 17th & 23rd, 2004.
[98] All information from this section comes from Feigenbaum & Palmer (2002) and the Louisiana Board of Ethics' Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure at http://www.ethics.state.la.us/.
[99] Primary and general elections are considered separate cycles.

takes more work."[100] With new restrictions on national committees and their ability to funnel soft money to states, parties have to rely more on individuals, PACs, corporations, and unions. These limits mean parties will have to increase the number of donors to maintain current funding levels. Other than this, state parties are largely uninhibited in Louisiana.

Conventional wisdom at the national level holds that the Republicans are financial giants; however, national success has not translated into financial prowess for the RPL. Some of this is the product of national committee support. RNC contributions to the RPL totaled only $166,400, while DNC contributions to the LDP totaled $727,500.[101] A state party official suggested that the RNC has not made Louisiana a priority because of "the continued perception…that Democrats still dominate local elections."[102] Right now, though, that perception is supported by fact. Unless the RPL produces significant results, it is not likely they will be targeted by the RNC in upcoming state elections. Furthermore, unless the RPL raises more money, it is doubtful they can produce immediate significant electoral gains desired by the RNC as a criterion for funds. This is problematic because the RPL believes that that it cannot achieve either result without the RNC first supplying some financial support.[103]

During the 2003 elections, LDP Chairman Mike Skinner and RPL Chairwoman Pat Brister hired firms to help solicit donations, host fundraisers, and organize targeted direct mailings for candidates, though the largest beneficiaries of these efforts were

[100] Interview with Author June 23rd, 2004.
[101] All financial data courtesy of the National Institute on Money in State Politics at www.followthemoney.org unless otherwise noted.
[102] Interview with Author July 10th, 2004.
[103] Interview with Author, June 8th & 25th, 2004.

statewide candidates.[104] The LDP did not make many direct contributions to state legislative candidates; instead, it directed most of its funds to statewide races for governor, lieutenant governor, insurance commissioner, and attorney general. The LDP primarily participated in passive financial activities, which included coordinating "meet and greets," disseminating donor lists, and recommending financial professionals. The dissemination of donor lists and financial professionals were the most common services provided to state legislative candidates, as one party official stated, "we [LDP] simply lacked the funds to do more. Our priority was Blanco, because in this state the governor's office means so much."[105] Active fundraising efforts did occur in the form of some contributions, but fundraisers and direct-mail strategies were largely employed for Blanco's gubernatorial contest and not for state legislative candidates. While no current Democratic official would admit to participating in negative activities, former party officials freely admitted that negative fundraising, in the form of steering PACs and other donors to preferred candidates, occurred in the past, and they were doubtful these practices cease to exist.[106]

The RPL also participated in passive financial activities like "meet and greets," disseminating donor lists, and recommending financial professionals. The RNC, for a small fee, provided the RPL with a "donor vault," a list of traditional Republican donors and consultants in the state. The RPL then provided this information to its state legislative candidates.[107] As far as active financial roles, the party made a few direct contributions and coordinated some direct mailings for open-seat candidates; however,

[104] Interview June 17th & 23rd, 2004.
[105] Interview with Author June 17th, 2004.
[106] Interview with Author June 29th, 2004.
[107] Interview with Author June 23rd, 2004.

the RPL focused most of its financial energies on Jindal's campaign for governor. Clearly, the financial priority for both parties was not legislative races, but gubernatorial races. Financial regulations and the open primary system did not limit the parties' financial role in state legislative elections in 2003; rather, the presence of an open-seat gubernatorial election and limited funds explain party absence. Both parties justified this decision because the governor of Louisiana historically wields considerable influence over state policy, and minor numerical shifts would not have resulted in a change of majority status for the Democrats or Republicans.

There is a need for party support by state legislative candidates because Louisiana's state legislative elections are becoming increasingly expensive. Although the governor's races accounted for $38.4 million, state legislative elections still generated another $26.5 million – $12.7 million for the House and $13.6 million for the Senate (Table 2.8). House elections generate much more than Senate elections because there are more candidates. In fact, the average House candidate raised only $54,000 for his campaign, and the average Senate candidate raised $144,000. A primary reason Senate elections generate more financial activity is because competition is higher. Out of 105 races, 44% of the House (46 candidates) ran unopposed. Out of 39 Senate races, only 31% of the Senate (12 candidates) ran unopposed.

Table 2.8: Money Raised by Office

	Total $	Candidates	Average $
Governor	$ 38,389,904	25	$1,532,604
Senate	$ 13,680,464	95	$ 144,005
House	$ 12,787,292	237	$ 53,953
Other Statewide	$ 8,157,779	14	$ 570,045

Table 2.9 demonstrates that Louisiana's political parties and Louisiana's legislative campaign committees raised significantly more amounts of money in 2003 than in 1999. In 2003, the Louisiana Democratic Party collected $6.7 million and the Republican Party of Louisiana collected $3.7 million, an increase since 1999 of $1.3 million and $228,000, respectively. The LDP is the financially stronger of the two parties. Additionally, the House Democratic Campaign Committee out-raised the RLDCC by almost $100,000. The HDCC raised $500,000 more in 2003 than in 1999, and the RLDCC raised $300,000 more in 2003 than in 1999. The increased financial prowess of the HDCC can be attributed to the maturation of this committee. While the Republican LCC was created in 1984, Democrats did not create theirs until the 1990s.[108] Republican organizational development preceding Democratic organizational development is a common pattern in Louisiana, but this does not seen to have affected Louisiana's Democrats too much in the financial realm. Considering the fact that Democrats still hold a majority in the legislature and the electorate, one would expect them to raise more funds.

Table 2.10 shows that 35% of the total campaign contributions in Louisiana came from candidates themselves, a number that is both accurate and deceiving. It is accurate in that it describes the fact that self-financing is the most prevalent source of campaign contributions at the state-level; however, most of the candidates for the state legislature actually self-finance the majority of their own campaign. Aided by beneficial campaign regulations, party committees are the second most common source of all expenditures ahead of legal, business, medical, and insurance groups. Unfortunately for the parties, these contributions account for only 3% of total contributions. Of the $2.3 million dollars

[108] Interview with Author June 27th, 2004.

Table 2.9: State Party Giving

2003	**Counts**	**Total Raised**	**Total Given**	**$ Given**	**$ House**	**Total House**	**% Raised**	**% Given**
Democratic								
LOUISIANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY	1397	$6,751,466	60	$379,864	$19,721	9	0.29%	5.19%
SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF LOUISIANA	393	$793,005	68	$361,180	$55,855	16		
HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF LOUISIANA	492	$597,060	93	$159,555	$159,555	93		
	2282	$8,141,531	221	$900,599	$235,131	118		
Republican								
LOUISIANA REPUBLICAN PARTY	831	$3,682,649	13	$330,312	$14,139	5	0.35%	4.28%
REPUBLICAN LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION CAMPAIGN CMTE	404	$499,837	18	$117,500	$56,250	12		
	1235	$4,182,486	31	$447,812	$70,389	17		
1999								
Democratic								
LOUISIANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY	427	$1,350,231	33	$592,845	$35,545	6	2.63%	5.99%
SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF LOUISIANA	145	$97,981	31	$72,559	$ -	0		
HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF LOUISIANA	228	$93,590	91	$121,627	$121,627	91		
	800	$1,541,802	155	$787,031	$157,172	97		
Republican								
LOUISIANA REPUBLICAN PARTY	214	$228,118	9	$17,390	$2,140	6	0.93%	12.30%
REPUBLICAN LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION CAMPAIGN CMTE	192	$199,825	24	$57,650	$35,000	14		
	406	$427,943	33	$75,040	$37,140	20		

that is labeled as party expenditures, 69% of this money comes from party committees. The Louisiana Democratic Party was directly responsible for $380,000 ($320,000 going to Kathleen Blanco), and the Republican Party of Louisiana was directly responsible for $330,000 ($275,000 of which went to Bobby Jindal). The most active financial group in 2003 was the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, long recognized as the most dominant interest group in Louisiana (Haynie 2002). The LABI, though operating under more stringent financial restrictions than the party, still spent $70,000 more than the LDP. The parties appear to be capable of competing with interest groups in Louisiana.

Previous studies suggest that competitive open-seat candidates and incumbents typically benefit from LCCs, while competitive challengers and open-seat candidates generally benefit from state party activities (Gierzynski 1992, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998). Louisiana is not consistent with this literature, as both the parties and the LCCs primarily assisted incumbents. In 2003, nine candidates received amounts ranging from $452 to $4,000 from the LDP. An LDP official indicated that the LDP's strategy, because of its majority status, was simply to protect perceived vulnerable incumbents and then look for "pick-ups." Open-seat elections were ruled out because they all involved multiple Democrats in the primaries and, in some cases, multiple Democrats in the runoff. The LDP found it inappropriate to financially favor one Democrat over another since either winner would be a gain for the party and there is no reason to upset either candidate.[109] While parties typically avoid incumbents, the LDP embraced them.

The LDP gave eight incumbents $19,269, an average of $2,400 per incumbent, and one uncompetitive challenger $452. Although the challenger and two incumbents ($6,200) lost, the party was successful because two-thirds of its money went to winning

[109] Interview with Author June 17th, 2004.

Table 2.10: Campaign Donations by Sector

Economic Sector	Total Contributions	**Total $**	**Percent of Total**
Candidate Contributions	1110	$ 29,747,432	35%
Party	605	$ 2,295,515	3%
Lawyers & Lobbyists	2671	$ 2,273,363	3%
Health	3005	$ 1,989,151	2%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2278	$ 1,951,919	2%
General Business	2148	$ 1,863,783	2%
Construction	1435	$ 1,315,573	2%
Energy & Natural Resources	1274	$ 882,500	1%
Labor	989	$ 821,950	1%
Transportation	467	$ 373,219	0%
Agriculture	694	$ 370,433	0%
Communications & Electronics	233	$ 168,733	0%
Other/Retiree/Civil Servants	165	$ 104,250	0%
Ideology/Single Issue	51	$ 47,285	0%
Defense	2	$ 5,000	0%

Table 2.11: Campaign Donations within Party Sector

Party Sector	Total Contributions	Total $	Percent of Total
Party	605	$2,295,515	3.00%
Party Committees	363	$1,592,731	69.38%
Dem	290	$ 983,180	61.73%
GOP	73	$ 609,551	38.27%
Candidate Committees	166	$ 547,662	23.83%
Dem	85	$ 133,445	24.39%
GOP	81	$ 413,617	75.61%
Leadership PAC	45	$ 35,500	1.50%
Dem	39	$ 32,300	90.14%
GOP	6	$ 3,500	9.86%
Party Officials	30	$ 120,172	5.24%
Dem	22	$ 16,450	13.69%
GOP	8	$ 103,722	86.31%

and competitive candidates. The HDCC funded 33 incumbents; 30 contributions went to victorious incumbents for a total of $135,000 (averaging $4,500 per incumbent). Only one challenger, who lost a competitive election, received a donation from the HDCC for $8,000. Overall, the HDCC only funded only twelve competitive candidates (36%), but nine of these twelve candidates won (75%). The funding strategies for the HDCC and LDP were similar; they both sought to protect incumbents. This is a safe strategy, as challengers have very low success rates and open-seat contests often consist of same-party match-ups. The HDCC had more funds to dispense, so naturally they spent more money on noncompetitive incumbents, spent more per candidate than the LDP, and funded a higher percentage of successful candidates. Interviews found that no coordination occurred between the two party committees in the decision to dispense funds.[110]

The financial donations of Democratic committees exceeded the RPL and RLDCC. The RPL donated only $14,139 to three candidates – two competitive open-seat candidates and one noncompetitive challenger (average of $4,700 per candidate). The RPL was less successful than the LDP, as two of the three candidates lost. A slightly more significant financial player, the RLDCC doled out $50,000 to ten candidates – three open-seats (average of $5,800 per candidate) and seven incumbents ($4,642 per candidate). Out of ten candidates, only one open-seat candidate lost, only one incumbent lost, and they were both competitive. Overall, the RLDCC funded only four competitive candidates – two open-seats and two incumbents – and the rest of the RLDCC funds went to safe Republican floor leaders. The RLDCC and RPL did not coordinate activities in 2003, and this shows in the fact that they jointly funded only one candidate. The RPL

[110] Interview with Author June 17th, 2004.

and RLDCC generally operated by different funding strategies. The RPL funded to help challengers, while the RLDCC funded to help leadership and then competitive challengers.

It is useful to examine the financial data to see if candidate perceptions are accurate. Although candidates occasionally have difficulty distinguishing who is responsible for initiating financial contributions and may not be privy to all the financial moves that occur behind the scenes, the information obtained from candidates is still useful for capturing the range of possible party influences in comparison to other organizations. In the eyes of the candidates, who are the significant financial players?

Table 2.12 summarizes the mean scores to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising?" A MANOVA test for this table indicates that party, competition, and seat type were all important predictors for the level of party activity. First of all, ranging from 3.13 to 4.50, the highest mean scores across all groups were for friends and family. When candidates are not financing themselves, they rely to a heavy degree on the support of their core supporters. This supports works financially and non-financially. Second of all, incumbents in both parties retain their highest marks for their respective legislative campaign committees. After removing noncompetitive incumbents, Democrats assigned an "extremely" important mean score of 4.20, and Republicans provided a mean score of 4.67. Clearly, incumbents are expressing tremendous gratitude towards their LCCs. Yet, the survey results partially conflict with the financial data, because the HDCC donated more money than the RLDCC, but Republican candidates found the RLDCC more important than Democratic candidates found the HDCC. Obviously, Republican

Table 2.12: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.42	4.00	4.56	3.13	2.33	3.67	4.50	4.40	5.00	3.38	4.50	3.00	4.35	4.38	4.33	3.39	3.09	4.80
Parish	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.47	1.33	1.56	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.63	1.50	1.67	2.20	1.50	2.67	1.32	1.22	1.80
State	1.67	1.33	1.78	1.53	1.33	1.67	1.39	1.40	1.33	1.75	1.50	1.83	2.05	1.38	2.50	1.18	1.09	1.60
LCCs	1.92	1.00	2.22	1.40	1.17	1.56	3.61	3.40	4.67	2.00	1.50	2.17	1.40	1.00	1.67	2.86	2.57	4.20
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.18	1.13	1.40
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.75	1.00	2.00	1.60	1.50	1.67	2.04	1.96	2.40
IGs	2.17	1.67	2.33	2.27	1.67	2.67	2.56	2.20	4.33	2.00	1.50	2.17	2.10	1.75	2.33	2.32	2.04	3.60
PACs	2.00	1.67	2.11	1.67	1.33	1.89	2.44	2.20	3.67	2.00	1.00	2.33	2.35	1.38	3.00	2.11	2.04	2.40
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 1.817, p< .013; Party F = 4.694, p< .000; Competition F = 3.745 p< .001, Seat Type F = 6.206, p< .000

incumbents rewarded the RLDCC for its assistance beyond direct financial contributions. More important than direct contributions, the RLDCC was more effective in connecting Republican legislators to donors and other fundraising sources. Direct contributions tell only part of the story.

Past research suggests that incumbents are large beneficiaries of interest groups and political action committees (Langbein 1986; Austen-Smith 1995; Rudolph 1999). In Louisiana, this is no different. While LCCs were the most important group for Republican and Democratic incumbents, second in importance to the LCCs are interest groups (2.32 for Democrats and 2.56 for Republicans) and political action committees (2.11 and 2.44 respectively).[111] These numbers increase significantly when removing noncompetitive incumbents from the analysis.[112] One significant difference between Democrats and Republicans are unions (2.04 versus 1.00).[113] Unions have provided Democrats with significant financial support, and Republicans do not indicate receiving any financial support. All other groups, including the state parties, receive means that hover precipitously close to a zero value. State parties are not at all important to incumbents even though they receive contributions from them.

Behind friends and families, challengers acknowledge interest groups and political action committees as the most important groups in their fundraising efforts. When removing noncompetitive challengers from the analysis, Democrats assign high values to political action committees (3.00) and interest groups (2.33).[114] Democrats also note the importance of parish-level committees (2.67) and state-level committees

[111] Interest groups $t = 2.794$, $p < .008$; PACs $t = 3.228$, $p < .002$; state party $t = 8.419$, $p < .000$.
[112] F-score 3.745, $p < .001$.
[113] $t = 4.551$, $p < .000$.
[114] PACs $t = 2.345$, $p < .039$.

(2.50).[115] PACs, IGs, and the LDP ignore noncompetitive challengers, so noncompetitive challengers do not find these groups at all important to their campaigns.[116] The LDP receives higher marks on this question than most of the other questions in this survey; thus, the LDP is actually an important financial resource. Relying solely on financial data and direct contributions to explain financial relationships is dangerous because this survey clearly shows that the LDP assistance through other indirect efforts like donor lists, "meet and greets," fundraisers, and direct mailings are perceived to be important to candidates. Though only 36% of the Democrats admitted to seeking party support, the few that solicit party assistance are finding the LDP an effective resource even without direct donations.

Republican challengers exhibit different, less-complimentary patterns. Interest groups are the only important groups (2.27), with PACs a distant second (1.67).[117] Even when removing noncompetitive challengers, the only significant groups remain interest groups (2.67).[118] No other groups achieve a level of importance compared to these two mean scores. Republican state-level committees (1.53) and parish-level committees (1.47) receive significantly lower mean scores.[119] Republican challengers are not finding outside groups, beyond interest groups, at all important. Even parish-level and state-level financial support is not important to Republicans, showing that the Democrats are financially more effective organizations whether directly or indirectly assisting candidates.

[115] Parish vs. IGs/PACs $t = 2.345$, $p < .039$.
[116] Parish, state, PAC, and IGs all significantly greater than $t = 2.345$, $p < .039$.
[117] IG vs. PACs $t = 1.871$, $p < .080$.
[118] $t = 2.626$, $p < .030$.
[119] $t = 2.750$, $p < .016$.

After friends and families, open-seat candidates for both parties assign their highest levels of influence to interest groups (2.00 and 2.17), PACs (2.00 and 2.00), LCCs (2.00 and 1.92) then the state parties (1.75 and 1.67). Consistent with the financial data, open-seat candidates find party services less important than challengers. With the exception of LCCs, open-seat candidates trail challengers in finding groups important to their campaigns. One would expect to see open-seat candidates receiving more assistance than challengers, but this is not the case in Louisiana. Some groups give more attention to open-seat candidates, while others give more attention to challengers. There are no consistent patterns in this support within or across parties. Fundraising obviously varies tremendously on a case-to-case, candidate-to-candidate basis. Though the differences between challengers and open-seat candidates are small, open-seat candidates still largely found interest groups (2.00, 2.17) and political action committees (2.00) to be the most important financial resources in their legislative campaigns. Finally, there is a significant disparity between the levels of importance in fundraising assistance between noncompetitive candidates and competitive candidates.[120]

In summary, the pattern of financial support in Louisiana is fairly clear. Open-seat candidates and incumbents are more likely to find LCC fundraising assistance important, while challengers are more likely to find the RPL and LDP important. Unfortunately for the state parties, they consistently trail interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees in importance. Interest groups are the most important financial groups across all candidates in both parties. Even in the South, Democrats will occasionally find unions to be just as important as the state parties. Either way, state legislative campaigns are largely self-financed and rely on friends and

[120] F-score 6.206, $p < .0001$.

family. There are some party differences, as the Republican Party of Louisiana is not important for any state legislative candidates, but the Louisiana Democratic Party is important to challengers. These survey results are critical because they suggest that the parties intermittently play important roles in state legislative campaigns in ways not readily apparent by solely examining financial data. Because financial assistance takes a variety of forms, researchers must be diligent about how they measure and assess party financial efforts. Overall, LCCs, interest groups, political action committees, and unions (though only among Democrats) have eclipsed the parties in relative value. If the LDP and RPL are to be more influential, then they must either become more active in fundraising or become more visible in fundraising. As it exists now, the perception held by the candidates is that parties lag behind other actors in relative influence.

One final note – a question was included in the questionnaire asking candidates, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with accounting and filing reports with the state ethics committee?" Regardless of the party, competitiveness, and types of contests, candidates generally do not rely on anyone to help them file accounting reports or answer accounting questions (Table 2.13). Though finance laws are more complex, candidates are not seeking help in filing paperwork in Louisiana.

Gauging Public Opinion and Mobilizing Voters

Grassroots mobilization has been and remains the most basic function of the party (Aldrich 1995, Bibby 2003, Frendreis and Gitelson 1999, Hogan 2003, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004, White and Shea 2004). Even decline theorists noticed (though they stressed party decline and unimportance compared to previous times) the continued

Table 2.13: How important were the following groups in assisting with filing accounting/state ethics reports?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	2.75	1.67	3.11	3.80	3.00	4.33	2.44	2.60	1.67	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	4.33	1.50	1.48	1.60
Parish	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.17	1.11	1.06	1.07	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.25	1.00	1.07	1.09	1.00
State	1.17	1.33	1.11	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.22	1.27	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.13	1.00
LCCs	1.25	1.00	1.33	1.27	1.17	1.33	1.89	1.67	3.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.45	1.00	1.75	1.71	1.17	4.20
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.04	1.04	1.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.13	1.00
IGs	1.25	1.00	1.33	1.40	1.00	1.67	1.28	1.27	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.14	1.00	1.80
PACs	1.08	1.00	1.11	1.20	1.17	1.22	1.17	1.20	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.09	1.00
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Competitiveness F = 1.911, p< .018; Party F = .732, p< .678; Competition F = 3.900 p< .000, Seat Type F = 2.554, p< .001

emphasis by parties on providing grassroots support (Crotty 1984). Today, without a doubt, the parties' most visible role is within their most traditional realm, the function of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters (Blumberg et al 2003). What is different is the manner in which the parties gauge public opinion and mobilize voters. Studies show that parties have done this in a myriad of ways like conducting benchmark polls, compiling electronic voter databases, distributing posters and lawn signs, writing letters, mailing literature, monitoring news broadcasts, assisting voter registration, organizing get-out-the-vote drives, recruiting volunteer workers, arranging transportation, and phone banking voters to vote on Election Day (Frendreis and Gitelson 1999; Hogan 2003, Blumberg et al. 2003, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004). Parties are increasingly elevating the importance of gauging public opinion over mobilization, and these two previously connected activities are now largely distinct activities. Keeping accurate and up-to-date electronic databases can be as consequential and important as making sure that voters are even registered and that campaigns are stocked with volunteers (Herrnson 2004, White and Shea 2004). The modern campaign is more technical and precise. As such, candidates need minute pieces of information regarding electoral tendencies and voting habits of each neighborhood within a precinct and each precinct within a district (Goodhart 1999, Blumberg et al 2003). Yet, are the candidates still going to the state parties for this information? Previous studies show that some legislative candidates still rely primarily on their state parties for voter information, though this number is declining (Francia et al. 2003). Nevertheless, grassroots mobilization still ranks among the highest and most important function for parties (Hogan 2003, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004).

In Louisiana, the RPL and LDP kept computer databases with general information about registered voters, electoral patterns, and volunteers. The ease of accessing this information, the timeliness of this information, and the usefulness of this information vary according to the candidate or official. This data was a combination of information obtained from the national committees and the Secretary of State's office. The RPL paid for its database, but made access free to state legislative candidates. Mike Skinner and the Louisiana Democratic Party organized a coordinated campaign between statewide candidates and legislative candidates during the 2003 state election. Among the coordinated services were literature drops, registration drives, GOTV phone banks, polling, and databases. The polling data, in conjunction with the voter databases, helped statewide candidates target certain demographics in certain districts with certain messages and medias. It also allowed local candidates to see which issues were currently important to various groups, allowing them to adjust issue positions, media strategies, and target audiences accordingly.[121] In fact, one successful statewide Democratic candidate took it on himself to share his coordinated poll information with some legislative candidates, even if they had not paid into the coordinated effort. He recounted this by saying, "I shared my polling and my research with others, particularly rural legislators, so they could target audiences and issues…[poll data] gives them 'snapshots' of what is on the mind of voters…while I may have paid for it, why can't others use it?"[122] Perhaps this unselfishness is one reason the Democrats swept all but one statewide office in the 2003 election.[123] In both parties, one quickly picked up on the heightened awareness within the parties regarding the importance of good voter information, up-to-

[121] Interview with Author June 17th & 25th, 2004.
[122] Interview with Author August 16, 2004.
[123] Interview with Author June 8th & 25th, 2004.

date voter databases, and timely issue research. It was a constantly occurring theme in all interviews with party officials and legislative candidates.[124] Similarly, the HDCC and RLDCC gathered information and databases from the national Hill Committees.[125]

The Republican Party of Louisiana and Louisiana Democratic Party participated in voter volunteer recruitment as well. Attempts were made by the RPL and LDP to recruit volunteers; however, state-level committees recruited primarily for statewide elections and not local elections. Both parties used their websites to solicit volunteers and steer them towards candidates and campaigns in their area. Candidates were primarily expected to recruit their own volunteers or rely on parish-level committees and organizations. In New Orleans, African American candidates did not have to rely on the party, as urban political organizations like BOLD and SOUL generally provided all the manpower these candidates needed. Likewise, many Republicans benefited from local mobilization efforts of the Louisiana Federation of Republican Women and College Republicans. [126]

The Republican Party of Louisiana and Louisiana Democratic Party made voter registration a priority, though the two parties utilized different strategies. The LDP focused on urban areas where traditionally Democratic constituencies were under-registered. The LDP concentrated on urban areas in Shreveport, Baton Rouge, Alexandria, and Lafayette where African American enrollment is historically lower than average. Several PEC and RSCC members coordinated with candidates to set up voter registration tables outside grocery stores, Dollar Generals, and Wal-Marts. Some Democrats did not need to rely on party efforts for grassroots mobilization because of the

[124] Interview with Author June 7th, 8th, 17th, & 25th, 2004.
[125] Interview with Author June 17th, 2004.
[126] Interview with Author June 17th & 25th, 2004.

presence of organizations like BOLD and SOUL. These New Orleans African American grassroots organizations act like parties in mobilizing support for candidates by informing voters where their precincts are and arranging transportation for them. BOLD and SOUL also assists with voter registration and educates voters how to vote early or by absentee ballot. Organizations like BOLD and SOUL reduce the need for LDP efforts in New Orleans, hence the absence of the LDP in New Orleans.[127] The RPL also places a large emphasis on voter registration, though its efforts historically focus on getting voters to change their registration (referred to as "re-registration" by one official) because most of its adherents are largely already registered. The College Republicans and Louisiana Federation of Republican Women, often in conjunction with the RPL, generally organized much of the registration drives. RPL re-registration drives targeted rural areas in South Louisiana, also utilizing larger grocery stores, malls, and Wal-Marts. Regardless of their actual success, officials in both parties engaged in a great deal of self-promotion regarding the importance and effectiveness of their voter registration drives. Finally, GOTV reminders for both parties came in the form of targeted mailings, literature drops, and phone banks.[128] Organizations tend to inflate their importance, and it is necessary to balance their perceived importance with evaluations from the candidates asking them who they felt were the most important groups in gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters.

The survey asked respondents three questions to assess the three aspects of gauging public opinion and voter mobilization. The first question (Table 2.14) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information

[127] Interview with Author June 27th, 2005.
[128] Interview with Author June 8th & 25th, 2004.

about voters?" The second question (Table 2.15) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day?" Finally, the third question (Table 2.16) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with volunteer workers?" It is in the area of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters that the state parties finally receive some high scores of importance.

Table 2.14 displays the mean scores assessing the importance of groups in providing campaigns with information about voters. The MANOVA test indicates that party and seat type were significant predictors for the level of involvement of certain groups. The RPL was slightly more effective than the LDP and open-seat candidates indicated receiving more effective information than challengers and incumbents. When asked how important certain groups were in supplying information about voters, incumbents accorded relatively higher levels of importance for state parties on this question than any other previous question. Republican and Democratic incumbents give decent scores to their respective state party (2.44 and 1.93), though Republicans were more impressed with these efforts than Democrats.[129] Similarly, Republican incumbents found the RLDCC (2.39) more effective than Democrats found the HDCC (1.61).[130] The HDCC is eclipsed in importance even by parish-level committees (1.93) and unions (1.71). The HDCC was not effective in supplying incumbents with information; however, the RLDCC was very effective with Republican incumbents. In fact, incumbents significantly mention the RLDCC (2.39) and RPL (2.44) above all other

[129] $t = 1.630$, $p < .101$.
[130] $t = 2.198$, $p < .033$.

Table 2.14: How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information about voters?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.00	3.33	2.89	2.40	2.33	2.44	4.00	3.87	4.67	4.38	4.50	4.33	3.80	3.75	3.83	2.00	1.87	2.60
Parish	1.50	1.33	1.56	1.40	1.67	1.22	1.61	1.60	1.67	1.88	2.00	1.83	2.15	2.38	2.00	1.93	1.83	2.40
State	2.33	2.00	2.44	1.80	1.83	2.22	2.44	2.47	2.33	2.25	2.50	2.17	2.40	1.75	2.83	1.93	1.83	2.40
LCCs	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.27	1.33	1.22	2.39	2.27	3.00	1.38	1.50	1.33	1.25	1.00	1.42	1.61	1.57	1.80
National	1.08	1.00	1.11	1.13	1.17	1.11	1.56	1.60	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.07	1.04	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.50	1.00	1.45	1.88	1.17	1.71	1.70	1.80
IGs	1.75	1.67	1.78	2.00	1.83	2.11	1.72	1.67	2.00	2.00	1.50	2.17	1.90	1.63	2.08	1.75	1.70	2.00
PACs	1.08	1.00	1.11	1.20	1.50	1.00	1.44	1.40	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.30	1.25	1.33	1.32	1.39	1.00
N	12.00	3.00	9.00	15.00	6.00	9.00	18.00	15.00	3.00	8.00	2.00	6.00	20.00	8.00	12.00	28.00	23.00	5.00

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 2.061, p< .020; Party F = 2.709, p< .008; Competition F = .829 p< .592, Seat Type F = 1.786, p< .031

groups.[131] The RLDCC mean scores increase even more when noncompetitive Republicans are removed from the analysis. Interest groups also registered a small impact (1.75, 1.72). In summary, incumbents found state party efforts effective, though the RPL graded higher than the LDP. Democrats found parish-level committees as useful state-level committees, and both groups more useful than the HDCC. Republican incumbents found the efforts of the RLDCC and RPL to have been equally effective but more important than any other group.

When examining challengers, the state parties retain their relative influence compared to other groups. Democratic challengers give higher mean scores to the LDP (2.40) than Republicans give to the RPL (1.83), which is the opposite pattern observed with incumbents.[132] Once again, Democrats cite parish-level committees as being equally important as state-level committees in supplying voter information. In asking a party official about this, he responded that what often happens is that parish members provide electoral "tips" regarding which regions of the parish may be more susceptible to certain messages – e.g. which precincts lean Democrat and which precincts lean Republican. Also, parish members will inform and supply the database rather than state central committee members, though it is the state-level committee that possesses the database.[133] For Republicans, parish-level committees are not factors (1.40), and the state-level committee (2.22) eclipses them in relative value.[134] Finally, Republicans (2.00) and Democrats (1.90) cite interest groups as being slightly important suppliers of information. LCCs are not at all helpful to challengers in supplying information about

[131] All scores at least $t = 3.071$, $p < .001$.
[132] $t = 2.327$, $p < .023$.
[133] Interview with Author June 29th, 2004.
[134] $t = 2.320$, $p < .036$.

voters, but this is not surprising and is consistent with LCC treatment towards challengers in other categories. The critical finding is the emergence of the importance of the LDP and RPL.

Open-seat candidates provide results that are similar to challengers. Democrats complimented the efforts of the state-level committees (2.25), interest groups (2.00) and parish-level committees (1.88). Apart from the slight decline of the parish-level scores, the results mirror those of Democratic challengers. Similarly, Republican open-seat candidates say the information received from state-level committees (2.33) and interest groups (1.75) was the most important. Republican open-seat candidates also failed to note parish-level committees.[135] Generally speaking, the pattern of importance in both parties recorded by open-seat candidates is similar to the pattern of importance recorded by challengers. The heightened importance of the state party in supplying voter information and the presence of higher scores than other groups is the significant finding among open-seat candidates.

The Republican Party of Louisiana and the Louisiana Democratic Party recorded some measurable influence in their efforts to supply information about voters (Table 2.14). The scores for the RPL and LDP by incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates in this category eclipse the mean scores of any other groups and are the highest mean scores for the parties by all three groups than in any other category examined to this point. While Republicans find state-level committees and interest groups to be the most important groups, Democrats are equally complimentary of parish-level committees, state-level committees, and, lastly, interest groups. Overall, the RPL and RLDCC outperformed the LDP and HDCC in this area. Nevertheless, candidates

[135] State-level versus parish-level $t = 2.880$, $p < .008$; interest groups $t = 1.548$, $p < .143$).

found the information supplied by the state parties to be more valuable, effective, and important than the information supplied by any other group. And, the candidates are going to the party for these services. Nearly two-thirds of all the Democrats and Republicans in this survey indicated they went to the RPL and LDP with requests for voter information. If nothing else, supplying information about voters is one thing the parties are doing well and one thing that legislative candidates are earnestly soliciting parties for help. Are the parties equally effective with the more intensive task of voter mobilization?

Get-out-the-vote (GOTV) drives are a traditional party activity within the voter mobilization rubric. While precinct captains with their heavy-handed tactics of "encouraging" people to vote are largely iconic symbols of past party-as-machine models, parties still take great strides to register people to vote and organize means to get voters out on Election Day. The results, displayed in Table 2.15, show that state legislative candidates view the state parties as being important, though there is some significant discrepancy between the two parties. The MANOVA test verifies that party and seat type explain the level of importance in assistance with registering voters and getting them out on Election Day. Regardless of the type of contest, Democrats identify the LDP as being an important group in assisting with voter mobilization, a score that is almost significantly higher than the RPL.[136] Democratic incumbents (2.04), challengers (2.30) and open-seats candidates (2.25) all cite the LDP, at the parish and state level, as being the most important group in assisting with voter mobilization and voter registration.[137]

[136] $t = 1.592$, $p < .119$.
[137] T-values range from 3.907 to 6.432 and all have $p < .001$.

Table 2.15: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	2.75	3.00	2.67	2.07	2.17	2.00	4.00	3.80	5.00	4.50	4.50	4.50	3.80	4.00	3.67	2.43	2.04	4.20
Parish	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.40	1.50	1.33	1.50	1.53	1.33	2.13	2.00	2.17	2.05	2.25	1.92	2.07	2.00	2.40
State	2.08	1.67	2.22	1.60	1.33	1.78	2.56	2.53	2.67	2.25	2.50	2.17	2.30	1.63	2.75	2.04	1.87	2.80
LCCs	1.67	1.33	1.78	1.27	1.50	1.11	2.50	2.27	3.67	1.25	1.50	1.17	1.30	1.00	1.50	1.46	1.48	1.40
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.00	1.11	1.72	1.80	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.50	1.00	1.35	1.63	1.17	1.50	1.48	1.60
IGs	1.42	1.33	1.44	1.87	1.67	2.00	1.61	1.60	1.67	1.88	2.00	1.83	1.60	1.25	1.83	1.54	1.57	1.40
PACs	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.20	1.50	1.00	1.44	1.40	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.30	1.25	1.33	1.32	1.39	1.00
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 2.162, p< .006; Party F = 3.705, p< .001; Competition F = 1.377 p< .212, Seat Type F = 2.071, p< .009

While the state political party still lags behind friends and family in importance (continually and consistently reminding us of the legacy of the "friends and neighbors" aspect of state legislative elections), the relative value of the party mean score is significant when compared to other organizations in their assistance towards Democrats. Interestingly enough, Democrats also note the incredibly slight influence of interest groups (1.50, 1.60, 1.88). Interest groups have clearly assisted some candidates with voter registration and mobilization, though the scores are neither as important nor as significant as the LDP.[138] A consistent pattern throughout this chapter has been that open-seat candidates are larger recipients of party assistance than challengers; however, among Democrats, open-seat candidates (2.25) do not significantly find party registration and mobilization services more effective for them than challengers (2.30). All Democratic candidates received a comparable level of support and, consequently, equally noted the importance of state-level committees and parish-level committees. No other groups appear to have been significantly important to Democrats with registering voters and getting them out to vote on Election Day.

Republicans also found the Republican Party of Louisiana as being an important group in assisting them with voter mobilization and voter registration. The RPL overall mean (2.11) barely lags behind the LDP (2.16), but it was still noted as being more important than any other group in this category of campaign services. The mean scores given to the state party from incumbents (2.56), challengers (1.60), and open-seat candidates (2.08) do show some variability. The 1.60 by challengers is heavily affected by the fact that noncompetitive Republican challengers, with a mean score of 1.33,

[138] $t = 3.907$, $p < .000$.

assigned an incredibly low level of importance to the state party.[139] Challengers appear not to have been targeted by party GOTV efforts as much as incumbents and open-seat candidates and, concomitantly, did not find party GOTV efforts at all important. Interestingly enough, interest groups (1.88) were more important to challengers than the state party (1.67) and there the only group deemed to have been important to challengers. Thus, this table suggests that the RPL is more discriminatory in its GOTV efforts than the LDP. When looking at incumbents and open-seat Republicans, different patterns emerge.

Open-seat Republicans acknowledge receiving significant support from the Republican Party of Louisiana. Incumbents appreciated party efforts more than challengers and open-seat candidates but also received some assistance from the RLDCC (2.50) and the national party (1.72). This was not an expected pattern, though one individual speculated that efforts by the national party to register and mobilize voters for the Jindal campaign might have positively contaminated registration efforts for legislative incumbents.[140] Even the local parish-level Republican organizations significantly lagged parish-level Democratic organizations in importance.[141] This theme also consistently appears between Republicans and Democrats. Democrats have long emphasized grassroots mobilization in the form of voter registration drives, while Republicans have not emphasized such activities to the same degree. Republican Party advancement has also been a top-down advancement; thus, many parish-level Republican organizations remain underdeveloped or absent in portions of the state. As a result, we see more active

[139] T-scores range from 2.085 to 5.809 and all have $p < .043$ (with the lone exception being difference between LCCs and state party $t = 1.132$, $p < .132$).
[140] Interview with Author June 28th, 2004. When asked why incumbents were affected more than other groups he speculated that other candidates may not have been able to properly distinguish the group responsible for the registration drives. This was his speculation, but no other possibilities were suggested by anyone else. The LCC's score suggests that some kind of LCC-RNC-RPL coordination occurred, though my interviews and contacts were unsuccessful in confirming or denying this fact.
[141] $t = 2.474$, $p < .015$.

state-level committees and parish-level committees among Democrats. Outside the state-level initiated activities of the RPL, Republican registration efforts by other groups were not noticed and were not gauged important. Outside of the parties, Republicans do not appear to receive assistance in voter mobilization from many sources nor does voter mobilization seem to have been emphasized to the same degree as by Democrats. In this survey, more Democrats, by a 67% to 56% margin, said they leaned on the state party for GOTV support. Despite the disparities between the level of importance between Republicans and Democrats, the RPL and LDP are the most important groups for both parties in the area of registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day.

Lastly, we look to see which groups were most important to candidates in recruiting volunteers (Table 2.16). The MANOVA test indicates that party was the most significant predictor of the level of importance of group activity. Generally speaking and not surprisingly, the most important groups for most candidates were parish-level organizations. For example, incumbents from both parties indicated that the state-level committees were not much help (1.25, 1.44). Party officials and candidates verified this information. One said, "Volunteer workers were reserved for the governor's election. In no uncertain terms they [LDP] made it clear that the governor's race was of paramount importance and we should turn to local organizations for help."[142] Parish-level organizations were expected to pick up the tab in this department, and this survey indicated that all Democrats, regardless of contest, found their parish-level committees (1.79, 2.35, 2.13) the most important groups along with unions (1.86, 1.50, 2.00) and friends and families (3.57-4.88). All were more important than the state-level committee

[142] Interview with Author, June 7th, 2005.

Table 2.16: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with volunteer workers?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.83	5.00	4.78	3.93	4.50	3.56	4.50	4.40	5.00	4.88	5.00	4.83	4.75	4.50	4.92	3.57	3.43	4.20
Parish	2.08	2.33	2.00	1.60	1.50	1.67	1.83	1.80	2.00	2.13	2.00	2.17	2.35	2.38	2.33	1.79	1.74	2.00
State	1.75	1.33	1.89	1.93	1.83	2.00	1.44	1.33	2.00	1.63	2.00	1.50	1.80	1.63	1.92	1.25	1.22	1.40
LCCs	1.42	1.00	1.56	1.60	1.50	1.67	2.11	2.07	2.33	1.13	1.00	1.17	1.35	1.00	1.58	1.43	1.35	1.80
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.00	1.11	1.11	1.07	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.50	2.17	1.50	1.38	1.58	1.86	1.78	2.20
IGs	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.87	1.67	2.00	2.11	1.87	3.33	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.70	1.50	1.83	1.57	1.52	1.80
PACs	1.33	1.00	1.44	1.20	1.50	1.00	1.44	1.20	2.67	1.38	1.00	1.50	1.65	1.63	1.67	1.43	1.43	1.40
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

MANOVA: Competitiveness X Party F = 2.213, p< .029; Party F = 4.227, p< .000; Competition F = 1.111 p< .364, Seat Type F = 1.998, p< .012

of the LDP.[143] An interesting participant of importance were unions, the most notable of these being the shipyard unions in the river parishes and some teacher organizations. Democratic incumbents cited the unions (1.86) as being the most significant organization. Obviously, Republicans did not rely on unions. In place of unions, Republican incumbents found the assistance received by LCCs (2.11) and interest groups (2.11) to be more important than other groups and the state party.[144] Notable party assistance, when it was noticed, came from parish-level committees (1.83).[145] Thus, apart from friends and family, the assistance incumbents found to be the most influential were unions, LCCs, and interest groups. The RPL fell below all three of these groups in importance; however, the data for challengers is slightly different.

While incumbents found the assistance in recruiting volunteers by parties not to be influential or important, challengers found party assistance to be more important. Challengers in both parties found the level of assistance from their state-level committees (1.80, 1.93) to have been more valuable than the assistance incumbents received by the state-level committees.[146] Democrats found party assistance at the parish level (2.35) to have been more beneficial than assistance from state-level committees (1.60).[147] In contrast, Republican challengers give far higher marks to the state party (1.93) than parish level organizations (1.60).[148] When talking to a challenger, he frustratingly noted that the state committee did favor the governor's race, but was complimentary of the support he received from parish committees because they were far more concerned with

[143] $t = 3.841$, $p < .000$; $t = 1.607$, $p < .114$; $t = 14.850$, $p < .000$.
[144] $t = 2.486$, $p < .024$; $t = 2.608$, $p < .018$.
[145] $t = 1.511$, $p < .149$.
[146] $t = 2.802$, $p < .036$.
[147] $t = 2.146$, $p < .045$.
[148] $t = 2.646$, $p < .019$.

local races.[149] Both incumbents and challengers were generally given a back seat to the gubernatorial contest; however, challengers were apparently not as turned off by this as incumbents. Challengers also indicated a minor influence from interest groups (1.70, 1.87). Outside of parish-level committees for Democrats and the state-level committees for Republicans, no other groups appear to have substantially helped challengers in recruiting volunteers. When comparing the open-seats candidates of both parties to the challengers of both parties, the same pattern appears.

Open-seat candidates found the support from parish-level committees (2.18, 2.03) in recruiting volunteers to be the most influential after friends and family (4.88, 4.83). Nevertheless, one substantial difference occurs between interest groups and state-level committees. Republican challengers found the assistance of interest groups as important as state-level committees, but Republican open-seat candidates found the assistance from state-level committees (1.75) to exceed interest groups (1.58).[150] Republican open-seat candidates found only party assistance important, but Democratic open-seat candidates benefit from more diverse support. Democratic challengers found state-level committees more influential than interest group or unions, but Democratic open-seat candidates report the opposite. For them, unions (2.00) were slightly more effective than state-level committees (1.63). Overall, the results suggest that the LDP and unions were helpful to Democratic open-seat candidates. Open-seat candidates appear to have been targeted differently by different groups, indicating that seat type is a predictor for group behavior. Open-seat candidates largely appreciated the recruitment efforts of their friends and

[149] Interview with Author June 25th, 2005.
[150] $t = 2.138$, $p < .056$.

family and parish-level committees before interest groups and state-level committees. Volunteer recruitment is a local activity for state legislative candidates.

In the area of volunteer recruitment, the analysis shows that the traditional belief of parties as important recruiting networks for volunteers needs to be reconsidered in Louisiana. Parish-level committees, interest groups, unions, and friends and family are the most important networks for Democrats. For Republicans, parish-level committees, interest groups, and friends and family state-level committees are most important. Only Republican challengers did not find the parish-level committees at all important, in favor of state-level committees. The state party clearly aimed its volunteer resources at gubernatorial candidates at the expense of state legislative candidates. State legislative candidates are expected to rely on local organizations for establishing, providing, and finding volunteer workers. In fact, only 18% of all Republican candidates and only 15% of all Democratic candidates in this survey indicated they went to the state committees for help. The parties provide help, but it is up to the parish-level committees to supply this help. Across the board, friends and family and candidates themselves do this the best.

In conclusion, when considering all the activities under the rubric of gauging public opinion and voter mobilization, the highest scores assessed to the state party come in its assistance with supplying information about voters and registering voters. The trend that emerges from this analysis is that the Republican Party of Louisiana and the Louisiana Democratic Party have recorded some measurable influence in these two areas. The scores for the RPL and LDP by incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates in this category eclipse the means scores of any other groups and are the highest mean

scores for the parties by all three groups than in any other category examined in this study. The continued emphasis by the RPL and LDP on voter registration and database maintenance has been noticed and successful to a degree. Thus, the strength of party activity in relation to state legislative elections lay in GOTV drives and voter databases. If these databases are maintained, their access eased, and the information kept up to date, the parties could find their relative worth immensely increasing.

The traditional state political party organizations in Louisiana have maintained their importance with mobilizing voters, registering voters, and supplying information about voters; however, the parties have lost their comparable worth in volunteer recruitment. The open-seat gubernatorial contest diverted many resources of the state parties away from state legislative elections, leaving parish-level committees to fill in the gaps. For Democrats, this was not a bad strategy given their numerical majority in both houses and the relative ease with which the majority could be maintained. For Republicans, the emphasis on the gubernatorial contest could be explained because the odds of a party switch in the legislature were incredibly small, and governors in Louisiana carry a great deal of legislative clout. Republicans accomplished plenty with Mike Foster at the helm of a Democratic legislature, and it was natural for them to assume that placing all their eggs in the basket of Bobby Jindal would produce the same results. Apparently, the Republicans did not benefit this time around and were swept out of all statewide offices except one and experienced their smallest legislative gain since the 1992 election.

Conclusion

Tip O'Neil is credited with saying "All politics is local." The colloquialism applies even more so with state legislative elections. Campaigns are local, but state legislative elections are even more local. Across all categories for all groups, friends and neighbors is the group that candidates in Louisiana rely heavily on and find most important to their campaigns in providing campaign services. The influences of the Louisiana Democratic Party and Republican Party of Louisiana during state legislative elections pale in comparison to friends and family. While the average influence noted for friends and family is "very" important, at their best the two parties still score two categories below in the "slightly important" range. Consistent with other literature, this analysis demonstrates that core constituencies are an important attribute in state legislative elections and that successful campaigns are built from the bottom-up (Gaddie 2004). This means local candidates turn first to friends and family for support, then work their way out. Parish-level committees are the closest in proximity to state legislative candidates and offer the best hope of sustained and important party-candidate relationships. Overall, the LDP and RPL supply resources and are an active group in state legislative elections, but they are not consistently an important group among candidates running for state legislature. Only in the realm of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections can the RPL and LDP be considered a significant and important electoral resource. In all other categories, both parties consistently fail to play an important or effective role.

Table 2.17 summarizes the mean scores given to state party activities divided by party, then further subdivided by seat type and competitiveness. Table 2.18 summarizes

the mean scores given to state party activities according to party, seat type, and competitiveness, while Table 2.19 summarizes the mean scores given to county party activities according to party, seat type, and competitiveness. By examining these additional tables, we gain a clear synopsis of party activity in Louisiana.

First, the trend that emerges in this chapter is that the Republican Party of Louisiana and the Louisiana Democratic Party have recorded some measurable influence in their efforts to supply information about voters, register people to vote, and mobilize voters on Election Day. In these three areas, the scores for the RPL and LDP by incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates, regardless of competitiveness, eclipse the mean scores of all other groups, are the highest mean scores for the state parties, and are high enough to indicate the party played an important and effective role. The only significant deviation from this pattern occurs among Republican challengers who were dissatisfied with party GOTV and voter information efforts. They found party support formulating issue positions and party assistance recruiting volunteer workers to have been more consequential. This survey indicates that the RPL may have been slightly more effective than the LDP in supplying information, but the LDP may have been slightly more effective than the RPL in registering voters.[151] Gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters, though excluding volunteer recruiting from this observation, are the most important party activities undertaken by the state parties in the opinion of state legislative candidates.

Second, the decision to run in Louisiana is a highly personal decision made in conjunction with friends and family. Over 90% of the candidates surveyed relied on their friends and family; however, only 36% of the Democrats and 43% of the Republicans

[151] Differences were statistically insignificant.

Table 2.17: Mean scores within all categories

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.67	1.00	1.89	1.80	1.50	2.00	1.33	1.33	1.33	2.00	1.50	2.17	1.70	1.63	1.75	1.36	1.35	1.40
Voter Information	2.33	2.00	2.44	1.80	1.83	1.78	2.44	2.47	2.33	2.25	2.50	2.17	2.40	1.75	2.83	1.93	1.83	2.40
Registering Voters	2.08	1.67	2.22	1.60	1.33	1.78	2.56	2.53	2.67	2.25	2.50	2.17	2.30	1.63	2.75	2.04	1.87	2.80
Media Advertising	1.58	1.33	1.67	1.67	1.50	1.78	1.56	1.53	1.67	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.55	1.25	1.75	1.75	1.74	1.80
Accounting	1.17	1.33	1.11	1.20	1.00	1.33	1.22	1.27	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.13	1.00
Fundraising	1.67	1.33	1.78	1.53	1.33	1.67	1.39	1.40	1.33	1.75	1.50	1.83	2.05	1.38	2.50	1.18	1.09	1.60
Issue Positions	1.75	1.67	1.78	2.00	1.67	2.22	1.67	1.73	1.33	1.75	1.50	1.83	1.70	1.38	1.92	1.50	1.48	1.60
Recruiting Workers	1.75	1.33	1.89	1.93	1.83	2.00	1.44	1.33	2.00	1.63	2.00	1.50	1.80	1.63	1.92	1.25	1.22	1.40
Strategies	1.75	2.00	1.67	1.53	1.50	1.56	1.61	1.67	1.33	1.88	2.00	1.83	1.75	1.38	2.00	1.21	1.17	1.40
Management	1.83	1.67	1.89	1.67	1.33	1.89	1.56	1.53	1.67	1.63	1.50	1.67	1.45	1.00	1.75	1.25	1.22	1.40
Professionals	1.67	1.67	1.67	1.53	1.50	1.56	1.78	1.67	2.33	1.50	1.00	1.67	1.40	1.38	1.42	1.14	1.13	1.20
N	12	3	9	15	6	9	18	15	3	8	2	6	20	8	12	28	23	5

Table 2.18: Mean scores for state-level party committees by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Party		Competitiveness		Seat Type		
	Democrat	GOP	C	N-C	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.57	1.58	1.82	1.39	1.35	1.74	1.80
Voter Information	2.14	2.20	2.36	2.02	2.13	2.14	2.30
Registering Voters	2.16	2.11	2.36	1.96	2.24	2.00	2.15
Media Advertising	1.66	1.60	1.73	1.56	1.67	1.60	1.60
Accounting Reports	1.05	1.20	1.09	1.14	1.15	1.09	1.10
Assisting Fundraising	1.57	1.51	1.91	1.26	1.26	1.83	1.70
Formulating Issue Positions	1.61	1.80	1.86	1.56	1.57	1.83	1.75
Recruiting Workers	1.50	1.69	1.82	1.40	1.33	1.86	1.70
Formulating Strategies	1.50	1.62	1.70	1.44	1.37	1.66	1.80
Campaign Management	1.38	1.67	1.75	1.32	1.37	1.54	1.75
Hiring Professionals	1.29	1.67	1.57	1.37	1.39	1.46	1.60
N	56	45	44	57	46	35	20

Table 2.19: Mean scores for parish-level committees by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Party		Competitiveness		Seat Type		
	Democrat	GOP	C	N-C	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.68	1.64	1.93	1.46	1.48	1.69	2.05
Voter Information	2.00	1.51	1.75	1.81	1.80	1.83	1.65
Registering Voters	2.07	1.49	1.80	1.82	1.85	1.77	1.80
Media Advertising	1.54	1.33	1.52	1.39	1.39	1.51	1.45
Assisting Fundraising	1.68	1.44	1.91	1.32	1.33	1.89	1.60
Formulating Issue Positions	1.69	1.78	1.98	1.55	1.43	1.92	2.04
Recruiting Workers	2.04	1.82	2.05	1.86	1.80	2.03	2.10
Formulating Strategies	1.73	1.51	1.82	1.49	1.54	1.80	1.55
Campaign Management	1.54	1.53	1.68	1.42	1.50	1.54	1.60
Hiring Professionals	1.23	1.49	1.48	1.25	1.28	1.37	1.45
N	56	45	44	57	46	35	20

surveyed acknowledged being approached by the state party. And, though the percentage of candidates claiming to have heard from the parties sounds high, the overall impact of party efforts is small and not important. Party recruiting occurs infrequently, though competitive challengers and open-seat candidates were targeted and noticed it more. This is logical because Republicans and Democrats have as their goals reducing intra-party disputes to increase the odds of winning and contesting elections to increase party competitiveness. Consistent with literature, history, and interviews, the RPL appears to have been slightly more active in recruiting than Democrats, but the difference between the two parties' mean scores indicates that the difference in the registered impact was very small. Clearly, the Louisiana Democratic Party and Republican Party of Louisiana are not important recruiters in state legislative elections, and the decision to run is personal.

Third, the Republican Party of Louisiana is doing a slightly better job than the Louisiana Democratic Party in the realm of campaign management. In all three dimensions within campaign management – formulating strategies, overall campaign management, hiring professionals – the Republican Party of Louisiana is playing a significantly more important role than the LDP for Democratic legislative candidates.[152] Open-seat Republicans mention party assistance with campaign management to be the third most important activity provided by the state party and Republican incumbents note hiring campaign professionals is the third most important service provided by the party. For Democrats, none of these three dimensions is mentioned within the top three. Nevertheless, the overall mean scores given to the RPL and LDP in campaign management are relatively low and indicate their unimportance. Campaign management

[152] Professionals $t = 2.456$, $p < .016$. Other two insignificant at $p < .111$.

is also a personal and candidate-centered activity in Louisiana. Parties are still generally incapable, and candidates are not yet ready to hand over complete control of their campaign.

Fourth, the Republican Party of Louisiana appears to have been more helpful in formulating issue positions for candidates than the Louisiana Democratic Party; however, the Louisiana Democratic Party did a better job, albeit barely, at providing media advertising and developing images. The homogeneity of Republicans makes them more amenable to generic party messages and themes, but this does not predict the success of advertising and images. Candidates assessed the LDP as having more effective media advertising and image development services, though only 20% of the candidates are going to the parties for this type of assistance. The only candidates to place these services within the top three are Republican challengers. Republican challengers cite formulating issue positions to be the single most important campaign service provided by the state party. The Republican strategy of hosting workshops, disseminating talking points, and emailing themes and messages was not a complete waste. Democratic incumbents found some media advertising support by the LDP to have made some small influence on their campaign. The generic mass mailings provided by the Democratic Party during the 2003 elections were minimally effective with Democratic incumbents. Outside of incumbents, the coordinated efforts of the LDP and the parallel campaign efforts of the RPL were not generally effective. Overall, both parties are neither effective nor important in the area of campaign communications.

Fifth, the pattern of financial support in Louisiana is fairly clear – the LDP and RPL are not important in state legislative elections. Despite more lenient campaign

limits, the RPL and LDP do not contribute substantial sums of money to state legislative candidates; therefore, state legislative candidates do not find them effective or important. Even though challengers and incumbents are more likely to receive party donations, incumbents are not more likely than challengers to find the party important. PACs, LCCs, interest groups, and unions (only among Democrats) have eclipsed the RPL and LDP. Louisiana's financial patterns conform with studies showing that LCCs donate strategically based on the absence of traditional state political party assistance (Gierzynski 1992), where the threat of electoral competition is greatest (Rosenthal 1995), and to those in positions of leadership (Shea 1995). The LDP is clearly the better provider of funds than the RPL, but the candidates do not reflect this fact. If the LDP and RPL are to be more influential, then they must become more active and visible in fundraising and networking. As it exists now, the perception held by the candidates is that parties lag behind other actors in relative influence.

Finally, other major trends are noticeable in Louisiana. The Democrats are better organized at the parish level, and Republicans are not as effectively organized. The top-down advancement of the Republican Party is evident today in these surveys, as the RPL still remain relatively underdeveloped at the parish-level. Yet, better parish-level committees are not necessarily causing candidates to find the LDP more important than the RPL.

Incumbents do not find the party to be very important in many areas. For them, regardless of party, the legislative campaign committees have eclipsed parties in relative importance. Louisiana's state parties cannot become more significant catalysts unless they are capable of providing assistance to incumbents. And, state parties cannot become

more responsible if they cannot maintain their importance to candidates after they have been successfully elected. Therein lies a dilemma. Limited resources force the parties to target certain candidates, and often the party will target those who do not already have support. Knowing that LCCs can support incumbents, parties strategically choose to ignore incumbents in favor of challengers and open-seat candidates; however, the parties force incumbents to rely more on LCCs because party support is absent. An electoral separation between the party and incumbents naturally creates a legislative separation between parties and officeholders. If parties are to be more successful in terms of responsibility, they must cultivate relationships with LCCs and incumbents.

Open-seat candidates generally receive more support from various groups at the expense of parties. Parties do not necessarily score higher marks of importance among open-seat candidates than challengers, though they admit to targeting open-seat candidates more than challengers. The reason for this loss of effectiveness is that open-seat candidates simultaneously are receiving support from so many other groups that the relative value of the state party to open-seat candidates is diminished. State parties lose the possibility of responsibility because the limited level of services they provide does not exceed the relative value of services offered by other groups. Until the party can correct this deficiency, the party will primarily remain only a valuable resource among challengers.

This prognosis is not good because incumbents are very rarely defeated in Louisiana. In this election cycle examined, only two incumbents were defeated. The parties are not successfully electing challengers because challengers do not get elected. While Louisiana's term limits are set to cause a slew of vacancies in 2007, this study also

shows that the parties are having problems eclipsing the relative value of other groups and are not deemed important by open-seat candidates. Much of this handicap is the product of the open-primary system of Louisiana, a system that both parties are more amenable than ever to replacing. The open primary is not the only problem. The RPL and LDP are under-staffed, under-funded, and organizationally bereft. Louisiana's parties are currently ill-structured to help with over 105 campaigns. If the parties have any hopes of entering the realm of a responsible mold, then this study suggests that they still have a ways to go because they are well-organized or well-coordinated campaign networks. To get there, the parties will have to overcome the relative value of interest groups, political action committees, legislative campaign committees, and unions. This will happen only with more funds to purchase these resources and if they distributed by experienced campaigners and bureaucrats. With the upcoming term limits, the parties have an incredible opportunity to make an impact. The possibility exists for party influence, but party efforts must improve. Until then, the responsible party model is a pipe dream.

CHAPTER THREE: Party Campaigning in Texas: Does Size Matter?

I thought I knew Texas pretty well, but I had no notion of its size until I campaigned it.

- Ann Richards

A Brief Electoral History

The political history of the state of Texas is very similar to the political history of its Southern neighbors; a once solid one-party Democratic state has been displaced by a more competitive two-party system. Yet, the party pendulum is currently swinging away from a two-party center back towards a one-party periphery. This time around it is the Republicans with the momentum. In fact, 2002 was an historic election year because the state government of Texas moved into a unified period of Republican control halfway through one of the most controversial redistricting battles in American history. Nonetheless, one should not interpret the condition of Republican unified government as a necessary indicator of the Republican Party of Texas being an effective organizational monolith. Like the Texas Democratic Party (TDP) in the 1940s and 1950s, the Republican Party of Texas (RPT) finds majority party status threatening its homogeneity and unity. Members who are passionately committed to the doctrine of the religious right are at odds with more moderate elements of the party (Bruce 1995, Lamare et al 2003). Not to mention, Texas' 254 counties span 261,194 square miles of land, which make it a tough challenge for any party to control or for any party to administratively oversee.[153] While much of the political patterns in Texas are familiar to the casual observer of party politics throughout the South, Texas' party politics retains some features that make its party history unique in several respects: first, the state's political party history lacks any clearly defined cleavages; second, though lacking any real cleavages, party politics has

[153] Texas Online @ http://www.texas.gov.

been defined by an intense and persistent conservatism; third, party competition arrived in Texas much earlier than in most Southern states; fourth, the Republican revival in Texas was so intense, allowing it to infiltrate more electoral levels more quickly than most other Southern states.

V.O. Key, in *Southern Politics in State and Nations*, identified several dominant factors driving the factional one-party battles in the South: geography, race, personalities, and economics. Yet, when Key arrives to his chapter summarizing Texas, he quickly informs the reader that "Texas conforms to none of these patterns" (Key 1949, 254). He titles his chapter on Texas "A Politics of Economics," but he is clearly uncomfortable with suggesting or concluding that Texas' politics is driven solely by economics. His vague categorization of Texas is evident in his loose discussion of modified class politics, conservatism, race, and oil and gas (Key 1949). Today these ingredients are visible in Texas politics but do not accurately capture the essence of Texas politics and, more importantly, Texas party politics. Key's Texas was changing tremendously and quickly; today's Texas is still changing tremendously and quickly. If the theme of Texas was "change" at the time of Key, then its biggest constant since Key remains its theme of "change." For example, Dallas/Ft. Worth, San Antonio, and Houston are among the fastest-growing cities in the entire United States, and it is not the traditional Southern demographic group of middle-class whites pushing this growth (Brown et al 2004). Hispanics are more numerous than African Americans, pushing African Americans to the political periphery and heightening varying racial/ethnic cleavages. Hispanics are growing faster than whites and blacks, which is also a source of political and societal tensions (Brown et al 2004, Bishop 2005). While Texas remains the oil and gas capital of

the United States, Texas' economy has traded in its exclusive reliance on oil and gas for a more diverse portfolio consisting of high-tech and service industries. Though one would be remiss to ignore the oil and gas industry, one would be equally wrong for concentrating on the oil and gas industry as the primary economic variable influencing Texas politics (Brown et al 2004, Kraemer et al 2005). Texas' government has traded in its colorful blend of charismatic, frontier Democrats for a colorful blend of dynamic, suburban Republicans (Murray and Attlesey 1999). Consequently, Texas is topically not the same state as it appeared to Key in 1949; however, its present party politics cannot be explained without understanding its past colorful heritage beginning with the fractures caused by the issue of civil rights and economics.

Texas is driven by a powerful and native conservatism. Thus, conflicts in Texas, then and now, have always been more accurately captured in ideological, rather than partisan, terms (Key 1949, Posler and Ward 1997). Even in the one-party period when there were only Democrats, elections pitted conservative Democrats versus liberal Democrats with the conservative usually winning these battles (Green 1979). When conservative Democrats felt threatened, they were not afraid to defy political norms and political unity. Therefore, it should not have taken anyone by surprise when Texas was one of a handful of Southern states to break with the solid Democratic South to vote against the Catholic, anti-prohibitionist Al Smith in favor of Protestant, prohibitionist, and Republican Herbert Hoover (Kraemer et al 2005). Starting in 1944 with the *Smith v. Allwright* decision that eliminated the white primary, conservative Democrats in Texas began to find more reasons to become disenchanted. Upset by the *Smith* decision and New Deal intervention into the oil and gas industry, Texas Democrats formed the Texas

Regulars and seized control of the Texas convention in 1944. The anti-Roosevelt electors, however, were replaced with New Deal Democrats at the second Texas state convention. The Regulars, with no candidate, still polled 12% of the vote in Texas (McKay 1952). Although the Regulars disbanded officially in the spring of 1945, their leadership formed the nucleus of the 1948 Dixiecrat movement. The Texas Dixiecrats were disturbed by Harry Truman's civil-rights program and his position that the oil lands off the Texas coast were federal rather than state property. Dixiecrats seized control of the first state convention but lost control of the second one before bolting the party in support of South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond. Finishing third in Texas behind the Democrats and Republicans in 1948, these Texas Regular-Dixiecratic leaders became Eisenhower Democrats in the 1950s and were pushed into the Republican Party in the 1960s and 1970s (Green 1979).

The Democrats in Texas, like elsewhere in the South, had always been a loose coalition of various factions divided over economic and social issues (Key 1949). Another wedge between these coalitions was driven deeply into the heart of Texas Democrats in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Voting Rights Act of 1965, *Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections* (1966), *Beare v. Smith* (1971), and inclusion into the Voting Rights Act in 1975.[154] Without these pieces of legislation, Republican growth assuredly would have occurred; however, these actions hastened Republican growth (Green 1979; Posler and Ward 1997, Davidson 1999,

[154] *Harper* struck down, among other states, Texas' state and local poll tax because Texas interpreted the 24th Amendment to apply solely to federal elections. The *Beare* decision used the Equal Protection Clause to strike Texas' limited registration period because prosecutors demonstrated that illiterate Hispanics and African Americans were more likely to miss the chances to register than other groups (Kraemer et al 2005).

Lamare et al 2003a). Texas historian George Green noted that previous Texas elections usually held this pattern:

> Several conservative candidates split the conservative vote in the first Democratic primary, allowing the lone liberal to get into a runoff with the leading conservative. The vote and money and newspapers then coalesce behind the conservative candidate in the second [runoff] primary defeating the liberal, who invariably runs out of money and never had any press support. (Greene 1979, 197 in Lamare et al 2003a)

Historically, the conservative Democrats had won most policy debates and elections within the party against moderate and liberal Democrats. The newly franchised African American segment allowed moderates and liberals to begin dominating Democratic politics, primaries, and elections (Green 1979, Posler and Ward 1997, Davidson 1999). Nonetheless, partisan identification, while being more volatile than ideology, is still a force that evolves slowly, so partisan changes within the electorate still occurred slowly. In 1964, 65% of Texans identified themselves as Democrats, and a decade later, though the number had declined 8%, Democrats still outnumbered Republicans 4 to 1. Nevertheless, 34% of Texans still identified themselves as Conservatives in both the 1960s and 1970s (Lamare et al. 2003a).

There were many reasons why partisan changes were slow to arrive. The older, frontier elements in Texas had a hard time abandoning the Democrats for Republicans. Part of the reason for this is, even after *Baker v. Carr* in 1962, the districts in Texas retained a Democratic advantage. Most local and county politicians remained Democrats, and Republicans often did not even field complete slates of candidates for statewide and local offices in many counties and districts. Besides, it was not local Democrats that made Texans nervous; rather, it was the national Democrats. There was

very little incentive for many native and rural Texas Democrats to abandon the party locally. In fact, these were the Democrats that gave rise to the term, "yellow dog Democrat" – voters who would rather vote for a yellow dog than any Republican (Lamare et al 2003a). And as long as they remained Democrats and as long as the rural areas still ruled the legislature, Republican gains would take a few more years to filter throughout all electoral levels in Texas. Therefore, the countryside could not and would not be the seed of Democratic discontent and concomitant Republican growth. Even today in Republican Texas, many rural Texans, although easily among the most conservative voters in the South, still maintain their partisan attachment to the Democratic Party. Change could not and would not occur until the arrival of the suburban middle-class (Lamis 1990, Kraemer et al 2005).

Another reason for gradual partisan changes was that Republicans had to wait for the arrival of more constituents, which would be the product of in-migration brought about by an economic transformation. The liberal conquest resulted in defeats for conservatives but also encouraged the departure of conservative, upper-class elements from the party. These upper-class conservatives, typically found in the oil and gas industry, found a more natural home among Republicans and converged politically and economically with the new and rapidly expanding suburban middle class. Since the 1950s, only Florida would experience a higher influx of northerners moving into the South (Nelson 1996, Posler and Ward 1997). The social force driving the Republicans into the political mainstream and into a position of competitiveness was the in-migration of northerners. Many of the middle-class whites were conservative like native Texans; however, they held no traditional allegiance to the Democratic Party and were not afraid

to vote for Republican candidates (Davidson 1990, Nelson 1996, Black and Black 2002). Since conservative elements were finding it harder to win Democratic primaries, they were more likely to run as Republicans. Furthermore, often times there were no Republican primaries because of the lack of Republican candidates, so Republicans found the path to office cheaper and less divisive (Lamis 1990, Posler and Ward 1997, Lamare et al 2003a).

As a result of electoral realignment and northern in-migration, Texas witnessed increased party competitiveness throughout the 1960s and 1970s, electing its first Republican Senator in 1961, John Tower, making it the first Southern state with a Republican Senator (Black and Black 2002). Democrats were stunned for several reasons: first, the impenetrable one-party South was penetrable; second, Tower's unprecedented Republican victory occurred within the shadow of the departure of one of the most powerful men in Texas politics, Lyndon Johnson; third, Tower, despite his Senate race in 1960, was still a relatively unknown college professor (Knaggs 1986). Even if Texas was arguably the least Southern of the Southern states, this Republican victory was still incredibly significant. Unfortunately, like the rest of the South, Republican victories for federal offices would not immediately transfer into Republican victories for local offices. That is, Republican gains were hierarchical in nature and would take several more decades before presidential and federal victories translated into state and local victories (Black and Black 2002).

Prior to Lyndon Johnson's candidacies in the 1960s, Texas had demonstrated presidential Republicanism by voting for Hoover in 1928 and Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956. To be sure, the Johnson legacy exerted a powerful influence on Texas, because

Texas would vote with the Democrats when Johnson was a VP candidate, when Johnson was a presidential candidate, and when Johnson handpicked Humphrey as his successor in 1968. Yet, this was not a total loss for Republicans. While voting for Johnson and his presidential regime during the 1960s, Republican candidates for statewide elections averaged 33% of the vote. While this does not seem like much, this is significantly higher than the 16% it averaged from 1946 to 1960, and in 1952 Republicans did not even field a statewide candidate. Subsequent to Johnson's departure from national politics, Texas has voted for a Democrat for President only once in the last 26 years (Jimmy Carter in 1976; Posler and Ward 1997).

The gradual accumulation of Republican votes would come to fruition at the end of the 1970s. In 1978, Texas elected its first Republican governor, Bill Clements. This was done at a time when less than 10% of the electorate even participated in Republican primaries and there were barely even one hundred total elected Republican officials out of 3,000 total officials in the entire state of Texas (History 2005).[155] Nonetheless, office holding tells only half of the story of Republican advancement in the 1970s and 1980s. Leading up to the Clements election, Republicans averaged 41% in statewide elections and were contesting over one-third of all state and local elections. The 1970s first witnessed a surge in Republican organizational competitiveness and, secondly, an increase in vote shares. After the Clements victory in 1978, the governor's office consistently yielded a mix of Republican and Democratic governors in a series of very close elections up to 1994. Whereas some of the largest Southern Republican gains were precipitated or solidified by the 1994 southern Republican revolution, Republicans in

[155] From the "History of the Republican Party of Texas" hosted at the Republican Party of Texas Online Library at www.texasgop.org/library. Hereafter referred to as "History 2005."

Texas made their first substantial gains a decade earlier in the 1980s (Murray and Attlesey 1999, Black and Black 2002).

In the 1980s, Republicans doubled Texas' congressional delegation, increased its state legislative membership by over 40%, increased its county offices by 50%, elected its second statewide Republican, and had over a million people participate in a Republican primary for the first time (History 2005). In legislative elections, Republicans contested over 50% of all elections and increased their vote share to over 40% (Posley and Ward 1997). In the late 1980s, those identifying themselves as Republicans exceeded those identifying themselves as Democrats by a 38% to 33% margin (Murray and Attlesey 1999). This is a substantial decline from the 4 to 1 margin held by Democratic identifiers only a decade earlier (Lamare 2003a). Table 3.1 displays the slowly accumulating consistency of the Republican gains made throughout the 1980s and 1990s. As the table suggests, Republicans were in good shape before the 1994 Republican revolution and, therefore, did not experience any significant perturbations between 1992 and 1994 as one would have expected from a "revolution." Outside of Republicans winning a second U.S. Senate seat, the theme of the 1990s was solid Republican growth and gradual Democratic decline.

Heading into the 21st Century, the Republicans are now the majority party in Texas. The *Almanac of American Politics* says of Texas:

> Texas is now an indisputably Republican state… On the major issues, and on the overriding question of whether to continue Texas's traditions of cultural conservatism and minimalist government … the Republicans seem very much on the majority side. The future of Texas appears to be theirs and, if this state is as attractive a model as it thinks, perhaps the nation as well. (Barone and Cohen 1998, 1439)

Table 3.1: Republican Growth Chart

Year	US Senate	Statewide	US House	TX Senate	TX House	County	District	Total
1974	1	0	2	3	16	53	?	75
1976	1	0	2	3	19	67	?	92
1978	1	1	4	4	22	87	?	119
1980	1	1	5	7	35	166	?	215
1982	1	0	5	5	36	191	79	317
1984	1	0	10	6	52	287	90	446
1986	1	1	10	6	56	410	94	578
1988	1	5	8	8	57	485	123	692
1990	1	6	8	8	57	547	170	802
1992	1	8	9	13	58	634	183	911
1994	2	13	11	14	61	734	216	1059
1996	2	18	13	17	68	938	278	1343
1998	2	27	13	16	72	1108	280	1527
2000	2	27	13	16	72	1233	336	1709
2002	2	27	15	19	88	1443	362	1966

Source: Republican Party of Texas (www.texasgop.org).

Republicans now control, among other things, the governor's office, the lieutenant governor's office, the attorney general's office, the state supreme court, the railroad commission, the state House, state Senate, the congressional delegation, and both U.S. Senate seats. Making matters worse, Republicans have swept all statewide offices in the last two election cycles, swept the 2002 races with no less than 53% of the vote, and Democrats have not occupied the governor's mansion in 10 years. Texas has sent the last two Republican presidents to the White House, which accounts for eight of the last 16 years and will be 12 of the last 20 at the conclusion of George W. Bush's presidency (Kraemer et al 2005). In 2004, only 18 counties of the 254 counties did not give Bush over 61% of the vote (Bishop 2005). While the infamous redistricting battles several years ago have certainly contributed to the rise of the Republicans, such gains and

redistricting decisions could not have occurred had Republicans not had such clout and power in the beginning of the process. The inability of Democrats to maintain their coalition and prevent defections contributed to the Democrat's decline in the face of Republican unity. Furthermore, the inability of Democrats to move beyond demographic minority appeals has exacerbated the white flight of the Democratic Party (Lamare et al 2003a). Regardless, one should temper this excitement because one cannot equate the rise of the Republicans in the electorate and government to mean a rise in political party organizational strength. Texas is generally considered the home of some of the weakest political parties in all the 50 states (Cotter et al. 1984, Appleton and Ward 1994). Nonetheless, some Democrats see signs of optimism.

First, the number of voters participating in Republican primaries has not consistently exceeded the Democrats in gubernatorial elections, indicating that the Democrats still have a numerical presence in the state (History 2005). Because the primary system in Texas allows voters to register their party affiliation at the time of voting, qualified voters may vote in the primary of any party, so long as they have not already voted in another party's primary in the same year (Kraemer et al. 2005). This semi-open primary system allows for crossover voting and partisan conversions in any given year under certain conditions (e.g. candidates, open seats), so the current figures indicate a large number of voters still identify with Democrats.

Second, signs of party unity and solidarity are appearing in the Texas Democratic Party. Following the redistricting debacle, Democrats punished several of their own members, including former longtime Democratic maverick Ron Wilson. Ron Wilson, an African American Democrat from Houston since 1976, voted for and assisted Tom

Craddick in becoming Speaker of the House. Not surprisingly, Wilson became a committee chair for his support. Wilson's lack of party solidarity, though a source of contention, had never really openly become a huge party issue until he abandoned the Democrats and sided with Craddick during the 2003 redistricting battle. Then, Democrats decided Wilson had gone too far. Charles Soechting, the TDP Chair since 2003, openly confronted Wilson by recruiting Anna Allen, professional educator and a member of the school board, to run against Wilson. Soechting and the TDP endorsed Allen and made available all party resources before the party primary, violating the TDP's practice of not intervening in primaries. The end result was that Anna Allen beat Ron Wilson by double digits. This is a responsible party at its finest, and such displays of party discipline are uncharacteristic for American party politics and, even more so, for Texas party politics (McNeely 2004, Herman 2004).

Third, Republicans' numerical strength may have come at the expense of organizational homogeneity (as close statewide election totals attest) because of the inter-party quarrel between the religious conservatives and the fiscal conservatives. At the state party convention in 1994, George W. Bush's close friend, Fred Meyer, was unceremoniously ousted by Tom Pauken, the conservative Christian activist who presided over the party through Bush's first two legislative sessions. Bush openly urged the party to retain Meyers, leaving Bush to straddle the religious conservatives and social conservatives. The move almost embarrassed Bush politically, because in retaliation, the state convention elected Pauken, not Bush, to lead the state delegation at the 1996 national GOP convention (Bruce 1995, Lamare et al 2003b). Pauken's Vice Chair was David Barton (who continues to serve in the same post today) and has been described as

"the 400-pound gorilla of the religious right in Texas" (Lamare et al 2003b, 71). The successions of chairs since Pauken have been battles about who is the most religious. In 1997 Susan Weddington advertised her Christian Right membership and her Sunday school experience to succeed Pauken (Lamare et al 2003b). Weddington made her name several years before by showing up at Richard's campaign headquarters with a black wreath and banner declaring "Death to the Family" in response to Richard's stance on homosexuality (Beinart 1998). Tina Benkiser succeeded Weddington in 2003 by also advertising her religious credentials but faced opposition in 2004 from Gina Parker, who argued that her public stances and lawyer occupation made her too "moderate" (Fikac and Rodriguez 2004). Recent conventions have been the scene of attempts to place more religious elements in the party rules, and pre-primary jockeying involves courting the religious right (Lamare et al 2003b).

Nevertheless, Republicans control 73 county courthouses that oversee two-thirds of the state's population, so a vast majority of the Democrats is contained, by Texas standards, to a relatively confined geographical space. Republicans have isolated white, conservative Democrats to the sparse countryside where they are, literally, dying off. The continued growth of inner-city coalitions within the TDP and their confinement within new legislative districts confirms to white middle-class voters that Democrats are a minority party (Lamare et al 2003a, Kraemer et al 2005). The Republican Party has become consistently competitive in all statewide and local elections and is winning more races than ever before. It stands a realistic chance of soon occupying a majority of all county offices within the next couple of election cycles.

Regardless, have political trends increased the viability of the political party organizations in Texas? What role do the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party play in legislative elections? Before we can discuss their role during state legislative elections, we must first gain an understanding of the actual party structure and recent organizational history of the Texas Democratic Party and Republican Party of Texas. One cannot begin to comprehend party roles without having some basic understanding of how the parties have organized in Texas.

The Texas Democratic Party – Organization & Development

At first, the Texas Democratic Party (TDP) is the typical party stratarchy; however, it is simultaneously atypical because it is actually comprised of two organizations – one permanent, one temporary – that come to life during different periods in the election calendar.[156] The permanent organization of the party is supported by a structural base presided over by a State Chair and several party officers, all of whom are elected at a state convention held in June in all even-numbered years. In the TDP, party officers consist of a First Vice-Chair (who must be "of opposite sex from the State Chair"), Vice Chair for Finance, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian.[157] The State Chair and party officers govern the State Democratic Executive Committee (SDEC). According to party rules, SDEC membership is comprised of two members from every senatorial district, two from the Texas Democratic County Chairs Association, one member from each of the legislative caucuses, two from the Democratic Women, two from the Texas Coalition of Black Democrats, two from the Tejanos Democrats, two

[156] All discussions of the structure of the Texas Democratic Party come from "The Rules of the Texas Democratic Party." Hereafter referred to as TDP Rules.
[157] TDP Rules Article III, Section D-d.

from the Non-Urban/Agriculture Caucus, and two from the Stonewall Democrats.[158] Thus, the SDEC is a diverse group that stresses participation from diverse facets of Texas, all the while chiefly concerning itself with statewide issues, conducting essential statewide party business between conventions, canvassing election results, and setting the location of the next convention (Brown et al 2004, Kraemer et al 2005).

Below the SDEC in the TDP structure is the District Executive Committee (DEC), which is presided over by a committeeman and committeewoman elected at the same state conventions as the SDEC officers. Presiding over one of thirty-one state Senate districts, the DEC committeeman and committeewoman hold automatic membership in the SDEC and monitor the concerns of party members and party candidates within their district. Thus, the DEC committeewoman and committeeman focus almost exclusively on the affairs and elections overlapping within their district.[159] One committeeman likened his role to a networking hub; he serves as an information agent for concerns and central collection agent for resource or service requests by individuals within the various counties within his senate district. Often there is not a party chair within every county, so the DEC serves as an interim county head and makes individuals aware of support in neighboring counties with various requests, needs, or services. At the very least, the DEC committeeman and committeewoman are supposed to be a link between local party members and local party officials and the state party and state party officials. Yet, in some districts the DEC displaces county party officials as being responsible for recruiting officials, raising funds, establishing and staffing county

[158] TDP Rules Article III, Section D. One stipulation about SDEC membership: although one member of the Senate Caucus and one member of the House Caucus may serve on the SDEC, these two members are non-voting members.
[159] TDP Rules Article III, Section F, Interviews with Author July 12th & 13th 2004.

offices, and serving as a local spokesman for the party. Thus, each committeeman and committeewoman performs different duties and exercises very different levels of involvement.[160]

Beneath the DEC in the organizational hierarchy is the County Executive Committee (CEC), which is presided over by a County Chair and is elected by Democratic primary voters in March in even-numbered years. It is the CEC's primary responsibility to administer primary elections in each county, because a unique feature in Texas is that the parties are responsible for running primaries, not the State of Texas. Other duties of the CEC include recruiting officials, raising funds, establishing and staffing county offices, and serving as a local spokesman for the party.[161] Finally, administratively below the CEC are Precinct Chairs representing 6,000 precincts with as few as 50 registered voters and as many as 3,500 voters (Brown et al, 2004). Like the CEC, Precinct Chairs are elected by Democratic primary voters in even-numbered years and have as their duty to register and canvass voters within a precinct, distribute candidate literature and information, operate phone banks on behalf of their candidates, and get people to the polls. Precinct chairs are unpaid but may select a secretary to assist them with their duties. It is not uncommon for many precincts to remain unfilled or many populous counties to have hundreds of precincts.[162] Out of 500 precincts in Bexar County, only 200 are presently occupied.[163] As one can tell, the permanent TDP organization is a behemoth after one sees all the layers and personnel within each layer. If one considers that there are 31 Senate districts in Texas with 31 DEC's, and 254

[160] Interviews with Author July 12th, 13th, 14th 2004.
[161] Interviews with Author July 12th & 22nd 2004.
[162] TDP Rules Article III, Section G, Interview with Author July 13th & 22nd 2004.
[163] TDP Rules Article IV, Interview with Author July 22nd, 2004.

counties in Texas with 254 CEC's, and 6,000 precincts with upwards to 6,000 Precinct Chairs, then it is theoretically possible for the TDP to have over 6,336 permanent party officials at one time. And, this is just the permanent half of the Texas Democratic Party.

During election years, the TDP's primary purposes of boosting party morale, establishing party doctrines, supervising elections, and winning elections require even more people to supervise an even greater amount of activities. Thus, the parties have created temporary organizations to conduct these functions. The temporary organization is first created when Democratic Primary voters elect delegates to a precinct convention in March during even-numbered years. The precinct convention sends to the county convention, by rule, one delegate per 25 votes cast for the party's gubernatorial candidate in the last election. Unfortunately, in 2002 the TDP had so few members participate at the conventions that this number was reduced to 15.[164] If there is more than one senate district in a county, then the delegates are sent to a district or regional convention. The district/regional and county conventions then elect delegates to send to the state conventions based on every 300 votes cast for the party's gubernatorial candidate in the last election. Yet, the TDP lowered this number to 180 when faced with a shortage of votes in 2002.[165] This is also the time when resolutions are drafted for consideration at the state convention. At the state convention the TDP writes the party rules, establishes a party platform, certifies party nominees, and elects delegates to the national Democratic convention, electors for the electoral college, a committeeman and committeewoman to the Democratic National Committee, DNC delegates, SDEC members, DEC members, Party Officers, and, finally, a State Chair. While much of the temporary organization is

[164] TDP Rules Article IV, Interview with Author July 12, 2004.
[165] TDP Rules Article IV, Interview with Author July 12, 2004.

situated at the precinct level and begins with primary voters, one would be incorrect in assuming that the common Texas citizen is the chief participant in this process. TDP rules considers a member of the TDP "any qualified Texas voter 18 years of age or older who supports the foregoing 'Statement of Principles'"; however, only a small fraction of the public ever votes in these primaries and participates in party affairs –themselves only a fraction of registered voters who are only a fraction of the eligible citizens of voting age.[166] Thus, it is safe to say that the TDP temporary organization is comprised of a small group of activists. While activists have always run the TDP, the organizational ability and coherence of these activists have changed considerably in the last 40 years (Posler and Ward 1997, Kraemer et al 2005).

The modern history of the Texas Democratic Party is a creeping struggle to convert itself from loose coalitions of factions to an organization occupied by stronger leaders stressing organizational continuity, coherence, and stability. This is problematic for a hierarchical organization with rural interests that are competing for access and influence. In the past, the governor traditionally assumed the role of the party leader. In the 1960s, the TDP was the governor's party and had no need for party unity given its seemingly safe majority status. Posler and Ward write that the TDP "was little more than an appendage of the faction in power" (Posler and Ward 1997, 311). The party was basically a certifying mechanism and primary election organizer with little to say in the conduct of campaigns or formulation of party policy. The governor was supposed to be the party leader; Posler and Ward found a memo written by an SDEC member to the party chair to illustrate this point:

[166] TDP Rules Article IV, Section B.

> Those who lack loyalty to the governor should be occupied on the rules or legal committee…perhaps avoiding embarrassing resolutions activity which would allow dissidents to promote civil rights issues. (DSEC, 10/31/60 in Posler and Ward 1997, 312)

Since TDP activities revolved around the governor and those who supported him, it was not surprising that the TDP was organizationally unprepared to respond to Tower's sudden victory in 1961. In fact, one chair even wrote a letter to a county chair asking for help in acquiring funds because the state party had depleted its funds and overdrawn the bank. The TDP was an ineffective, under-staffed, and under-budgeted mechanism wracked by inter-party squabbles between liberal and conservative elements (Knaggs 1986, Posler and Ward 1997).

The TDP assumed that as long as it held the governor's mansion, it would remain stable, but it did not take more aggressive measures to prepare for the loss of the governor's mansion. To be sure, the most successful TDP fundraiser in the 1960s did come in 1963 as a reaction to the Tower victory. Shortly thereafter, a 1964 memo revealed an SDEC member's anxiousness over the perceived lessening of post-primary activities, perhaps indicating the party once again was dismissing organizational concerns (Posler and Ward 1997). Posler and Ward's study of the budgeting and staffing of the TDP in the 1960s indicates the memo was accurate because no party growth occurred at this time. Technology was not upgraded, staffs were not expanded, fundraising did not increase, and communications did not increase with the national committee. While Republicans instituted their first direct-mail coordinated campaign in Texas in the 1960s, Democrats were debating proper quotas of their delegates for the national convention. Even in the 1970s, TDP records find an SDEC member complaining about an $86,000

debt because of the lack of activism and fundraising due to a preoccupation with debates and controversies over the selection of delegates (Posler and Ward 1997).

Republicans began to coordinate their campaigns in the 1970s, but Democrats were still reconciling the division between conservative and liberal elements. When liberal John Hill defeated conservative Dolph Briscoe, many conservative Democrats turned their support to Bill Clements, the Republican, hence his election in 1978. Even though Democrats won back the governor's office in 1982, they lost it again in 1986. All the while the TDP was ensnared by the belief that it simply needed to capture, for a sustained period, the governor's office and all would be well. In the meantime, the Texas Democratic Party deteriorated while the Republican Party of Texas progressed. The lone bright spot of the 1980s for the TDP was leadership stability (Posler and Ward 1997, Murray and Attlesey 1999, Kraemer et al 2005).

Lacking a governor for a consistent party leader, the TDP elected and re-elected Bob Slagle for Party Chairman from 1980 to 1995. Slagle was an individual who recognized the debilitating effect of the Reagan presidency on Democratic candidates in the 1980s. After observing the trickle-down power of the Reagan presidency on the staffing, budgeting, and modernizing of the Texas Republican Party, he surmised that Democrats could not compete against this without organizational support. Slagle created a large, permanent staff funded by the largest budget ever. While he was unable to do everything he wanted, his emphasis on structure and staffing imparted a belief that Democratic resurgence could occur only with organizational capacity. Thousands of party positions were refilled, and the party ran its first coordinated campaigns to assist statewide and federal candidates. In the 1980s, Slagle focused on using party resources

to slow Republican growth and consistently assist statewide and federal candidates for the first time in party history. In the 1990s, Slagle turned his attention to technology, voter databases, and assisting vulnerable incumbents, but these actions put the party in debt. Though Slagle is described a solid and fair leader, Republican gains and Democratic debts in the early 1990s forced his resignation (Posler and Ward 1997).[167]

Slagle was replaced by Bill White (1995-98), who lasted only three years when he failed to prevent the RPT from winning the state Senate, gaining seven seats in the state House, gaining U.S. Congressional seats, and bringing the party out of debt. White's tenure was nondescript and marred by increasing TDP committee vacancies. He resigned only five months before the 1998 elections (Balz 1998, Merle 1998). In 1998, the TDP made history by electing its first female Chair, Molly Beth Malcolm, who made it a point to coordinate campaigns, distribute party fliers, provide financial assistance, coordinate direct mailings, recruit candidates, develop voter lists, disseminate committee listings to all candidates, and improve DNC-TDP relations.[168] Malcolm's strategy was to use limited party resources to shore up existing Democratic strongholds in East Texas. Her "East Texas Strategy" alienated many Democrats, isolated the party, and reduced party competitiveness (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003). Although Malcolm was the first chair in 18 years to operate a debt-free party (erasing $650,000 of debt), an 0-29 record in statewide elections marred her tenure. To be fair, she was thrust into the 1998 elections by the abrupt resignation of Bill White, but the party failed to contest many elections in 2000 and saw Democratic competitiveness in contested elections decrease. Malcolm's recruitment of more female candidates was successful and increased female

[167] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004.
[168] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

representation to 19%, though Texas became a unified Republican state in 2002. In 2002, the party accumulated a $90,000 debt trying to support the "Dream Team" and other statewide candidates. Planning not to run anyway for re-election in 2004, she resigned abruptly in 2003, and Charles Soechting assumed control of the party. Among the complaints of many committee members was the party's inability to shift its focus from federal and statewide races to support down-ticket races.[169]

Soechting's challenge is to raise the party from debt, reverse declining Democratic competitiveness, and reverse the philosophy of ignoring state legislative elections and county elections. Though declining resources have forced the party to target and use resources selectively, Soechting began actively recruiting even in heavily Republican areas of the state and filling committee vacancies caused by the departure of Democrats in the 1990s. He has been the first chair thus far to take a more active approach to state legislative elections, partially a result of fewer competitive races created by redistricting. Today, the TDP has become a more homogenous organization; however, it remains a financially strapped organization responsible for governing the second largest state in the nation. Soechting has already began to expand TDP's fundraising, assemble a network of lobbyists, consultants and think tanks, and develop poll-tested messages. Also in the party plan is data collection because the batch of databases developed by Malcolm is already outdated. The party has redeveloped its website and is beginning to look into ways to use MoveOn.org spin-offs to revitalize party networks and recruitment.[170]

[169] Interview with Author July 12th, August 5th & 9th, 2004.
[170] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

On a concluding note, the rapid growth of Hispanics and their tendency to support Democrats have many Democrats equally excited and apprehensive. Apprehension comes from African Americans, who have always been a large component of the party but are not willing to yield political power to Hispanics, creating a new party rivalry (Murray and Attlesey 1999, Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003). Nonetheless, the cultivation of Hispanic membership brings excitement within the TDP for numerical growth even though Hispanics are the least reliable voters in Texas. The party found this out the hard way when Hispanics did not help the Democrats when the TDP recruited, nominated, and ran Sanchez against Perry during the 2002 gubernatorial election. Largely, Republicans have not idly sat back and also have fought very hard to curb the Hispanic appeal within the Democratic Party by successfully recruiting and running their own Hispanic candidates, like Tony Garza for secretary of state and railroad commissioner. Furthermore, Hispanics are greeted with apprehension among Democrats who are working very hard to redesign the image of the TDP as something other than a minority party because many within the party stress that TDP growth cannot occur without securing some middle-class support and shedding its lower-class image (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003, Lamare et al 2003a, Kraemer et al 2005).[171]

The party history of the Texas Democratic Party is a grim one. It is one of organizational incoherence and numerical defection. The TDP lost the middle-class whites and, more recently, has severed financial connections with the Democratic National Committee. The TDP is a lone undermanned outpost in a Republican frontier. The current chair, Charles Soechting, has been one of the more vocal chairs in recent

[171] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

years and has scheduled more party activities in his first year than any previous chair.[172] Scholars argue that the minority status of Democrats has had a positive effect on party discipline and party unity, but has party discipline and unity improved the party's ability to assist state legislative campaigns? Therefore, we will examine whether the expansive Texas Democratic Party has played an important role in legislative elections in the state of Texas. Before we can compare the work of these two organizations, we must first discuss the structure of the Republican Party of Texas.

The Republican Party of Texas – Organization & Development

The Election Codes in the State of Texas equally regulate the two parties in Texas, which, consequently, have influenced the structural development of the two state parties. A single individual who delegates authority and responsibility in a hierarchical fashion over a large, permanent and temporary party structure governs the Republican Party of Texas.[173] Identical to the TDP, the RPT permanent organization is comprised of a State Republican Executive Committee (SREC), District Executive Committee (DEC), County Executive Committee (CEC), and a Precinct Chair. The SREC is presided over by a Party Chair who receives assistance from Party Officers, which are comprised of the following positions: Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Finance Director, General Counsel, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Party Chaplain. The roles of these various organizational levels are very similar to the Texas Democratic Party. The SREC concerns itself with statewide issues, conducts the essential statewide party business between conventions, canvasses election results, and sets the location of the next convention. SREC members are politically active individuals, but as a group there is

[172] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[173] All discussions of the structure of the Republican Party of Texas come from the "The Republican Party of Texas Rules." Hereafter referred to as RPT Rules.

little coordination and active campaign decisions made in conjunction with campaigns, particularly state legislative campaigns.[174]

The District Executive Committee makes candidates, voters, and party members aware of party developments and is responsible for handling their various requests, needs, or concerns. The DEC committeeman and committeewoman are supposed to be a link between local party members and local party officials and the state party and state party officials. Yet, in some districts the DEC committeeman and committeewoman displace county party officials as being responsible for recruiting officials, raising funds, establishing and staffing county offices, and serving as a local spokesman for the party. Each committeeman and committeewoman performs different duties and maintains different levels of involvement.[175] The County Executive Committee's primary responsibility is administering primary elections in each county. Additional duties of the CEC include recruiting officials, raising funds, establishing and staffing county offices, and serving as a local spokesman for the party.[176] County officers are more likely to be involved in local elections, while district officers are more likely to be involved in federal, state, and local elections. Finally, it is the duty of the PEC to register and canvass voters within a precinct, distribute candidate literature and information, operate phone banks on behalf of its candidates, and get people to the polls. The PEC will assist federal, statewide, and local elections as directed by the party or solicited by candidates.[177] The RPT is not very restrictive in its membership, as any person who has established party affiliation may participate. Since Texas does not keep track of party

[174] Interview with Author July 30th, 2004.
[175] Interview with Author July 30th & August 2nd, 2004.
[176] Interview with Author July 30th & August 4th, 2004
[177] Interview with Author July 30th.

registration, party affiliation is determined by participation in the Republican general primary.

Similarly to the TDP, the RPT has created a temporary organization to supervise an even greater amount of activities during election years. The temporary organization comes to life when Republican primary voters elect delegates to a precinct convention in March during even-numbered years. The precinct convention sends to the county convention, by rule, at least one delegate and alternate per 25 votes cast for the party's gubernatorial candidate in the last election.[178] If there is more than one Senate district in a county, then the delegates are sent to a district convention. The district and county conventions then elect delegates and alternates to the state convention based on every 300 votes cast for the party's gubernatorial candidate in the last election.[179] Also, this is when resolutions are drafted to take to the state convention. At the state convention, the RPT rules allow each Senate district to have two delegates on any of the temporary committees created during the state conventions and five permanent committees, which help to write the party rules, establish a party platform, certify party nominees, and elect delegates to the national Republican convention, electors for the electoral college, a committeeman and committeewoman to the Republican National Committee, RNC delegates, SREC members, DEC members, Party Officers, and, finally, a State Chair.[180] While much of the temporary organization is situated at the precinct level and begins with primary voters, the common Texas citizen is not the chief participant in this process.

---

[178] The Republican Party bylaws use a 1/25 system; however, the RPT formula requires a minimum of 37 votes before the 25-vote increment begins (RPT Party Rule No. 23A).
[179] The Republican Party bylaws use a 1/300 system; however, the RPT formula requires a minimum of 750 votes before the 300-vote increment begins. Furthermore, if the conventions are held during presidential election years, then bylaws allow for congressional district conventions in lieu of state senate district conventions (RPT Party Rule No. 23A).
[180] RPT Party Rule No. 33.

Like the TDP, the RPT is manned by a small group of dedicated activists (Kraemer et al 2005).

When Democrats ruled the state, the Republican Party of Texas was primarily a "national patronage dispenser for Republican Presidents" (Weeks 1972, 209). During the 1950s, the first permanent committee – the State Republican Executive Committee – was created but other organizational devices were not established because Republicans had yet to host regularly scheduled primaries. John Tower's victory in 1961 provided the impetus for organizational change, evidenced by the first non-binding presidential Republican primary in 1964 (Casdorph 1965, Weeks 1972). In 1966, Tower was re-elected, and two Republican congressman were sent to Washington D.C. from Texas for the first time since Reconstruction. Additionally, three Republicans were sent to the state House and one Republican to the state Senate, the first in 39 years (Knaggs 1986). As Republicans consolidated state and national offices, the Republican Party held regularly scheduled meetings, held fundraisers for party activities, and established its first party headquarters. One party financial device, county donation quotas, was so successful that the party finally had the funds to hire its first Executive Director (Knaggs 1986, Posler and Ward 1997, History 2005).

As the party became organizationally coherent, it undertook a more active campaign role. William Clements cited, among the many influential forces in his election to Governor, the existence of a permanent party organization (Knaggs 1986). Clements and Tower used their statewide organizations to build, staff, and fund the Republican statewide organization. The financial donations of Clements and Towers doubled state party budgets, giving them a permanent year-round staff in a fully supplied and new

permanent headquarters in Austin (Knaggs 1986, Posler and Ward 1997). Although Clements was not re-elected in 1982, the Republican Party of Texas successfully planned and held visits and fundraisers for Reagan, Bush, and Gramm in 1984. With a budget and a staff, the Republican Party of Texas established its first party communications network and created a loose coalition of party activities resembling a parallel campaign. Direct-mail technology was implemented and the first voter, donor, and committee officer databases were assembled. RPT leadership modeled the organizational and campaign strategies of Ray Bliss and Bill Frock, two more innovative chairs in the history of the Republican National Committee. This national leadership filtered to the state level, and Republican presidential victories began translating into more statewide and congressional victories (Posler and Ward 1997, History 2005). Innovative Republican leadership clearly helped Republican growth, but it also allowed the RPT to become a much more formidable campaign organization well before the TDP (Appleton and Ward 1994, Posler and Ward 1997).

In the 1980s, RPT Chairman George Strake (1983-1988) coordinated Republican campaigns, maintained communication networks, recruited conservative Democrats to run as Republicans, developed voter databases, increased party funds, and maintained a close relationship with the RNC and Reagan administration.[181] Strake was able to do and accomplish much more than any of his predecessors. In 1986, the net result was a gain of 107 local offices, 15 seats in the state legislature, and five seats in the U.S. Congress (History 2005). Also, Bill Clements was elected, again, to the governor's mansion. The presence of a Republican Governor, Vice-President Bush, and Senator Gramm, all who

[181] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004. In the same interview, the individual relayed that Strake probably would have remained chair of the RPT, but he was recruited to work for Bush's campaign in 1988 and resigned.

got along with Chairman Strake, allowed the party to act more coherently, bolster party membership, and grow financially. Furthermore, Governor Clements governed with 56 Republicans in the state legislature in his second term, unlike the 36 in his first term, giving him a veto-sustaining minority. For the first time, the RPT and Republicans had some pull over state policy. Dispensing coordinated resources, Clements, Gramm, Strake, and the Republican Party backed numerous Republicans for statewide and federal offices (Posler and Ward 1997). For example, the RPT recruited and supported the campaign of Kent Hance for Railroad Commissioner by supplying funds, staff, advertising, communications, and other resources. The result was the first Republican Railroad Commissioner in the history of Texas. Replicating the Hance campaign, the RPT also provided the same resources to Judge Thomas, allowing him to become the first Republican elected to the Texas Supreme Court (History 2005). The RPT, in conjunction with the governor, had become a well-organized campaign mechanism, though it was not yet focused on state legislative elections.

On the heels of solid Republican gains, the Republican Party of Texas would bolster its organization by electing some innovative leaders, but it would be troubled simultaneously by factional disputes. Fred Meyers replaced George Strake in 1988; however, he was replaced in 1994 because the Democrats recaptured the governor's mansion, Republican growth did not accelerate beyond a steady pace, and the Texas Christian Coalition complained he was not conservative enough. Though Meyers generally replicated the practices of Strake and kept the party out of debt, this was not enough for RPT members who wanted more and complained of complacency. [182] Replacing Meyers was Tom Pauken (1994-1997) as Chair and David Barton (1994-

[182] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004.

present) as Vice-Chair. Under their leadership, the RPT developed a party platform that was far more conservative and emphasized a new grassroots movement designed to take over state and local offices. Pauken's 1996 grassroots movement was termed "76 in 96", indicating the party's new emphasis to acquire 76 seats, or a majority, in the Texas House. Although the party still reserved most of its resources and services for federal and statewide races, Pauken stressed for SREC, DEC, and CEC officers to become more active in state legislative elections. His grassroots effort emphasized recruiting Republicans and running Republicans where they and largely been absent while attempting to take advantage of legislative districts that had trended Republican more and more. The RPT provided polling, literature, volunteers, and precinct lists to state legislative candidates. While Pauken's efforts were successful for the Senate, his House efforts fell eight seats short. Pauken's grassroots movement was unable to go any further and the Texas Christian Coalition grew increasingly frustrated with his lack of conservatism, so he resigned 1998 (Murray and Attlesey 1999, Lamare et al 2003b, History 2005).[183]

Replacing Tom Pauken was the first female chairwomen, Susan Weddington. Weddington doubled party membership, increased the budget of the state party, and served with experienced Vice-Chairman, David Barton, for her entire tenure (History 2005). Together, Weddington and Barton used Republican gains at the top to bolster and coordinate district-level grassroots activities. Nevertheless, Weddington had to fight off numerous challenges at Republican conventions fraught with internal conflicts between social and fiscal conservatives. In fact, some speculated that Weddington was forced to emphasize district-level grassroots advancement because the state party lacked the

[183] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004.

coherence and unity to oversee state-level activities, especially in those areas controlled by very strong religious conservatives (Gizzi 2003).[184] In fact, the 2002 state convention saw social conservatives trying to dictate party strategy by attempting to pass Rule 43 – a rule denying party funds to any candidate who refuses to implement the party plank should they become elected. It was brought up for a vote against the wishes of Chairwoman Weddington but did not pass (Lamare et al 2003b).[185] Disheartening for Republicans has been the incessant fighting between social and fiscal conservatives and, more recently, between Republican governors and party leadership. Candidate for governor George W. Bush distanced himself from the party's anti-abortion stance in 1994, which caused Tom Pauken and the RPT to rebuke his request to lead the party delegation at the national convention. Later, differences between Chairman Tom Pauken and George W. Bush over the best campaign strategy and campaign role for the state party in the 1996 elections led to the resignation of Pauken; however, Bush's choice for Party chair was dismissed in favor of Susan Weddington (Kraemer et al 2005). More recently, governor Perry publicly opposed 23 of the party's 46 planks of the platform, distanced himself from 16 others, and endorsed only seven of them (Brown et al 2004). Eventually, the same factional dispute claimed Weddington, and she resigned in 2003. The relative instability of the Republican Party of Texas and its disputes with governors distinguish them from the Texas Democratic Party and prevent the party from playing a more prominent and cohesive role in state politics (Posler and Ward 1997, Lamare et al 2003a).[186]

[184] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004.
[185] Interview with Author July 30th & August 5th, 2004.
[186] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004.

Although the RPT has fought internal division, there is evidence to suggest it is stronger than ever. In 2000, the state party, in combination with a variety of local, district, and national forces, helped Todd Staples win the state's 3rd Senate District, the critical seat in creating a Republican Senate majority (Rausch 2002). For the first time, state-level party efforts were orchestrated with an uncanny precision and unusual party cohesion. Many observers in Texas began to wonder if a coordinated state party had arrived in Texas; however, critics have raised doubts to party claims of success. Some owe legislative victories less to RPT efforts and more to Tom Craddick, a 17-term Representative from Midland, the first Republican Speaker of the House, and leader of the Republican Legislative Caucus of Texas (RLCT). The Republican Legislative Caucus of Texas is Craddick's legislative campaign committee that has played an increasingly large role in state legislative campaigns. Craddick's RLCT was modeled after Pete Laney's Texas Partnership PAC founded in the early 1990s to preserve his Speakership. The RLCT has operated with the assistance of state and national sources, among them Tom Delay's Texans for a Republican Majority PAC (TRMPAC). DeLay's TRMPAC was created in 2001 partially at the behest of the Texas Association of Business (TAB), the most powerful interest group in Texas, and from Delay's desire to control the 2001 redistricting effort. Explicitly prohibited by law, corporations may not donate to candidates and the Speaker may not steer PAC donations to candidates. It is currently being investigated whether Craddick, DeLay, TRMPAC, and TAB played a more intensive and coordinated role in 2002 than legally allowed. Regardless, some feel the 2002 legislative victories had less to do with the RPT and everything to do with the financial maneuverings of TRMPAC, TAB, DeLay, and Craddick (Bernstein and Mann

2004). Clearly, Craddick had made the RLCT a formidable legislative and incumbent campaign resource prior to 2002, but do these entities threaten the relative importance of the Republican Party of Texas? Laney's Texas Partnership PAC gave all its donations to the TDP to dispense, but the TRMPAC and Craddick have circumvented the RPT in favor of distributing funds themselves. In fact, my interviews suggested that there was no coordination in 2002 between the RPT and Craddick and, historically, this has been the common practice.[187] Nevertheless, the illustration shows that Texas' parties have to contend with many competing and powerful groups when involved in state legislative campaigns, when and if they participate in state legislative campaigns.

History and contemporary evidence suggest that the Republican Party of Texas and the Texas Democratic Party are better coordinated and more organized than ever before – budgets are larger, staffs are more complex, headquarters are upgraded, technology has been acquired, innovative websites are maintained, and leadership has been stable. The Republican Party of Texas and the Texas Democratic Party have become much more active in campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections. Therefore, the quest now is to determine how the RPT and TDP have contributed to state legislative elections because it would appear that both parties are in a better position than ever before to provide the type of services that could facilitate the advancement of a responsible party. Though geography makes coordination difficult and often places the state party miles away – literally and figuratively – from autonomous districts and their concomitant campaign organizations, the TDP and RPT have positioned themselves to become campaign organizations. Do the

[187] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004.

parties have the organizational or structural wherewithal to maintain support in state legislative elections throughout the entire state of Texas? When studying Texas in 1984, Cotter suggested that the parties in Texas were among the weakest observed in the entire nation, but Cotter's conclusions were reached before observing the technological, budgetary, and ideological modifications of the 1990s (Cotter et al 1984). Are the traditional state political party organizations in Texas important to candidates campaigning for state legislative offices in the state of Texas? We turn now to these questions.

Data Collection

Since the organizational history of the Texas Democratic Party and Republican Party of Texas is relatively new, knowledge regarding the electoral significance of their organization is scarce. There is no literature or data available focusing on and describing the importance of state political party services in state legislative elections in Texas. We know that the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party have come a long way and are stronger, more influential, and more active in campaigns than in the past; however, this does very little to inform us regarding the present relationship between these actors. Therefore, in order to investigate the importance of their services in the realm campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization, a questionnaire was mailed to all qualified candidates for the state legislature who faced major party opposition during the 2002 electoral cycle.

The questionnaires were mailed out three times from January to June of 2004, for a total response rate of 61%. Table 3.2 shows the survey sample for Texas is comparable

to the actual population of candidates, with only a slight overrepresentation of incumbents and winners.[188] Since the return rate among state Senate candidates was incredibly low, as was the eligible pool, only the responses of House candidates were utilized in this analysis to avoid any unintentional contamination of the data. In addition to the surveys, 15 interviews were conducted with past and present party officials and 8 interviews were conducted with past and present legislative candidates during July and August of 2004.[189] The following section summarizes the data regarding the importance of the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party in the 2002 elections for the Texas House of Representatives.

Table 3.2: Survey Response Rate by Groups as Compared to Eligible Population

TX	# Eligible	%	# Surveyed	%
Democrats	68	50%	36	43%
Republicans	68	50%	47	57%
Incumbents	53	39%	34	41%
Challengers	51	38%	34	41%
Open seats	32	24%	15	18%
Winners	68	50%	40	48%
Losers	68	50%	43	52%
N	136		83	61%

[188] Since incumbents makeup the largest category within the category of winners, the simultaneous overrepresentation of these two groups is related. The reason for the lower 61% response rate is largely attributable to the under-representation of challengers. The surveys were mailed over a year after their campaigns, so many of them had moved homes, moved employment, or used temporary campaign addresses or phone numbers that were no longer valid. Overall, Texas was the hardest state to track and enforce in terms of response rates.

[189] Only one interview was conducted with a current state-level officer of the RPT at the instruction/permission of the Party Chairman. In addition, I encountered tremendous hesitancy by many Republicans on the DEC, making it very difficult to obtain consent for interviews. I found the hesitancy was the product of two things: one, the media attention created by investigations into Tom DeLay and his possible relationships with the Republican Party of Texas; two, an intense phone bank bombardment received by Republican party members from various national interest groups in response to the 2003 redistricting battles. In one instance, an individual actually asked me to fax my credentials because he had been bombarded with several angry phone calls from various interest groups and wanted proof that my study was academic and/or legitimate. Interestingly, I encountered no such equal hesitancy among Democratic legislators, former candidates, or past and present party members.

Candidate Recruitment

As mentioned in the previous chapter, no other party activity in the election process is probably as tough to discern as the area of candidate recruitment. The reason for this is primarily three-fold: first, candidate recruitment often occurs behind the scenes and is often invisible to the candidate himself; second, recruitment is a complicated process that involves more than simply asking people to run for office; third, it is often difficult to distinguish the level of the party organization involved in the process or whether the recruitment is on behalf of individuals who happen to be party members or individuals on behalf of the party.

On the first difficulty, candidate recruitment occurs behind the scenes and is often invisible to the candidates themselves. The RPT and LDP do not make pre-primary endorsements and refrain from publicly supporting candidates before primaries, which has the effect of forcing the party to discreetly or secretly recruit to avoid offending current candidates. Therefore, this first type of recruiting is very common in Texas.[190] Many DEC and CEC chairs certainly admit to occasionally attempting to winnow the field in an effort to reduce primary competitiveness and divisiveness. Interviews with RPT and LDP executive, district, and county officers affirm the existence of this type of recruiting. One RDEC officer discussed how in his region he "regularly" encourages candidates to run where no filings have occurred and dissuades candidates if he is confident in the present candidate pool. The dissuasion comes in a variety of forms like politely asking people not run, bolstering the status of the opposition, or making prospective candidates aware of other electoral or party activities.[191] Occasionally,

[190] Interviews with Author July 12th & 30th, 2004.
[191] Interview with Author July 2nd, 2004.

existing candidates know about this, but sometimes they do not. As interviews attest, the RPT and LDP work behind the scenes to winnow or influence the potential field of candidates, which reminds us that candidate appraisals may actually downplay the importance of party influence.

On the second recruiting type, party recruitment is a complicated process that involves more than simply asking people to run for office. In the second chapter, I mentioned party recruitment takes multiple dimensions of passive recruitment, active recruitment, and negative recruitment. Active recruiting is also common in Texas, but state executive committee members are not the most likely to do this in state legislative elections. While occasionally party chairs will recruit candidates for offices, county and district officers are more likely to recruit state legislative candidates. How often or actively they recruit is left up to each officer; some are very active and others are not at all active.[192] A common form of passive recruitment in Texas is party membership. Several legislative candidates in both parties started their political careers as executive, district, county, or precinct officers. One officer admitted to developing what he called the "party farm system" by recruiting active college students, successful businessmen, or political activists to run for local party offices.[193] Present members recruit to facilitate party involvement with a long-term goal of creating eligible candidates for various offices (including state legislature). By meeting the party leadership, other party activists, and party-allied groups, the individual becomes exposed to the party network and may become more active in state politics. This exposure and activism occasionally propels individuals to seriously consider candidacies when vacancies arise in their

[192] Interviews with Author July 12th, 21st, 22nd, 30th, & August 5th, 2004.
[193] Interview with Author July 21st, 2004.

legislative districts.[194] Negative recruitment is as straightforward as the solicitation toward prospective candidates not to run or as subtle as "suggestions" artificially bolstering the reputation of a particular opponent in such a fashion so as to create a false impression of superiority. While negative recruitment is rarely openly discussed and hard for officials to admit, in Texas present party members did acknowledge it as an equally important, though more difficult, recruitment tactic. It seems largely a side effect of party rules prohibiting pre-primary endorsements and a desire by party officials to reduce pre-primary competitiveness.[195] Interviews suggest that these various forms of recruitment are present in both parties in Texas.

On the final difficulty of recruitment, candidates occasionally fail to draw distinctions between whether the recruitment is on behalf of individuals who happen to be party members or whether the recruitment is by individuals on behalf of the party. Are candidates always capable of knowing if an individual is recruiting them as an individual who also doubles as a ranking member within the party or if an individual is recruiting as a party representative with the permission to use the party name as the recruiter? Additionally, it is difficult for candidates to distinguish which level of the organization is trying to recruit them, as the parties have been organized at the state, district, and county level in Texas. The TDP and RPT have a varying array of subsidiary groups – divided according to gender, race, interests, county, region – that hold a relationship with the party, though they are not official extensions of the state party. Finally, legislative parties and their respective legislative campaign committees engage in recruitment, but their organizations operate independently from traditional state political

[194] Interviews with Author July 21st, 22nd & August 5th, 2004.
[195] Interview with Author July 12th, 21st, 22nd, 30th, & August 5th, 2004.

party organizations and concentrate their efforts on incumbents and open-seats.[196] Sometimes candidates have difficulty distinguishing who is recruiting them (and on whose behalf they are recruiting them).

Finally, interviews revealed an important piece of information regarding the relationship between the party and state legislative recruitment. Interviews with present party officials in both parties at the executive, district, and county level yielded some important information. In Texas, state legislative races are listed on the ballot right before city offices. The physical location of the state legislative candidates on the ballot is symbolic as well. One party district officer said:

> You have to understand that state legislative candidates are listed as the second to last office on most ballots, in the party, and mind of the voter. Although 2002 was significant because of redistricting, [party members] are usually more concerned with statewide offices like the railroad commissioner, lieutenant governor, state supreme court and county courthouses than any other office. State legislative elections are usually not a priority for the party or party recruiting efforts…If it is an effort, then it is because of the individual initiative of some county and district committeemen and committeewomen…recruiting is usually individual, not organizational. (Interview July 30th, 2004)

An equally shared sentiment was present in both parties at the executive levels. In interviews with seven district chairs, only one admitted to actively recruiting for the state legislature, and the other four indicated county offices and legal offices were far more important. In interviews with three county chairs, all three stressed recruiting as an important duty for all elections in their county. Recruiting for state legislative elections is not a large priority for many party members. In 2002, state legislative candidates had to compete with federal elections and statewide elections, which are far more important offices to the party given the citizen status of the Texas Legislature, the relative weakness

[196] Interviews with Author July 12th & 30th, 2004.

of the Texas Legislature, and the redistricting that dramatically altered the perceived competitiveness for the Texas Legislature. In addition, of the eight candidates I spoke with, only one of them said a party representative solicited him to run for office.[197] The other seven said the party had not approached them and was not a factor. They were more likely to approach the party after a decision rather than before a decision.

A candidate-centered perspective yields important information on which groups were the most influential on their decision to run. If parties are to create the conditions for a responsible party, then the candidates must know or acknowledge that parties contributed to their decision to run. If parties are to be judged as important, then one acceptable dimension to judge their importance is in the area of recruitment. Parties do recruit, albeit not much, so we need to assess their importance in recruiting relative to other groups. When asked, "How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office," this survey finds that the decision to run for the Texas House of Representatives is no different, in that it is a highly personal, very localized decision (Table 3.3).[198] When candidates do acknowledge groups as being influential, the single most cited group is friends and family. Over 90% of the candidates surveyed in Texas cite friends and family as being important, with mean scores ranging from 2.75 to 4.50 (moderately to extremely important). The overall mean score for friends and family is even higher when noncompetitive incumbents are excluded from the analysis, a group that generally did not seek anyone's input in their re-election

[197] Interview with Author August 10th, 2004.
[198] Answer choices for this question and all other questions in this analysis were (5) extremely important, (4) very important, (3) moderately important, (2) slightly important, (1) not important. Thus, a 5.0 is the highest possible score and a 1.0 is the lowest possible score.

Table 3.3: How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.33	4.00	4.43	3.78	3.60	4.00	2.95	2.75	3.25	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.06	4.09	4.00	3.50	3.38	3.67
County	1.89	1.50	2.00	1.89	1.90	1.88	1.45	1.58	1.25	2.17	1.50	2.50	1.69	1.64	1.80	1.57	1.50	1.67
District	1.78	1.00	2.00	1.61	1.60	1.63	1.50	1.42	1.63	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.25	1.18	1.40	1.21	1.13	1.33
State	1.56	1.50	1.57	1.44	1.50	1.38	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.67	1.50	1.75	1.56	1.45	1.80	1.43	1.38	1.50
LCCs	2.00	1.50	2.14	1.17	1.20	1.13	2.30	1.83	3.00	1.83	1.50	2.00	1.06	1.00	1.20	1.93	1.75	2.17
National	1.56	1.00	1.71	1.11	1.10	1.13	1.80	1.42	2.38	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.14	1.00	1.33
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.33	1.00	1.50	1.38	1.36	1.40	1.36	1.38	1.33
IGs	1.78	1.50	1.86	1.67	1.50	1.88	1.30	1.00	1.75	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.44	1.18	2.00	1.64	1.63	1.67
PACs	1.89	1.50	2.00	1.22	1.20	1.25	1.90	1.75	2.13	1.83	1.50	2.00	1.19	1.00	1.60	1.71	1.63	1.83
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Position X Competitiveness F = 1.287, p< .203; Party F = 3.295, p< .002; Competition F = 2.945 p< .005 Seat Type F = 4.291, p< .000

decision.[199] Consistent with current literature, all candidates, regardless of party, seat type, and competitiveness, consider friends and family significantly more influential than other groups in their decision to run for office (Hogan 2003, Francia et al 2003, Gaddie 2004).

Reinforcing the personalization of the decision, over 50% of the candidates in this survey did not cite a single group outside of friends and family as being important in their decision to seek office. After friends and family, there is a significant reduction in the mean scores, indicating that all other groups are far less significant, far less important, or far less consistent in their influence on the decision to run.[200] This table also shows that candidates do not perceive the Republican Party of Texas and the Texas Democratic Party as successfully recruiting candidates for state legislative offices compared to other groups. State political parties, when they do recruit, seemed to focus on competitive open-seat candidates and competitive challengers. The multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) test confirms that candidate status, party affiliation, and competitiveness were significant predictors of how much influence candidates received from various groups, particularly the state political party, in the decision to run.

Even for incumbents, the decision to seek re-election is largely personal and usually excluded to friends and families; however, incumbents do indicate that some groups have subtly influenced them. The most significant, effective, and influential of these other groups from the perspective of candidates were legislative campaign committees. The Republican Legislative Caucus of Texas (RLCT) and the Democratic

[199] $t = 3.684$, $p < .001$.
[200] $t = 7.050$, $p < .000$.

Legislative Campaign Committee (DLCC)[201] played a significantly more important role than any other group in recruiting incumbents to run for reelection.[202] Furthermore, Republican incumbents noticed recruitment efforts of the RLCT (2.30) more than Democratic incumbents noticed recruitment efforts of the DLCC (1.93). Consistent with other accounts of the 2002 elections in Texas, Republican incumbents also acknowledged an active role and some concomitant influence by the national party (1.80) and political action committees (1.90). That is, the activities of Tom DeLay's Texans for a Republican Majority were not restricted to the financial realm; rather, DeLay and the TRMPAC also appeared to engage in recruiting activities and actively solicited or encouraged incumbents to seek re-election. These efforts were captured by this survey. The perceived importance of the RNC by Republican incumbents (1.80) is significantly higher than the perceived importance of the DNC by Democratic incumbents (1.33).[203] National Democratic groups were not as proactive or not as effective in Texas as their Republican counterparts. Behind the DLCC, the next most important groups for incumbent Democrats were political action committees (1.83), interest groups (1.67), and county-level party organizations (1.67). The Texas Democratic Party (1.57) and the Republican Party of Texas (1.25) were not perceived as important groups for incumbents

[201] The Texas Democrats in the House of Representatives have no formal name or official title for their legislative campaign committee, so I will use the name "Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee" with the acronym DLCC. One may encounter references to the Texas Partnership (TP), which is the political action committee (PAC) for the DLCC. TP and DLCC may be used interchangeably to reference LCC activities because the Democratic candidates themselves often used the terms interchangeably when referencing their LCC. It was difficult for candidates to recall technically which aspect of the LCC they officially interacted with, but this is not a problem because the two groups were tightly connected and, simultaneously, controlled by Pete Laney (D), the Speaker of the House, and legislative Democrats leader during the 2002 election.

[202] $t = 1.997$, $p < .054$.

[203] $t = 2.056$, $p < .048$.

in their decision to run for reelection.[204] The TDP was assigned a low mean score barely exceeding the paltry importance of unions, the national party, and district-level party organizations. The TDP may be more important than the RPT, although the difference was not statistically significant. The RPT was the least-mentioned group among Republicans ahead of, understandably, only unions. In both parties, state-level committees trailed (1.43, 1.25) county-level committees (1.57, 1.45) in importance. Across both parties for all groups, competitive incumbents generally perceived receiving more recruitment attention from groups than noncompetitive incumbents.[205]

A different, rather lonely pattern emerges for challengers. In both parties, challengers were either not heavily recruited by many groups, or challengers did not perceive to be heavily recruited by these groups. Whereas incumbents noticed LCCs, PACs, and interest groups, challengers noticed only some interest group and county-level party recruitment efforts. Additionally, competitive challengers perceived more groups as being more important in their recruiting than noncompetitive challengers.[206] Beyond this, cross-party similarities end.

Regardless of competitiveness, Democratic challengers cite county-level committees as being the most important group in their recruiting (1.69), though competitive challengers (1.80) were more impressed than noncompetitive challengers (1.64). Trailing the county committees were state committees (1.56). Apparently, state-level committees did recruit competitive challengers (1.80), but since competitive challengers are less prevalent than noncompetitive challengers (1.18) the overall impact of the TDP is muted. TDP recruitment appears strategic in that its resources and attention

[204] LCC v Party $t = 2.633$, $p < .013$.
[205] LCCs and IGs no less than $t = 2.123$ $p < .042$.
[206] Only interest groups were statistically different $t = 2.254$, $p < .031$.

were largely expended according to the competitiveness of the challenger. Outside of the county and state party, the only other noticeable recruiter for Democratic challengers were interest groups, with competitive challengers (1.80) finding them more important than noncompetitive challengers (1.18).[207] The impact of RPT recruitment was not as discriminatory. Overall, the RPT was not as important as the TDP, but their recruitment efforts were noticed more by noncompetitive (1.50) challengers than competitive (1.38) challengers. Either way, the state committees (1.44) trail county-level committees (1.89) and district-level committees (1.61) in importance. County-level and district-level committees, like state-level committees, did not focus exclusively on competitive challengers. Outside of interest groups (1.67), Republican challengers did not notice the recruitment efforts of any other group. Overall, Republican challengers did find county-level party recruiting efforts slightly important and exceeding district-level party and state-level party organizations in terms of importance. After the county-level committee, Democrats find state-level committees more important than district-level committees.

Open-seat candidates were the focus of more recruitment efforts by more groups than both challengers and incumbents in state legislative lections. The LCCs ignored challengers in the eyes of challengers, but the LCCs did not ignore incumbents in the eyes of incumbents. While challengers did not notice LCC recruiting efforts, they did notice party recruiting efforts (vice versa for incumbents). Open-seat candidates, on the other hand, equally and simultaneously acknowledge the slightly important effects of recruiting efforts by both party organizations and legislative party organizations. Regardless of the party, county-level party committees (2.00), LCCs (1.93), and PACs (1.87) received the highest mean scores of all the groups. Trailing in importance were

[207] $t = 2.976$, $p < .010$.

the state-level committees of the TDP and RPT, with the TDP (1.67) receiving slightly higher scores than the RPT (1.56). Like challengers, Republican open-seat candidates found county-level committees (1.89) to have been the most important, followed by district-level committees (1.78) and state-level committees (1.56). Among Democrats, county-level committees are the most important party recruiters (2.17); however, district-level committees (1.50) and state-level committees (1.56) are not important.[208] Thus, the RPT seemed to have a more active district-level committees than the TDP. Either way, district-level and state-level party committees follow PACs (1.83) and LCCs (1.83) in relative importance. Again, one item that emerges is the relative influence of national party forces among Republicans. Republican open-seat candidates find the national party (1.56) more important than Democratic open-seat candidates (1.17). Open-seat candidates did find some county-level party committee recruitment slightly important, along with LCCs and PACs.

Overall in terms of recruitment, the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party are relatively unimportant and generally trail other groups in importance. Friends and family, LCCs, PACs, and interest groups consistently exceed party committees in terms of importance. When party recruitment is noticed, it is by competitive open-seat candidates who find county-level party committee recruitment slightly important. While challengers find county-level committees the most influential group, the mean scores are not high enough to consider the recruitment substantially important. Incumbents clearly did not find any party efforts at any level to be important. The two parties had varying levels of influence from different committees. The RPT has more influential district-level committees, but the TDP has more influential state-level

[208] $t = 2.00$, $p < .102$.

Table 3.4: How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office?

	Party		Position			Competitiveness	
	Democrat	Republican	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat	C	N-C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.92	3.53	3.18	3.91	4.40	3.92	3.51
County	1.72	1.70	1.50	1.79	2.00	1.79	1.64
District	1.28	1.60	1.38	1.44	1.67	1.61	1.33
State	1.53	1.38	1.32	1.50	1.60	1.50	1.40
LCCs	1.53	1.81	2.15	1.12	1.93	1.97	1.44
National	1.08	1.49	1.53	1.06	1.40	1.53	1.13
Union	1.36	1.00	1.15	1.18	1.13	1.16	1.16
IGs	1.53	1.53	1.44	1.56	1.67	1.82	1.29
PACs	1.50	1.64	1.82	1.21	1.87	1.79	1.40
N	36	37	34	34	15	38	45

committees. Leading the way in both parties were county-level committees. Incumbents and open-seat candidates find LCC, PAC, and national party efforts significantly more important in their recruiting than challengers.[209] Given the fact that open-seat candidates and incumbents are more likely to win than challengers, this finding is logical. Most importantly, though, the decision to run for state legislature in Texas is highly personal and made largely in conjunction with friends and family. Most candidates do not rely on outside groups.

Campaign Management

In Chapter Two, I discussed how campaigning has become increasingly complicated because campaigns are more expensive, campaign finance laws are more complex, technology is becoming more sophisticated, and electorates are rapidly changing (Francia et al. 2003). Campaigns must become more precise if they are to be successful, and such precision requires increased levels of technical knowledge not

[209] LCCs $t = 4.459$, $p < .001$; PACs $t = 3.515$, $p < .001$; $t = 2.771$, $p < .007$.

necessarily nor automatically possessed by local candidates. At the federal level, the parties have converted themselves into campaign management networks that connect candidates to consultants and pay-for professionals, with some workshops interspersed throughout the year designed to recommend strategies, tactics, and management techniques (Aldrich 1995, Herrnson 2004). Mentioning national parties is important because they have contributed to the strengthening of the state parties and have passed down many of the techniques and lessons learned at the national level to state parties for statewide elections (Appleton and Ward 1994). Modeling themselves after the national committees, state parties often provide experience, offer advice, suggest tactical decisions, assist with the hiring and training of campaign staff, and recommend legal, polling, management, fundraising, media, and get-out-the-vote professionals (Francia et al 2003, Monroe 2001, Frendreis et al. 1990, Gibson and Scarrow 1993, Thurber and Nelson 2000). Despite this trend, state legislative candidates still like to control their campaigns and are generally reluctant to yield control to other people, especially parties (Kolodny 2000). Parties occasionally attempt to handle the responsibility of management for campaigns, but clearly they are better suited to connecting candidates to political, polling, and management consultants and other professionals that can provide management services. As we will see, Texas is not much different from other states.

Texas, like other states, has seen elections grow more difficult with campaigns that are more expensive, campaign finance laws that are more complex, technology that is more sophisticated, and electorates that are rapidly changing. State legislative elections remain simpler than statewide and state Senate campaigns; however, state legislative districts still average 140,000 people and 1,740 square miles. Texas' state

legislative districts are still larger in size and population than the national average; so, many candidates have a need for support and assistance. Interviews suggest, however, that the TDP and RPT are unprepared to assume campaign management roles. The party officials I spoke with did not mention any future plans to take a more active, hands-on approach towards state legislative campaigns beyond their current role of training seminars and candidate schools. In fact, one TDP executive member laughed at the question and said, "Are you kidding me? We cannot run state legislative campaigns now; we really don't even try. We gave them a workshop, we give advice, we recommend people…we had about a hundred show up, but that's about it."[210] The one-day TDP training school attempted to educate candidates on developing administrative strategies, running a campaign, implementing personnel management strategies, recruiting volunteers, researching opponents or voting records, and publicizing groups and professionals for specialized services. The school also advertised the coordinated campaign, where candidates could pool some of their finances to participate in targeted mailings, literature drops, direct mail solicitations, GOTV drives, email blasts, and polling information. The TDP did not orchestrate any other activities that fall within the realm of campaign management.

The TDP official also went on to indicate that more substantial and personal party support comes from DEC or CEC officers on a case-by-case basis according to their experience or ability, though the executive committee does "encourage [DEC and CEC officers] to assist local campaigns in any capacity they can…we make it perfectly clear to candidates what we can and cannot do. They know to go to district officers, county officers, and local organizations for more support." Do these local party entities provide

[210] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

much support? In the Democratic Party, all six officers (four district, two county) that I spoke with indicated that they generally do not provide campaign management assistance and avoid trying to tell candidates how to run their campaign unless actively solicited by candidates. One district officer with campaign experience said she was not afraid to give strategic or administrative advice, but "candidates already think they know what they are doing. You can't tell them anything they don't want to hear and my experience says they don't like being told what to do."[211] All six also mentioned that they occasionally gave advice and recommended SDEC-approved professionals, but that was about it.

The Republican Party of Texas offered a series of one-day training seminars in different cities in late 2001 and early 2002. These seminars required all candidates to bring a campaign plan, a prospective budget or financial summary, and their campaign manager (if they had one). At the seminar, RPT members and professionals critiqued the campaign plans or financial summaries, and gave basic recommendations to campaign managers about what their proper role should be, how they should structure the campaign staff, and what various personnel should be doing. Also, candidates were informed about party services (i.e. donor lists and precinct lists) and given lists of local precinct, county, district, and executive officers in the area. The seminars provided tips on how to research opponents, how to develop issue positions in response to opponents, how to create a press release, and provided lists of media outlets. The candidates were also given business cards and packets identifying party-friendly professionals to hire for fundraising, polling, advertising, and GOTV drives. In the words of one RPT executive committee member, "The purpose of the seminar was to communicate what winning campaigns have, not

[211] Interview with Author July 15th, 2004.

necessarily to tell them what to do."[212] For state legislative campaigns, this is the extent of coherent, unified RPT efforts in campaign management. Beyond this, district, county, and other local committees may perform management functions, but interviews with four of these committee officers indicate campaign management is not a common activity. One individual said, "I will raise money for them, I will knock on doors for them, but I will not and cannot run their campaign. I can give phone numbers of party members I think may help them, but that is it."[213] Responding to a follow-up question as to why they are not more involved, all four gave two universal reasons: one, they do not have enough free time; two, candidates generally do not ask for this type of help.

In Texas the state parties are trying to create service networks, but they clearly do not try to impose any authority on candidates and avoid trying to make campaign management a priority. Individual members may provide advice, may work for a candidate's campaign, and may recommend various professionals, but that is the extent of local party involvement in state legislative campaigns. Part of the reason for this is budgetary; the party lacks the financial resources to provide more services. Part of the reason for this is organizational; the party lacks a strong and coherent central committee capable of directing personnel and resources to various parts of a large state. Part of the reason for this is time; party members have full-time jobs and families, while party activity is an extracurricular activity. The final reason is the candidates themselves; they are not demanding party assistance nor are they generally amenable to party control in campaign management. Both parties have made concerted efforts to develop some sort

[212] Interview with Author July 30th, 2004.
[213] Interview with Author August 2nd, 2004.

of management program and introduce candidates to consultants, but that is the extent of party activity. Nevertheless, how did the candidates perceive this assistance?

In light of the parties' increased interest in campaign management, this survey posed three questions asking candidates to gauge the importance of party influence in this area. The first question on the survey ascertains whether the training schools, seminars, and various materials provided by different groups helped candidates formulate a campaign strategy. Table 3.5 presents the results to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with the formulation of a campaign strategy?" Campaign strategies are a less intrusive facet of campaign management, so this survey also asks if the parties were more intrusive and actually assisted the candidate with the overall management of the campaign. Table 3.6 presents the responses to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?" Finally, literature and interviews suggest that parties are often unwilling to play any role in campaign management and instead prefer to recommend professionals (Kolodny 2000). Since the use of professionals in campaigns is increasing, a third question asks, "How important were the following groups in assisting you in hiring pollsters, media consultants, and other campaign professionals?" Table 3.7 shows the results of this question.

Table 3.5 shows that friends and families are the most influential individuals, outside of the candidate themselves, in formulating campaign strategies. Although the means vary widely across groups (1.95 to 4.22), the assistance of friends and family

Table 3.5: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with the formulation of a campaign strategy?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.22	4.50	4.14	4.00	4.20	3.75	1.95	1.33	2.88	3.83	4.50	3.50	3.38	3.55	3.00	2.93	2.38	3.67
County	1.78	1.50	1.86	1.94	1.90	2.00	1.40	1.25	1.63	1.67	1.50	1.75	1.81	1.55	2.40	1.36	1.25	1.50
District	2.00	1.50	2.14	1.89	1.70	2.13	1.45	1.25	1.75	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.31	1.18	1.60	1.21	1.13	1.33
State	1.22	1.00	1.29	1.50	1.40	1.63	1.25	1.08	1.50	2.17	2.00	2.25	1.75	1.64	2.00	1.43	1.25	1.67
LCCs	2.44	1.50	2.71	1.22	1.30	1.13	2.40	2.08	2.88	2.33	2.00	2.50	1.06	1.00	1.20	2.29	1.75	3.00
National	1.89	1.00	2.14	1.06	1.00	1.13	1.45	1.17	1.88	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.00	1.17
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.33	1.50	1.25	1.25	1.18	1.40	1.21	1.25	1.17
IGs	1.56	1.50	1.57	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.65	1.33	2.13	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.50	1.36	1.80	1.36	1.13	1.67
PACs	2.11	1.50	2.29	1.44	1.50	1.38	2.00	1.58	2.63	1.67	1.50	1.75	1.25	1.09	1.60	1.79	1.63	2.00
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 2.309, p< .004; Party F = 2.833, p< .007; Competition F = 1.996 p< .054, Seat Type F = 4.861, p< .000

significantly outranked all other groups in terms of relative importance.[214] Thus, like the decision to run, candidates also rely heavily on their friends and family for formulating campaign strategies, though to a lesser degree than the decision to run. The MANOVA test for this question indicated that the importance of party assistance for formulating campaign strategies was contingent on the party and the seat type. Competitiveness becomes a significant predictor of party activity only when combined with the seat type of the candidate. Thus, the party seems to have made strategic decisions to help formulate strategies for competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates, and the Texas Democratic Party was more effective with its support and, simultaneously, more important to its respective candidates than the Republican Party of Texas.

First of all this survey finds that, generally speaking, incumbents do not find state party organizations to be important. Democratic (1.50) and Republican (1.25) incumbents found their state-level committees to be ineffective and unimportant. County-level committees were barely more important than state-level committees (1.57, 1.45), but these mean scores are still incredibly low to the point of being negligible, and the differences are not statistically significant. Once again, Republicans receive more support from district-level committees and county-level committees, whereas Democrats generally do not acknowledge any district-level committee activity. Secondly, the most important group for incumbents are their respective legislative campaign committees. The RLCT (2.40) seems to have been very important to incumbents, outpacing the recorded importance of the DLCC (2.29). Also, Republican incumbents, especially competitive incumbents, acknowledge that PACs (2.63), the national party (1.88), and other interest groups (2.13) were important and helpful in formulating campaign

[214] No t-test lower than 6.745, $p < .000$.

strategies. Democratic incumbents had to fend for themselves and had fewer effective resources at their disposal because only PACS (1.71) and interest groups (1.64) receive any mention of being important, and this recorded importance is incredibly small. Incumbents appeared to formulate their own strategies without much help. When they did not formulate their own strategies, the most important group was the DLCC; however, Republicans received far more support from far more groups. In both parties, competitive incumbents received more support. Overall, incumbents running for the Texas State House of Representative largely formulate their own campaign strategies. At the very least, incumbents do not find the parties to be at all important in this campaign activity.[215]

If a picture of self-sufficiency is captured for incumbents in the formulation of their campaign strategies, then a monstrous billboard of self-sufficiency jumps out in the data for challengers. Generally speaking, challengers have not received any help formulating campaign strategies. Democratic challengers give their two highest mean scores to state-level committees (1.75) and county-level committees (1.81), and competitive candidates (2.00, 2.40) were more complimentary than noncompetitive candidates (1.64, 1.81). When removing noncompetitive candidates, there is some evidence that county-level committees (2.40) and state-level committees (2.00) played an important role in helping competitive challengers formulate campaign strategies. Interest groups also emerge (1.80) as a marginally influential group among competitive challengers. Thus, the TDP and its county-level committees assisted some candidates in formulating campaign strategies. When excluding noncompetitive candidates, the TDP

[215] All three party committees significantly trail PACs and LCC with no t-test lower than $t = 2.209$, $p < .034$.

was influential and slightly important. Overall, these contributions would appear unimportant because of the greater number of noncompetitive candidates with low opinions of party support.

Republican experiences with the party are different in several respects and similar in others. First, Republican challengers acknowledge some slight importance for county-level party committees (1.94) to a degree that makes them the most important group in the formulation of campaign strategies. While Democrats found the state-level committees to be the next important group, Republican challengers find their district-level committees (1.70) to be secondly important. Second, in terms of competitiveness, the county-level committees received equal scores from all Republican challengers regardless of competitiveness, but district-level committees did not receive equal scores from competitive (2.13) and noncompetitive (1.70) challengers. Competitive candidates generally seem to notice party efforts more, suggesting that party efforts were either more effective with or more concentrated on competitive challengers than noncompetitive challengers. Third, all Republican challengers, like competitive Democratic challengers, found county-level committees to be the most important of the party organizations and slightly important overall. Fourth, all Republican challengers, like Democratic challengers, also did not find anyone else to be reasonably helpful in formulating campaign strategies. Some challengers acknowledged interest groups as providing some marginal support, but this support is exactly that – marginal. Overall, outside of friends and family, county-level party committees were slightly important in formulating campaign strategies for Republicans and competitive Democratic challengers, but therein lay the full extent of party support.

Open-seat candidates are not ignored when needing assistance with formulating campaign strategies. Surprisingly, the LCC's highest scores came from open-seat candidates and not incumbents. Democratic and Republican open-seat candidates perceived legislative campaign committees as being very active in formulating campaign strategies for open-seat candidates, with the RLCT (2.44) receiving a slightly higher mean score than the DLCC (2.33). Both LCCs were significantly more important to open-seat candidates than party committees at any level.[216] Democratic state-level committees were relatively effective with open-seat incumbents (2.17), even outranking the county-level party in relative importance (1.67).[217] Thus, the TDP state-level efforts were more effective than county-level efforts. Trailing the party are interest groups (1.50) and PACs (1.67). Clearly, LCCs were the most important organizations, though the party did have some slightly important impact.

On the similar side of the ledger, the RLCT was the most important group for Republican open-seat candidates, significantly outpacing other groups.[218] On the other side of the ledger, the party is not as important. Once again, county-level party committees (1.78), and especially the district-level committees (2.00), are more important party resources than state-level committees (1.22).[219] The involvement of PACs (2.11), interest groups (1.56), and the national party (1.89) were also noticed. The two groups clearly left out are unions (1.00) and the state party (1.22). Overall, Republican open-seat candidates found the assistance by LCCs, district-level party committees, and PACS important in formulating campaign strategies. Republican open-seat candidates also

[216] LCCs vs. County, District, and State all greater than $t = 2.320$, $p < .036$.
[217] $t = 2.236$, $p < .076$.
[218] T-test for LCC-group differences significant (greater than $t = 2.828$, $p < .022$) for all groups except district party and PACs.
[219] $t = 3.162$, $p < .013$; $t = 2.401$, $p < .043$.

perceived more groups to have been more helpful than their Democratic counterparts, with the only exception being the state and county-level party committees. In 2002, Republican open-seat candidates received more beneficial assistance from a variety of groups, but the party plays a more important role for Democrats than Republicans.

When it comes to helping candidates formulate campaign strategies, the Texas Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Texas have been selective in their support. For Democrats, the TDP concentrated on competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates. Unfortunately for the TDP, it had to compete with the DLCC for the attention of open-seat candidates and the RPT had to compete with the RLCT for the attention of open-seat candidates. Within the TDP, county-level and state-level party committees were important to challengers and open-seat candidates, but district-level committees were not important. On the other hand, incumbents found party support unimportant. The RPT is not as active as the TDP at the state level or county level, as they lag behind the Democrats in relative influence. Offsetting the relative absence of these two party committees were district-level committees, which focused on competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates. Although the overall scores suggest the two parties have not been important, the TDP and RPT are slightly important to competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates. In the realm of campaign strategy formulation, most state legislative candidates are largely self-sufficient and do not rely on many outside groups in formulating campaign strategies.

Formulating campaign strategies is one facet of campaign management, but the other dimension of campaign management includes, though is not restricted to, campaign structure, division of labor, hiring a campaign manager, and organizing campaign

activities and operations. State legislative candidates largely set their own strategies with little or no influence from other groups, but are these same legislative candidates willing to allow groups to assist, structure, or advise their day-to-day campaign management?

Table 3.6 summarizes the responses to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?" A MANOVA test demonstrates that seat type and political party are important predictors in indicating the level of assistance by the TDP and RPT; however, across all categories – competitiveness, seat type, party – the mean scores for every group in the realm of campaign management are lower than the mean scores recorded for strategy formulation. Thus, the first conclusion that can be drawn is that candidates are not receptive to outside groups taking an important role in the management of campaigns and, simultaneously, these outside groups do take an important role in the formulation of campaign strategies. That is, while some candidates find some groups marginally helpful in formulating campaign strategies, these same candidates are additionally and significantly less likely to find these groups helpful with campaign management. Candidates may yield to strategic advice, but not management advice. In fact, 40% of the all the candidates in this survey indicated a complete absence of all group assistance with the management of their campaign.

State legislative campaigns are candidate-driven and candidate-centered operations, with candidates yielding very little control to outside individuals. Incumbents are not any different, as incumbents in both parties deny the relative importance of group support in the overall management of their campaigns. When incumbents do acknowledge others, the credit is bestowed on two entities: friends and families and

Table 3.6: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.00	4.50	3.86	3.67	4.10	3.13	2.45	1.92	3.25	3.67	3.50	3.75	3.25	3.55	2.60	2.21	1.75	2.83
County	1.67	1.50	1.71	1.56	1.70	1.38	1.25	1.17	1.38	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.38	1.27	1.60	1.29	1.13	1.50
District	1.78	1.50	1.86	1.56	1.50	1.63	1.25	1.17	1.38	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.19	1.09	1.40	1.07	1.00	1.17
State	1.44	1.00	1.57	1.39	1.30	1.50	1.15	1.08	1.25	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.44	1.36	1.60	1.14	1.13	1.17
LCCs	2.00	1.50	2.14	1.17	1.20	1.13	2.00	1.75	2.38	1.83	1.00	2.25	1.06	1.00	1.20	2.07	1.88	2.33
National	1.78	1.00	2.00	1.06	1.00	1.13	1.30	1.08	1.63	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.13	1.09	1.20	1.21	1.00	1.50
IGs	1.44	1.50	1.43	1.44	1.40	1.50	1.45	1.25	1.75	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.25	1.18	1.40	1.21	1.00	1.50
PACs	1.67	1.50	1.71	1.28	1.30	1.25	1.55	1.42	1.75	1.33	1.50	1.25	1.19	1.09	1.40	1.36	1.25	1.50
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 1.689, p< .049; Party F = 3.749, p< .001; Competition F = 1.863 p< .074, Seat Type F = 3.916, p< .000

legislative campaign committees. Friends and family receive some very moderate scores from Democrats (2.21) and from Republicans (2.45). Next to friends and family are their respective legislative campaign committees, with the DLCC (2.07) edging out the RLCT (2.00) in relative importance. Outside of these two groups, the overall importance of other groups in campaign management is negligible. Republican incumbents indicate some minor assistance from interest groups (1.55) and political action committees (1.45), while Democratic incumbents give their next highest rating to PACs (1.36). These groups significantly trail LCCs in importance.[220] When accounting for competitiveness, competitive incumbents were slightly more susceptible to group influence; however, the relative importance of these groups remains incredibly small. Not surprisingly, noncompetitive incumbents do not assign any level of importance to any groups, as many did not even have to actively campaign, thereby removing the necessity of campaign management. At the very least, in terms of party significance, the state, district, and county parties are not at all significant or important in assisting with the management of campaigns.[221]

Given the generally low chances for success, one could reasonably expect challengers to have relied more on outside groups for any help with the management of their campaigns. And they did, as 45% of the challengers indicated receiving party support and 33% received non-party support.[222] Furthermore, one could also reasonably expect challengers to be more appreciative with the more assistance they receive. Challengers in fact do not cite any groups as being slightly, moderately, very, or

[220] $t = 2.748$, $p < .010$; $t = 3.438$, $p < .001$.
[221] Democrats $t = 2.474$, $p < .028$; Republicans $t = 2.680$, $p < .015$.
[222] In campaign strategy 50% of challengers received party support and 36% of challengers received no party support.

extremely important with the overall management of their campaigns on average. Among the groups not playing an important role was the TDP, at the state (1.44), district (1.19), and county level (1.38). Once again, competitive challengers favored the Democratic Party at the state (1.60) and county level (1.60) over noncompetitive challengers (1.36 and 1.27, respectively). Republican challengers exhibit similar characteristics. Party organizations rank as being more influential than other groups; however, their overall mean score is incredibly low. Whether it is the state-level committee (1.39), the district-level committee (1.56), or county-level committee (1.56), each level exerts little influence on campaign management, although competitive Republican challengers (1.50, 1.63) were more impressed than noncompetitive challengers (1.30, 1.50). Including the party organizations, none of the groups takes a prominent role in campaign management for challengers in state legislative elections.

While challengers and incumbents found group assistance to have been inconsequential in assisting with the management of their campaign, open-seat candidates in Texas received more attention and acknowledged more groups as being important. Democratic open-seat candidates found the assistance by the DLCC (1.83) and, more importantly, county-level committees (2.00) to have been slightly important. When removing noncompetitive candidates from this analysis, the level of importance of the DLCC jumps to 2.25. The only other groups that even register any impact are PACs (1.50) and interest groups (1.50). Reflecting the strength of their district-level organizations, Republican open-seat candidates found the campaign management assistance from district-level committees (1.78) to have been the most important state party source with county-level committees trailing slightly (1.67). These party

organizations trail the legislative campaign committees (2.00) and national party in relative importance (1.78).[223] Normally the national party, when it becomes involved in campaigns, generally supports incumbents; however, the national party appears to have played a marginal role among the campaigns of open-seat Republicans in 2002.[224] Concomitantly, the mean level of importance assigned to Republican PACs (1.67) shows that open-seat candidates felt this group to have been equally as influential as their county and district committees. Overall, open-seat candidates acknowledge more groups to have had some minor influences. For Republicans, the party was not at all important, but for Democrats the county-level committee was slightly important.

Overall, the picture that emerges from the analysis of the management of campaigns is that traditional state political party organizations are not consistent and important actors in the management of state legislative campaigns in Texas. When parties do provide support, competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates were the most receptive. In fact, Democratic open-seat candidates indicate that county-level party committee efforts are slightly important to their campaigns; however, this is offset by the fact that their relative importance did not increase at a significantly greater rate relative to the increased rate of influence of other groups. This does not suggest that group competition has a zero-sum component; rather, it shows that parties must work harder with open-seat candidates to gain their exclusive attention. The two parties operate differently. The Texas Democratic Party and its county-level committees are marginally important and outperforming the Republican Party in the eyes of the candidates. Meanwhile, the Republican Party's district-level organizations are better

[223] LCC-PAC/County $t = 2.202$, $p < .058$, other LCC differences significant.
[224] DNC vs. RNC $t = 1.996$, $p < .070$.

organized, more active, and subsequently more effective than their Democratic counterparts in the eyes of the candidates. Nevertheless, parties are being surpassed by the DLCC and RLCT among incumbents and open-seat candidates. Although the TDP is the highest rated group among challengers, the mean score is so low as to make this first-place finish insignificant and unimportant in the grand scheme of things. In conclusion, candidates seldom rely on groups to assist in the management of their campaigns, and when they do rely on party support, they are not likely to find this assistance important.

The final dimension of campaign management covered in this survey is the ability of groups to network campaign professionals with or find campaign professionals for candidates. First and foremost, a notable finding that emerges in this study is the general lack of use of campaign professionals in state legislative elections in Texas. Professionalism has not infiltrated state legislative elections in Texas. Just 40% of the candidates surveyed said they sought help to locate campaign professionals and, when removing incumbents from these statistics, the percentage of candidates that acknowledges receiving assistance finding professionals decreases to 22%. Table 3.7 shows the complete results when candidates were asked to assess which groups were the most helpful in finding, recommending, or hiring campaign professionals. A MANOVA test demonstrates that seat type and competitiveness are still important predictors in indicating the level of support by the TDP and RPT in assisting candidates with finding campaign professionals.

Not surprisingly, incumbents found the assistance of their respective legislative campaign committees to be the most important group in assisting them with finding consultants, pollsters and other campaign professionals. The DLCC receives slightly

Table 3.7: How important were the following groups in hiring campaign professionals and consultants?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.89	4.00	3.86	1.72	2.00	1.38	2.15	1.50	3.13	2.67	2.50	2.75	2.19	2.18	2.20	1.71	1.38	2.17
County	1.44	1.00	1.57	1.33	1.40	1.25	1.10	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.19	1.09	1.40	1.07	1.00	1.17
District	1.44	1.00	1.57	1.39	1.30	1.50	1.10	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.06	1.00	1.20	1.14	1.00	1.33
State	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.28	1.20	1.38	1.10	1.08	1.13	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.18	1.40	1.07	1.00	1.17
LCCs	2.11	1.50	2.29	1.44	1.60	1.25	2.15	1.92	2.50	1.83	1.50	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.29	1.63	3.17
National	1.78	1.00	2.00	1.11	1.00	1.25	1.30	1.00	1.75	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.14	1.00	1.33
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.13	1.09	1.20	1.07	1.00	1.17
IGs	1.22	1.00	1.29	1.39	1.50	1.25	1.35	1.25	1.50	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.13	1.09	1.20	1.14	1.00	1.33
PACs	1.89	1.00	2.14	1.11	1.10	1.13	1.50	1.33	1.75	1.83	1.00	2.25	1.19	1.09	1.40	1.43	1.13	1.83
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Position X Party X Comp. F = 1.276, p< .2154; Party F = 1.617, p< .130; Competition F = 3.012 p< .005, Seat Type F = 3.281, p< .000

higher scores of importance (2.29) than did the RLCT (2.15). Not only were the LCCs important to incumbents, but open-seat candidates also acknowledged the DLCC (1.83) and RLCT (2.11) as being the most important group for them as well. The LCCs are significantly the most important resources for incumbents.[225] Incumbents of both parties also acknowledge a marginally important role by their respective PACs (1.83 for Democrats, 1.75 for Republicans), but they are not as significant as the LCCs. Democratic and Republican incumbents did not find that any other groups appear to have been very important. Among Republicans, the national party did appear to help some Republican incumbents (1.75) hire campaign specialists. Absent from the campaigns of incumbents at all levels are the state political parties.

The Texas Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Texas played almost no role in assisting campaigns with hiring consultants, pollsters, or other campaign professionals. The pattern of note up to this point is the parties are a campaign resource primarily for competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates. In the hiring of campaign professionals, the parties fail to leave an impression on anyone. Democratic challengers did not acknowledge any party committee (1.25, 1.06, 1.19), or any other group for that matter (1.00 – 1.19), to have played a role in the hiring of campaign professionals. Republicans acknowledge, albeit very minimally, the role of the RLCT (1.44), interest groups (1.39), and district-level organizations (1.39). Even incumbents and open-seat candidates, regardless of party, shared a general assessment of the state party that resulted in a very inconsequential mean score of importance.

Reflecting the heightened importance of open-seat contests during the 2002 state legislative election because House control was at stake, competitive open-seat candidates

[225] LCC-group differences all significant with a t-score no lower than $t = 2.743$, $p < .010$ (PACS).

were the most likely to need professionals and, consequently, more likely to receive assistance from various groups in finding these professionals. Unfortunately, competitive open-seat candidates did not acknowledge their respective state party organizations as being one of the groups that were instrumental in this aspect of campaigning. In both parties, county-level (1.47), district-level (1.27), and state-level (1.07) party organizations all trailed at least four other groups in relative importance.[226] Furthermore, the mean score assigned to these various party levels was very small. The most important groups for open-seat candidates were legislative campaign committees (2.00), political action committees (1.87), and the national parties (1.67). Interestingly enough, the national party played a more important role for both Democrats (1.50) and Republicans (1.78) than any other state, district, or local party organization. The RLCT (2.11), Republican-allied PACs (1.89), and the national Republican Party organizations (1.78) played a more important role than the DLCC (1.89), Democratically-allied PACs (1.83), and national Democrat party organizations (1.50). Candidates in Texas are not likely to utilize the services of campaign professionals and, when they do, are not likely to seek out the party or find the party important in acquiring these services. The parties are not doing a very good job helping state legislative candidates find pollsters, media consultants, and other campaign professionals.

In conclusion, state legislative elections in the state of Texas are so local and so candidate-centered that the candidates themselves largely dictate the strategies and management of the campaign. As a result, candidates do not rely on others to assist them in the formulation of strategies, management of their campaign, or hiring of professionals. In the rare instances that candidates do find outside groups to assist them

[226] Party-LCC $t = 3.108$, $p < .008$; Party-PAC $t = 3.055$, $p < .009$.

under the rubric of campaign management, they are generally neither seeking nor finding important the advice or assistance of the Texas Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Texas. Consistently surpassing the parties in relative importance are legislative campaign committees, political action committees, interest groups, and, in the Republican Party, national party organizations. The TDP and RPT are also not the primary or most important actors in the overall management of state legislative campaigns. Both parties have also failed to help state legislative candidates find and hire professionals. Although the RPT is weaker than the TDP at the state level and county level, the RPT is more effective at the district level. There are only three isolated cases where party activities are slightly important to candidates: one, Democratic competitive challengers and Democratic open-seat candidates from state-level committees in formulating strategies; two, Republican competitive challengers and Republican open-seat candidates from district-level committees in formulating strategies; three, Democratic open-seat candidates from county-level committees in overall campaign management. Overall, parties are not consistently important in the realm of campaign management.

Campaign Communications

Party organizations have attempted not only to increase their ability to provide campaign management-related services, parties have also attempted to take a more active role in communicating messages, themes, and platforms to candidates. Presidential, federal, and statewide elections are often accompanied by a media spectacle; however, state legislative elections remain relatively isolated from the media scrutiny and attention of other races. Larger elections are more dependent on the media, primarily television and radio advertising to spread their themes, messages and positions. Yet, state

legislative elections are unique in that radio and television coverage zones often span multiple legislative districts. The exorbitant costs associated with medias, especially with large coverage zones, are difficult to justify to candidates whose goal is to isolate or focus on a very compact constituency within a coverage area. Thus, electronic forms are largely inefficient. Instead, campaign communications become literature-oriented in state legislative elections; effectively targeted flyers and postcards are of paramount importance (Hogan 2002). According to The Campaign Assessment and Candidate Outreach Project, some state and local organizations now own printing presses, write direct mail, copy direct mail, print direct mail letters, and mail them to voters in an attempt to take control of state campaign communications. Despite this, their surveys found that state organizations still rarely take responsibility for a candidate's campaign communications (Francia et al. 2003). The state parties in Texas neither own presses nor attempt to control campaign communications, but they do provide direct mail templates, partially subsidize mailings, inform candidates about available advertising strategies, disseminate talking points, provide lists of media outlets, and supply sample press releases.

The Texas Democratic Party undertook several activities under the rubric of campaign communications. Although the one-day training school was primarily a campaign management resource, it also covered some items that fall within campaign communications. Communication resources made available were teaching candidates how to research opponents, showing how to "attack" opponents, and recommending advertising professionals. The party also made available "email blasts," which are weekly email updates from the state-level committee containing, among other things,

talking points, poll-tested themes, party press releases, poll numbers, and opposition inaccuracies, mistakes, or other public gaffes. Candidates participating in the coordinated campaign benefited from generic targeted mailings, literature drops, shared poll data, and television, radio, and newspaper advertisements. Party efforts in campaign communications were primarily aimed at those candidates within targeted areas of statewide campaign efforts and occasionally without the knowledge or coordination of state legislative candidates. Therefore, several state legislative candidates were benefited both intentionally and accidentally from party services because they were within targeted zones.[227] Those not participating in the coordinated campaign could still buy generic party literature, poll data and party advertisements, though several candidates mentioned how interest groups like the Texas Trial Lawyers Association made this literature available more cheaply or freely on their behalf based on their status or the status of their opponents.[228] Like with campaign management, the SDEC primarily expected district and county officials to most directly assist campaigns. One district officer with previous electoral experience indicated that she regularly assisted candidates with formulating communication strategies and made available her marketing experience to help candidates in her district with speeches and advertisements. She also tried to keep candidates abreast of any available party services, though she admitted she did not waste too much of her time with candidates that she felt had no chance of succeeding. Finally, when I asked whether her support was typical or atypical for DEC committeewomen, her answer was, "most likely, atypical."[229] In urban areas district officers are usually of less help; in this case, county officers are the recommended resource. Some county officers

[227] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[228] Interview with Author July 22nd, 2004.
[229] Interview with Author July 21st, 2004.

are very experienced and have many connections to help candidates with communications and will do so in an advisory capacity after first being solicited by candidates. Most county officers are not proactive in their support, and many lack the skills to play an effective communications role.[230] An executive committee member verified this claim when he suggested that some counties and districts have some very ineffective officers that are useless to candidates and the party.[231] Interviews make clear that in the realm of campaign communications, the Texas Democratic Party appears to be making a more concerted effort, though in an advisory capacity, i.e. providing advice, publicizing party services, and pointing candidates to advertising specialists when they fall outside of targeted zones within statewide contests.

The Republican Party of Texas also played a role in campaign communications, though it had to compete more with groups like the Texas Association of Businesses, RLCT, and TRMPAC. TAB, TRMPAC, and RLCT initially targeted approximately fifteen legislative districts for generic radio, television, and literature advertising occasionally without coordinating with candidates and never coordinating with the RPT. These groups also provided email updates pointing out issue positions, advertising strategies, and stressing certain talking points. The TRMPAC and TAB also made available advertising professionals to work with candidates and serve as communication advisors. Because of the activeness of TAB, TRMPAC, and the RLCT, incumbents and many open-seat candidates did not need to rely heavily on RPT assistance.[232] Nevertheless, the RPT still conducted its own communication activities and developed an electronic weekly modeled after these interest groups that also pointed out issue

[230] Interview with Author July 13th, 2004.
[231] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[232] Interview with Author July 23rd & August 9th, 2004.

positions, advertising strategies, and pro-Republican "buzzwords" or issue points. The RPT's training seminars had some campaign communication tips on how to research opponents, how to develop issue positions in response to opponents, how to create a press releases, and listed media outlets. In 2002 the RPT also employed a full-time communications director, with staff, that monitored headlines, speeches, and activities of the opposition to assist the campaigns of many statewide candidates, county candidates, and some legislative candidates as they became available. The communications director also served as a liaison between the campaign and the party, informing them of poll results, stressing media strategies, suggesting issues and themes, and addressing needs or complaints. Primarily the communications director worked with statewide campaigns, but did assist a couple of competitive open-seat candidates and competitive challengers.[233] Beyond this, district and county chairs were expected to make up the difference, and they were only as effective as the level of their experience and activeness.[234]

The RPT and LDP are attempting to take a more active role in campaign communications. Nonetheless, the state party is not trying to directly control the messages by serving as a communications director for candidates or demanding the candidates do things a certain way because the fact is that the state of Texas, with divergent urban and rural constituencies, is a very diverse state. The unique constituencies within each district and the more important goal of obtaining a legislative majority hamstring the parties in the amount of control they can exert over candidates or the amount of universal, generic party communication messages that can be helpful for

[233] Interview with Author July 30th, 2004.
[234] Interview with Author August 4th, 2004.

candidates. Also preventing both parties from being more effective are the factions within the parties and the occasionally divergent issue positions of these factions. Religious conservatives currently control the RPT, so some of their generic communication pieces stressed social themes like homosexuality, the displaying of the Ten Commandments, and prayer in schools. Some conservatives within the party were less inclined to focus on these issues or use these issues. Finally, the presence of an open-seat gubernatorial contest and heightened attention to redistricting activated many competing interest groups in Texas. The TDP and RPT had to compete with more groups for candidate attention. Though publicly the parties seem indifferent, an effort was definitely made to influence campaign communications by providing advertising and encouraging a consistent dissemination of certain issue positions. The effectiveness of these activities needs to be determined.

Two questions addressing the theme of campaign communications were asked of all candidates. First, respondents were asked, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image?" The results of this question are presented in Table 3.8. A second question asked respondents, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in selecting your issue positions?" Table 3.9 summarizes this information.

Half of the candidates in this survey reported using some form of campaign advertising for the purpose of promoting the campaign or developing the candidate's public image. The task at this point is to determine which groups those candidates felt were the most influential in helping them acquire media advertising, select an advertising

medium, or develop the candidate's public image. The MANOVA test for Table 3.8 indicates that party, seat type, and competitiveness were significant predictors of the likelihood of group assistance with media advertising and image developing. Nonetheless, as the discussion will reveal and the table demonstrates, the Texas Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Texas were not consistently cited by candidates as being the most influential or most important group in assisting them with media advertising and image developing.

At first glance, it appears as though incumbents were less likely to use media advertising or less likely to concern themselves with developing their images since they gave very few groups substantial mean scores. After further examination, it becomes clear that this is not the case, as competitive incumbents relied heavily on and found their respective legislative campaign committees to have been the most important group for advertising and image development. Democratic incumbents cited the DLCC (2.93) as being the single most important group in assisting them with their campaign communications, even more so than the influence of their friends and families (2.00) and PACs (2.00).[235] And, this mean score jumps considerably when only competitive incumbents are examined (4.00).[236] Republican incumbents also cited their legislative campaign committee (2.60) as being important, yet the RLCT appears to have had less of a singular impact than the DLCC even when noncompetitive incumbents are eliminated from the analysis (3.25).[237] Once again, incumbents in Texas demonstrate a heavy reliance on their legislative campaign committees, and the legislative campaign committees seem to be addressing their needs by receiving "very important" mean scores.

[235] $t = 2.509$, $p < .026$.
[236] $t = 3.352$, $p < .006$.
[237] $t = 1.466$, $p < .160$.

Table 3.8: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.11	3.00	3.14	3.06	3.00	3.13	1.60	1.42	1.88	2.83	3.50	2.50	3.19	3.45	2.60	2.00	1.63	2.50
County	1.89	1.50	2.00	1.61	1.70	1.50	1.40	1.25	1.63	1.67	1.50	1.75	1.69	1.55	2.00	1.21	1.13	1.33
District	1.56	1.00	1.71	1.67	1.50	1.88	1.45	1.33	1.63	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.44	1.27	1.80	1.36	1.25	1.50
State	2.11	2.00	2.14	1.89	1.70	2.13	1.50	1.25	1.88	2.17	2.00	2.25	2.00	1.82	2.40	1.64	1.50	1.83
LCCs	2.89	1.50	3.29	1.28	1.20	1.38	2.60	2.17	3.25	2.33	2.00	2.50	1.13	1.00	1.40	2.93	2.13	4.00
National	2.11	1.00	2.43	1.22	1.20	1.25	1.80	1.25	2.63	1.67	1.00	2.00	1.19	1.09	1.40	1.57	1.25	2.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.83	1.50	2.00	1.69	1.45	2.20	1.50	1.50	1.50
IGs	2.00	1.00	2.29	2.00	1.80	2.25	1.70	1.50	2.00	2.00	1.50	2.25	1.81	1.55	2.40	1.79	1.38	2.33
PACs	2.44	1.50	2.71	1.67	1.60	1.75	2.20	1.67	3.00	2.17	1.50	2.50	1.38	1.18	1.80	2.00	1.63	2.50
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Position X Comp F = 2.438, p< .095; Party F = 2.690, p< .010; Competition F = 2.582 p< .013, Seat Type F = 3.993, p< .000

When not relying on legislative campaign committees, incumbents also found the support of interest groups, PACs, and the national party to have been of some significance, though there are differences between the two parties. For Republican incumbents, their respective PACs (2.20) and the RNC (1.80) seem to have been more important and effective at assisting candidates with developing images than Democratic PACs (2.00) and the DNC (1.57). Yet, among Democrats, their respective interest groups (1.79) and unions (1.50) were more helpful than Republican interest groups and unions (1.70, 1.00). Notably absent from the perception of candidates are the political parties. Whether it was the county-, district-, or state-level party organization, incumbents reported the assistance from these organizations to have been significantly marginal and unimportant when compared to the assistance received from other groups.[238] Finally, and to no one's surprise, competitive incumbents received more attention from all these groups than noncompetitive incumbents.[239]

Challengers perceived that they received less assistance as incumbents from outside groups for advertising and image development. In the few instances that they did receive assistance, challengers found it from groups not noted by incumbents. Whereas incumbents acknowledge the importance of legislative campaign committees, interest groups, the national party, and PACs, challengers found only some state-level committee and interest group support slightly important. Challengers noticed the efforts of the TDP and RPT, with the TDP (2.00) being slightly more effective at the state level than the RPT (1.89). For Democratic challengers, state-level TDP assistance in campaign advertising and image developing was the most important behind only friends and family.

[238] Republicans: RPT-PAC, RPT-LCC significant ($t = 2.232$, $p < .038$; $t = 2.319$, $p < .032$). Democrats: TDP-PAC, TDP-LCC significant ($t = 3.347$, $p < .005$; $t = 2.242$, $p < .043$).
[239] LCC, PACs, national party, interest groups all significant no lower than $t = 2.101$, $p < .044$.

With Democratic challengers, the party appears to have actually played a slightly important role. Competing with the state party for attention are interest groups (1.81), unions (1.69), and county-level party committees (1.69). Although the TDP was the most influential group with Democratic challengers, Republicans did not find the RPT (1.89) to hold an equally important position. Rather, Republican challengers found interest groups (2.00) to have been more valuable in their stead. Of secondary and minor importance were PACs, district-level committees, and county-level committees. Removing noncompetitive candidates, the importance of state-level committees (2.13) and interest groups (2.25) is heightened. Again, Republican district-level efforts seem to be more effective, better organized, and more important than Democratic district-level organizations. Yet, local and state Democratic organizations slightly outperformed Republican local and state organizations. Overall, some evidence suggests that the state-level committees of the TDP were the most important to Democratic challengers, and some county-level committees played some role with competitive challengers. Also, some Republicans seemed to have benefited from state-level RPT efforts.

Open-seat candidates were the recipients of a vast amount of attention from a diverse array of groups. While incumbents seemed to have benefited primarily from LCCs, PACS, and interest groups, and challengers seemed to have benefited from some party committees, open-seat candidates acknowledge all these groups as having played varying roles of importance. First, open-seat candidates received the most important support from their LCCs, with the RLCT (2.89) generating a more significant impact than the DLCC (2.33). In fact, Republican open-seat candidates (2.89) were more appreciative of the advertising assistance of the RLCT than Republican incumbents

(2.60). This is interesting considering the fact that conventional wisdom suggests that LCCs exist primarily to benefit their members – e.g. incumbents. In 2002, this does not necessarily appear to have been the case for the RLCT, which took an increased interest in open-seat contests.

Secondly, incumbents seemed to have received some attention from their national counterparts, with the national Republican Party (2.11) outperforming the efforts of the national Democratic Party (1.67). The mean scores observed in this category for the national party are remarkably higher than the mean scores for the national party in any other area. Third, another incumbent-oriented set of committees, political action committees (2.44, 2.17) and interest groups (2.00, 2.00), provided an influential amount of assistance for open-seat candidates with campaign communications. Traditionally, PACs are also seen as being incumbent-first, financial organizations; however, in 2002 Texas PACs and interest groups also assisted in finding, directing, or assisting in developing images and media advertising for open-seat state legislative candidates. They clearly recognized the increased potential for access in these races as opposed to other contests involving incumbents.

Fourth, the state parties reserved their greatest energies for open-seat candidates. Democratic open-seat candidates rewarded the TDP (2.17) as being a "slightly" important group, marginally more than their Republican counterparts (2.11). While these mean scores are actually the highest mean scores assigned to the state party to this point, this party effect is lost in the heightened activism of other and competing interests. Although the party makes a substantial and important impact with open-seat candidates, so to do LCCs, PACs, interest groups, and the national party. Open-seat candidates in Texas were

among the largest users of media advertising and, therefore, received much more support from various groups in this area.

Finally, another item that stands out because it breaks with past patterns is the level of assistance by party organizations. Typically, the pattern has been for the TDP to outperform the RPT from the perspective of candidates, and for Republican district-level committees to outperform Democratic district-level committees from the perspective of candidates. In the realm of media advertising, county-level committees in both parties outperform district-level committees, with Republican county efforts (1.89) being more important than Democratic efforts (1.67). Although open-seat candidates received more party attention than challengers and incumbents, dimming this positive evaluation is the simultaneous high amount of attention that competing groups also gave open-seat candidates. Leading the way for all party committees, for once, are the state-level committees.

In helping candidates select media advertising and develop their images, the state parties receive some of their highest mean scores. Party efforts were primarily reserved for open-seat candidates and competitive challengers and, concomitantly, Democratic challengers and open-seat candidates find the parties slightly important. The state parties either neglected or were ineffective with noncompetitive candidates and incumbents. While the state parties were given some of their highest mean scores in this category, so too were LCCs, PACs, interest groups, and unions. Thus, if the party is to have any future significant influence, then it must compete even harder and be even more effective in order to offset the potential simultaneous and competing influence of other groups. Finally, Republican candidates generally found the support from groups to have been

more effective and beneficial than Democratic candidates; however, Democratic candidates find the Texas Democratic Party more important to them than Republican candidates find the Republican Party of Texas.

The second aspect of campaign communications is formulating issue positions. Table 3.9 displays the results obtained by candidates assessing the importance of certain groups in assisting them with selecting issue positions. Generally speaking, some challengers and open-seat candidates find party assistance in formulating issue positions effective and important; however, the influence of the party with open-seat candidates is lost amidst competing groups providing more important and more influential support at the same time. The highest rated groups in assisting candidates with formulating their issue positions were friends and family, legislative campaign committees, and interest groups, but not the state party. When the parties did intervene, a MANOVA test indicates that party, competitiveness, and seat type were significant predictors of perceived party activity by candidates. Party efforts were directed more towards competitive open-seat candidates and competitive challengers over noncompetitive challengers and incumbents, with the Republican Party of Texas being more effective than the Texas Democratic Party.

Incumbents, both competitive and noncompetitive, disproportionately benefited from their legislative campaign committees.[240] Democratic incumbents (3.21) found DLCC efforts more useful than Republican incumbents found the RLCT (3.11), but Republicans incumbents were given more assistance from the national party (1.89) than

[240] Republican: RLCT scores significant over all groups except PACs with a t-score no lower than $t = 2.728$, $p < .013$. Democrats: DLCC scores significant over all groups with a t-score no lower than $t = 2.929$, $p < .012$.

Table 3.9: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in selecting your issue positions?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.22	4.50	2.86	3.22	3.20	3.25	1.65	1.42	2.00	3.33	4.00	3.00	3.63	3.82	3.20	2.00	1.38	2.83
County	2.44	2.00	2.57	2.00	2.10	1.88	1.60	1.42	1.88	2.17	2.00	2.25	2.00	1.73	2.60	1.43	1.25	1.67
District	2.11	2.00	2.14	2.00	1.90	2.13	1.75	1.50	2.13	2.00	1.50	2.25	1.75	1.45	2.40	1.71	1.50	2.00
State	1.67	1.00	1.86	1.50	1.40	1.63	1.55	1.17	2.13	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.63	1.55	1.80	1.29	1.25	1.33
LCCs	3.11	1.50	3.57	1.17	1.10	1.25	2.85	2.33	3.63	2.50	1.00	3.25	1.13	1.00	1.40	3.21	2.50	4.17
National	1.89	1.00	2.14	1.17	1.10	1.25	2.05	1.42	3.00	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.14	1.00	1.33
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.17	2.00	2.25	1.88	1.64	2.40	1.64	1.63	1.67
IGs	2.44	1.00	2.86	2.28	2.10	2.50	1.75	1.42	2.25	2.33	2.00	2.50	2.00	1.73	2.60	2.07	1.63	2.67
PACs	2.89	1.50	3.29	1.61	1.30	2.00	2.50	2.08	3.13	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.25	1.00	1.80	1.57	1.25	2.00
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Competitiveness X Party F = 1.524, p< .092; Party F = 4.828, p< .000; Competition F = 3.871, p< .001, Seat Type F = 3.871, p< .001

Democrats (1.14).[241] In absence of the national party, Democratic incumbents report some mild assistance given by unions (1.64).[242] Outside of the LCCs, the groups of most consequence and importance were PACs and interest groups. Republican PACs (2.50) and interest groups (1.75) were more valuable than Democratic interest groups (2.07) and PACs (1.57). Noticeably absent from any level of importance is the Texas Democratic Party (1.29) and Republican Party of Texas (1.55).[243] Some competitive Republican incumbents notice party influence at the state (2.13), district (2.13), and county level (1.88), though they still trail LCCs, PACs, the RNC, and interest groups. Such equally high levels of support are absent from competitive Democratic incumbents. Throughout this analysis, incumbents in all categories generally ignore the state parties; however, the RPT apparently played some minor role in assisting incumbents with developing issue positions. Obviously, the Republican Party's dissemination of issue points and party platforms was of some value to Republican incumbents. Once again, though, higher mean scores are reported for non-party organizations than for party organizations, muting the potential impact of the political party.

Challengers generally found party assistance in developing issue positions to have been more beneficial than incumbents. Overall, the TDP's state-level committee (1.63) appears to have been more effective than the RPT's state-level committee (1.50), but Republican district-level committees (2.00) outperformed Democratic district-level committees (1.75). What is unique is that the mean score assigned to the Democratic district-level committees exceeds the state party for the first time, as this is the first recorded instance of the Democrat's district-level committees making any impact on

[241] $t = 2.432$, $p < .021$.
[242] $t = 3.116$, $p < .004$.
[243] Both significantly trail LCCs and PACs with a t-score no lower than $t = 2.230$, $p < .038$.

candidates. Apparently, district-level committees were better-suited for providing assistance with developing issue positions. This assumption is strengthened after examining the mean scores for the county-level party organizations, as Democratic (2.00) and Republican (2.00) county-level party organizations equally received higher mean scores than district-level and state-level committees. In selecting issue positions, those closest in geographical proximity to candidates appeared to be the most useful, as those closest are be more likely to understand the specific concerns of district constituents. However, when comparing the importance of county-level committees to Democrats and Republicans, an interesting pattern appears. Competitive Democratic challengers (2.60) report receiving significantly more important support than noncompetitive challengers (1.73), but Republican competitive challengers (1.88) did not find county-level support to have been as effective as noncompetitive challengers (2.10).[244] Thus, competitive Democrats were more receptive to party efforts than noncompetitive Democrats, but no such discrepancy appears among Republicans. Outside of the party organizations, the only other groups noticed by challengers in formulating issue positions were interest groups. Both Democratic challengers (2.00) and Republican challengers (2.28) found interest group support important, more important than party organizations.[245] Lastly, unions emerge among the Democratic challengers as being the third-most significant group (1.88) behind interest groups and county-level committees. This is the first substantial recorded influence of union activities in legislative campaigns.

The pattern thus far in the analysis has been pretty clear. Challengers find important support to have come primarily from the state party (usually via local

[244] TDP competitive vs. noncompetitive: $t = 2.128$, $p < .052$.
[245] RPT vs. IGs $t = 2.522$, $p < .022$.

committees) and some interest groups, while incumbents find support from legislative campaign committees, PACs, and interest groups. Open-seat candidates are a combination of the two groups. Open-seat candidates received a lot of meaningful assistance formulating issue positions from party and non-party groups. The most important groups were LCCs, with the RLCT (3.11) being more effective than the DLCC (2.50).[246] Also, both parties' open-seat candidates found the support of interest groups to have been important as well, though not as important as LCCs. Likewise, Republican interest groups (2.44) were slightly more influential than their Democratic counterparts (2.33). It previously was found that the Republican Party seems to have done a better job in helping candidates select media advertising and developing images and, in the area of issue formulation, the same pattern emerges. The RPT (1.67), and its concomitant district (2.11) and county-level organizations (2.44), outperformed the TDP (1.50) and its respective district-level (2.00) and county-level (2.17) organizations.[247] Thus, one can surmise that although the TDP seems to possess more organizational coherence, organizational coherence has not guaranteed a more effective campaign communication vehicle. The RPT, despite demonstrating less organizational coherence, seems to have been more effective at assisting its candidates with campaign communications. One could reasonably conclude the RPT is still the more homogeneous party, in terms of issues, in Texas. Despite being slightly important, the traditional state political party organizations still trail LCCs, interest groups, and PACS in relative importance. Finally, Republican PACs (2.89) and the Republican national Party (1.89) were significantly

[246] $t = 3.460$, $p < .004$.
[247] RPT county vs. state $t = 3.162$, $p < .025$; TDP county vs. state $t = 3.500$, $p < .008$.

more active in open-seat contests than Democratic PACs (1.50) and national Democratic Party (1.17).

Candidates themselves still largely formulate issue positions, as roughly 50% of the candidates in this survey did not rely on external groups to help formulate their issue positions. And, when they did, they were more likely to seek out the support of interest groups and legislative campaign committees before party organizations. County-level committees were found to be slightly important to competitive challengers and open-seat candidates, followed by the district-level committees and, far more distantly, state-level committees. Unfortunately, open-seat candidates were simultaneously bombarded by interest groups, PACs, and LCCs and also found them important to their campaigns. Overall both parties were not at as effective as other groups in formulating issue positions, but county-level committees are still competitive with other groups. Considering the local nature of state legislative campaigns, it is not at all surprising that local candidates are more likely to rely on local committees. Since political parties reserved most of their time and resources for competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates, their efforts appear to have paid off. The state parties tend to ignore incumbents because they know incumbents have legislative committees that can assist them; consequently, incumbents do not find the party important to their campaigns.

In conclusion, the state party is perceived to be better at assisting candidates with campaign communications than with candidate recruitment and campaign management. Campaign communication carries two distinct forms of assistance: one, assisting candidates in selecting media advertisement and developing images; second, formulating issue positions. The state parties are better with the latter. Issue formulation is not

equally emphasized by parties, so the party is not as influential and candidates do not find these contributions generally important. The parties do discriminate based on the competitiveness of candidates and the position of the candidates. Competitive candidates in open-seat elections receive the most attention from state parties, followed by competitive challengers. The TDP and RPT were slightly important to these two groups of candidates. Generally, noncompetitive candidates and incumbents do not receive party assistance, and they are not likely to find party assistance important. Also, state-level committees trail district-level and county-level committees in relative importance. Candidates in Texas are far more likely to rely on local party organizations and find these local party organizations important. Finally, all party organizations, regardless of level, trail interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees in overall relative importance. The conclusion then is that although party organizations appear to be better at campaign communications than recruitment or management, their relative importance is still secondary to the comparative importance and effectiveness of competing groups.

Fundraising

In Chapter Two, I detailed how party financial services come in a variety of active, passive, and negative forms and state parties have modeled themselves after the national party in many ways. Although the state parties in Texas lack the financial contributions, financial assistance, and operating budgets of their national counterparts, the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party have become increasingly viable independent financial networks. Both parties are more capable today of directly financing candidates than they have ever been because they maintain larger budgets, raise

larger amounts of money, and donate higher amounts money than ever before. And, when they are incapable of directly financing the candidates themselves, they have established financial networks with party-allied and non-partisan individuals and organizations capable of directly assisting the candidates. This is increasingly necessary because in Texas, state legislative elections are becoming increasingly expensive and have seen expenditures triple since 1992 (Rausch 2002). Part of the financial acceleration can be owed to Texas' largely unregulated campaign finance system, or what one writer calls "no regulation" (Rausch 2002, 36). The rules are straightforward: corporations and labor unions are banned from contributing to parties for election purposes but may contribute an unlimited amount of money for administrative purposes. Corporations and labor unions can avoid these limits by creating political action committees and may contribute an unlimited amount of money to these PACs. PACs, in turn, can give unlimited amounts of money to political parties and political parties can give unlimited amounts of money to candidates.[248]

The lack of regulation explains why the governor's race accounted for a whopping $125 million in spending. State legislative elections generated still another $50 million – $37.4 million for the House and $23.7 million for the Senate.[249] The $37.4 million is three times the amount raised in 1992 from all House candidates (Rausch 2002). The average House candidate raised and spent over $100,000 for his campaigns versus $313,000 for the average Senate campaign. Out of 150 House races, only 56 (37%) were contested. Out of 30 Senate races, only 12 (40%) seats were contested.[250]

[248] All regulation information comes from the Texas Ethics Commission at www.ethics.state.tx.us.
[249] Financial data courtesy of the National Institute on Money in State Politics unless otherwise noted.
[250] I define "contested" as any race with major two-party competition, because many Democrats and Republicans faced Libertarian challengers in 2002 (none of which exceeded 15% of the vote).

Table 3.10: State Party Giving

2002	Counts	Total Raised	% Given
Democratic			
TEXAS DEMOCRATIC PARTY	602	$19,700,617	
TEXAS PARTNERSHIP PAC	805	$ 845,336	
SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF TEX AS	8	$ 3,500	
	1415	$20,549,453	61.88%
Republican			
TEXAS REPUBLICAN PARTY	2374	$12,472,618	
REPUBLICAN LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS OF TEXAS	34	$ 184,200	
SENATE REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGN CMTE OF TEX AS	5	$ -	
	2413	$12,656,818	38.12%
2000			
Democratic			
TEXAS DEMOCRATIC PARTY	527	$ 6,398,862	
TEXAS PARTNERSHIP PAC	294	$ 412,105	
SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF TEXAS	107	$ 121,341	
	928	$ 6,932,308	60.39%
Republican			
TEXAS REPUBLICAN PARTY	1339	$ 4,306,561	
REPUBLICAN LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS OF TEXAS	61	$ 224,570	
SENATE REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGN CMTE OF TEXAS	10	$ 14,850	
	1410	$ 4,545,981	39.61%

Consistent with past trends, spending has gone up and competitiveness has declined (Nelson 1996, Kraemer et al 2005). To be sure, discussions regarding the possible importance of party financial support would be inappropriate if Texas' state political parties were financially destitute; however, Table 3.10 demonstrates that Texas' political parties and Texas' legislative campaign committees raised significantly more amounts of money in 2002 than in 2000. The Texas Democratic Party collected $20 million versus the $12 million for the Republican Party of Texas. Thus, the TDP is more solvent than the RPT. Additionally, the Texas Partnership PAC – the financial wing of the DLCC – outraised the RLCT by a four-to-one margin. Party funds are more prevalent, more significant, and appear to favor Democrats.

Table 3.11: Campaign Donations by Sector

Economic Sector	Total Contributions	Total $	Percent of Total
Candidate Contributions	6924	$94,153,609	36%
Lawyers & Lobbyists	24740	$22,245,475	9%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	11870	$16,064,951	6%
Energy & Natural Resources	6733	$11,026,790	4%
General Business	6853	$ 9,940,359	4%
Health	9108	$ 7,562,749	3%
Party	2138	$ 7,370,247	3%
Construction	4779	$ 6,897,553	3%
Communications & Electronics	2500	$ 4,304,900	2%
Agriculture	3219	$ 4,179,083	2%
Transportation	2178	$ 2,994,665	1%
Labor	1871	$ 2,398,165	1%
Other/Retiree/Civil Servants	5557	$ 2,377,146	1%
Ideology/Single Issue	487	$ 537,625	0%
Defense	69	$ 48,624	0%

Table 3.11 suggests that only 40% of the total campaign contributions came from candidates themselves, but in reality, most of the candidates actually self-financed the majority of their own campaigns. Despite the absence of regulations, the table also shows that party expenditures do not account for a large percentage of all expenditures. Party contributions account for only 3% of total contributions, which ranks 8th in the state of Texas behind business, medical, and insurance groups. The most generous groups were legal groups, which contributed $22 million or 8% of all contributions. Half of this money came from the Trial Lawyers PAC while the other half came from their opponents, Texans for Legal Reform. Since tort reform was a huge issue in 2001-2002, this is not surprising. Of the $7.3 million dollars labeled as party expenditures, 68% of this money comes from party committees. The Texas Democratic Party was directly responsible for $1.3 million ($225,000 going to Tony Sanchez) and the Republican Party of Texas was directly responsible for only $343,000 (half of which went to Rick Perry).

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, LCCs account for another $1 million in expenditures, with the Texas Partnership outspending the RLCT. All this is partially deceiving because it does not include Tom DeLay's Texans for a Republican Majority PAC, which spent an additional $747,000 on state House campaigns and furthered the ability of the RPT to selectively target key races. If this amount is added into RLCT totals, then Republican legislative campaign committee expenditures equaled Democratic legislative campaign committee expenditures.

Party organizations – legislative campaign committees and state political party organizations – were financially active in 2002, but where did the parties allocate their resources? Previous studies suggest that competitive open-seat candidates and incumbents typically benefit from LCCs, while competitive challengers and open-seat candidates generally benefit from state party activities (Gierzynski 1992, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998). Texas financial patterns fit these studies. One TDP official, in a position of authority to speak on the financial activities of the party, said that the SDEC met and ranked the legislative candidates according to their likelihood of victory, the amount of money raised, and district vulnerability for Republican takeover. After placing the candidates in tiers, they then donated – sometimes via multiple contributions – a sum of money appropriate to their respective tier. In 2002, 17 candidates received amounts ranging from $20,000 to $100,000 from the TDP. When asked why only 17 candidates were given contributions, the party official rhetorically countered, "What is the wiser strategy? Giving 50 people a $100 check or giving a couple people a $100,000 check?"[251] According to this individual, the strategy of the TDP was to target their limited financial resources on those races deemed to be the most valuable, regardless of

[251] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

seat type. While parties typically avoid incumbents, the individual noted that the TDP's ranking strategy allowed for the targeting of vulnerable Republicans, supporting of vulnerable incumbents, and taking advantage of open seats. The TDP does not avoid incumbents; however, it tends to favor challengers because challengers lack the resources and opportunities of incumbents and open-seat candidates.

The TDP gave most of its money ($489,000) to challengers, followed nearly equally by donations to open-seat candidates ($291,903) and incumbents ($248,767). Unfortunately, of the money given to challengers, only one challenger won out of six challengers funded. The party spent an average of $90,000 per challenger, which is a significant amount of money, but nearly $400,000 went to losing challengers. Similarly, out of five funded incumbents, only two won and out of six funded open-seat candidates, only three won. The party spent an average of nearly $50,000 on open-seat candidates and incumbents. The TDP's financial strategy favored challengers and, despite the support, these challengers still lost. Thus, the party did not have a very high success rate. In the meantime, the Texas Partnership favored incumbents, with 61 of its 80 contributions going to competitive and noncompetitive incumbents for a total of $153,081 (averaging $2,500 per candidate). Also, 17 of the 80 contributions went to open-seat candidates for a total of $62,348 (averaging $3,600 per candidate). The LCC did fund two challengers, but these two donations totaled only $1,500. Thus, the strategy of the DLCC was contradictory to the TDP. The TDP selected fewer candidates with higher donations totals. The DLCC assisted a large number of candidates, but the average expenditure was relatively small. Nonetheless, the DLCC was safer with its targeting strategy than the TDP because only 10 of its 80 recipients lost.

The financial impact of the RPT pales in comparison to the TDP, though the RPT was more successful at targeting winners than the TDP. The RPT donated only $80,644 to 18 candidates. Though they funded the same number of candidates as the TDP, the total donations were $70,000 or less. Similar to the TDP, most of this money ($40,257) went to challengers, with a lesser amount reserved for open-seat candidates ($23,830) and incumbents ($16,557). The RPT also utilized a financial strategy benefiting challengers over other candidates; however, only five of the 18 candidates they supported lost their election. Although the RPT provided less money, their contributions went to more winners. The more significant financial player was the TRMPAC, which doled out $747,237 to 31 candidates – seventeen open seats, eight incumbents, and six challengers. Out of 31 candidates, only 8 lost. Furthermore, excluding the losers, the TRMPAC averaged $22,183 per open seat-candidates, $19,251 for incumbents, and a whopping $37, 464 for four challengers. The TRMPAC was a far more powerful financial organization than the Texas Partnership, but the TDP was a more powerful organization than the RPT. Thus, Democratic candidates are expected to rank their party higher and Republicans should rank LCCs higher.

The governor's race affected the dynamics of state House campaigns in 2002. Speaking on a condition of anonymity, one Democratic official explained, "We had our 'Dream Team'. We honestly thought this Team could win and it would trickle down into more resources and momentum for other races. But things happened, and winning wasn't one of them."[252] The party reserved most of its resources for the governor's and lieutenant governor's races and hoped for coattail victories; however, the party made itself vulnerable at lower levels by ignoring the possibility of the "Dream Team" losing.

[252] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

The Dream Team did lose, and the party lost its legislative majority. Thus, the TDP's strategy, including financial strategy, failed. The same official went on to say, "The House was important, but it wasn't a financial priority. We knew that other groups and PACs were capable of providing money, and our goal was to introduce the serious [legislative] candidates to these people. In the meantime, we tried to get Tony [Sanchez] elected."[253] Thus, the party gave what it could after assisting the higher part of the ticket, and then additionally directed competitive candidates to other individuals with deeper pockets. Clearly another factor that forced financial and party decisions, though the TDP official did not admit it, was redistricting. Redistricting reduced the overall impact the party could realistically make in the 2002 state legislative elections because the new districts severely decreased the number of competitive Democratic districts. As in recruiting, management, and communications, the TDP SDEC expected district and county officers to work for and with candidates in the realm of campaign finance. Of the six district and county officials I spoke with, four said they took an active role helping to organize fundraisers and introduce candidates to donors for state legislative candidates in their area.

Like the TDP, the Republican Party Texas made a conscious decision to focus on the governor's race. One RPT official said, "Sanchez had deep pockets and we had to target him. We knew the House would be ours; the districts were ripe and DeLay and TAB and [Texans for Legal Reform] were throwing money all over the place. We didn't have the same confidence with the governor's race that we had with legislative races, so we focused on [the governor's race]."[254] The RPT also expected most financial support

[253] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[254] Interview with Author July 30th, 2004.

to come from county and district officers because they RPT did not have a large amount of funds to directly dispense. All the Republican district and county officers that I spoke with said they helped with fundraisers for state legislative candidates, in addition to other city and county races. In several cases, district-wide and county-wide events were held to assist multiple candidates raise funds simultaneously. In conclusion, state legislative candidates received different levels of support from different groups; however, at the end of the day, state legislative candidates lacked the attention given to the governor and lieutenant governor races.

It is useful to examine the financial data to see if candidate perceptions are accurate. Although candidates occasionally have difficulty distinguishing who is responsible for initiating financial contributions and may not be privy to all the financial moves that occur behind the scenes, the information obtained from candidates is still useful for capturing the range of possible party influences in comparison to other organizations. In the eyes of the candidates, who are the significant financial players?

Table 3.12 summarizes the mean scores to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising?" A MANOVA test for this table indicates that party, competitiveness, and seat type were all important predictors for the level of party activity. Verifying the financial data, this survey finds that candidates view friends and family as the most important group to their campaigns. Trailing self-financing and friends and family are various external groups, who contribute different sums of money to different candidates based on the seat type of the candidates. Regardless of seat type, competitive candidates assess groups as being significantly more effective and, therefore, more important. After this, the similarities

Table 3.12: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.33	4.50	4.29	4.06	4.00	4.12	4.05	4.08	4.00	4.50	5.00	4.25	4.38	4.45	4.20	4.36	4.25	4.50
County	2.00	1.50	2.14	1.94	1.90	2.00	1.40	1.25	1.63	1.67	1.50	1.75	1.38	1.27	1.60	1.29	1.25	1.33
District	1.78	1.50	1.86	1.61	1.50	1.75	1.45	1.25	1.75	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.18	1.40	1.21	1.13	1.33
State	1.44	1.00	1.57	1.17	1.10	1.25	1.15	1.08	1.25	1.67	1.00	2.00	1.38	1.18	1.80	1.36	1.13	1.67
LCCs	2.89	1.00	3.43	1.22	1.00	1.50	2.60	2.25	3.13	2.00	1.00	2.50	1.13	1.00	1.40	2.14	1.75	2.67
National	2.33	1.00	2.71	1.17	1.00	1.38	1.85	1.33	2.63	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.19	1.00	1.60	1.36	1.25	1.50
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.67	1.00	2.00	1.50	1.18	2.20	1.71	1.75	1.67
IGs	2.89	1.50	3.29	2.06	1.60	2.63	2.40	1.92	3.13	2.33	1.00	3.00	1.88	1.36	3.00	2.14	1.25	3.33
PACs	3.11	1.50	3.57	1.83	1.40	2.38	2.55	2.33	2.88	1.83	1.00	2.25	1.31	1.09	1.80	2.21	1.63	3.00
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 2.551, p< .138; Party F = 2.880, p< .008; Competition F = 6.566 p< .000, Seat Type F = 1.736, p< .048

between incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates end. One clear pattern is the diminutive importance of the financial contributions of the state party. In the category of campaign contributions, the state party receives some of its slowest mean scores.

Past research suggests that incumbents are large beneficiaries of interest groups and political action committees (Langbein 1986; Austen-Smith 1995; Rudolph 1999). Like in Louisiana and regardless of party, incumbents do not rely on the state parties at all. The three most important groups from the perspective of incumbents are interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees. For Republican incumbents, the RLCT (2.60), interest groups (2.40) and PACS (2.55) were the three most important groups and were more effective than their Democratic counterparts (2.14, 2.14, 2.21). Also, Republicans cite the financial activities of the national party (1.85) as being somewhat noteworthy, while Democrats do not acknowledge any national support (1.36). In lieu of national party support, Democratic incumbents cited unions as providing more noteworthy support (1.71).[255] Across both parties, these groups substantially helped competitive incumbents before noncompetitive incumbents, although the disparity between them is higher among Democratic incumbents than Republican incumbents. Clearly absent from this conversation are the parties. The state-level, district-level, and county-level committees all recorded negligible levels of importance and were significantly less important to incumbents than PACs, LCCs, and interest groups.[256] Clearly, in the eyes of incumbents, party organizations did not do much or enough to assist incumbents.

[255] $t = 2.539$, $p < .016$.
[256] PAC-Party, LCC-Party, IG-Party all have t-score no lower than $t = 3.064$, $p < .004$.

The pattern thus far has been for challengers to exhibit higher and more significant levels of gratitude toward party activities. At the aggregate level, challengers are not more significantly inclined to find party support to have been consequential (Table 3.13). Incumbents found state-level (1.42), district-level (1.22), and county-level committees (1.39) incredibly unimportant; however, challengers were not much more complimentary toward the state-level (1.26), district-level (1.44), and county-level (1.68) party support. Despite receiving more funds from the party, challengers were not significantly more inclined to positively appreciate party efforts. Nevertheless, there are some very subtle patterns within these numbers worth mentioning. First, the mean scores are severely suppressed, more so among Democrats, by the low mean scores of noncompetitive challengers. Removing noncompetitive challengers, there are some discernable patterns of note. First, the TDP (1.80) is acknowledged as being slightly more effective than the RPT (1.25). Yet, Republican county-level (2.00) and district-level (1.75) party committees were more influential financial instruments than Democratic county-level (1.60) and district-level (1.40) party committees. Overall, party efforts were noticed more by Republicans than Democrats, despite the fact that Democrats received more and larger direct contributions from the party. Direct contributions are only part of the party-candidate relationship. Instead Democratic challengers primarily acknowledge interest groups (1.88) as being influential. Yet, these low numbers are once again severely depressed by the inclusion of noncompetitive Democrats, because noncompetitive Democrats give a mean score of 1.18. When noncompetitive Democrats are removed, interest groups (3.00) and unions (2.20) did

Table 3.13: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising?

	Party		Position			Competitiveness	
	Democrat	Republican	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat	C	N-C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.39	4.11	4.18	4.21	4.40	4.21	4.24
County	1.39	1.72	1.35	1.68	1.87	1.76	1.42
District	1.22	1.57	1.35	1.44	1.53	1.61	1.27
State	1.42	1.21	1.24	1.26	1.53	1.53	1.11
LCCs	1.67	2.13	2.41	1.18	2.53	2.47	1.47
National	1.31	1.68	1.65	1.18	2.00	1.97	1.13
Union	1.61	1.00	1.29	1.24	1.27	1.37	1.18
IGs	2.06	2.36	2.29	1.97	2.67	3.05	1.53
PACs	1.75	2.38	2.41	1.59	2.60	2.71	1.60
N	36	37	34	34	15	38	45

Table 3.14: How important were the following groups in assisting with filing accounting/state ethics reports?

	Party		Position			Competitiveness	
	Democrat	Republican	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat	C	N-C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	1.39	1.43	1.24	1.50	1.60	1.53	1.31
County	1.00	1.11	1.00	1.09	1.13	1.05	1.07
District	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
State	1.03	1.06	1.00	1.03	1.20	1.08	1.02
LCCs	1.14	1.32	1.47	1.03	1.20	1.32	1.18
National	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
IGs	1.06	1.15	1.03	1.12	1.27	1.08	1.13
PACs	1.00	1.13	1.09	1.09	1.00	1.08	1.07
N	36	37	34	34	15	38	45

exert some significant influence.[257] Political parties, however, remain unimportant at all levels (1.80, 1.40, 1.60). Similarly, Republican challengers found interest groups (2.06) and PACs (1.83) to have been more effective than other groups, but the inclusion of noncompetitive challengers has the effect of substantially depressing the mean scores.[258] Considering only competitive Republican challengers, the relative value of interest groups (2.63) and PACs (2.38) over political parties is significant.[259] Either way, challengers in both parties did not find the financial support of parties as important as unions, interest groups, and political action committees.

Reflecting the heightened importance of open seats in determining the majority in the Texas House of Representatives, open-seat candidates found themselves at the center of a lot of attention. Absent from the perspective of open-seat candidates as a significant financial vehicle are the political parties. While the TDP's state-level committee (1.67) and RPT's state-level committee (1.44) played a more significant financial role with open-seat candidates than with challengers, the overall level of importance is significantly smaller and trails LCCs, PACs, and interest groups in relative importance.[260] Although the Democrat's state-level committee was slightly more influential than the RPT's state-level committee, this is the only Democratic organization assessed at a higher rate by Democratic candidates than by Republican candidates. Republican county-level (2.00) and district-level (1.78) committees outperformed Democratic county-level (1.67) and district-level (1.17) committees.[261] Overall, Republican open-seat candidates found Republican interest groups (2.89), PACs (3.11), LCCs (2.89), and

[257] Unions $t = 2.432$, $p < .029$; IGs $t = 3.205$, $p < .006$.
[258] IGs $t = 2.022$, $p < .060$.
[259] RPT vs. IGs $t = 2.762$, $p < .028$.
[260] LCC-RPT $t = 2.600$, $p < .032$; RPT-IG $t = 2.874$, $p < .021$; RPT-PAC $t = 2.530$, $p < .035$.
[261] District level difference is significant $t = 2.196$, $p < .046$.

RNC (2.33) more effective and more important than Democratic interest groups (2.33), PACs (1.83), LCCs (2.00), and DNC (1.50).[262] Even when removing noncompetitive open-seat candidates, the Republican candidates retain higher mean scores. Republican-allied organizations were significantly more effective with and significantly more important to Republican candidates than to Democratic candidates. Furthermore, the activated interest of the national party in state legislative elections in Texas is also significantly captured. Competitive open-seat candidates display a tremendous amount of gratitude toward the national party, an effect not seen anywhere else in this study. Tom Delay's involvement was felt by candidates and recorded in this survey. The candidates were completely aware of the financial maneuverings of various forces in Texas state legislative elections in 2002.

Candidate financing has grown complex, but the laws are not. In Texas, state legislative candidates do not appear overwhelmed by campaign finance laws (or the absence of them), as almost everyone in this survey did not rely on anyone in helping them file their campaign finance reports (Table 3.14). In the realm of campaign finance, it has become evidently clear that the financial activities of the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party are neither effective nor consequential. Party money is reserved for Congressional elections, gubernatorial elections, railroad commission elections, and judicial elections. Despite the fact that 2002 was a watershed in Texas legislative politics in terms of partisan balance, the state parties still generally ignored state legislative candidates. The TDP and RPT are capable of donating significant sums

[262] Democrat vs. Republican differences for PACs, IGs, and LCC all have t-score no lower than $t = 2.196$, $p < .046$.

of money and, at times, did donate large sums of money, but the candidates were not too impressed by the financial prowess of the state party in this survey.

Previous studies suggest that competitive open-seat candidates typically benefit from LCCs, interest groups, and PACs; incumbents generally benefit from LCCs, interest groups, and PACs; and competitive challengers generally benefit from state party activities (Austen-Smith 1995, Gierzynski 1992, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998, Langbein 1986; Rudolph 1999, Shea 1995). In Texas incumbents and open-seat candidates do benefit and are most likely to notice the efforts of LCCs, interest groups, and PACs. Challengers are the largest recipients of state party funds, but are not significantly more likely to notice or acknowledge their contributions as being important. Overall, party financial services are not important to state legislative candidates. Some competitive open-seat candidates and competitive Republican challengers do give slightly important scores to the TDP and RPT, but these ratings failed to eclipse the relative value of interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees.

Gauging Public Opinion and Mobilizing Voters

In Chapter Two, I discussed how grassroots mobilization has been and remains the most basic and most visible function of the party (Aldrich 1995, Blumberg et al 2003, Bibby 2003, Frendreis and Gitelson 1999, Hogan 2002, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004, White and Shea 2004). What is different today is the manner in which the parties gauge public opinion and mobilize voters. Studies show that parties have done this in a myriad of ways such as conducting benchmark polls, compiling electronic voter databases, distributing posters and lawn signs, writing letters, mailing literature, monitoring news broadcasts, assisting voter registration, organizing get-out-the-vote

drives, recruiting volunteer workers, arranging transportation, and phone banking (Frendreis and Gitelson 1999; Hogan 2002, Blumberg et al 2003, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004). Parties are increasingly elevating the importance of gauging public opinion over mobilization because keeping accurate and up-to-date electronic databases can be as consequential and important as making sure that voters are even registered and that campaigns are stocked with volunteers (Herrnson 2004, White and Shea 2004). The modern campaign is more technical and precise. As such, candidates need detailed pieces of information regarding electoral tendencies and voting habits of each neighborhood within a precinct and each precinct within a district (Goodhart 1999, Blumberg et al 2003). Yet, are the candidates still going to the state parties for this information? Previous studies show that some legislative candidates still rely on their state parties for voter information and mobilization, though this number is declining (Francia et al. 2003). Nevertheless, grassroots mobilization still ranks among the highest and most important function for parties (Hogan 2002, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004).

The Texas Democratic Party orchestrated many activities within the rubric of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections. Most of this was not done specifically or solely for state legislative candidates, but state legislative candidates still benefited from party activities. This was verified by one party official who said, "We targeted the railroad commission, some judgeships, a dozen congressional races, and of course the Dream Team. So no, state legislative races were not our priority, but I am sure some still benefited when coordinated efforts overlapped their districts."[263] In terms of supplying information about voters, the TDP created an online voter file for candidates

[263] Interview with Author July 24th, 2004.

that included voter history, phone lists, mailing labels, and walking lists. The TDP attempted to alert most candidates to the existence of this file, the most comprehensive voter file the party has ever maintained. Yet, many candidates still did not access this file because they still did not know about it or they did not want to pay the fee (charged to recoup some of the costs for acquiring the information). The information came from a variety of sources including the DNC, DSCC, DLCC, professionals, and county and precinct officers who had their own county and precinct data.[264] A few county chairmen with surplus county funds bought portions of the file so local candidates could gain access.[265] A similar donor file was started, but not completed in time for the 2002 elections.[266] The TDP's mobilization and GOTV efforts were largely committed to the coordinated campaign. The coordinated campaign paid for over 25 staff members to organize voter-turnout drives statewide, in addition to supporting individual Democratic candidates. A registration coordinator was hired to recruit GOTV volunteers to register voters in under-registered areas, arrange transportation for elderly and low-income voters, assist voters with filing absentee ballots, phone banking and waving signs on Election Day. The week before the election, 5,000 volunteers called or rang doorbells of over 200,000 homes. The party also utilized direct mail and leaflets.[267] This summarizes orchestrated TDP activities within gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections. Beyond this, county and district officers were responsible for the planning and execution of party activities. Some county officers converted their county headquarters into phone bank centers, stocked signs for volunteers to distribute, organized county-wide

[264] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[265] Interview with Author July 21st, 2004.
[266] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[267] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

mobilization efforts, arranged transportation for voters on election day, and walked neighborhoods with candidates.[268] All six Democratic district and county officers I spoke with placed GOTV activities as their single most important party responsibility; all mentioned these services immediately and most often in interviews, and all actively participated in the planning, executing, and participating in mobilization efforts.

The Republican Party of Texas also conducted many activities within the rubric of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections. The RPT created and maintained a voter file, though at a charge to candidates. The state party compiled it with the assistance of the RNC, RLCT, statewide candidates, and county and precinct chairmen who had maintained records but never disseminated the information higher up the party stratarchy. Nevertheless, one official recounted that many candidates complained that most of the information was not user-friendly and was already outdated. He said, "With all the complaints, it felt like it was not worth the trouble. The idea was to create a means to help candidates target likely voters and undecided voters, but many local chairs were more effective than the database."[269] In fact, he told me about one chair, whom I spoke with, that created and maintained over the years his own county precinct maps with coded neighborhoods. This data had been collected over time through what he called the "elephant hunt," in which volunteers learned about voters as they went door-to-door for candidates and the party in previous elections. He spent several hours with several candidates and their volunteers ringing doorbells, working with his precinct map that graded homes from "A" (for hardcore Republicans voters) to "E" (for hardcore Democratic). They ignored the Democratic houses (D and E); focusing instead on

[268] Interview with Author July 14th, 15th, & 21st, 2004
[269] Interview with Author July 30th, 2004.

making sure that Republican (A and B) and 'Independent' (C) houses were covered.[270] These district and county officials also set up phone banks, recruited volunteers to man the phones, and blanketed their areas with calls and literature the days leading up to the election. The RPT recruited and sent volunteers to go door-to-door and target districts in what was billed as "the biggest statewide get-out-the-vote effort in state history."[271] The volunteers were instructed to target Hispanics, to them a key swing demographic. The RPT also benefited from the grassroots efforts of the Texas Christian Coalition. The TCC gained access to churches and set up registration booths, placed "how-to-vote-absentee" flyers in churches, and arranged transportation for elderly people who had no individual means of transportation. The RPT was aware of these efforts, though they did not and could not coordinate these efforts with them.[272] Primarily, the RPT focused on congressional and statewide races, leaving district and county chairs to deal specifically with assisting state legislative candidates. The four district and county officers I spoke with all took an active role in organizing GOTV drives in conjunction with candidates and, like Democrats, mentioned GOTV drives as the most common and most important activity they participated in with state legislative candidates.[273] This summarizes orchestrated RPT efforts.

Parties have a tendency to inflate their importance in this area, so it is necessary to balance their perceived importance with evaluations from the candidates asking them who they felt were the most important groups in gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. The survey asked candidates three questions to assess three aspects of gauging

[270] Interview with Author August 2nd, 2004.
[271] Interview with Author July 30th, 2004.
[272] Interview with Author July 24th, 2004.
[273] Interview with Author August 2nd, 4th & 5th, 2004.

public opinion and voter mobilization. The first question (Table 3.15 and Table 3.16) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information about voters?" The second question (Table 3.17) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day?" Finally, the third question (Table 3.18) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with volunteer workers?" It is in the area of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters that the state parties receive some of their highest overall scores of importance.

Among the most traditional and fundamental of all expectations of political parties is their responsibility to keep track of information about voters within precincts, counties, districts, and the state. Therefore, it should not be surprising that this survey found some of the highest mean scores of importance for party activities in response to candidates being asked how important certain groups were in supplying information about voters. In light of the increased specialization and professionalization of campaigns, one fundamental activity that has not yet left the realm of party control in Texas is supplying information about voters. Table 3.15 displays the mean scores assessing the importance of groups in providing campaigns with information about voters. Interestingly enough, the table also shows the MANOVA test indicating that party, competitiveness, and seat type were significant predictors for the level of party activity. In other words, the two state parties were not equally effective, with the Texas Democratic Party, from the perspective of candidates, delivering more effective and more useful information about voters than the Republican Party of Texas. The TDP's state-level committee (1.79) was more important than the RPT' state-level committee (1.49)

Table 3.15: How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information about voters?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.67	5.00	3.29	3.61	3.40	3.88	2.10	1.75	2.63	4.00	4.50	3.75	3.88	4.18	3.20	2.36	1.75	3.17
County	2.56	2.00	2.71	2.06	2.30	1.75	1.85	1.67	2.13	2.83	3.00	2.75	2.38	2.09	3.00	1.64	1.63	1.67
District	2.22	2.00	2.29	2.33	2.30	2.38	1.85	1.50	2.38	2.33	2.50	2.25	2.00	1.73	2.60	1.79	1.50	2.17
State	2.00	1.00	2.29	1.61	1.40	1.88	1.15	1.08	1.25	2.17	1.50	2.50	2.13	2.00	2.40	1.71	1.50	2.00
LCCs	1.67	1.00	1.86	1.17	1.10	1.25	1.75	1.58	2.00	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.06	1.00	1.20	1.64	1.50	1.83
National	1.44	1.00	1.57	1.06	1.00	1.13	1.40	1.25	1.63	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.21	1.13	1.33
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.50	1.00	1.75	1.38	1.27	1.60	1.43	1.38	1.50
IGs	1.56	1.00	1.71	1.44	1.30	1.63	1.30	1.17	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.31	1.18	1.60	1.36	1.25	1.50
PACs	1.44	1.00	1.57	1.22	1.10	1.38	1.55	1.42	1.75	1.33	1.50	1.25	1.13	1.00	1.40	1.29	1.25	1.33
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Position X Party F = 1.287, p< .207; Party F = 3.295, p< .002; Competition F = 2.955 p< .005, Seat Type F = 4.291, p< .000

Table 3.16: How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information about voters?

	Party		Position			Competitiveness	
	Democrat	Republican	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat	C	N-C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.31	2.98	2.21	3.74	3.80	3.29	2.98
County	2.17	2.06	1.76	2.21	2.67	2.26	1.98
District	1.97	2.11	1.82	2.18	2.27	2.34	1.80
State	1.97	1.49	1.38	1.85	2.07	1.97	1.47
LCCs	1.36	1.51	1.71	1.12	1.60	1.66	1.27
National	1.11	1.28	1.32	1.03	1.33	1.34	1.09
Union	1.42	1.00	1.18	1.18	1.20	1.24	1.13
IGs	1.36	1.40	1.32	1.38	1.53	1.58	1.22
PACs	1.22	1.40	1.44	1.18	1.40	1.47	1.20
N	36	37	34	34	15	38	45

and, surprisingly, both parties discriminated in the level of their services.[274] Parties are supposed to be in service for all constituents, candidates, and voters; however, competitive (1.97) candidates found state-level committees more important to their campaigns than noncompetitive candidates (1.47).[275] Additionally, open-seat candidates (2.07) were more receptive to party information than both challengers (1.85) and incumbents (1.38).[276] Most importantly, for this discussion, is that in the category of supplying information about voters, party organizations led other organizations and were deemed important to state legislative candidates.

Incumbents in both parties relied heavily on their legislative campaign committees for a variety of services during their campaigns. Nevertheless, one area that the DLCC did not exceed the TDP in usefulness and importance is supplying information about voters, though the same does not hold true in the Republican Party. Texas

[274] $t = 2.478$, $p < .015$.
[275] $t = 2.627$, $p < .010$.
[276] Incumbents vs. open-seats $t = 2.812$, $p < .007$; incumbents vs. challengers $t = 2.268$, $p < .027$.

legislators found the TDP (1.71) more important than the DLCC (1.64), with competitive incumbents (2.00) being slightly more appreciative than noncompetitive incumbents (1.50). Within the TDP, the state-level committee (1.71), district-level committees (1.79), and county-level committees (1.64) were almost equally beneficial. The pattern has been for the Democrats to demonstrate stronger levels of usefulness at the county and state level, but this does not hold true in this case. For incumbents, county-level information did not surpass the district and state in usefulness. The only other marginally useful group was the DLCC, with all other groups being irrelevant. Republicans found voter information supplied by the RLCT (1.76) to have been more marginally more useful than the information supplied by the DLCC (1.64). Yet, the real difference comes in the usefulness of the RLCT (1.76) versus the RPT's state-level committee (1.15).[277] Republican incumbents did not at all rely on state-level committees for voter information. Republican legislators completely bypassed state-level committees in favor of the information supplied instead by district (1.85) and county-level committees (1.85). Thus, Republicans relied more on local party organizations when they did not rely on their LCCs. All other groups were irrelevant. Thus, incumbents found party organizations useful in supplying information about voters, though the type of party organization and level of party organization vary depending on the party. The RPT was not as valuable a resource compared to the TDP, but local Republican organizations were more valuable than local Democratic organizations.

Challengers relied more heavily on party organizations for voter information, though with some variance depending on the party and competitiveness of the candidates. Once again, the TDP's state-level committee (2.13) surpassed the RPT's state-level

[277] $t = 2.189$, $p < .036$.

committee (1.61) in usefulness. Republican challengers did not find the state-level committee important in supplying information about voters, but the voter information supplied by their respective district-level (2.33) committees and county-level committees (2.06) was significantly more useful, effective, and important.[278] Democratic incumbents were also more appreciative of county-level committees (2.38) than Republican challengers (2.06). Finally, the last major pattern is the level of discrimination practiced by the party in supplying this information. Republican party organizations were more likely to distribute their information equitably to competitive and noncompetitive challengers, and challengers acknowledged this by giving the parties equitable levels of assessment. Yet, competitive Democratic challengers (2.40) received more attention from party organizations and were more likely to positively assess their respective party organizations than noncompetitive Democratic challengers (2.00). Nevertheless, the TDP and RPT played an important role in providing information about voters to challengers and challengers did not significantly attribute any other groups as being important in supplying information.

Open-seat candidates were the most complimentary of party voters' information services. Overall, the TDP and RPT were significantly the most important group to open-seat candidates.[279] The efforts of the Texas Democratic Party appear to have been more influential to Democratic open-seat candidates than the Republican Party of Texas for Republican open-seat candidates. Democratic open-seat candidates found the TDP's state-level committee (2.17), district-level committees (2.33), and county-level committees (2.83) more important than Republican open-seat candidates found the RPT's

[278] $t = 2.718$, $p < .015$.
[279] $t = 2.824$, $p < .014$.

state-level committee (2.00), district-level committees (2.22), and county-level committees (2.56). Thus far, Republican district-level committees have largely outperformed Democratic district-level committees, but this is not the case in supplying information about voters. Both LCCs significantly trail the parties in terms of usefulness, but the RLCT (1.67) surpasses the DLCC (1.50).[280] No other groups are important or noticed by open-seat candidates. Finally, competitive and noncompetitive open-seat candidates equally indicated that district-level and county-level committees were important to their campaigns, but noncompetitive candidates were not enthusiastic about state-level committees. Apparently, state-level committees were more likely to supply information about voters to competitive candidates than noncompetitive candidates and, consequently, competitive candidates (1.97) find state-level committees more important to their campaign than noncompetitive open-seat candidates (1.47).[281] The RPT and TDP were the two most important groups from the perspective of candidates in supplying information about voters.

Supplying information about voters is one function that safely remains in the hands of party organizations. Incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates all largely found the party efforts to have been the most important to their campaigns of all group efforts. All other organizations, including legislative campaign committees, were not significant suppliers of information. For Democrats, the TDP and its respective county-level committees were more effective than state-level and district-level committees. Yet, Republican district-level committees were more important than state-level and county-level committees. Open-seat candidates were the most appreciative of

[280] DLCC vs. TDP $t = 3.162$, $p < .025$; RLCT vs. RPT $t = 2.286$, $p < .052$.
[281] $t = 2.256$, $p < .042$.

these efforts, followed by challengers and then incumbents. Republicans distributed their resources equitably; however, Democrats tended to discriminate between competitive and noncompetitive candidates. As such, competitive Democratic candidates were more likely to find party efforts important to their campaigns. Interest groups, PACs, unions, and national party organizations were not significant contributors of information.

The other, perhaps more, fundamental party activity involves mobilizing voters. Get-out-the-vote (GOTV) drives remain one the most common, central, and critical party activities. The parties spend a lot of time and resources finding ways to activate potential supporters because turnout can be the single largest difference between winning and losing. Another question in this survey deals with voter mobilization and asks candidates to determine how important groups were in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day. Table 3.17 displays the mean scores given by candidates, and the MANOVA test indicates that party and seat type were significant predictors for the level of party involvement in registering and mobilizing voters.

The highest mean scores for party efforts are found in response to this question, as candidates found the registering and mobilizing efforts of the two parties to be the most important function, of all their functions, they provided for their campaigns. Overall, the Texas Democratic Party did a significantly more influential job registering and mobilizing voters. To be fair, the TDP has a natural advantage because most Republican voters are already registered, making registration less of a priority for the RPT, and Republican constituencies are more likely to turn out than Democratic constituencies, making mobilization less of a priority for the RPT. When the parties did provide

Table 3.17: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.11	5.00	3.86	4.00	3.90	4.13	2.40	1.92	3.13	4.67	5.00	4.50	4.44	4.55	4.20	3.07	2.63	3.67
County	2.89	2.50	3.00	2.50	2.80	2.13	2.35	2.08	2.75	3.17	3.00	3.25	2.81	2.45	3.60	2.07	2.13	2.00
District	2.67	3.00	2.57	2.61	2.50	2.75	1.95	1.67	2.38	2.50	3.00	2.25	2.25	1.91	3.00	2.00	1.75	2.33
State	2.00	1.00	2.29	2.00	1.80	2.25	1.25	1.08	1.50	2.83	3.50	2.50	2.56	2.55	2.60	2.21	2.25	2.17
LCCs	1.33	1.00	1.43	1.11	1.10	1.13	1.30	1.25	1.38	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.06	1.00	1.20	1.29	1.25	1.33
National	1.33	1.00	1.43	1.06	1.00	1.13	1.25	1.17	1.38	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.14	1.13	1.17
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.67	1.00	2.00	1.56	1.45	1.80	1.64	1.63	1.67
IGs	1.67	1.00	1.86	1.50	1.40	1.63	1.45	1.25	1.75	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.19	1.09	1.40	1.21	1.13	1.33
PACs	1.22	1.00	1.29	1.17	1.10	1.25	1.15	1.17	1.13	1.33	1.50	1.25	1.06	1.00	1.20	1.14	1.13	1.17
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

NOVA: Position X Party F = 3.069, p< .084; Party F = 3.942, p< .001; Competition F = 1.016 p< .438, Seat Type F = 2.647, p< .001

services, Democratic county-level committees performed better than Republican county-level committees; however, Republican district-level committees remained more important than Democratic district-level committees. Interestingly, challengers and open-seat candidates in both parties were far more complimentary of these party mobilization efforts than incumbents. Finally, there does appear to have been some beneficial, though relatively minor, union activity noticed by Democrats and some beneficial, but also minor, interest group activity noticed by Republicans.

As stated previously, incumbents in both parties relied heavily on their legislative campaign committees for many campaign services during the 2002 state legislative elections. Yet, the importance of the DLCC and RLCT declined appreciatively in the area of supplying information about voters. Likewise, the DLCC (1.29) and RLCT (1.30) were neither prepared nor willing to provide GOTV services. While legislative campaign committees provide many services, they are not yet effective agents for mobilization and, consequently, they are not yet effective at registration. Thus, it is not a shock to find incumbents reporting that the DLCC and RLCT were not important to their campaigns in the area of mobilization and registration. Instead incumbents relied almost exclusively on the traditional state political party organization, though there is a difference between the two parties regarding the level of the organization found to be the most important. Democratic incumbents benefited most from state-level committees (2.21), followed by county-level (2.07) and district-level (2.00) committees. Democratic incumbents found the TDP's state-level committee (2.21) significantly more effective at voter registration and voter mobilization than Republican incumbents found the RPT's state-level

committee (1.25).[282] Once again, the RPT received some scathingly low and unremarkable scores among incumbents, clearly demonstrating that Republican incumbents were extremely dissatisfied with the efforts of the state-level committee of the RPT. In place of the state-level committee, incumbents were far more complimentary of county-level (2.35) and district-level (1.95) efforts.[283] Making this observation perplexing is the fact that Republicans assessed their interest groups (1.45) as doing a better job at voter registration and voter mobilization than the RPT's state-level committee, and interest groups are not typically known for being active in voter registration drives (though to some degree they do emphasize voter mobilization). Given this finding, numerous explanations are available. One, the gubernatorial campaign diverted RPT statewide attention and resources, leaving state legislative candidates largely to rely on local sources. Second, most incumbents had safe seats and party efforts went to other seat types and districts. As a result, Republican incumbent-RPT relationships were non-existent. Democrats did not suffer from a similar fate. Finally, Democratic incumbents also received some support from unions (1.64) while Republicans received some support from interest groups (1.45). Outside of this, no other groups were influential to legislators in providing GOTV services.

Challengers also found GOTV services of the parties to have been moderately important to their campaigns. Like incumbents, challengers found party activities in the realm of voter registration and voter mobilization to have been their most effective and most important service provided. For Democratic challengers, the state-level committee (2.56) was more effective with GOTV services than the Republican state-level committee

[282] $t = 2.853$, $p < .008$.
[283] State vs. county $t = 2.871$, $p < .010$; state vs. district $t = 2.101$, $p < .049$.

(2.00). Similarly, Democratic challengers also found county-level committees (2.81) more important than Republican county-level committees (2.50); however, Republican district-level committees (2.61) were more effective than Democratic district-level committees (2.25). The RPT generally provided the same level of support to competitive and noncompetitive challengers. The TDP focused its efforts on competitive candidates. Once again, the TDP appears to discriminately apply its services more so than the RPT. Finally, some Democratic challengers also cited the mobilization efforts of unions (1.56). Challengers did not find important mobilization support for their campaign from non-party groups. The state political parties maintain a significantly important and central campaign role in registering voters and mobilizing voters. Combined with supplying information about voters, the party maintains an active presence in the realm of gauging public opinion and voter mobilization.

Open-seat candidates yield similar results as challengers. First, the Texas Democratic Party, at the state level, was more successful, again, in delivering services than the Republican Party of Texas' state-level committee. The TDP (2.83) was more important to open-seat Democrats than the RPT (2.00) to open-seat Republicans. Likewise, Democratic open-seat candidates also found county-level committees (3.17) more important than Republican county-level committees (2.89). Nonetheless, Republicans retained their advantage at the district-level, as Republican open-seat candidates (2.67) found their district-level committees more effective than Democratic district-level committees (2.50). Thus, Democrats are better organized at the state and county level, while Republicans remain better organized at the district-level. Secondly, the overall level of importance by open-seat candidates exceeds the level of support by

challengers and incumbents. Together, challengers and open-seat candidates found party assistance significantly more important to their campaigns than incumbents.[284] Therefore, party services are distributed rationally and strategically. That is, parties are more likely to devote their services, resources, and attention where they are likely to have the most effective results and where the most is at stake. Furthermore, since partisan balance was at stake, open-seat elections assumed a heightened role. There is no clear pattern of differential treatment between Republicans and Democrats towards competitive and noncompetitive open-seat candidates. Previously, it had been shown that RPT concentrated equally on competitive and noncompetitive candidates, but the TDP concentrated solely on competitive candidates. All open-seat candidates in both parties, regardless of whether they were competitive or noncompetitive, received TDP assistance with voter mobilization and registration. Overall, the RPT and TDP are important to the campaigns of open-seat candidates.

Summing up voter mobilization and voter registration, the RPT and TDP have maintained their hegemony over this traditional party function. They remain the most important resources for candidates seeking help with registering voters and mobilizing voters on Election Day. The state political parties' highest mean scores in the entire survey are recorded in this particular category, with the TDP outperforming the RPT at the state-level and county-level. Republicans' district-level organizations remain more organized and, therefore, more important for Republicans than Democrats. Both parties concentrated their resources on open-seat candidates, then challengers and incumbents. Republican incumbents were significantly less likely to rely on the state party than Republican challengers and open-seat candidates. While incumbents find LCCs to be a

[284] $t = 2.393$, $p < .019$

dominant external resource for their campaigns, in the area of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters, the traditional state political party organizations maintain their relative value over legislative party organizations and non-party organizations. The results of this survey show that in the minds of Texas candidates, non-party organizations are non-existent and not important in providing support for registering and mobilizing voters. Also, both parties are rational and strategic in determining the type of candidates to support in terms of seat type, but the Democratic Party is even more discriminatory than the Republican Party by selecting candidates based on their perceived competitiveness. Competitive Democrats are somewhat more likely to receive party support and find that support important than noncompetitive Democrats. Overall, voter mobilization is still the parties' most important responsibility.

Finally, the last aspect of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters is supplying campaigns with manpower. This survey asks candidates how important groups were in providing the campaign with volunteer workers. Table 3.18 displays the mean scores assessing the importance of groups in supplying the campaigns with workers, and the MANOVA test indicates that party and seat type were significant predictors for the level of involvement for party and non-party groups. Outside of friends and families, the organizations that provided the most volunteers for state legislative candidates were county-level committees, with Democratic county-level committees being more influential than Republican county-level committees. Given the size of Texas and the closer proximity of county organizations, it is not surprising that county-level committees are the most important to candidates in supplying campaign workers. Among Democrats, slight levels of importance were also recorded for interest groups, unions, and the state-

Table 3.18: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with volunteer workers?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.33	5.00	4.14	4.17	4.10	4.25	3.20	2.58	4.13	4.67	5.00	4.50	4.63	4.73	4.40	3.71	3.00	4.67
County	2.89	1.50	3.29	2.89	3.30	2.38	2.65	2.33	3.13	3.17	3.00	3.25	3.06	2.82	3.60	2.43	2.38	2.50
District	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.67	1.60	1.75	1.40	1.33	1.50	1.33	1.00	1.50	1.56	1.45	1.80	1.57	1.38	1.83
State	1.78	1.00	2.00	1.89	2.00	1.75	1.35	1.33	1.38	1.83	2.00	1.75	1.81	1.91	1.60	1.71	1.63	1.83
LCCs	1.22	1.00	1.29	1.17	1.20	1.13	1.40	1.42	1.38	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.43	1.50	1.33
National	1.22	1.00	1.29	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.17	1.38	1.33	1.00	1.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.00	1.17
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.50	2.50	2.50	1.50	1.27	2.00	2.00	1.88	2.17
IGs	1.78	1.00	2.00	1.39	1.40	1.38	2.25	2.33	2.13	2.17	2.00	2.25	1.63	1.36	2.20	2.14	2.00	2.33
PACs	1.11	1.00	1.14	1.11	1.10	1.13	1.10	1.08	1.13	1.17	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.14	1.13	1.17
N	9	2	7	18	10	8	20	12	8	6	2	4	16	11	5	14	8	6

MANOVA: Competitiveness X Party F = 1.587, p< .073; Party F = 6.153, p< .000; Competition F = 1.233 p< .292, Seat Type F = 2.714, p< .001

level committee. For Republicans, though, of more importance were interest groups and the district-level committees. Beyond interest groups and the traditional state political party organization, state legislative candidates received very few campaign volunteers from other groups.

In the last category of supplying the campaign with volunteer workers, incumbents do not find their respective legislative campaign committees useful. When asked about supplying campaigns with volunteer workers, incumbents in both parties again note the ineffectiveness of legislative campaign committees (1.43, 1.40). LCCs have become critical electioneering resources for campaigns; however, they are not effective in the area of volunteer recruitment. Today, political parties maintain their monopoly, relatively speaking, on more traditional campaign activities. Incumbents find county-level committees (2.43, 2.65) significantly more useful in supplying campaign workers than LCCs.[285] The two most important groups for incumbents were county-level committees and interest groups, though Republican incumbents (2.65, 2.25) noticed their support more than Democratic incumbents (2.43, 2.14). Not surprisingly, a group that was significantly more important to Democrats than Republicans was unions (2.00 vs. 1.00).[286] Unions appear to have played a slightly important role for Democratic incumbents. Finally, competitive incumbents were not significantly more likely to find group support more important than noncompetitive incumbents; they were both equally appreciative of the support received from external groups.

[285] TDP $t = 2.550$, $p < .024$; RPT $t = 3.324$, $p < .004$.
[286] $t = 4.686$, $p < .000$.

Regardless of party, challengers found efforts by county-level committees to supply campaigns with volunteers significantly more useful than any other group,[287] though Democratic county-level committees (3.06), were more important to challengers than Republican county-level committees (2.89). Deviating from previous sections, Republican challengers (1.89) and Democratic challengers (1.81) also noticed state-level committee efforts. Thus far, Republicans have given very poor ratings to their state party, ratings that almost always trail the district-level party in terms of importance. It appears that several challengers actually found the support of state-level committees beneficial. Republican and Democratic challengers did not find any other groups helpful to their campaigns. Whereas incumbents generally acknowledged some mild support from some interest groups, challengers apparently did not receive the same level of attention.

The group most impressed by county-level efforts was open-seat candidates. Democratic open-seat candidates (3.17) noticed county-level committee support more than Democratic challengers (3.06) Democratic incumbents (2.43), and Republican open-seat candidates (2.89). In both parties, county-level committees were more important than any other group to open-seat candidates.[288] Democratic open-seat candidates also found the workers supplied by unions (2.50) and interest groups (2.17) important, more so than their Republican open-seat colleagues (1.00, 1.78).[289] Also, the Democratic state-level committee (1.83) appears to have been slightly more important than the Republican state-level committee (1.78) to open-seat candidates. Yet, Republican open-seat candidates found district-level committees (2.00) more important to them than

[287] $t = 3.610$, $p < .001$.
[288] $t = 2.416$, $p < .030$.
[289] Unions $t = 5.485$, $p < .000$.

Democratic open-seat candidates found district-level committees (1.33). There is not a large or significant difference between competitive and noncompetitive open-seat candidates in their receptivity to groups in supplying campaign workers. Outside of the party organizations, interest groups and unions played a minor role with Democrats, but they lacked the effectiveness and importance of the party organizations. Republicans did notice the efforts of any group other then the RPT.

In conclusion, in the last category of gauging public opinion and voter mobilization, we finally find some evidence for the perceived importance of party organizations. Gauging public opinion and voter mobilization activities include, but are not solely restricted to, informing candidates about voters, registering voters, helping voters to the polls, and supplying campaigns with volunteers. These activities encompass some of the most traditional party activities, and, in the state of Texas, the Texas Democratic Party and Republican Party of Texas are still supplying these traditional party functions. For state legislative candidates, the parties' contribution exceeds the contributions of other organizations.

When supplying information about voters, party organizations are significantly important suppliers of information. For Democrats, the TDP and its respective county-level organizations were more effective than the RPT and its county-level organizations. Yet, Republican district-level organizations outperformed Democratic district-level organizations. Open-seat candidates were the most appreciative of these efforts, followed by challengers and incumbents. Republicans distributed their resources more equitably; however, Democrats tended to discriminate between competitive and noncompetitive

candidates. Interest groups, PACs, unions, and national party organizations were not significant contributors of information.

Similarly, party organizations remain the most important group for voter mobilization and voter registration. The state political parties' highest mean scores come in response to this particular category, with the TDP outperforming the RPT at the state level and county level. Nonetheless, Republicans' district-level organizations remain more organized and, therefore, more important resources for Republicans. Both parties concentrated on open-seat candidates, then challengers and incumbents. The Democratic Party is more discriminating than the Republican Party in selecting which candidates to focus on, with competitive Democrats far more likely to receive party support than noncompetitive Democrats. Voter mobilization is still largely controlled by party organizations and remains their most valuable resource for state legislative candidates.

Finally, the same pattern holds true in the realm of supplying campaigns with campaign workers. The TDP and its county-level committees outperformed the RPT and its county-level committees; however, Republicans were better organized at the district level than Democrats. Open-seat candidates received far more attention from party organizations than incumbents and challengers. Whether it was informing candidates about voters, registering voters, helping voters to the polls, and supplying campaigns with volunteers, party organizations are the most important resources for state legislative campaigns. Even among incumbents, legislative campaign committees and other non-party organizations were not as important or as effective in providing these services.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the parties' most significant impact comes in the realm of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. This is confirmed in Table 3.19, which provides the mean scores for state-level party importance divided by party, competitiveness, and seat type; Table 3.20 which provides the mean scores for county-level party importance divided by party, competitiveness, and seat type; and Table 3.21 which provides the mean scores for district-level party importance divided by party, competitiveness, and seat type. The Texas Democratic Party is most effective in registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day, followed by supplying information about voters and assisting candidates with media advertising. The RPT is most effective in assisting with advertising, followed by registering voters and supplying campaign workers. The mean scores for Democratic activities are substantially higher than Republican activities, suggesting that the Texas Democratic Party is far more important to its candidates than the Republican Party of Texas. Yet, the district organization within the Republican Party is more effective than the Democrats' district organizations. At the county level, both parties are important. Competitive candidates notice the TDP and RPT more than noncompetitive candidates. The last major observation is that challengers and incumbents generally notice the TDP and RPT more than incumbents. Depending on the category, open-seat candidates are slightly more positive about their experience with the party than challengers, but many other and competing groups also benefit open-seat candidates. Disappointingly, from the perspective of the parties, the relatively low mean scores demonstrate the relative unimportance of the party in state legislative campaigns.

Table 3.19: Mean scores for state-level party committees by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Party		Competitiveness		Seat Type		
	Democrat	GOP	C	N-C	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.53	1.38	1.50	1.40	1.32	1.50	1.60
Voter Information	1.97	1.49	1.97	1.47	1.38	1.85	2.07
Registering Voters	2.47	1.68	2.16	1.91	1.65	2.26	2.33
Media Advertising	1.89	1.77	2.08	1.60	1.56	1.94	2.13
Accounting Reports	1.03	1.06	1.08	1.02	1.00	1.03	1.20
Assisting Fundraising	1.42	1.21	1.53	1.11	1.24	1.26	1.53
Formulating Issue Positions	1.47	1.55	1.74	1.33	1.44	1.56	1.60
Recruiting Workers	1.78	1.64	1.71	1.69	1.50	1.85	1.80
Formulating Strategies	1.69	1.34	1.66	1.36	1.32	1.62	1.60
Campaign Management	1.33	1.30	1.45	1.20	1.15	1.41	1.47
Hiring Professionals	1.17	1.15	1.21	1.11	1.09	1.26	1.07
N	36	37	38	45	34	34	15

Table 3.20: Mean scores for county-level party committees by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Party		Competitiveness		Seat Type		
	Democrat	GOP	C	N-C	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.72	1.70	1.79	1.64	1.50	1.79	2.00
Voter Information	2.17	2.06	2.26	1.98	1.76	2.21	2.67
Registering Voters	2.58	2.51	2.71	2.40	2.24	2.65	3.00
Media Advertising	1.50	1.57	1.68	1.42	1.32	1.65	1.80
Assisting Fundraising	1.39	1.72	1.76	1.42	1.35	1.68	1.87
Formulating Issue Positions	1.81	1.91	2.11	1.67	1.53	2.00	2.33
Recruiting Workers	2.83	2.79	1.68	1.42	2.56	2.97	3.00
Formulating Strategies	1.61	1.68	1.84	1.49	1.38	1.88	1.73
Campaign Management	1.44	1.45	1.55	1.36	1.26	1.47	1.80
Hiring Professionals	1.19	1.26	1.34	1.13	1.09	1.26	1.47
N	36	37	38	45	34	34	15

Table 3.21: Mean scores for district-level party committees by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Party		Competitiveness		Seat Type		
	Democrat	GOP	C	N-C	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.28	1.60	1.61	1.33	1.38	1.44	1.67
Voter Information	1.97	2.11	2.34	1.80	1.82	2.18	2.27
Registering Voters	2.19	2.34	2.55	2.04	1.97	2.44	2.60
Media Advertising	1.42	1.55	1.68	1.33	1.41	1.56	1.53
Accounting Reports	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Assisting Fundraising	1.22	1.57	1.61	1.27	1.35	1.44	1.53
Formulating Issue Positions	1.78	1.91	2.16	1.60	1.74	1.88	2.07
Recruiting Workers	1.53	1.62	1.74	1.44	1.47	1.62	1.73
Formulating Strategies	1.25	1.72	1.76	1.31	1.35	1.62	1.67
Campaign Management	1.19	1.47	1.53	1.20	1.18	1.38	1.67
Hiring Professionals	1.08	1.28	1.34	1.07	1.12	1.24	1.27
N	36	37	38	45	34	34	15

Recapping, in the realm of candidate recruitment, the Republican Party of Texas and the Texas Democratic Party generally trail other groups in being mentioned as important in the decision to run. Friends and family, LCCs, PACs, and interest groups consistently exceed the state parties in terms of relative importance. Only competitive open-seat candidates found some county-level party recruitment slightly important; however, competitive open-seat candidates comprise only 11 of the 73 total candidates in this survey. Therefore, generally speaking, the state parties are not effective or important recruiters, but county-level party committees are much more active and much more important. When parties recruit, they are led by county committees and tend to focus on competitive candidates and open-seat candidates, but not incumbents.

When it comes to helping candidates formulate campaign strategies, the Texas Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Texas, again, are selective in their support and generally not important. For Democrats, the TDP concentrated its efforts on competitive challengers and, more significantly, competitive open-seat candidates. Unfortunately for the TDP, its efforts with open-seat candidates did not exceed the contributions of the DLCC. County-level party committees are more active in both parties and, subsequently, were noticed more by competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates. Party efforts with open-seat candidates are not more effective than the efforts of the DLCC and RLCT. Incumbents received no party support and did not find the party, at any level, important. The RPT is not as active as the TDP at the state level or county level, but are more effective at the district level. Incumbents and noncompetitive candidates do not find party services important.

Overall, the picture that emerges from the analysis of campaigns management is that all levels of the traditional state political party organization are not important to almost all candidates. The county-level committees of the Texas Democratic Party did make a slightly important impact with open-seat candidates and were more effective than the DLCC and other groups. The TDP also is marginally outperforming the RPT; however, the RPT's district-level organizations are again more effective than their Democratic counterparts. Nevertheless, the mean scores for the parties are so low as to make their efforts insignificant in the grand scheme of things. Only 28% of the candidates in this study said they even received any assistance from the state parties, so it is little wonder then that their relative influence is marginal. In conclusion, candidates seldom rely on groups to assist in the management of their campaigns.

Candidates rely neither on others to assist them in the formulation of strategies and campaign management nor, as a logical extension, do they seek party support to hire professionals. In the rare instances that candidates do find outside groups to assist them under the rubric of campaign management, they are not seeking for nor are they finding important the Texas Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Texas. The TDP and RPT are neither primary actors nor important actors in the realm of campaign management in state legislative campaigns. Surpassing the TDP and RPT in relative importance is legislative campaign committees, political action committees, interest groups, and, in the Republican Party, national party organizations. The RPT is weaker than the TDP, but the RPT makes up for this with a stronger district-level organization. When the party does intervene, competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates, but not incumbents and noncompetitive candidates, primarily notice their efforts.

In helping candidates select media advertising and develop their images, the state parties receive higher mean scores. Party efforts were primarily reserved for competitive open-seat candidates and competitive challengers, but the state parties neglected noncompetitive candidates and incumbents. When parties provided media advertising, the state-level committees were the most influential and deemed slightly important to competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates. Unfortunately for the party, open-seat candidates simultaneously found interest groups, political action committees, national party committees, and legislative campaign committees slightly important. This is one realm where state-level committee efforts exceeded the effectiveness of county and district-level committees.

Candidates themselves largely formulate issue positions; roughly 50% of the candidates reported not relying on any external groups to help formulate their issue positions. And, when they did, they were more likely to seek out the support of interest groups and legislative campaign committees before party organizations. Where party organizations were found to be helpful was at the county level, followed by the district-level party and the state party by open-seat candidates and competitive challengers. Overall both state parties were not as effective formulating issue positions for most candidates; this is handled better by local party committees.

We learn some things about party roles in campaign communications. First, the state party is better at assisting candidates with campaign communications than with candidate recruitment and campaign management. Second, campaign communications carries distinct forms of assistance: one, assisting candidates in selecting media advertisement and developing images; second, formulating issue positions. The state parties are better with the latter. Issue formulation is not nearly as emphasized by parties, nor is the party as effective nor do the candidates find these contributions important. Third, state parties discriminate based on the competitiveness of candidates and the position of the candidates. Competitive candidates in open-seat elections receive the most attention from state parties, followed by competitive challengers. Generally, noncompetitive candidates and incumbents do not receive party assistance nor are they likely to find party assistance to be more important. Fourth, candidates in Texas are far more likely to rely on local party organizations and find these local party organizations to have been more important. Fifth, and finally, all party organizations, regardless of level, trail interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees in

relative importance. Although party organizations appear to be better at campaign communications than recruitment or management, their impact is secondary to the comparative importance and effectiveness of other competing groups.

In the realm of campaign finance, it has become evidently clear that Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party are neither effective nor consequential. Financial activities in the state of Texas are reserved for Congressional elections, gubernatorial elections, railroad commission elections, and judicial elections. In fact, the second to last office listed on the Texas ballot are state legislative offices and it shows from the perspective of candidates. Despite the fact that 2002 was a watershed year and campaign regulations are largely absent, state legislative candidates still generally ignore the state parties. PACs, LCCs, unions, interest groups, and the national party were all more significant donors in Texas than the TDP and RPT, but the TDP held a slight edge over the RPT. Part of the RPT's absence can be explained in part by the intense financial involvement of the TRMPAC. The TRMPAC displaced the need for party activity but simultaneously displays the increasing irrelevancy of the party in the financial realm. Unless the parties manage to increase their financial base or reassess their contribution patterns, this does not look to change any time soon.

Consistent with other and past studies, gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections is still largely controlled by party organizations and remains the most valuable party resource for state legislative candidates (Aldrich 1995, Blumberg et al 2003, Bibby 2003, Frendreis and Gitelson 1999, Hogan 2002, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004, White and Shea 2004). Party services like conducting benchmark polls, compiling electronic voter databases, distributing posters and lawn signs, writing letters,

mailing literature, monitoring news broadcasts, assisting voter registration, organizing get-out-the-vote drives, recruiting volunteer workers, arranging transportation, and phone banking were significantly noticed by candidates and significantly outweighed the contribution of other groups in the eyes of the candidates. Conscious party efforts to focus on and elevate their attention towards public opinion and mobilization are paying off. The modern campaign is more technical and precise, and the party has adjusted to this environment. Here candidates still rely on their state parties for voter information and mobilization, and party efforts rank among the highest and most important function for parties (Hogan 2002, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004). Outside of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections, the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party are useless most of the time to most candidates.

The prognosis for the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Democratic Party is not good. They are solely resources for open-seat candidates and challengers, which is not good considering that incumbents in Texas are among the least defeated in the country (thanks, in part, to new legislative districts). While newly-drawn districts restrict the party, they are also limiting themselves by not helping incumbents. The parties are somewhat successful assisting some competitive challengers, but challengers do not get elected. Much of the handicap for the TDP and RPT derives from an unwieldy party structure responsible for governing over a large geographical area. The party must find a way to increase coordination between committee members, decrease the number of bureaucratic layers, and diversify the services they offer. The TDP is effective at the county level and must build off these committee layers and, likewise the RPT is effective at the district level and should build off these committee layers. The TDP and RPT are

both under-staffed and under-funded at the executive level. They must increase their operating budget and hire well-qualified campaign professionals. With stable, strong, and intelligent leadership, parties could be more effective campaign resources. If the parties are to entertain any hopes of being responsible, then this study suggests that they still have a ways to go because they are terribly organized and poorly coordinated. Better organization and better coordination could improve the quality and quantity of party services. If they offer better services, then candidates will seek them out. If candidates begin to seek them out, they can overcome the relative value of interest groups, political action committees, legislative campaign committees, and unions. Until then, the responsible party in Texas is a long, long way off.

CHAPTER FOUR: Party Campaigning in Oklahoma: Belief in No Organized Party

Oklahoma's Democratic Party reminds you of some simple-minded Goliath

– aged, obese, and disoriented.

- Frosty Troy

A Brief Electoral History

The state of Oklahoma stands at a crossroads culturally, geographically, socially, economically and politically. It has always been a state on the edge, but not necessarily the cutting edge. It is the intersection of the Ozarks and Great Plains and barren Southwest. The social crossroads juxtapose this geographical crossroads, the product of a variety of settlements. Native Americans joined an already concentrated Indian population in 1830, Boomers and Sooners settled in 1889 (the Jayhawkers settled in the North and West, Southerners from Arkansas and Mississippi settled in the Southeast), and many more businessmen, bankers, and oil-related professionals arrived in Oklahoma City and Tulsa in the early 1900s from Kansas City, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and other Midwestern cities (Kirkpatrick et al 1977, Morgan et al 1991). This state also finds itself at an economic crossroads. The interests of petroleum, ranching, and farming are reconciling their existence with the spread of a new service-oriented economy that is transforming the western capital of the state – Oklahoma City – and the eastern capital of the state – Tulsa. These two metropolitan areas are competitively driving Oklahoma, demonstrating that the state still battles sectionalized heritages, interests, identities, personalities, and concomitantly, politics (Morgan et al 1991). Perhaps these are all some of the reasons that David Morgan wrote, "Oklahoma remains a paradox – a state struggling with its sense of identity, a place where old and new vie for the attention and

allegiance of its people" (Morgan et al 1991, 3). Yet, it is not simply a state vying for the attention of its own people, but the nation and scholars.

Oklahoma is not universally accepted as Southwest, Midwest, or Southern; however, many are in agreement that its culture and politics distinctly mimic Southern traditions, patterns, and trends (Kirkpatrick et al 1977, Morgan et al 1991, Bartley 1995, Gaddie and Copeland 2003). Gaddie and Copeland write, "Oklahoma stands at the fringe of the South, both in the study of southern politics and in the mind set of Oklahoma" (Gaddie and Copeland 2003, 223). Critics argue it is not properly Southern because it was not one of the official states of the old Confederacy; it was not a state at all, really.[290] Also, it is not properly Southern because a defining southern characteristic – a significant black population – is not currently present, nor has ever been present (Morgan et al 1991, Gaddie and Copeland 2003). This is not to suggest that race has not been a factor in Oklahoma, as evidenced by numerous racially motivated lynchings, the deadliest race riot in American history in 1921, the proliferation of black-only towns, pervasive Jim Crow laws, and the late arrival of segregation in many public schools. Oklahoma's struggle with civil rights for African Americans parallels the racial histories of other Southern states (Morgan et al 1991, Madigan 2001, Johnson 2002, Klarman 2004). Oklahoma's traditionalistic political culture is also distinctly in line with Southern states, as its political leaders play a largely conservative and custodial role rather than being innovative. The state maintains a limited government designed to meet the needs of those in power and preserve the status quo (Elazar 1972, 1984; Morgan et al 1991). Conservatism is a Southern hallmark, and Oklahoma is beset with a nascent conservatism

[290] If politically defined by the classic criteria as a state that seceded and held Confederate membership, then Oklahoma fails because it was a territory that could never formally secede. However, Oklahoma was given representation in the Confederate Congress.

infiltrating every aspect of state politics and policy – evidenced by divisive fights over topics like liquor-by-the-drink, right-to-work, and, more recently, a state lottery. Oklahoma's conservatism is conjoined with a Christian fundamentalism derived from its dominant Southern Baptist and evangelical population (Bednar and Hertzke 1995).

This powerful and nascent religious conservatism simultaneously precipitated the rise of the Democrats during the Depression, preserved Democratic hegemony during the turbulent pre-Civil Rights Era, and, most recently, fueled the Republican Revolution just like the other former states of the Confederacy (Morgan et al 1991, Gaddie and Copeland 2003). For years, Oklahoma operated as a one-party, solid Democratic state, and the Democratic Party lacked a coherent organizational apparatus because of personality-driven conflicts. In the meantime, the Republicans lacked a coherent organizational apparatus because there were no Republicans. This description of Oklahoma reads similar to the passages of Louisiana and Texas in V.O. Key's *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (1949). Today, the two parties have paid more attention to organizational development in response to a changing political environment in order to play a more effective role during elections (Hale and Kean 1999).

Like the rest of the South, Oklahoma has experienced a partisan transformation after years of Democratic domination in state legislative politics. Paradoxically, Oklahoma went into statehood a relatively progressive state that gave 20% of its vote to a Socialist gubernatorial candidate in 1914. Socialist Party strength came at the expense of the Democratic Party, thus explaining a brief period of Republican control over the state legislature in 1920. The GOP would additionally claim a U.S. Senate seat and three U.S. Congressional seats; however, the perturbations of the Twenties were short-lived, and

Republicans would never reclaim a majority of the state legislature for the rest of the century. Although a series of economic dislocations contributed to the popularity of the Socialist Party, it would be the biggest dislocation of them all, the Great Depression, that caused Oklahomans to permanently abandon both the Republican and Socialist Party in favor of the Democratic Party. Consequently, Democrats ruled comfortably while Republicans averaged a meager 20% share of the vote from 1907 to 1975. Clearly, Oklahoma was a one-party, Democratic state. Nonetheless, in the face of congressional, gubernatorial, state legislative, and county dominance, political and legal forces would slowly and quietly erode Democratic bases of support (Kirkpatrick et al 1977, Hale and Kean 1999, Gaddie and Copeland 2003).

After World War II, Democratic presidential hopefuls began to have difficult times, due in part to the absence of Southern electoral votes. The departure of Southern states from the New Deal voting coalition began when the civil rights movement emerged and national Democrats advocated racial, social, and economic policies that put them at odds with Southern Democrats. These issues, which had unified the party after Reconstruction, were now driving the party apart and causing many Democrats in the South to slowly reexamine their party loyalty. Although Oklahoma never experienced the violence and massive resistance characterizing other Southern states, the issue of race, among other issues, contributed to more willingness to support Republicans at the presidential level while simultaneously supporting Democrats at the state and local level. The split between Oklahoma Democrats and national Democrats facilitated top-down Republican advancement (Hale and Kean 1999, Gaddie and Copeland 2003). In 1952, Oklahoma cast its electoral votes for Eisenhower and has since voted only once for a

Democratic presidential candidate. Despite casting its electoral votes for Eisenhower in both 1952 and 1956, in 1958 the Republican gubernatorial candidate still received only 19% of the vote and was swept in all 77 counties (Kirkpatrick et al 1977). National Republican successes did not translate automatically into state and grassroots successes for Republicans.

Further, even limited Republican grassroots success could not and would not occur until Oklahoma's legislative districts were reconfigured. In the 1950s, the existing apportionment statutes of the State of Oklahoma were challenged as a violation of the Oklahoma Constitution and the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The plaintiff alleged that despite being a resident and voter in the most populous county of the state, which had about 15% of the total population, his county held only 2% of the seats in the state Senate and less than 4% of the seats in the state House. The complaint recited the unwillingness and inability of Oklahoma to provide relief, but the Oklahoma District Court dismissed the complaint and the Supreme Court affirmed without dissent.[291] In the 1960s, the Supreme Court ruled that rural malapportionment schemes prevalent in Southern states that allowed rural Democrats to numerically dominate heavily populated Republican metropolitan areas violated the principle of "one man, one vote." *Baker v. Carr* and subsequent rulings forced Oklahoma to redraw its congressional and state legislative districts, giving the metropolitan corridor, led by Oklahoma City and Tulsa, doubling as Republican enclaves, more representation (Kirkpatrick et al 1977, Morgan et al 1991, Gaddie 1999, Gaddie and Copeland 2003).

The redrawing of districts allowed for Republican representation and increased the viability of running as a Republican for state legislative elections. Nonetheless, the

[291] *Radford v. Gary* 352 U.S. 991 (1957) in *Reynolds v. Sims* 377 U.S. 533 (1964).

redrawing of legislative districts did not immediately create significant Republican gains, because Republicans still constituted less than 25% of the population and were geographically confined to a small number of urban districts in Tulsa and Oklahoma City (Gaddie and Copeland 2003). Republican competitiveness was limited to a handful of districts, though, at the very least, Republican metropolitan centers could not be as blatantly discriminated against when drawing legislative boundaries as done in the past. Newly drawn legislative districts made Republican victories more likely in the sporadic instances when the Republican candidate was more attractive than the Democratic candidate. This happened more frequently when conservative Democrats began to question their partisan attachments as national Democrats nominated presidential candidates that did not socially and racially mesh with their ideology. Thus, the door for gradual and sporadic Republican growth was opened. To the frustration of Republicans, the top-down advancement would take many more decades before infiltrating the state legislature.

While Oklahoma was casting its electoral ballots for Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956, the Republican gubernatorial hopeful accumulated only 19% of the vote and was swept in all 77 counties (Kirkpatrick et al 1977). Yet, the frustrations of the 1950s gave way to glimpses of promise in the 1960s as Oklahoma elected its first Republican governor, Henry Bellmon, in 1962. Bellmon's tenure was not completely a fleeting Republican moment like David Treen in Louisiana or Bob Clements in Texas because the Republican Dewey Bartlett succeeded Bellmon. While shocked by the Bellmon and Bartlett victories, Democrats were not too incredibly worried because Oklahoma's governors rank among the weakest in the country, and Democrats maintained the ability

to override gubernatorial vetoes. In Texas, the party is often defined by and ruled from the governor's mansion, Oklahoma's parties had never held such an equal amount of dependency. Democrats in Oklahoma had always been a personality-driven bunch and relied less on state institutions, like the governor's mansion; to define the party (Kirkpatrick et al 1977, Hale and Kean 1999). As long as the party had Carl Albert, Fred Harris, and, most especially, Robert Kerr, they felt secure. Senator Kerr passed away in 1966 and Fred Harris and Carl Albert retired in 1976. In the meantime, Bartlett claimed back-to-back victories in 1966 and 1970, Bellmon became Senator in 1968, and Bartlett was elected Senator in 1972. Republican Senate victories served notice to Democrats that Republicans could be competitive, and Democrats grew nervous as the number of significant Democratic personalities began to dwindle (Kirkpatrick et al 1977, Morgan et al 1991). On the edge of a breakthrough, Republicans stalled. From 1972 to 1990, Republicans won only four more statewide offices – Tom Daxon for State Auditor in 1978, Bob Anthony for Corporation Commission in 1988, JC Watts for Corporation Commission in 1990, and Claudette Henry for State Treasurer in 1990 (Morgan et al 1991).

Southern Republican advancement suffered similar fates, to varying degrees, throughout the South. The disruptions of the Civil Rights Movement shook the loyalty and confidence of many Southern Democrats as reflected in national presidential voting patterns and other statewide Republican successes, but national- and even state-level victories did not lead to many district- and county-level victories. Even in the Southern states that flirted with Republicanism and elected statewide candidates, the signs of Republican progress were muted by the conditions under which many of these

Republicans were elected – Treen won under a new open-primary system in Louisiana, Clements faced a liberal Democrat emerging from a new primary electorate in Texas. These random victories lacked long-term momentum and permanent grassroots support. Republicans' progress stalled because their adherents were loosely tied coalitions that lacked the numerical and financial power to consistently sustain victories. They still were not able to field a full slate of candidates and their statewide victories had more to do with Democratic self-destruction than Republican popularity (Bartley 1995, Lamis 1999). Even in Oklahoma in the 1970s, many county commissioners, state senators, and state representatives still had not faced a single Republican opponent. The Republicans needed a solid base before progress could be made, a class of citizens who comprised such a percentage of the state to give any organization the money or numbers to consistently challenge in any area of a state. This class of citizens that Republicans had to wait on in Oklahoma, as elsewhere, was the middle class (Morgan et al 1991, Hale and Kean 1996).

In most cases, the largest source of Republican activation occurred after the arrival of a middle class. The Republican Party had to wait for an economic revitalization to induce the in-migration of non-Southern middle class whites that lacked any historical attachments to Democrats or Republicans. These people, combined with the Southern middle-class whites that fled the "black and liberal" Democratic Party, gave Republicans a numerical base by which majorities were more possible (Black and Black 1987). As a rural farm state, Oklahoma lacked a significant urban population outside of Oklahoma and Tulsa County. The transformation of the Oklahoma economy began in the 1980s as a result of the collapse of the petroleum and agriculture sectors. If Oklahoma

were to grow, then it needed Tulsa and Oklahoma City to lead the conversion to a service-oriented economy. The conversion occurred slowly and painfully, and the middle class began displacing old, rural Democrats as a significant proportion of the electorate. Furthermore, the post-1960s redistricting efforts allowed the state legislature to change with the state, with urban areas gaining representation and the rural areas losing representation. Nonetheless, not all middle class whites were immediately inclined to support these new Republicans in Tulsa and Oklahoma City (Morgan et al 1991).

The Republicans had to find a blueprint by which to attract social conservatives and fiscal conservatives, farmers and city folk. Henry Bellmon understood that Republicans had to draw on a diverse coalition to win, so he launched an initiative, Operation Countdown, that had as its intent to bridge the gap between "moneybags" or "country club" Republicans of the city with the "grassroots" Republicans in the small town and surrounding rural areas. Bellmon was a small-town kid with an agriculture degree from OSU who understood rural issues and was able to use his rural experience to woo rural voters in spite of his Republican label. The small government and lower taxes theme attracted these rural farmers, and, simultaneously, attracted moneybag support (Jones 1974, Hale and Kean 1999). These two groups had different ideas about the amount of attention fiscal issues and social issues should receive, but Bellmon had no room for religious fundamentalism in his platform. While his version of Republicanism would sustain itself for his purposes, this schism would later be a source of internal factionalism threatening the unity of Republicans (Gaddie and Copeland 2003). Later, the Reagan presidency gave Oklahoma Republicans a model on how to combine business themes – tax cuts, less regulations, right-to-work – with agricultural themes – farm relief,

subsidies, tax cuts – and social conservative themes – pro-life, school prayer, and opposition to liquor-by-the-drink – in such a fashion without destroying the party fabric. As long as the coordinating individual was strong enough, then Republicans could be consistently successful. While Bellmon was less reluctant to invoke this strategy, Nickels, Inhofe, and Keating were all more willing to fuse fiscal discussions with religious discussions, thereby keeping the "moneybags" and "grassroots" at the same table. These individuals garnered the votes of urban Tulsa County and rural Texas County. As Republicans like Nickels and Inhofe solidified their status, they were able to provide more campaign resources to other candidates and facilitate grassroots Republican growth throughout the entire state (Hale and Kean 1996, Gaddie and Copeland 2003).

The Democratic Party was able to survive so long as it had dynamic and powerful individuals like Carl Albert and Robert Kerr. The death of Kerr and the retirement of Albert shook the foundation of the party because now the more dominant personalities were gone. Without these personalities and their fiscal resources, Democrats began to succumb to local factional disputes driven by congressmen and politicians who viewed their districts more as fiefdoms at the expense of party maintenance. Democrats spent more time developing local electoral networks rather than party networks; thus, Democrats belonged to "no organized party." Democrats fought among themselves, and the party was wrought with factional paralysis. Furthermore, senatorial and congressional Democrats found themselves less secure and provided fewer resources to Democrats down the ticket (Jones 1974, Hale and Kean 1996, Hardt 2002). In the face of renewed Republican strength and strong Republican leaders, Democratic factions were exposed, and the party was paralyzed. Democrats lost increasing segments of the party,

and some politicians even defected. Weakening attachments and dwindling adherents paved the way for a revolution in 1994 (Gaddie and Copeland 2003).

Going into the 1994 election, the GOP held only one U.S. Senate seat, two congressional seats, and no major statewide offices. After the elections, the GOP held both Senate seats, five of the six congressional seats, and recaptured the Governor's mansion (Hale and Kean 1996). The most painful scene of 1994 was incumbent Democrat Mike Synar losing in his own primary to a 70 year-old retired former public school teacher, Virgil Cooper. Synar lost despite outspending Cooper by a $230,000 margin. Cooper was later easily defeated in the general election by Dr. Tom Coburn, who raised over $600,000 to became the first Republican to represent the second district in state history (Hardt 2003). Also in 1994, Democrats were brutally exposed when former Sooner football icon and current Lieutenant Governor, Jack Mildren, lost his bid to become governor. He was defeated when Wes Watkins bolted the Democratic Party to run as an Independent. Splitting the Democratic constituency, Watkins garnered 23% of the vote, Mildren took 30% of the vote, and the Republican, Frank Keating, won with a 47% plurality.[292] The fractures within the Democratic Party, the defection of conservative Democrats, and the defeat of a former football icon highlighted the serious problems facing the Democratic Party. Two years later, the Republicans completed their congressional sweep when Bill Brewster retired and former Democrat-turned-Independent-turned-Republican Wes Watkins won. From 1996-2000, Oklahoma sent no Democrats to Washington D.C. and the only football players reaping rewards were Republicans. After 1994, Republicans found themselves in the driver's seat, with the lone source of grief being the state legislature. Republican success had still not garnered

[292] www.fairvote.org.

a majority in either legislative body, but Republican advances at the top were clearly and slowly facilitating Republican growth at the grassroots (Hale and Kean 1999, Gaddie and Copeland 2003).

In Oklahoma, the state legislature is critical from a policy perspective because the governor of Oklahoma is, relatively speaking, one of the weakest governors in the nation. To control policy in Oklahoma, the party needs a legislative majority and must occupy a significant number of commissioner seats (Morgan et al 1991). The immediate post-*Baker* redistricting period saw Republicans occupying only 25% of the state legislature, Republican representation peaked at 32% in the 1980s, and Republicans hit 40% in the 1990s (Gaddie and Copeland 2003). Republican governors, senators, and congressmen, now safely in office, began investing more money into legislative and county races. In the 1990s, Nickels, Inhofe, Watts, and Keating all poured significant resources into many local campaigns, and Republicans slowly accumulated county and legislative seats (Hardt 2002). Lacking significant federal help, Democrats in the state legislature found themselves under siege with depleted fiscal resources and impending term limits (Gaddie 1999). No Democratic National Committee, Senators, or Congressmen were there to donate or divert significant resources. There were no charismatic Democrats even capable of campaigning for and drawing attention to Democrats. Even though Brad Carson broke the federal Republican monopoly in 2000, he did not support any Democrats down-ticket because his own electoral status was fragile (Hardt 2002). In 2000, the Democrats held a slim 53-48 margin in the state legislature and Republicans looked towards 2002 with incredible optimism.[293]

[293] National Conference of State Legislatures at www.ncsl.org.

In the wake of Republican ascendancy, Democrats were able to momentarily stall Republican progress in 2002. The 2002 elections largely represented a preservation of the status quo in the legislature, as Democrats lost only one seat in the House and two seats in the Senate.[294] Helping Democrats was a strong turnout in rural Democratic-leaning counties, fueled by a highly competitive governor's race and State Question 687's proposal to ban cockfighting. Republicans lost the governor's mansion when Brad Henry upset Hall of Fame wide receiver Steve Largent. Largent failed to preserve the frail relationship within the GOP between the "country club" and "grassroots" Republicans, as Largent's support was restricted to the metropolitan corridor. Henry won the countryside buoyed by high turnout from many rural Democrats turning out to vote against the ban on cockfighting. Largent had hoped his name, religious fundamentalism, and fiscal conservatism would suffice; however, Henry's experience as a rural legislator and his aggressive campaign proved more successful (Kerr 2003). Most alarmingly and importantly, Henry won with only a 43% plurality. Independent candidate Gary Richardson collected 14% of the votes, many of which otherwise would have gone to Largent.[295] The governor's race positively affected Democrats down-ticket and the heavy Democratic turnout stymied Republican advances.[296] In response, Republicans changed party leadership, legislative leadership, and regrouped for 2004.[297]

Despite Henry's election in 2002, the Democrats were unable to develop any momentum and lost their majority in the state House in 2004 when Todd Hiett became the first Republican Speaker in over 80 years. Democrats still hold a slight majority in

[294] National Conference of State Legislatures at www.ncsl.org.
[295] http://www.elections.state.ok.us.
[296] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.
[297] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

the State Senate and retain a slim 51%-49% registration advantage. Nevertheless, while official registration continues to trend Republican, more of those actually voting identify themselves as Republican (43%) and not Democrat (40%).[298] Republicans occupy all but one congressional seat and maintain control over both U.S. Senate seats. Democrats will assuredly lose the state Senate because all 14 term-limited Senators are Democrats. Brad Henry's reelection odds are also precarious because he was elected with a plurality in 2002, and his current re-elect numbers are not strong (Gaddie 2005). While Oklahoma may be teetering on the edge in many respects, politically it has clearly fallen towards the Republicans.

Although Oklahoma offers a rich history for partisan politics, it has not necessarily offered a rich history of party politics. One should not mistake Republican successes and Democratic failures as necessary extensions of the failures and successes of the organizations referred to as the Republican Party of Oklahoma (RPO) and Oklahoma Democratic Party (ODP). Not to say that the two parties have had no effect on electoral and legislative patterns, but organizational histories maintain their own identities. The rise and fall of the party-in-the-electorate or party-in-government does not necessarily describe the rise and fall of the party-as-organization. The overall partisan dynamic and histories of the state are important because they provide a context in which to appreciate party growth or decline; however, in order to fully understand current party activities in state legislative elections, we must first have knowledge of the organizational structure and history of the Republican Party of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Democratic Party.

[298] Edison/Mitofsky exit poll: http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/OK/S/01/epolls.0.html.

The Oklahoma Democratic Party – Organization & Development

The Oklahoma Democratic Party (ODP) is a relatively weak, decentralized organization. Its activists are a heterogeneous mixture of farmers, union members, African Americans, urban dwellers, academics, and Dixiecrats. The party is organized in a hierarchical fashion according to party rules, but its coherence is saturated and the authority of the Party Chairman is reduced by the existence of too many party committees. Therefore, the size of the party and the multiplicity of members cripple the ability of the ODP to act expediently, efficiently, and coherently. Despite organizational deficiencies, the party has made some strides in recent years and maintains involvement in state legislative elections.

The organizational structure of the Oklahoma Democratic Party is similar to Texas and Louisiana in that the various committee layers – precinct, county, district, state – reflect the electoral divisions of state.[299] With over 2,000 precincts, 77 counties, and five congressional districts, one can see how quickly the party becomes convoluted as one views the party apparatus (Morgan et al 1991). The lowest level of the party organization is the precinct committee. A tripartite officer corps – Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary – governs each precinct committee. Additionally, precinct committees may elect two committeewomen and two committeemen as formal precinct officers as well. The precinct committees primarily act as extensions of the county committees, providing support for county leaders and canvassing precincts during election cycles. The precinct committees are supposed to be the foot soldiers of the party, making sure that eligible voters in their areas are informed and mobilized for the upcoming elections. While

[299] All references to the party apparatus are found in "Oklahoma Democratic Party Constitution," hereafter referred to as ODP Constitution, and "Oklahoma Democratic Party Bylaws," hereafter referred to as ODP Bylaws.

precinct committees are encouraged to raise funds for the party, precinct committees do not have the authority to disburse funds. The ODP often finds it hard to keep every precinct committee fully staffed because some precincts contain only a handful of registered Democrats and, if every position were occupied, full precinct membership could increase active party membership by 14,000 people.[300] Of more importance are county committees.

Supervising the precinct committees are county committees, also supervised by a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. The county committees have electoral responsibilities and convention responsibilities. For example, during convention years they are charged with electing delegates to the state convention based on a formula that considers the county's vote for Senator and Governor in the last election, the county's vote for the Democratic nominee in the last two Presidential elections, and the total statewide vote.[301] When not busy with state conventions, the county committees are responsible for recruiting candidates for local elections, supporting candidates in their county, directing party activities and meetings in their county, distributing party resources and party information to local officials and candidates, coordinating precinct committee activities within the county, organizing county party events and fundraisers, creating working committees, and serving as a state party liaison for party members, candidates, and officials. Most importantly, county committees are given constitutional authority to raise and disburse party funds, giving them financial flexibility, authority, and independence from the state central committee. County committees are relatively autonomous entities

[300] Interview with Author July 15th, 2004.
[301] ODP Constitution Article IV, Section 2.

that are largely free to do what they want as long they have the funds and do not violate party rules.[302]

It is at the county level that most of the formal relationships exist among the party, candidates, and elected officials, as they are the closest, most visible, and, occasionally, the only link they have with the state party. In many ways, the Oklahoma Democratic Party is only as effective as its county committees. One former party official called the county committees "the engines of the party."[303] County committees vary in their level of activity; some counties have very active organizations capable of providing a lot of services while other county committees are limited and less capable of assisting people. This is problematic for Democrats in areas without fully staffed county officers and with insufficient resources. The previously mentioned party official indicated that occasionally some county committees are not staffed or staffed with incompetent individuals, which handicaps party coordination, planning, and effectiveness in certain areas. He noted, "Until we [ODP] get all of our counties on the same page and filled with good people, we will not be an effective party. They [county committees] are the arms and legs of the party, and how can anyone function without arms and legs?"[304] The inability of Democrats to keep the party fully staffed at all times is an indication of the general weakness and limitations of the ODP. Why are some county committees understaffed? The same individual said, "it is not cool to be a Democrat in Oklahoma, so no one wants to volunteer or there are no volunteers in certain areas."[305] To illustrate, let us consider the case of one of the major urban counties, Tulsa County. Traditionally the

[302] ODP Bylaws Article VI, Section 2; Interviews with Author July 7th & 10th, 2004.
[303] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.
[304] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.
[305] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.

Tulsa County Democratic Party is an active and instrumental organization, filled with more energetic and ambitious party activists than most county committees. The Tulsa County Democratic office has a permanent headquarters, is staffed part-time, open most of the year, and stocked with campaign resources and materials for candidates, members, and the general public. Yet, other county committees have no headquarters and their officers are more difficult to contact. The panhandle of the state – Beaver, Texas, and Cimarron County – has been a particularly difficult place for the party and has not consistently fielded any permanent presence in recent years.[306] The implications for the party in terms of the state legislature are enormous. One past candidate indicated that the county party was the first place he turned to for resources or questions, preferring to deal with the county committee before the state committee for a variety of reasons – accessibility, location, report, helpfulness, and friendliness.[307] The others I spoke to also mentioned county committees, out of all the committees, as one of the first sources or contacts for party support in lieu of the state-level committee in the beginning of their political careers. Without county parties, the ODP stands to lose a critical presence in certain areas of the state; with county parties the ODP gains a critical presence in certain parts of the state.[308]

Congressional District Committees oversee county and precinct committees and are supervised by three officers elected at party conventions. District committees exist primarily to facilitate communication between the state central committee and county committees, act as a representative for county leaders at central committee meetings, and coordinate regional party activities. Their most important function is the coordination

[306] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.
[307] Interview with Author July 7th, 2004.
[308] Interviews with Author July 6th, 7th, 8th, & 9th, 2004

function, because they are in the best position to disburse information to various county leaders about state activities and inform county leaders of activities of surrounding counties within that district.[309] Unlike county committees, district committees are charged only with raising funds but cannot disburse funds. Illustrating their general weakness, the only two mandated actions of district committees are establishing policies of conduct for county committees and issuing letters of reprimand for party violations.[310] Thus, district committees are supervisors for the committees in their district. During election cycles, the district committees primarily focus on helping and distributing resources for congressional candidates and are less likely to assist state legislative candidates. While they could be convenient to individuals lacking active county organizations and county leadership, district committees recently have been limited in activeness, importance, and, consequently, use.[311] In regions with active county organizations, like Tulsa, district committees often take a back seat to the county committee. One member complained he had not seen two of his three district committee members in the last couple years except at state conventions, describing them as "worthless positions you give to people who need to feel important."[312] These committees all fall under the governing framework of the State Central Committee.

The State Central Committee (SCC) is a large body that meets infrequently, so it actually functions as an advisory board to the Party Chairman.[313] A State Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, elected to two-year terms at biennial conventions, formally govern the SCC. SCC membership extends to the officers of the district

[309] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[310] ODP Bylaws Article VI, Section 4.
[311] Interview with Author July 7th, 2004.
[312] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[313] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.

committees, members of the Democratic National Committee, the president of each officially recognized Democratic club, four affirmative action committee members, a representative from the congressional delegation, and an elected representative from the state Senate and state House.[314] The SCC has been given 19 formal charges by the Party Constitution; six of them specifically deal with campaigns: providing political research, assisting nominees, conducting workshops, assisting media campaigns, distributing literature, and collecting voter registration data.[315] The ODP Constitution formally bestows on the SCC several important electoral responsibilities. In reality, though, the SCC typically for goes its campaigning charges and concentrates on three other functions: assisting with party policy, hiring officials, and approving large expenditures.[316] The SCC holds all the same powers and responsibilities of other party committees, but its auditing and budgetary powers are unique and most important. By and large, the SCC is not a powerful or active element of the party because of infrequent meetings.[317]

Party committees at all levels become much more active during biennial conventions held during odd-numbered years. The party committees convert into convention committees, unlike in Texas where the Texas Democratic Party creates temporary organizations to deal with conventions that are distinct from the permanent organization. Precinct committee members automatically become ODP delegates to county conventions. The county conventions include not just officers of the county

[314] ODP Constitution Article VI, Section 3. From 1996-2000 when there was no Democratic Congressmen, this position was left vacant. Also, the caucus representatives are non-voting members of the central committee (Interview 7/08/04).
[315] ODP Constitution Article VII, Section 1.
[316] Interview with Author July 7th, 2004.
[317] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.

committee and precinct representatives, but also state affirmative action committee members, elected Democratic officials of the county, members of the Congressional Districts of the county, and members of the Democratic National Committee residing in the county.[318] The county conventions feed into district conventions and these include county officers and delegates, district officers, and all the state affirmative action committee members, elected Democratic officials of the district, members of the state convention within the district, and members of the Democratic National Committee residing in the district.[319] The state convention is the accumulation of the preceding processes. Here the party rules and officers are decided for the next two years. Interestingly, most conventions spend a lot of time designing party platforms; however, the last three Democratic Party conventions have refrained from articulating a party platform in favor of less permanent party resolutions.[320]

The most important person in the party, during conventions or campaign seasons, is the State Party Chairman. The State Party Chairman is responsible for determining the long-term directions and plans of the Oklahoma Democratic Party, but, more importantly is the chief fundraiser. The day-to-day planning and coordinating of activities is typically left to other individuals. Along these dimensions, the ODP created the position of Executive Director in 1995 and staffed it with former chair Pat Hall; however, a lack of ODP funds has left this position largely vacant. Recent party chairs have simultaneously served as the Executive Director. Jay Parmley did this during his tenure as Party Chairman from 2001 to 2005, and, more recently, Lisa Pryor has done the same.[321] In

[318] ODP Constitution Article 2, Section 3.
[319] ODP Constitution Article 2, Section 4.
[320] Interview with Author July 7th, 2004.
[321] Interviews with Author July 7th, 2004 and May 30th, 2005.

lieu of an executive director, former chairman Jay Parmley divided day-to-day operations into three areas – operations, finances, communications – and found part-time volunteers – Donna Russell, Jason Ziesch, Robert Blunt – to serve as directors over these three areas. In addition to fundraising and long-term planning, the chairman is the public face of the party and is responsible for being the spokesman of the party. In typical Oklahoma Democratic fashion, Jay Parmley often found himself fighting for the public stage against other Democrats, most notably Brad Henry and Brad Carson, and the party split among factions aligning themselves with the governor, the former congressman, and the party chairman. Presently, a headquarters is located in a leased building in Oklahoma City and staffed by a volunteer, part-time staff. While the chair receives much more assistance today than in the past, budget difficulties limit the number, experience, and qualifications of this support staff. Former chairman Parmley consistently had difficulty finding and keeping positions filled with qualified individuals. The number of party committees and absence of full-time party professionals decrease the organizational capabilities and responsiveness of the party, and members continually express dissatisfaction with the overall effectiveness and coherence of the party.[322]

The chairman during the 2002 election cycle was Jay Parmley, who succeeded former legislator Mike Mass in 2001 but did not seek re-election in 2005. It is not uncommon for ODP chairs to be filled by elected Democratic officials, but Parmley broke this pattern. He was previously president of the Young Democrats of Oklahoma and, at the age of 31, became the youngest Democratic Chair in the U.S. Indicating the instability of the Oklahoma Democratic Party, Parmley's four-year tenure was the longest since Betty McElderry's in the 1990s. Despite his youth, energy, and vigorousness, he

[322] Interviews with Author July 7th & 8th, 2004.

clashed consistently with elected officials and was unable to limit sectional rivalries. While many felt he did better than most of his predecessors, he was ultimately unable to solve the financial problems of the party and sealed his fate when he endorsed Howard Dean over the contrary wishes of other Democrats.[323] While other state parties are capable of playing substantial roles and giving significant donations to gubernatorial candidates and congressional candidates, in 2002 the ODP could muster only $2,500 to gubernatorial hopeful Brad Henry in his campaign against Steve Largent. The meager donation further demonstrates the relative weakness of party campaign activities and explains their inability to acquire leverage with lawmakers and other politicians. In fairness, the ongoing financial woes of the party are largely the result of the continued disconnection between the national party and state party. DNC-ODP relations have been problematic for some time, as the DNC does not recognize Oklahoma as being competitive and has written it off. Because Oklahoma is not a financial priority, the ODP must work even harder to meet financial obligations for it and prospective candidates. Nonetheless, Parmley was able to convince the DNC to create a Coordinated Campaign in Oklahoma during the 2002 elections, the first coordinated campaign in Oklahoma since 1990.[324]

The Coordinated Campaign of 2002 was a serious organizational advancement for the Oklahoma Democratic Party. The DNC committed only after the ODP was able to submit a proposal showing it had the organizational capacity and financial support to host, coordinate, and fund a coordinated campaign. In the past a lack of funds hampered the ability of the state party to consistently maintain an active role during state

[323] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004 and May 30th, 2005.
[324] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.

campaigns, but the DNC made a minimal investment and allowed the ODP to take a slightly more active role in 2002. For example, the ODP was able to substantially upgrade and finish its voter file. The ODP began converting the old and raw database into a user-friendly searchable database in 2001, but lacked recent data and technology to make it accessible and user-friendly. Whereas past data requests took days and provided a lot of outdated information, the newer, searchable database had up-to-date activist, volunteer, delegate, and donor information at no cost to candidates. This project, though started by the ODP, was finished with the help from information and funds from the DNC, DCCC, DSCC, DLCC, DGA, and DAGA. This information was available for candidates in 2002 and allowed state legislative candidates to obtain free voter information for the first time.[325]

The Coordinated Campaign allowed the ODP to launch a Native American Vote project, which was a targeted GOTV effort in Native American precincts. The party increased Native American registration in under-registered precincts and worked with county and precinct leaders to provide transportation for voters. Jay Parmley, the ODP, and DNC believed that Native Americans were a valuable but untapped electoral resource that could significantly bolster Democratic candidates. With help from the Coordinated Campaign, the ODP also paid for an "ID call program" to find undecided voters and target them with a 142,000 piece mailing in the last weeks of the campaign. The ID call program also gave precinct and county workers an idea of where to target their door-to-door efforts and literature drops. Finally, issue polling was funded and conducted for candidates. This information revealed which issues were important to voters and where Oklahomans stood on these issues, which allowed Democratic candidates to fashion or

[325] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.

alter existing messages and themes based on this information. The maintenance of a slim Democratic majority in the state legislature possibly indicates that party efforts may have been helpful to state legislative candidates. Party feedback received from those within the ODP suggested that the 2002 Coordinated Campaign was beneficial to many candidates.[326] In contrast, the 2004 Coordinated Campaign effort was wrought with deficiencies; it was poorly coordinated, under-staffed, left the ODP with a monumental debt, and was succumbed by Carson-ODP infighting. The 2004 effort was primarily tied to Brad Carson and his Senatorial campaign, but by most accounts the ODP and Brad Carson were unable to get along. In 2004 Henry-Parmley disagreements were overshadowed by ODP-Carson disagreements.[327] Most importantly, the failure of the 2004 Coordinated Campaign and the concomitant loss of the state House suggests that ODP campaign activities may in fact be consequential.

In the past, factions tied to the competing personalities of various elected officials wrecked the Oklahoma Democratic Party unit. Even during the height of Democratic legislative and electoral strength, the officials fought for control over the party apparatus and the state government. Governors found their agendas conflicting with Senators, and Senators found their agendas conflicting with Representatives, and Representatives found their agenda conflicting with other statewide and non-statewide legislators. Therefore, the Oklahoma Democratic Party became one of the factional disputes and power struggles. Most elected officials ignored the party altogether and focused more on developing their own political networks and promoting their own agendas.

[326] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[327] Interview with Author May 30th, 2005.

Unfortunately, minority status does not seem to have changed this past dynamic. The cumulative result is a party that struggles to efficiently interact with its various committees, various constituents among the electorate, and various elected officials both locally and statewide. Perhaps this may change; Parmley's conflict with Governor Henry, among other things, led to his announcement that he would not seek reelection in 2005. Henry's choice for chair, Lisa Pryor, was elected as Parmley's replacement and possibly presents a new opportunity for better relationships between the party and elected officials. Or, at the very least, it signals the party will be working solely for Brad Henry's reelection in 2006.[328]

Given the number of committees and the multiplicity of interests, it is little wonder that the ODP has difficulty acting as a coherent organization. Nonetheless, it is within this environment and with limited resources that the Oklahoma Democratic Party attempts to fulfill its electoral obligations and provide campaign resources to state candidates. Therefore, we will examine whether the conflicted Oklahoma Democratic Party has played an important role in legislative elections in the state of Oklahoma. But, before we can examine the work of this organization, we must first discuss the structure of the Republican Party of Oklahoma.

The Republican Party of Oklahoma – Organization & Development

The Republican Party of Oklahoma (RPO) is arranged in a hierarchical fashion; at the top is a chairman with governing authority over eleven committees dispersed into four layers. It is an unwieldy structure encumbered by numerous committees and committee officers, making it difficult for any single individual to effectively coordinate and orchestrate organizational activities. The Republican Party of Oklahoma is organized

[328] Interview with Author May 30th, 2005.

similarly to the Oklahoma Democratic Party; however, there are some differentiating nuances such as a smaller executive committee and more county committees. The RPO Chair wields more power than his Democratic counterpart, but the increased number of committees offsets this authority to some degree.

At the lowest level of the party pyramid is the Republican Precinct Committee (RPC), led by an officer corps that consists of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.[329] The RPC is charged with being "the supreme Republican Party authority of each precinct" in order to promote the "welfare" and "affairs" of the party in that precinct.[330] Yet, precinct chairmen positions are often not filled on a regular basis and usually serve at the behest of the Republican County Committee (RCC).[331] Essentially, RPCs are field personnel for county committees, but are granted automatic membership in the RCC along with a State Committeeman, a State Committeewoman, a District Committeeman, and District Committeewoman. RCCs oversee RPCs, which are run by a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. These three, or four, individuals, with the assistance of the state committeeman and state committeewoman, form the Republican County Central Committee (RCCC). The RCCC is the central governing authority of the RCC and is assisted by the Republican County Executive Committee (RCEC). The RCEC is an "advice and consent" body for the RCCC, a relatively large body comprised of the County Chairman, County Vice-Chairman, State Committeeman, State Committeewoman, the District Committeeman, District

[329] All references to party structures come from the "Republican Party of Oklahoma Bylaws" and is hereafter referred to as RPO Bylaws. Party rules declare that the chairman and vice-chairman cannot be the same gender and the same person may simultaneously serve as secretary and treasurer [RPO Bylaws Rule 5(a)].
[330] RPO Bylaws Rule 5(b).
[331] Interview with Author July 10th, 2004.

Committeewoman, President of the County Women's Club, the state Representative whose district encompasses the county, and the state Senator whose district encompasses the county. If the county falls within multiple districts, then the chairman may select which representative serves and the vice chairman may select which senator serves on the committee. Specially appointed members, whose number varies according to the population of the county, further staff the RCEC. If the County exceeds 200,000 in population, then the chairman and vice chairman may appoint 51 members. But if the county is less than 200,000, then the chairman and vice chairman may appoint only 25 members.[332]

RCCs are cumbersome organizations governed by a large RCEC and smaller RCCC, which has the effect of slowing committee responses and preventing them from operating efficiently. Most of the time, however, the officers of the RCCC operate independently from the RCEC and RCC, the one exception being when placing people in precinct election boards. In this case, the RCCC must seek the full approval of the RCEC.[333] Generally, the RCC, at the guidance of the RCCC, recruits candidates for local elections, supports candidates in their county, directs party activities, calls for meetings, distributes party information, coordinates precinct committee activities, organizes county fundraisers, and serves as a state party liaison for party members, candidates, and officials. Though convoluted in structure, the RCCs are generally the more active committee in the RPO.[334]

---

[332] If the two do not agree on the 51, then rules further stipulate that the Chair appoints 26 and the Vice Chair appoints 25. In the case of 25, then rules further stipulate that the Chair appoints 13 and the Vice Chair appoints 12 [RPO Bylaws Rule 7(a)].
[333] RPO Bylaws Rule 8(b).
[334] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

Overseeing the operation of the RCC are district committees, known as the Republican Congressional Committees, divided according to Oklahoma's five congressional districts. The primary purposes of the district committees (RDC) are to hold and govern the district conventions during convention years and to direct, orchestrate, and supervise the activities of the RCCs during non-convention years. Nevertheless, most RCCs operate autonomously from the RDCs, which do not actually perform many active party functions.[335] RDCs are composed of two members (one man, one woman) from every county in the district in addition to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of each county. Chairman and Vice Chairman (also not of the same sex) govern the RDCs with the assistance of a secretary and treasurer. The RDCs are supposed to act as liaisons between the State Central Committee and the Republican County Committee, but the current Party Chairman, Gary Jones, has largely done the communicating with the county chairs himself.[336] Republican chairmen have always encouraged an active county committee, which has the further effect of reducing the general worth and influence of district committees. Therefore, the real center of the party is found in the RCCs and not the RDCs.[337] The intent for RCCs to be the focal point is reinforced by RPO rules requiring that each county operate a fully-staffed headquarters at a minimum of 30 hours per week for 40 weeks during non-election years and 55 hours per week during election years.[338] These demands do not exist in the Democratic Party and are not required by any other committee of the RPO. Since RCCs are required to be more visible, they actually serve as the real centers of the state party. Unfortunately for

[335] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.
[336] Interview with Author July 10th & 17th, 2004.
[337] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[338] RPO Bylaws Rule 6(k).

the RDCs, they sit in an awkward and limited position within the party. RDCs could potentially be useful by coordinating county activities in rural areas that have little contact with the state or weak leadership. Generally speaking, they do not do much as an organization, though individual members are not uncommonly and personally politically active individuals.[339]

At the top of the Republican Party of Oklahoma pyramid sits the Republican State Committee (RSC), which is advised by a State Executive Committee (SES) and run by a Party Chairman. The permanent officers of the RSC are the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant State Treasurer, and General Counsel. The officers are advised by the (SES), composed of a chairman, vice chairman, each district committeeman and committeewoman, ten members from the state at large, the Governor, President of the Federation of Women, President of Young Republicans, President of Teen-Age Republicans, the chair of each county, the National Committeeman and Committeewoman, and the floor leaders of the Oklahoma Legislature. Because of its size, the SES is primarily an advisory committee and meets infrequently. Its most common, and largely only, function is approving larger party expenditures.[340] The party also has a State Central Committee (SCC) with only four members – the Chairman, Vice Chairman, National Committeeman, and National Committeewoman. The SCC is limited to performing only functions prescribed by the SES. Obviously, the state-level bureaucracy of the RPO is a tad unwieldy.

While some of the important policy decisions and campaign strategies of the party are set by the chairman in conjunction with the SES, the chairman usually operates

[339] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.
[340] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

independently from this committee. The chairman generally determines the agenda of the party, sets the activities of the party, makes public statements about party direction and platforms, and raises money for the party. He will occasionally solicit the SEC for advice or ideas, but the SES is largely an advisory board whose symbolic membership serves to placate other notable Republicans wishing to influence the party platform or campaign activities. The SES also primarily organizes the next convention and prepares the operating budget of the party. When the chairman needs assistance with daily operations, he may create positions as deemed necessary. For example, the current chair, Gary Jones, created the position of State Committee Liaison/ Project Coordinator and filled it with Jay Mandracia. The chairman is primarily preoccupied with fundraising and party communications, but the Project Coordinator frees chairman Jones from making sure that day-to-day administrative operations, plans, or details are carried out or arranged.[341] Also assisting the chair are three permanent standing committees – State Finance Committee, Budget Committee, and Auditing Committee – staffed by another 118 people. These committees focus on the financial activities of the party by making sure that budgetary commitments are being met and funds are properly spent. Despite the hierarchical appearance of RPO, it is notoriously weak at the state level because of its size. Historically, RPO chairmen operate independently in order to be more efficient and concentrate more on fundraising.[342]

Fundraising has become a mixed blessing. McCain-Feingold has made it much more difficult for the RPO to raise funds.[343] In recent years, though, the RPO has not had to be the strongest party financial source because of the presence of senior and safe

[341] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.
[342] Interview with Author July 12th & 17th, 2004.
[343] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

Republican Senators, Inhofe and Nickels. Senator Nickles has been particularly active in state legislative elections, creating the Republican Majority Fund specifically to raise money for and disperse money to Republican state legislative candidates (Hardt 2002). Not to be outdone, Nickles' Fund for Oklahoma PAC and J.C. Watts' GROW PAC also donate heavily to the RPO and Republican candidates.[344] While this helps overall Republican growth, it forces the RPO chairman to compete for limited funds. Occasionally, these funds also come with strings attached. For example, former Governor Keating attempted numerous times to exert his influence on RPO activities by leveraging his war chest, occasionally causing conflicts with other elected officials and RPO leaders.[345] While McCain-Feingold has reduced the financial role of the RNC within Oklahoma, the RPO has been at odds with RNC regarding the proper use of funds. In the 2004 election to replace the retiring Nickels, the RNC wanted an RPO endorsement of its candidate before the primaries; however, the RPO refused to endorse any candidate in favor of letting Oklahoma Republicans make the decision. On top of that, the RPO and RNC were at odds regarding who should be the official Republican nominee. The RNC felt it had earned the right to direct, control, or otherwise influence RPO activities.[346]

The examples shows that the Republican Party of Oklahoma definitely takes an interest in Oklahoma campaigns, but it is finding itself caught in turf wars with other elected officials and many of its own members. Conventions have also become problematic because religious fundamentalists are attempting to exert influence at the expense of more non-fundamentalist, fiscal conservatives. Lately, religious

[344] National Institute on Money in State Politics, Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.
[345] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.
[346] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

fundamentalists have been winning more of the battles and placing their preferred themes into the party platform (Bednar and Hertzke 1995). Democrats avoid these battles by eliminating the party platform altogether.[347] Today, the Republican Party finds itself in a similar position of the Democrats in earlier years, reconciling the demands of various factions within the party and determining the proper use of party resources. Although there is no doubt that Gary Jones is definitely the director of party operations and is an improving fundraiser, his personality is relatively bland, and he lacks the charisma of other notable Republicans. Chairman Jones has governed like his predecessors, emphasizing grassroots activities, concentrating on candidate recruitment and development, and encouraging active county organizations while reconciling the competing strands of the economic conservatives and the religious fundamentalists.[348]

Chairman Jones' emphasis on grassroots development and building intra-party relations is consistent with previous leaders like Henry Bellmon and Quineta Wylie. Wylie modeled her strategy after former RNC Chairman Haley Barbour and did much to advance the relationship between the RPO and the RNC. According to Hale and Kean, Wylie referred to the RNC as " a bunch of snobbish children" and had to work to get the closed-door, elitist party into Oklahoma in spite of clear and obvious pro-Republican tendencies (1996, 262). Not only did Wylie improve the relationship between the RNC and RPO, she also concentrated on improving the relationship between the state party and county committees. Many rural Republican county committees viewed Tulsa County and Oklahoma City County as "moneybags" or "country club Republicans" (Hale and Kean 1996). Granted, the "moneybags" were the core party supporters and were financially

[347] Interview with Author July 7th, 2004.
[348] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

driving the party, but Oklahoma's populist tendencies dictate that successful parties retain a rural element because neither party can win statewide without rural votes. Wylie worked hard to cultivate rural-urban relationships in order to unify Republicans, a necessary ingredient for winning. Her results paid off; as Hale and Kean write, the "more likely explanation of the changing relationships is the Republicans Party's successes in the 1990s in state and local elections in areas outside of Oklahoma City and Tulsa" (1996, 262). Chairman Jones has paid attention to the rural and urban elements of the party and consciously kept this tension in mind when making party decisions. During his tenure, in fact, he met and continues to meet or talk regularly with every county chairman. On these journeys, he has made a point to meet as many people and prospective candidates as possible because "the party is out there."[349]

Chairman Jones has also made it a point to physically meet with prospective candidates throughout Oklahoma, encourage them to run for office, insure that every state legislative district has a Republican candidate, get out the vote in "non-traditional" counties, and, more recently, increase Republican registration.[350] This is reminiscent of Bellmon's "Operation Countdown" of the 1960s, an aggressive recruiting strategy and voter mobilization attempt that took him to various regions in Oklahoma, including Stipe-ruled "Little Dixie" in the southeast corner of the state. Bellmon stressed grassroots activism out of necessity because he realized his campaign could not win solely by relying on Republicans in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. He also felt that Republican success could not occur without a permanent, fully staffed party infrastructure in place to support him and other local candidates. Therefore, county organizations and volunteer

[349] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.
[350] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

lists were created, even in areas where the GOP had never existed. While Bellmon himself may have enjoyed state popularity, he realistically understood that party developments would be fleeting and isolated if the party did not have volunteers to work with him and other candidates throughout the state. And, the party had no chance of becoming a majority party if it did not begin to contest elections and field full slates of candidates (Kirkpatrick et al 1977, Hale and Kean 1999, Gaddie and Copeland 2003).

Chairman Jones is clearly a grassroots-oriented leader who is very conscious about the fragile relationships between rural-urban committees and the RNC. Jones is not much of an innovator, and his leadership is not as similar to former chair Tom Cole. Tom Cole fused technological innovation with grassroots techniques, modernizing the party in technological and financial terms. Cole incorporated targeted direct-mail fundraising techniques perfected by the RSCC and RCCC to increase financial support to candidates and the party. Cole's connections with the RNC, RSCC, and RCCC secured access to voter, donor, and precinct information in order to create a database for candidates and the party. The RPO used this information to accurately target voters outside of traditional Republican counties and make mobilization efforts more efficient. The party also used this information to pinpoint voter registration and voter re-registration efforts. Tom Cole's brief tenure was remarkably forward thinking for Oklahoma party chairs.[351] The cumulated result of the efforts of Bellmon, Cole, and Wylie came to fruition in 1996, when Republicans fielded more candidates than Democrats (Hale and Kean 1996).

Although Jones is perhaps less of an innovator than Cole or Wylie, he recognizes the need to encourage active county committees, recruit candidates, maintain accurate

[351] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

databases, and supply volunteers lists to support candidates in every county in Oklahoma. The RPO has also utilized campaign workshops and produced campaign manuals for local candidates. The party reserves funds specifically for state legislative candidates during every cycle. The party continues to focus on voter registration, even setting a quota during each election cycle. Chairman Jones has kept the RPO involved in parallel campaigns, making more resources available for candidates, increasing party-candidates' coordination, and preserving RNC-RPO relationships. While Chairman Jones is not without his shortcomings, he has been more successful than past chairmen like Clinton Key and Chad Alexander.[352]

In the past, party success has had the effect of muting many of the factions that traditionally divide large parties. Now, the RPO's majority status has brought it face-to-face with internal ideological schisms and external divergent electoral directions by state politicians. Many of the problems facing the Republican Party in Texas and Louisiana – conflicts between politicians and chairmen, conflicts between fiscal conservatives and religious conservatives – have appeared in Oklahoma as well. According to Hale and Kean, "Wylie said that for the first time the Republicans have had to 'think like a majority party'" (1996, 262). Ironically, the exact same words were spoken by the party official that I spoke to as well. When asked what the party needs become more successful in the future, among other things, this individual said, "We have to start thinking like a majority party…we cannot continue to make rookie mistakes, the same mistakes, or succumb to internal squabbles. If we do this right, we stand to win almost all of the elections."[353] Another former party official said, "Of course we need more

[352] Interviews with Author July 12th & 17th, 2004.
[353] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

money, that is an obvious solution. What we really cannot afford to do is fight with ourselves or operate without a clear, precise campaign plan like 2002. Or we will stall again like in 2002."[354] These comments are poignant and were shared by others as well. The Republican Party of Oklahoma takes an obvious interest in state legislative elections, participates in state legislative elections, and is increasing its campaign-related activities over previous years. Like in Louisiana and Texas, one senses that the Republican Party of Oklahoma often takes the leading edge in campaign activities, with the Oklahoma Democratic Party following its lead. Nevertheless, the literature and interviews suggest that the state parties of Oklahoma are more coordinated and organized than in the past – budgets are larger, staffs are present, and leadership has been stable. Consequently, the Republican Party of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Democratic Party have become more active in campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections. The substantial coordination of services with candidates by the party organizations has led to various levels of party success. Therefore, the task now is to determine if the organizational development of party and the concomitant incorporation of campaign services are deemed important to candidates campaigning for state legislative offices in the state of Oklahoma.

Data Collection

Since the organizational history of the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma largely has been ignored, there is not much extensive knowledge or data readily available describing the importance of state political party services in state legislative elections in Oklahoma. As a whole, we know that the

[354] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

Republican Party of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Democratic Party have come a long way; they are financially stronger, have a permanent headquarters, hold regular party meetings, and are more active year round than in the past. Yet, this does very little to inform us regarding the present relationship between these actors at the state level during campaigns. Therefore, in order to investigate the importance of their services in the realm campaign finance, candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization, a questionnaire was mailed to all qualified candidates for the state legislature who faced major party opposition during the 2002 electoral cycle.

The survey prompted them to recall the nature of assistance they received from state party organizations, legislative and national affiliates, PACs, interest groups, unions, and family and friends. The questionnaires were mailed out three times from January to June of 2004, for a total response rate of 74%. Table 4.1 shows the survey sample for Oklahoma is comparable to the actual population of candidates, with a slight overrepresentation of Democrats. As in Texas and Louisiana, the return rate among state Senate candidates was low, as was the eligible pool; so, only the responses of House candidates were utilized in this analysis to avoid any unintentional contamination of the data. In addition to the surveys, 11 interviews were conducted with past and present party officials and 9 interviews were conducted with past and present legislative candidates during July and August of 2004. The following section summarizes the data regarding the importance of the Republican Party of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Democratic Party in elections for the Oklahoma House of Representatives during the 2002 election cycle.

Table 4.1: Survey Response Rate by Groups as Compared to Eligible Population

OK	# Eligible	%	# Surveyed	%
Democrats	50	50%	39	53%
Republicans	50	50%	35	47%
Incumbents	39	39%	28	38%
Challengers	39	39%	29	39%
Open seats	22	22%	17	23%
Winners	50	50%	38	51%
Losers	50	50%	36	49%
N	100		74	74%

Candidate Recruitment

As mentioned in the previous two chapters, no other party activity in the election process is probably as tough to discern as the area of candidate recruitment. The reason for this is primarily three-fold: first, candidate recruitment often occurs behind the scenes and is often invisible to the candidate himself; second, recruitment is a complicated process that involves more than simply asking people to run for office; third, it is often difficult to distinguish the level of the party organization involved in the process or whether the recruitment is on behalf of individuals who happen to be party members or individuals on behalf of the party. On the first difficulty, candidate recruitment occurs behind the scenes and is often invisible to the candidates themselves. While candidates are certainly aware of the recruiting that may occur before them, some candidates are only slightly cognizant, if not altogether wholly unaware, of the effects that party activity may have had on their decision to run because of activities occurring behind the scenes. On the second difficulty, party recruitment is a complicated process that involves more than simply asking people to run for office. It was also mentioned in the second chapter that candidate recruitment takes multiple, complex forms: passive recruitment, active

recruitment, and negative recruitment. On the final difficulty of recruitment, candidates occasionally fail to draw distinctions between whether the recruitment is on behalf of individuals who happen to be party members and whether the recruitment is by individuals on behalf of the party (Herrnson 1988).

Interviews with members of both parties in Oklahoma provide examples of the following forms of recruitment, though to differing degrees. For Democrats, party officials indicated that state legislative recruiting is largely in the hands of individual county members, though occasionally chairman Parmley personally recruited candidates himself. Recruitment by Parmley was relatively rare because of the numerous activities requiring his attention; however, it was not uncommon to hear Parmley regularly emphasize the importance of candidate recruitment at meetings, party events, and other speaking engagements. He actively encouraged state, district, and county committees to keep their eyes out for prospective candidates for all elections. In 2002, Chairman Parmley provided encouragement to several prospective candidates in what one person called "reassurance recruiting." "Reassurance recruiting" occurs two ways. First, candidates approach the party for reassurance, tantamount to a "party blessing," that their candidacy would be supported or approved by the party. This does not happen that often. The second and more common form of "reassurance recruiting" is when party officials approach prospective candidates indicating party approval for their candidacy, bolstering their possible competitiveness, and offering party or individual services if they should decide to run. "Reassurance recruiting" is an example of active party recruiting.[355] Nonetheless, Democratic chairmen generally rely on their county organizations to do most state legislative recruiting, and Democratic county organizations have the authority

[355] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.

to recruit in the name of the party if the county officer is doing the recruiting. "They [state leadership] expect us to do this," claims one former county party official, "and we do."[356]

Interviews suggested that Democratic county-level recruitment for state legislative positions vary according to two dominant characteristics: the activeness of county leaders and presence of county networks. A county committee with active leadership tends to participate in more campaign functions, recruiting candidates being one of these functions. Also, county leaders who recruit also tend to have networks set up; they have connections within the area, keep up with behind-the-scenes political maneuvering, and maintain mental lists of prospective or interested candidates.[357] Unfortunately, some feel the party does not have as many of these individuals as they would like and, subsequently, recruiting does not occur as often.[358] One notable exception is the Tulsa County Democratic Party, a particularly active committee that often solicits candidates for various offices ranging from the First Congressional District to city offices. The Tulsa County Democratic Party appears to be the exception and not the rule, as most county committees do not approach their level of activism or sophistication because they lack the resources and connections. Many rural county committees are less professional, less sophisticated, less experienced, and less capable of inserting themselves into state legislative politics. Therefore, if and when they recruit, they tend to concentrate on city-level elections more so than multi-county elections.[359] The nature of the recruiting appears to be mostly direct and active, though occasionally

[356] Interview with Author July 15th, 2004.
[357] Interview with Author July 16th, 2004.
[358] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[359] Interview with Author July 7th, 2004.

involves some maneuvering behind the scenes. One official notes, "Candidates will occasionally come to you, wondering if anyone else is planning on running or if any resources are available if they should run…I don't think that happens very often and I think, most of the time, they will make their decision irregardless [*sic*] of what you tell them."[360] Thus, county party officials occasionally serve as information warehouses for prospective candidates considering running for office, dispensing information about the political landscape, and identifying opportunities of support. On negative recruitment, none of the present party officials suggested they have ever blatantly told people not to run, but have had to occasionally suggest to potential candidates "maybe next time will better" or "have you considered running for this other office."[361] Interviews indicate that the state central committee and district committee officers are usually occupied with other races and other issues, and generally prefer county committees take the lead with candidate recruitment for more local races. Of the four Democratic candidates I spoke to, only one indicated that he went to the party before a decision was made in order to determine if any other prominent individuals, to the best of the party's knowledge, were running for office and identifying resources at the party's disposal.[362]

The Republican Party of Oklahoma emphasizes recruiting by all committees for all elections, including state legislative offices. One official suggested that chairman Gary Jones has made legislative recruiting a bigger priority during his tenure than former chair Chad Alexander, and that it is not uncommon to see Jones himself encouraging people to run for the state legislature. One person said, "It irks him to see a Democrat, no matter how safe, not have to run against anyone. I never got the impression that Chad

[360] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.
[361] Interview with Author July 15th, 2004.
[362] Interview with Author July 6th, 2004.

[Alexander] was as concerned."[363] Nevertheless, another official conceded that state legislative races are difficult for the RPO because the party has to compete with so many other groups. "Recruiting is important to the party and I think we can be important to some candidates," he replied to my question, "but with so many other people around [the candidates], I doubt they find us critical to their efforts. I would be surprised if many thought of us at all."[364] State-level committees do not generally take a leading role in recruiting, but instead rely on county committees. Like the ODP, different county committees are successful to varying degrees. Says one individual, "The county leaders are expected to know who the best local prospects are, not so much [the state party chair]…Some [county chairs] do it well, others don't do it at almost of them not as much as they probably should." In terms of whether the recruiting is active, passive, or negative, the same individual answered "all the above."[365]

One story was particularly interesting. One interviewed candidate actually recounted that the chairman of the party and head of the House Caucus recruited him to run against a Democratic incumbent after being convinced that the incumbent was vulnerable based on previous election results. He was further encouraged by the prospect of campaign assistance; however, this candidate became dissatisfied. After being recruited, he felt the party did not deliver the promised resources after encountering fundraising problems. Asked if he would have considered running anyway, the candidate answered, "Perhaps, but the promise of party incentives and party support made running a more attractive option." This candidate received a targeted mailing, a small financial donation to offset the cost of the mailing, and was invited to a regional fundraiser netting

[363] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[364] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.
[365] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

"only a couple thousand dollars."[366] When recounting the story to a party official, the official verified the candidate's account but indicated this was the exception and not the rule. When asked about the promise of resources, he clarified that it is not rare for the party to promise resources to prospective candidates, but candidates often misunderstand what is meant by the promise. "Sometimes they are offered resources, but interpret this to mean that we will do everything for them. They still have to do the work," he said.[367] He further indicated that it is completely inappropriate for county leaders to promise state resources without the consent of party leadership, but occasionally situations and contexts change the nature of available resources and support.

Interviews revealed another recruiting pattern that occurs in both parties in Oklahoma. In both parties, prospective candidates meet party activists and introduce themselves at party events, rallies, and conventions. In this way, party officials are not actively recruiting, but party events become ways for prospective candidates to gauge the possibility of a campaign or assess the status of a particular district. Therefore, party events are used to facilitate electoral ambitions. By meeting party leadership, activists, and party-allied groups, the individuals become exposed to the party network and gain knowledge about what it takes to run for office or garner support for office. As they learn about candidate training seminars, fundraising seminars, mass media services, and meet potential donors, this exposure and involvement propels individuals to consider candidacies.[368] This occurs fairly frequently in both parties.

On the final difficulty of recruitment, candidates occasionally fail to draw distinctions between whether the recruitment is on behalf of individuals who happen to

[366] Interview with Author July 16th, 2004.
[367] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.
[368] Interviews with Author July 7th & 17th, 2004.

be party members or whether the recruitment is by individuals on behalf of the party. Are candidates always capable of knowing if an individual is recruiting them as an individual who also doubles as a ranking member within the party or if an individual is recruiting as a party representative with the permission to use the party name as the recruiter? Interviews with party officials in both parties indicate they are not too concerned about this distinction. Interviews also indicate that when individual party officers recruit, they are allowed by rules to use the party name. In the end, several speculated that most party officials are recruiting people not necessarily in the name of the party or as a symbol of the party, but as a friend or acquaintance that happens to be a party official.[369]

To obtain answers regarding the importance of various groups on the decision to run, all surveyed candidates were asked the following question, "How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office?"[370] The following tables present the results (Table 4.2 & Table 4.3). Consistent with other investigations about why and how people seek office, this survey finds that the decision to run for the Oklahoma House of Representatives is not different from other states and races in that it is a highly personal decision (Gaddie 2004). Generally, when candidates do acknowledge other groups as being influential, the single most cited group is friends and family. Nearly 98% of the candidates surveyed in Oklahoma cite friends and family as being important, with mean scores ranging from 2.50 to 5.00 (moderately to extremely important). The overall mean score for friends and family is even higher

[369] Interviews with Author July 8th & 17th, 2004.
[370] Answer choices for this question and all other questions in this analysis were (5) extremely important, (4) very important, (3) moderately important, (2) slightly important, (1) not important. Thus, a 5.0 is the highest possible score and a 1.0 is the lowest possible score.

Table 4.2: How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.50	4.20	5.00	4.09	4.25	4.00	3.00	2.50	3.83	4.56	4.33	5.00	4.06	3.92	4.33	3.00	2.71	3.40
County	2.25	2.00	2.67	1.91	2.00	1.86	1.31	1.10	1.67	2.11	1.67	3.00	1.83	1.50	2.50	1.33	1.14	1.60
District	1.63	1.80	1.33	1.45	1.50	1.43	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.56	1.67	1.33	1.33	1.17	1.67	1.17	1.14	1.20
State	2.00	2.20	1.67	1.55	1.50	1.57	1.13	1.10	1.17	1.89	1.83	2.00	1.67	1.33	2.33	1.42	1.14	1.80
LCCs	1.63	1.40	2.00	1.27	1.25	1.29	1.63	1.50	1.83	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.17	1.08	1.33	1.75	1.57	2.00
National	1.25	1.20	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.19	1.10	1.33	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.08	1.00	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.39	1.17	1.83	1.00	1.00	1.00
IGs	1.75	1.60	2.00	1.36	1.00	1.57	1.25	1.20	1.33	1.89	1.83	2.00	1.28	1.17	1.50	1.17	1.14	1.20
PACs	1.50	1.20	2.00	1.18	1.00	1.29	1.44	1.20	1.83	1.67	1.50	2.00	1.22	1.00	1.67	1.50	1.43	1.60
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Party X Competitiveness $F = 2.295$, $p < .029$; Party $F = 2.653$, $p < .013$; Competition $F = 1.602$ $p < .138$ Seat Type $F = 2.832$, $p < .000$

when noncompetitive incumbents are excluded from the analysis, a group that generally did not seek anyone's input in their re-election decision.[371] Regardless of party, seat type, and competitiveness, all candidates significantly consider friends and family to have been the single most influential group above all the other groups in terms of importance in their decision to run for office.[372] The assessment of party importance is quite the opposite.

Table 4.3: How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your decision to run for office?

	Party		Position			Competitiveness	
	Democrat	Republican	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat	C	N-C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.85	3.69	3.00	4.07	4.53	4.13	3.52
County	1.74	1.71	1.32	1.86	2.18	2.10	1.48
District	1.33	1.34	1.14	1.38	1.59	1.40	1.30
State	1.64	1.46	1.25	1.62	1.94	1.73	1.43
LCCs	1.41	1.51	1.68	1.21	1.53	1.63	1.34
National	1.10	1.14	1.14	1.03	1.24	1.20	1.07
Union	1.21	1.00	1.00	1.24	1.06	1.20	1.05
IGs	1.38	1.40	1.21	1.31	1.82	1.53	1.30
PACs	1.41	1.37	1.46	1.21	1.59	1.67	1.20
N	39	35	28	29	17	30	44

Whereas 98% rely on friends and family, only 26% of the candidates indicate that the party was of any importance in their decision to run. In the few cases where the party did actively recruit, a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) indicates that candidate status and competitiveness were significant predictors of how much attention candidates received from the state political party. Table 4.3 shows that competitive open-seat candidates and competitive challengers significantly notice party recruitment before

[371] $t = 2.536$, $p < .013$.
[372] $t = 13.993$, $p < .000$.

incumbents, who generally ignored party efforts or were not recipients of their recruiting efforts.[373] The parties, therefore, appear strategic in recruiting. Overall, candidates noticed the Oklahoma Democratic Party more than the Republican Party of Oklahoma, as the mean scores for the ODP are slightly higher than the RPO at both the state (1.64 versus 1.46) and county level (1.74 versus 1.71). The higher scores for county-level organizations over state-level organizations suggest county-level committees may be more influential than state-level committees, though the difference is not statistically significant. District committees in both parties were not at all a factor in recruitment (1.33, 1.34). Nonetheless, the mean scores for party committees are very low, signifying that overall party recruitment is relatively unimportant to candidates. Interestingly enough, the mean scores for all other groups are also so low that it becomes clear that the decision to run for state legislative office in Oklahoma is incredibly personal and largely conducted without any outside consideration or influence. Besides friends and family, groups do not play large roles in the decision to run for state legislative office in Oklahoma.

Incumbents in both parties generally do not report receiving much attention from outside groups when determining whether to seek reelection. When outside groups do enter into the decision-making matrix, some incumbents indicate that legislative campaign committees play some role, albeit minor. Democratic incumbents indicate the Oklahoma House Democratic Caucus (OHDC, 1.72) was more influential than either PACs (1.50) or the ODP's state-level committee (1.42). Even when accounting for noncompetitive incumbents, the same pattern exists. Like Democratic incumbents, Republican incumbents found the Republican State House Caucus (RSHC, 1.63) the most

[373] County $t = 2.268$, $p < .024$.; State county $t = 1.934$, $p < .057$.

important outside group, almost significantly more important than county-level committees (1.31).[374] After removing noncompetitive incumbents, there is some evidence that political action committees (1.83, 1.60) may have played a minor role in selective instances. Outside of the LCCs, incumbents do not notice the recruitment of outside groups. At the very least, the ODP and RPO are not effective recruiting incumbents.

Challengers indicate the RPO and ODP played a more noticeable role in their decision to run for office than incumbents, with some differences between the ODP and RPO. First, it should be pointed out that challengers, like incumbents, generally do not find outside groups either effective or important in determining whether to seek office. Friends and family (4.07) remain significantly more important than all other groups, and other groups generally do not receive mean scores that exceed "slightly important."[375] Second, when not being recruited by friends and family, challengers noticed county-level party committee efforts (1.86) significantly more than non-party recruiting efforts (1.31).[376] Among Democrats, the incredibly low scores of noncompetitive challengers and the fact that noncompetitive challengers outnumber competitive challengers lower the overall mean score. Removing noncompetitive challengers, county-level committees (2.50) and state-level committees (2.33) emerge as slightly important recruiters to Democratic challengers. County-level committees (1.86) and state-level committees (1.57) did not similarly impress competitive Republican challengers. While overall Republican county-level committees were marginally more important than Democratic county-level committees, the ODP left a larger impact among competitive Democratic

[374] $t = 2.070$, $p < .056$.
[375] $t = 8.347$, $p < .000$.
[376] $t = 2.242$, $p < .033$.

challengers. In the case of competitive Democratic challengers, party recruitment at the county level was slightly important. Meanwhile, Republican Party efforts were not at all important.

Finally, there is more variety observed among open-seat candidates. Open-seat candidates in both parties received more attention from more groups than challengers and incumbents. Surprisingly, county-level party committees were slightly important in influencing open-seat candidates in their decision to run for office, with Republican county-level committees (2.25) doing better than Democratic county-level committees (2.11). Simultaneously, Republican state-level committees (2.00) were slightly more effective and more important than the ODP's state-level committee (1.89), while neither party's district-level committees played much of a role (1.56, 1.63). The ODP and RPO exceed LCCs, interest groups, and PACs in relative importance. Democratic and Republican open-seat candidates received some marginal attention from interest groups (1.89, 1.75), but these groups do not exceed county-level committees in importance. Competitive Republican open-seat candidates also indicated receiving some recruitment by the RSHC (1.63). Open-seat candidates find the decision to run highly personal but are subject to more attention from more groups than the other types of candidates. One group that did play a slightly important role was the county-level committees of the RPO and ODP.

Finally, there is a disparity in the evaluations of competitive and noncompetitive candidates. Not surprisingly, competitive candidates acknowledge more recruiting efforts by groups than noncompetitive candidates. Among these groups, competitive candidates significantly noticed county-level party committee recruitment (2.10) more

than noncompetitive candidates.[377] Political parties, and other groups, are strategic in their evaluations of candidates and when pursuing candidates to run for elections.

In Oklahoma, the decision to seek a state legislative office is a personal decision. Consistent with other studies and states, candidates generally rely on their friends and family to help them decide (Hogan 2002, Francia et al 2003, Gaddie 2004). Although outside groups attempt to shape and influence the prospective field, generally speaking these efforts, from the vantage point of the candidates, are relatively weak, largely ineffective, and not very important. Overall, the RPO and ODP do not appear important, but further analysis of the numbers reveals that competitive Democratic challengers, Democratic open-seat candidates, and Republican open-seat candidates did find county-level committees slightly important in their decision to run for the state legislature. Incumbents find legislative party organizations far more consequential, but these groups did little for challengers and open-seat candidates. Generally speaking, the groups closest to the candidate in geographical and personal proximity are more important than other groups. Since local candidates are removed geographically from state-level committees, it is logical for them to lack influence. Only 26% of the candidates in this study reported any contact with state-level committees and only 36% reported any contact with the county-level committees. Parties, when they do recruit, do so selectively.

Campaign Management

In Chapters Two and Three, I discussed how campaigning has become increasingly complicated because campaigns are more expensive, campaign finance laws are more complex, technology is becoming more sophisticated, and electorates are rapidly changing (Francia et al. 2003). Campaigns must become more precise if they are

[377] $t = 2.171$, $p < .033$.

to be successful, and such precision requires increased levels of technical knowledge that are not necessarily nor automatically possessed by local candidates. At the federal level, the parties have converted themselves into campaign management networks that connect candidates to consultants and pay-for professionals, with some workshops interspersed throughout the year designed to recommend strategies, tactics, and management techniques (Aldrich 1995, Herrnson 2004). Mentioning national parties is important because they have contributed to the strengthening of the state parties and have passed down many of the techniques and lessons learned at the national level to state parties for statewide elections (Appleton and Ward 1994). Modeling themselves after the national committees, state parties often provide experience, offer advice, suggest tactical decisions, assist with the hiring and training of campaign staff, and recommend legal, polling, campaign management, fundraising, media communications, and get-out-the-vote professionals (Francia et al 2003, Monroe 2001, Frendreis et al. 1990, Gibson and Scarrow 1993, Thurber and Nelson 2000). Despite this trend, state legislative candidates still like to control their campaigns and are generally reluctant to yield control to other people, especially parties (Kolodny 2000). Parties occasionally attempt to handle the responsibility of management for campaigns, but clearly they are better suited to connecting candidates to political, polling, and management consultants and other professionals that can provide management services. As we will see, Oklahoma's political parties and campaigns have not become as sophisticated as other states.

Oklahoma elections have grown more challenging with changing finance laws, rising campaign costs, and evolving districts characteristics. Nonetheless, relatively speaking, state legislative elections remain simpler than other statewide campaigns and

state legislative campaigns in other states. With an average of less than 34,000 people per district, Oklahoma's legislative districts are still relatively homogeneous, compact, and small in terms of population. Candidates for state legislature in Oklahoma certainly do not have to deal with the obstacles and complexities of statewide and national candidates. While the state contains only 3.4 million people, it is still diverse enough to make it difficult for any single official in Oklahoma City to know what is best for 101 legislative districts spread across 77 different counties. While this stymies party development in the realm of campaign management, it has not stopped the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma from developing ways to assist candidates with management, strategies, and professionals.

National parties and national campaign committees have contributed to the strengthening of the state parties by passing down many of the techniques and lessons learned at the national level. Under Haley Barbour, the RNC improved state-national relations and shared information, technology, and strategies consistent with his grassroots philosophy. One particular beneficiary of this strategy was the Republican Party of Oklahoma (Hale and Kean 1996). Beginning in the early 1990s with Tom Cole to the present day with Gary Jones, the Oklahoma Democratic Party has taken an increased interest in the formulation of campaign strategies and campaign management. For example, in 2002 the RPO hosted a candidate training school for successful primary candidates and their campaign managers to educate and sharpen candidates' knowledge of the basics of campaigning. Prior to attendance, all candidates and their campaign managers were required to formulate and bring a campaign portfolio containing their campaign outline, available resources, and financial information. The RPO critiqued

these portfolios and made suggestions for improvement. Workshop topics ranged from personnel management strategies to campaign ethics. The model used by Republicans in Oklahoma was remarkably similar to the one described in Texas because candidates were also given tips on how to research opponents, how to develop issue positions, how to recruit volunteers, how to issue press releases, how to contact media, what type of phone banks or mailings to use, how to study voting/polling patterns to target resources, and where to gather precinct information. Furthermore, particular consultants were recommended for candidates. Interestingly, county and district committee members were also encouraged to attend in order to educate them so that they may be more useful to other or future candidates. Approximately two dozen county committee officers did indeed attend.[378]

While much of the information at the workshops may have already been known, in the end the purpose of the seminars was to strengthen campaigns by identifying weaknesses. One official said, "There is no cookie cutter, one size fits all model, but successful campaigns do have common elements."[379] The individual further stressed that the state party does not try to impose its authority on candidates and their campaigns, but does try to provide advice regarding the intricacies of campaigning and the common attributes of successful campaigns. He suggested there was not much more the RPO could do in this area, likening this task to "herding cats" because "individual candidates all have their own idea of the best way and do not like being told what to do."[380] He described these activities as necessary, saying, "You would be alarmed at how much

[378] Interviews with Author July 17th, 2004.
[379] Interviews with Author July 17th, 2004.
[380] Interviews with Author July 17th, 2004.

these people do not know [about campaigning]."[381] Outside of the campaign school there was not much else specifically orchestrated by the RPO for state legislative campaigns in the area of campaign management. The RPO, at the state, district, and county level, did make itself available for candidates if they had any questions.

The ODP performed some of the same functions but never hosted a statewide candidate school like the RPO. Jay Parmley did encourage county organizations to host candidate workshops, but left the length and content of these workshops up to county or district committees. He did offer his expertise on how to organize workshops, whom to invite to these workshops, possible topics to discuss, and disseminated lists to county officers of party-friendly professionals. Nonetheless, a former state official indicated that the state committee did not place too much pressure on county committees to develop workshops nor did it advertise this demand very effectively. The former state official had this to say, "I am not aware of any activities. The state party does not run campaigns and we do not tell them what to do. Individual members with expertise may have lended [*sic*] a hand, but we didn't."[382] The ODP made a strategic decision to focus its efforts, attention, and resources on the Coordinated Campaign, causing what one described as "tunnel vision." The same individual said, "We were so wrapped up in the coordinated campaign that we lost sight of other things, other activities, other people."[383] This official did concede that this was partially a product of necessity because the party lacked the resources to do much of anything else for state legislative campaigns. He felt the coordinated campaign was "somewhat successful," but "clumsy" because it was under-funded and under-staffed.

[381] Interviews with Author July 17th, 2004.
[382] Interviews with Author July 8th, 2004.
[383] Interviews with Author July 8th, 2004.

County officials held at least two workshops in 2002. One workshop, hosted by the Tulsa County Democratic Party, featured presentations from individuals with previous experiences on potential problems and problem-solving, recommended professionals, explained how to identify likely voters, told how to create walking lists, provided strategies for soliciting volunteers, advertised how to plan fundraisers, suggested whom to contact with the coordinated campaign, taught how to set up a phone bank, and stressed the value of good poll data. The workshops were not designed to take over or to run campaigns. Advice concerning campaign management, campaign strategy, and campaign professionals were not a high priority for the ODP, and party efforts could be best described as uncoordinated and largely the product of individual self-initiative or experience.[384]

State legislative campaigns are largely controlled, if not completely controlled, by the candidates themselves. All nine candidates that I spoke with ran their own campaigns and did not hire professionals or rely on outside groups to take a primary role in campaign management. All nine had campaign managers whose responsibilities were primarily secretarial; they were not daily administrators or directors for the campaigns. Candidates described doing most, if not all, of the scheduling, writing, strategizing, organizing, or soliciting. Campaign managers were generally left with tasks like gathering volunteers, giving volunteers tasks, and running errands for candidates (i.e. picking up signs, shirts, literature, lunch, and other miscellaneous items). Candidates in Oklahoma describe a "friends and neighbors" campaign style, whereby advice is generally restricted to a candidate's friends or neighbors who have political experience or knowledge. Some have friends and neighbors double as party members, but none of

[384] Interviews with Author July 10th, 2004.

them mentioned the party as their primary, preferred, or first resource for help with management, strategy, or professionals.[385]

In light of the parties' increased interest in campaign management, this survey posed three questions asking candidates to gauge the importance of party influence in this area. The first question on the survey ascertains whether the training schools, seminars, and various materials provided by different groups helped candidates formulate a campaign strategy. Table 4.4 presents the results to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with the formulation of a campaign strategy?" Campaign strategies are a less intrusive facet of campaign management, so this survey also asks if the parties were more intrusive and actually assisted the candidate with the overall management of the campaign. Table 4.5 presents the responses to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?" Finally, literature and interviews suggest that parties are often unwilling to play any role in campaign management and instead prefer to recommend professionals (Kolodny 2000). Since the use of professionals in campaigns is increasing, a third question asks, "How important were the following groups in assisting you in hiring pollsters, media consultants, and other campaign professionals?" Table 4.6 shows the results to this question.

The Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma were not generally perceived by candidates as being important to candidates in the area of formulating campaign strategies. Consistently more important are interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees. When the party is perceived as playing a role, county-level committees take a leading role over district-

[385] Interviews with Author July 6th-9th, 15th-17th, 2004.

Table 4.4: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with the formulation of a campaign strategy?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.63	4.40	5.00	4.18	4.25	4.14	3.63	3.20	4.33	4.67	4.50	5.00	4.28	4.17	4.50	3.75	3.57	4.00
County	2.50	2.20	3.00	2.18	2.25	2.14	1.50	1.20	2.00	2.00	1.83	2.33	1.72	1.50	2.17	1.67	1.43	2.00
District	1.75	1.80	1.67	1.45	1.50	1.43	1.31	1.00	1.83	1.78	1.67	2.00	1.50	1.25	2.00	1.33	1.29	1.40
State	1.50	1.60	1.33	1.36	1.25	1.43	1.19	1.10	1.33	1.56	1.50	1.67	1.50	1.42	1.67	1.17	1.00	1.40
LCCs	1.75	1.60	2.00	1.45	1.50	1.43	1.81	1.60	2.17	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.17	1.08	1.33	2.08	1.86	2.40
National	1.38	1.20	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.10	1.50	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.17	1.00	1.40
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.22	1.00	1.67	1.44	1.25	1.83	1.08	1.00	1.20
IGs	2.13	2.00	2.33	1.73	1.50	1.86	1.44	1.30	1.67	2.22	2.00	2.67	1.72	1.50	2.17	1.42	1.29	1.60
PACs	2.00	1.60	2.67	1.45	1.25	1.57	1.56	1.20	2.17	2.11	1.67	3.00	1.39	1.17	1.83	1.75	1.71	1.80
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Position X Comp F = .579, p< .908; Party F = 1.381, p< .220; Competition F = 2.437 p< .021, Seat Type F = 2.054, p< .012

level and state-level committees. The MANOVA test demonstrates that competitiveness and candidate status were significant predictors of state political party activity. Consequently, competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates found county-level party support slightly important. At the county-level and district-level, the RPO was more effective than the ODP. The ODP may have been slightly more effective than the RPO at the state level, but the differences were not statistically significant. Like recruitment, the mean scores for all groups within this category suggest that state legislative candidates in the state of Oklahoma generally rely on themselves, family, or friends when formulating their strategies.

Incumbents indicate that three groups, outside of friends and family, play a slightly important role in assisting them with formulating their campaign strategy: LCCs, PACs, and county-level committees. When incumbents did receive party support, they noticed county-level assistance more than the other committees. Democratic county-level committees were (1.67) more effective with Democratic incumbents than Republican county-level committees (1.50) with Republican incumbents. In both parties, county-level committees exceeded state-level committees (1.17, 1.19) and district-level committees in importance (1.33, 1.31). Nevertheless, it is safe to say that among incumbents, the state parties play neither consequential nor important roles in assisting them with the formulation of their strategies. Significantly more important than the party are the efforts of legislative campaign committees.[386] The OHDC (2.08) and the RSHC (1.81) proved to be the most important resources for incumbents, with the OHDC slightly more effective than the RSHC. For incumbents of both parties, the LCCs were the highest rated groups and, simultaneously, the only important group. Apart from LCCs,

[386] ODP $t = 3.188$, $p < .009$; RPO $t = 2.179$, $p < .046$.

the only other groups involved with incumbents were political action committees, with Democratic PACs (1.75) outperforming Republican PACs (1.56). Nevertheless, the low mean scores for the PACs in both parties indicate that their overall assistance was relatively unimportant. Finally, competitive incumbents generally were more receptive to group assistance than noncompetitive incumbents. This finding is logical, as most noncompetitive incumbents would have spent little time, if any, worrying about campaign strategies. The ODP and RPO did not play important roles formulating campaign strategies for incumbents, significantly trailing legislative campaign committees.

Incumbents generally relied on LCCs and PACs; however, challengers relied more on county-level committees and interest groups. All Republican challengers and only competitive Democratic challengers found county-level party support slightly important, but the assistance of state-level and district-level committees was not important. Republican challengers actually found the assistance of county-level committees slightly important (2.18), but Democratic county-level committees (1.72) were not viewed as favorably. The only other marginally noticeable support came from interest groups (1.72, 1.73). Again, trailing county-level committees in importance are state-level committees (1.50, 1.36) and district-level committees (1.50, 1.45).[387] When removing noncompetitive candidates from the analysis, Democratic challengers indicate county-level (2.17), district-level (2.00), and interest group assistance (2.17) as equally and slightly important. An interesting finding is that unions appear to have assisted some competitive Democratic challengers (1.83) even more than the state-level committee (1.67). Finally, competitive challengers generally perceived group assistance more

[387] County versus state $t = 2.170$, $p < .055$.

important than noncompetitive challengers.[388] Challengers seeking state legislative office are more likely than incumbents to notice and receive assistance from the state parties, with competitive Democratic challengers and Republican challengers finding county-level committee support slightly important to their campaigns.

When examining open-seat candidates, many of the same trends seen with challengers are observed. County-level committees, interest groups, and, additionally, PACs all played slightly important roles assisting candidates formulate their strategies. Republican open-seat were more complimentary of county-level committees (2.50) than interest groups (2.13) and PACs (2.00), while Democrats were not as complimentary of county-level committees (2.00) as interest groups (2.22) and PACs (2.11). Therefore, among open-seat Republicans, county-level committees played a slightly important and, simultaneously, the most important role. Open-seat candidates also did not find state-level committees important, with the ODP (1.56) marginally outperforming the RPO (1.50). Although the ODP and RPO are more important with open-seat candidates than challengers, they must compete for the attention of open-seat candidates because they are the recipients of more group attention. The continued low mean scores of state-level and district-level committees continually prove they are not very effective in assisting state legislative campaigns with formulating strategies. Significantly more important are friends, family, and interest groups.[389] Among Republicans, the most effective assistance came from PACs (2.13), interest groups (2.00), and LCCs (1.75). Usurping these groups in relative influence are county-level committees (2.50); even when removing noncompetitive open-seat candidates, county-level committees (3.00) remain the most

[388] PACS fell just outside of significance with a $t = 1.933$, $p < .060$.
[389] $t = 16.554$, $p < .000$; $t = 2.184$, $p < .044$. County-state differences fall just outside of being statistically significance with ($t = 1.900$, $p < .076$).

important. Among Democrats, removing noncompetitive candidates does not change the fact that interest groups (3.00) and PACs (2.67) are more important than county-level committees (2.33). With open-seat candidates, first I find that the state party has not played much of a role in assisting candidates with their campaign strategies. Second, county-level committees are slightly important, with Republican county-level committees outperforming Democratic county-level committees. Third, the RSHC (1.75) played a marginal role among Republicans but the OHDC (1.44) was not equally helpful to Democratic incumbents. Fourth, open-seat candidates receive more assistance from more outside groups than any other type of candidate.

In the realm of assisting candidates with the formulation of their campaign strategies, the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Oklahoma Republican Party are not consistently important providers of these services as perceived by candidates. State-level and district-level committees were of little consequence, with interest groups, LCCs, and PACs providing more beneficial services. The only impact of the party is at the county level. Given the local nature of state legislative campaigns, the importance of local committees is not surprising. Overall, Republican open-seat candidates and Republican challengers generally acknowledge receiving slightly and more important assistance from county-level committees. Meanwhile, only competitive Democratic challengers and competitive Democratic open-seat candidates found county level support slightly important, but it did not exceed the relative value of interest groups and political action committees. Incumbents did not find the state party at all important, but did find their legislative party organizations helpful. Competitive candidates are more likely to receive assistance than noncompetitive candidates, with these differences even more

exaggerated among Democrats. The consistent low scores, though, indicate that state legislative candidates generally formulate their own campaign strategies.

Parties are taking increasingly active roles in the management of campaigns, but it remains to be seen if increased activities have caught the attention of candidates. Table 4.5 presents the results to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?" Generally speaking, the presence of lower mean scores indicates that state legislative candidates in Oklahoma do not rely on outside groups for assistance with campaign management. Comparing Table 4.5 to Table 4.4, one notices an across-the-board decline in the mean scores for all groups. The Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma are not exempt from this recession. Not surprisingly, this survey finds that 97% of the candidates relied on their friends and family, but only 24% sought support from ODP and RPO state-level committees and only 31% from ODP and RPO county-level committees. Nevertheless, at 31%, county-level committees and interest groups are the two most common providers of management services. The overall mean scores indicate that the ODP and RPO were not perceived as important by state legislative candidates. Finally, the MANOVA test indicates that in the rare instances of party intervention, candidate seat type was a significant predictor of party activities. Though marginal in influence, the parties were more likely to assist competitive open-seat candidates than any other group of candidates.

Incumbents, as noticed before, usually rely on themselves and their network of friends for campaign management. In the rare instances they relied on outside groups, the only significantly important outside group appeared to be their legislative campaign

Table 4.5: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in overall campaign management?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.75	4.40	2.67	4.45	4.75	4.29	3.75	3.70	3.83	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.39	4.42	4.33	3.08	3.14	3.00
County	2.38	1.80	3.33	1.82	1.75	1.86	1.31	1.00	1.83	1.78	1.67	2.00	1.61	1.58	1.67	1.42	1.43	1.40
District	1.50	1.20	2.00	1.18	1.50	1.00	1.19	1.00	1.50	1.67	1.67	1.67	1.28	1.17	1.50	1.33	1.29	1.40
State	1.63	1.60	1.67	1.55	1.25	1.71	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.44	1.50	1.33	1.25	1.00	1.60
LCCs	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.27	1.50	1.14	1.88	1.80	2.00	1.22	1.00	1.67	1.11	1.08	1.17	2.17	1.86	2.60
National	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.10	1.17	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.08	1.00	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.28	1.08	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00
IGs	1.75	1.40	2.33	1.55	1.50	1.57	1.44	1.30	1.67	2.00	1.83	2.33	1.72	1.58	2.00	1.50	1.29	1.80
PACs	1.25	1.20	1.33	1.27	1.25	1.29	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.67	1.50	2.00	1.17	1.17	1.17	1.50	1.43	1.60
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Comp X Party F = 1.046, p< .417; Party F = .991, p< .458; Competition F = 1.722 p< .106, Seat Type F = 2.950, p< .000

committees.[390] The Oklahoma House Democratic Caucus was very helpful for competitive Democratic incumbents (2.80); however, Republican incumbents did not share the Democrats' enthusiasm towards the Republican State House Caucus (1.88). Beyond the OHDC and RSHC, there are only marginal recorded levels of assistance by other groups. Clearly Republicans (1.25, 1.31) and Democratic (1.25, 1.42) incumbents found the ODP and RPO not at all helpful at the state level and county level. Competitive incumbents perceived receiving more assistance than noncompetitive incumbents, with the perception of party assistance being significantly different.[391] Sharing in this assessment were challengers, who indicated that party committees were neither effective nor important in assisting them with the overall management of their campaigns.

Even though Democratic challengers (1.44) were more supportive of the ODP than incumbents (1.25) and Republican challengers were more supportive of the RPO (1.55) than incumbents (1.25), the low mean scores further verify the ineffectiveness of party management services. The ODP and RPO are not important campaign management service providers for state legislative candidates. Even at the county level, county-level Democratic committees (1.61) and Republican county-level committees (1.82) were not important to candidates, though Republican county-level committees may have slightly outperformed Democratic county-level committees. Some competitive Democrats felt interest group assistance (2.00) was slightly important, but, apart from this, challengers are left to manage their own campaigns, lack outside support, and, consequently, do not find groups important to the management of their campaigns.

[390] $t = 2.301$, $p < .029$.
[391] Party $t = 2.199$, $p < .037$.

Consistent with the findings in the previous section on campaign strategies, open-seat candidates, especially competitive open-seat candidates, perceive more assistance from more outside groups than other types of candidates. Despite acknowledging the presence of more groups, open-seat candidates also did not generally find outside groups important to the management of their campaigns. One of the groups not found to be of any significant help was the state-level and district-level committees of the ODP (1.33, 1.67) and RPO (1.63, 1.50). Results also show that Democrats did not find county-level committees to have been of much importance (1.78) either. When removing noncompetitive Democratic open-seat candidates, there is some evidence to suggest county-level committees (2.00) might have played a slight role; however, the mean scores are equal to interest groups (2.00) and lower than political action committees (2.33). Aside from these three candidates, the ODP failed to play an effective role in campaign management. Republican county-level committees were slightly more effective. The RPO seems to have outperformed the ODP at providing campaign management services to candidates during the 2002 election cycle, as county-level committees (2.38) were mentioned by Republican open-seat candidates as being the most important group in providing assistance with campaign management. Some secondary importance is recorded for interest groups (1.75), but this score is not at a level of importance. Among Democrats, interest groups were the most important and among Republicans the RPO's county-level committees were the most important. The party is not an overall effective provider of campaign management resources.

In state legislative elections in Oklahoma, groups do not provide much assistance in the formulation of campaign strategies nor do they provide much support in the

management of campaigns. The Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma do not generally assist candidates with campaign management. Some competitive open-seat candidates indicate county-level committees may have played a slightly important role; however, these six candidates comprise a super minority out of the 74 candidates surveyed.[392] Though the parties have attempted to become more versatile and effective in this area, the type and level of services being provided thus far are clearly not effective, consequential, or important. The low mean scores observed by candidates toward all groups in the two categories of campaign strategies and campaign management further suggest that state legislative candidates are left to run their own campaigns.

Finally, a third question related to campaign management asked candidates to assess the importance of groups in assisting with the hiring of pollsters, media consultants, and other campaign professionals. Table 4.6 presents the results of this question. In short, candidates for the state legislature in Oklahoma do not yet frequently use campaign professionals. The use of professionals appears to hinge on the competitiveness and seat type of the candidates. The MANOVA test indicates that party involvement is also contingent on the competitiveness and the seat type of candidates. For example, this survey finds that Democrats did not find the Oklahoma Democratic Party at all helpful in locating campaign professionals. Challengers did not find much help from anyone, but incumbents and open seat candidates relied a little on the Oklahoma House Democratic Caucus. Republican open-seat candidates found the state party slightly important, but all other Republicans did not find anyone, including friends and family, to have been of much help. Two important trends are evident: one, state

[392] $t = 1.815$, $p < .075$.

Table 4.6: How important were the following groups in hiring campaign professionals and consultants?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.00	3.40	2.33	1.91	2.00	1.86	2.56	2.50	2.67	2.67	2.83	2.33	2.39	2.75	1.67	1.83	1.71	2.00
County	1.50	1.40	1.67	1.18	1.25	1.14	1.19	1.00	1.50	1.56	1.17	2.33	1.28	1.25	1.33	1.33	1.43	1.20
District	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.09	1.25	1.00	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.11	1.08	1.17	1.25	1.14	1.40
State	2.13	2.20	2.00	1.36	1.00	1.57	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.61	1.67	1.50	1.25	1.00	1.60
LCCs	1.50	1.80	1.00	1.36	1.00	1.57	1.38	1.40	1.33	1.44	1.17	2.00	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.83	1.14	2.80
National	1.38	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.08	1.00	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.17	1.00	1.50	1.00	1.00	1.00
IGs	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.09	1.00	1.14	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.22	1.00	1.67	1.22	1.08	1.50	1.08	1.00	1.20
PACs	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.33	1.00	2.00	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.00	1.00	1.00
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Position X Comp. F = 1.685, p< .053; Party F = 1.102, p< .377; Competition F = 3.300 p< .003, Seat Type F = 1.885, p< .024

legislative candidates in Oklahoma do not use professionals very often; two, when candidates do look for them, they usually do not generally find the ODP and RPO helpful.

Logically, one would expect incumbents to be the primary users of campaign professionals. The resources acquired and the contacts made while in the state legislature give an edge to incumbents in locating, using, and paying for professionals (Thurber and Nelson 2000). Since LCCs have become a primary campaign service provider for legislators in Oklahoma, we expect incumbents to find LCCs more important than any one other group (Shea 1995). This is not necessarily the case because professionalism, at least in state legislative campaigns, has not arrived in Oklahoma. Barely 22% of all the candidates in this survey indicated receiving support from any group in locating or using professionals, which is skewed slightly by the fact that 25% of all incumbents relied on LCCs to locate professionals. Democratic incumbents who used professionals generally attributed the OHDC (1.83) as the most important group in helping them find professionals. Yet, this number is deceiving because the low scores by noncompetitive incumbents (1.14) obscure the fact that competitive incumbents (2.80) significantly perceived LCCs more helpful and important to them.[393] Other groups did not play any role. Republican incumbents, interestingly, did not find any groups to have been important to them when locating professionals. Though the mean score of the RSHC (1.38) was higher than any other group, it is so incredibly low that it becomes negligible. Republican challengers similarly did not find any groups useful in finding professionals, as they simultaneously awarded the RSHC and RPO with a paltry mean score (1.36). Clearly, Republican challengers and Republican incumbents did not perceive to have

[393] $t = 3.234$, $p < .009$.

been helped by anyone when locating professionals. Democratic challengers were also not impressed by any groups, but were slightly more complimentary of the ODP (1.61) than Republicans of the RPO (1.36).

The most common users of professionals did not turn out to be incumbents, but rather open-seat candidates. Like competitive incumbents, competitive Democratic open-seat candidates found the OHDC (2.00) most helpful. Competitive Democratic open-seat candidates also perceived PACs (2.00) and county-level party committees (2.33) beneficial and slightly important. Democratic open-seat candidates found the assistance of county-level party committees more beneficial than district-level (1.33) or state-level committees (1.44). Democratic open-seat candidates, therefore, consistently find county organizations beneficial with campaign management, campaign strategy, and campaign professionals, despite the fact that the Oklahoma Democratic Party does not emphasize these activities. The individual initiative of party members is driving Democratic Party activity in this realm of campaign services. A different pattern is observed among Republicans. Republican open-seat candidates found the state Republican Party of Oklahoma (2.13) to have been the most important resource in helping locate professionals along with the national party (2.00). Don Nickels' Republican Majority organization is not strictly a financial enterprise, but also helped competitive open-seat candidates locate professionals and subsidized the use of Nickels-recommended professionals. This activity is very similar to those of DeLay's TRMPAC in Texas. Outside of these two organizations, all other groups were neither effective nor important in helping to locate professionals as perceived by open-seat candidates.

State legislative campaigns in Oklahoma are local. As such, candidates largely run their own campaigns – determining their strategy, managing their campaign, and locating campaign specialists. Candidates are reluctant to allow others to play much of a role in the management of their campaigns, believing that they know what is best for themselves and their campaigns. Consequently, candidates indicate that outside groups do not consistently play an important role in the realm of campaign management. When groups do play a role, the first group candidates turn towards are friends and family. As far as outside groups are concerned, the state party is not important.

Very few of the candidates relied on the state party for support with campaign management, campaign strategy, or campaign professionals, though there are some differences between the RPO and ODP. Among Democrats, only competitive open-seat candidates found county-level party support slightly important in all three areas; however, they simultaneously found interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees slightly important. While county-level committees have played a slightly important role, they have not been able to exceed other groups in importance. Another problem is that there were only three competitive incumbents among 39 Democratic candidates, showing that the party is noticeably affecting a small portion of candidates in their assistance. Democratic incumbents never found the traditional state political party organizations important, and generally relied only on LCCs. Competitive Democratic challengers only once found county-level committees slightly important in the area of campaign strategy, but that was it. Whereas only competitive Democratic open-seat candidates found county-level assistance slightly important, all Republican open-seat candidates found party assistance slightly important,

though the level of the party that is important varies according to the assistance. In the areas of strategy and management, county-level committees are slightly important and exceed the relative worth of interest groups and PACs. In finding professionals, it is the state-level committee that is slightly important and exceeds other groups in relative importance. Republican incumbents, in contrast, did not find party support important across all three areas, whether it came from traditional state political party organizations or legislative party organizations. Republican challengers did not find party support important in locating professionals or managing campaigns, but did indicate that some-county level party assistance was important to them when formulating campaign strategies. Overall, the RPO and ODP are not consistently providing much consequential assistance in the realm of campaign management, though the evidence suggests the RPO may be slightly more influential. Candidates primarily rely on their friends and family, and that is it.

Campaign Communications

In Chapters Two and Three I discussed how party organizations have also attempted to take a more active role in communicating messages, themes, and platforms to candidates. Presidential, federal, and statewide elections are often accompanied by a media spectacle; however, state legislative elections remain relatively isolated from the media scrutiny and attention of other races. Larger elections are more dependent on the media, primarily television and radio advertising, to spread their themes, messages and positions. Yet, state legislative elections are unique in that radio and television coverage zones often span multiple legislative districts and the exorbitant costs are difficult to justify to candidates whose goal is to isolate a very compact constituency. Thus,

electronic forms are largely inefficient. Instead, campaign communications become literature-oriented in state legislative elections; effectively targeted flyers and postcards are of paramount importance (Hogan 2003). According to The Campaign Assessment and Candidate Outreach Project, state and local organizations now write direct mail, copy direct mail, print direct mail letters, and mail them to voters in an attempt to take control of state campaign communications. Despite this, their surveys found that state organizations still rarely take responsibility for a candidate's campaign communications (Francia et al. 2003). The state parties in Oklahoma do not attempt to control campaign communications, but they do conduct issue polls, disseminate talking points, provide direct mail templates, partially subsidize mailings, provide lists of media outlets, and supply sample press releases.

On the Republican side, the House and Senate Caucus, guided largely by Lance Cargill, was active at developing group messages for incumbents in 2002. This strategy was very similar to what the national Republican Congressional Campaign Committees (RCCC) has been doing for several decades at the congressional level. The Caucus developed messages based on polls paid for by participating members, which was not shared with non-paying candidates or the state party. Based on this information, the RSHC suggested certain strategies, positions, and talking points for incumbents. The RSHC, however, did not pay for nor did they make available generic mailings and other advertisements.[394]

The state party took a similar, though more expansive, approach with its parallel campaign. In 2002, the RPO, with financial and professional assistance from the RNC, paid for a statewide poll to mine important issues and to target generic pro-GOP

[394] Interview with Author July 6th, 2004.

mailings. The RPO disseminated the poll information to candidates at the candidate workshop and also gave the poll results to county committee officers. The RPO workshop stressed, among other things, that effective campaigns must have coherent, simple, and popular messages. At the workshop, candidates also received media contact information and sample press releases. County committee officers could also assist local candidates, including state legislative candidates, in developing or altering messages, themes, and issue positions based on the poll information. The poll results were not only used to develop issue positions, but also to help select appropriately themed mailings and determine whom to target with mailings. The party also conducted some of its own mailings and literature drops. If a legislative candidate happened to be in a targeted area, then the mailings assisted that campaign. Candidates not in the targeted area were unaffected or had to pay for their own generic party literature pieces and mail them on their own. The party did not rely on television advertisements due to costs but did develop some radio spots to play in targeted coverage zones. Party attempts to assist with advertising were discriminatory and inconsistent to some degree. One party official felt the party did not do enough to make non-targeted candidates aware of mailing and communication opportunities, but was not bothered too much because "it is not our responsibility to contact every candidate."[395]

One candidate indicated he knew about the services and mailings, but could not afford them and was skeptical of their relative worth and effectiveness. He was further frustrated that the party did not do more to help alleviate the cost of advertisement possibilities, but was generally appreciative of the poll information that was shared. He

[395] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

indicated that he did use this information to adjust his issue themes and deliveries.[396] RPO efforts were not more extensive in this area because, as one party official said, "Mailings and advertising help to some degree, but we reserve our resources for door-to-door canvassing and other personal mobilization activities."[397] The RPO clearly believes that communications have their place, but personal forms of contact are less costly, more efficient, and more effective. This was the extent of orchestrated RPO activities in this area; other activities in assisting with advertising and developing issue positions were left up to county committee officials to perform at their discretion according to their expertise.

In 2002, the Oklahoma Democratic Party's most active form of communication assistance was in conjunction with the Coordinated Campaign. The party attempted to inform every candidate of the existence of the campaign and advised that competitive candidates participate. The money went towards several statewide polls that determined the primary issues of importance and voter perceptions of issues. The poll data was made available to participating candidates and participating county committees, some of these committees attempted to disseminate this information to regional candidates (non-participating candidates were asked to pay a small fee). Based on these polls, three pre-manufactured party mailings were sent to targeted areas and voters. In all, the ODP and the coordinated campaign delivered 142,000 postcards to targeted legislative districts and precincts in Oklahoma during the last week of the election alone. Several other television spots and radio spots were subsidized. These items were not addressed specifically for state legislative candidates, but still benefited candidates in certain areas. Occasionally

[396] Interview with Author July 16th, 2004.
[397] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

candidates were informed about these mailings, others were extended invitations to purchase additional mailings, and others were offered party subsidies if they chose party mailings over third-party mailings.[398]

One candidate I spoke with felt these generic mailings saved him the expense of purchasing more mailings, and allowed him to use his limited resources for more important voter mobilization efforts. The same candidate also felt that the poll data successfully allowed him to hone his messages and adjust his "power lines" to make his speeches more effective.[399] Most candidates and party officials I spoke to felt the coordinated campaign and concomitant communication efforts were successful. One former party official argued that it was perhaps the most coordinated and orchestrated communications effort he had ever seen by the ODP.[400] Although the communication efforts were targeted and reserved for races at the top of the ticket (largely the governor's race), obvious spillovers still occurred. The ODP was limited from doing more because of a tight budget and small staff, as most resources, like the RPO, were committed to GOTV efforts and the Coordinated Campaign. As far as actively assisting candidates formulate ideas, convert ideas into issues, and advertise or disseminate these issues, none of the state-level or county-level officials indicated they played this role for candidates. What county and state party officials did not do is actively solicit candidates and offer to take over or direct their campaign communications. While the party will offer general assistance and advice, beyond this they are limited in their support.[401]

[398] Interview with Author July 7th, 2004.
[399] Interview with Author July 6th, 2004.
[400] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[401] Interview with Author July 7th & 8th, 2004.

Two other individual efforts should be noted. One individual effort was hosted by the Tulsa County Democratic Party, which held a workshop that discussed, among other things, communication strategies, how to advertise, how to package issue points, and lists of local media outlets. They also advertised the Coordinated Campaign, discussed the generic party mailings, and made candidates aware of the existence of the issue poll data.[402] The OHDC and Larry Adair's WIN PAC jointly sponsored another individual communication effort. The OHDC also paid for an issue poll for Democratic incumbents to utilize and partially subsidized a generic mailing made available by the DCCC and DGA.[403] This generally describes the role of the ODP and other party organizations in the area of campaign communications; other efforts were advisory in nature and left up to individual party members.

Oklahoma's parties appear to be taking a more active role in campaign communications. Nonetheless, they do not try to directly control the messages of candidates or act as the communications director for candidates. They do not demand candidates do things a certain way, recalling the official who previously said, "There is no cookie cutter, one size fits all model."[404] Oklahoma may appear to be a small state geographically, but it is host to very different issues affecting different constituencies. The unique constituencies within each district and the more important goal of obtaining or maintaining a legislative majority limits party desires to control campaigns. Not to mention, the party simply does not have the time, staff, and energy to play this role. Additionally, the parties focus on other campaigns – in 2002 this was the governor's race. In both parties, county organizations were expected to play the primary role, if any, in

[402] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.
[403] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[404] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004

assisting with campaign communications. Though the state parties seem indifferent to campaign communications to some degree, to suggest they pay no attention to this area would be a mistaken assumption.

Most of the candidates in this survey reported using some form of campaign advertising for the purpose of promoting the campaign and developing the candidate's image. We now need to determine which groups these candidates felt were the most influential in helping them acquire media advertising, select advertising mediums, or develop public images. Two questions addressing the theme of campaign communications were asked of all candidates. First, respondents were asked, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image?" The results of this question are presented in Table 4.7. A second question asked respondents, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in selecting your issue positions?" Table 4.8 summarizes this information.

The decision to run is personal, campaign management is personal, and, not surprisingly, campaign communication is personal. The ODP and RPO failed to play a large and important role in providing campaigns with media advertising and developing the candidate's public image, as the overall mean scores are low enough to indicate that party efforts are ineffective and unimportant. When the party does intervene, its intervention is predicted by party, competitiveness, and seat type as indicated by the MANOVA test results provided beneath Table 4.7. Therefore, depending on the candidate, party, and seat type, some party committees did make an effort to assist candidates.

Table 4.7: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.13	3.4	2.67	2.91	2.75	3.00	2.69	2.6	2.83	2.89	2.67	3.33	2.56	2.33	3.00	2.75	2.43	3.2
County	1.88	1.40	2.67	1.82	2.25	1.57	1.19	1.00	1.50	1.78	1.83	1.67	1.39	1.33	1.50	1.33	1.14	1.60
District	1.75	1.40	2.33	1.27	1.50	1.14	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.56	1.67	1.33	1.22	1.08	1.50	1.33	1.29	1.40
State	1.50	1.40	1.67	1.36	1.00	1.57	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.89	1.50	2.67	1.67	1.50	2.00	1.50	1.00	2.20
LCCs	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.36	1.00	1.57	1.19	1.30	1.00	1.22	1.00	1.67	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.92	1.29	2.80
National	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.10	1.17	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.60
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.33	1.00	2.00	1.39	1.08	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
IGs	2.38	2.20	2.67	1.73	1.25	2.00	1.63	1.50	1.83	1.56	1.33	2.00	1.28	1.08	1.67	1.08	1.14	1.00
PACs	2.00	1.20	3.33	1.18	1.25	1.14	1.38	1.00	2.00	2.33	1.83	3.33	1.33	1.25	1.50	1.42	1.43	1.40
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Position X Comp F = 1.819, p< .032; Party F = 2.544, p< .016; Competition F = 4.294 p< .000, Seat Type F = 2.715, p< .001

Incumbents do not rely on many outside groups to provide campaigns with media advertising and develop the candidate's public image, though the results vary between the two parties. The first and foremost important group to incumbents is friends and family (2.71), who are significantly more important than legislative campaign committees (1.50).[405] Democratic incumbents perceived the OHDC (1.93) to be the most effective resource, significantly more so than Republican incumbents perceived the RSHC (1.19).[406] When removing noncompetitive Democratic incumbents, the OHDC (2.80) and ODP (2.20) emerge as significantly more important groups.[407] This dispels the myth that parties completely ignore incumbents. In the case of competitive Democratic incumbents, the ODP and OHDC provided slightly important advertising support to some incumbents. No other groups are important to incumbents. Unfortunately for Republican incumbents, the RPO (1.06) and RSHC (1.19) are not at all important, even when noncompetitive incumbents are removed from the analysis. Republican incumbents did not rely on anyone for advertising support in 2002.

The most influential group from the perspective of Democratic challengers was the ODP, and the most influential group from the perspective of Republican challengers was the RPO. Though they were the most noticed, their scores indicate that this assistance was still unimportant. Democratic challengers noticed state-level committee efforts of the ODP (1.67), but gauged these efforts unimportant. They become slightly important (2.00), along with unions (2.00), when removing noncompetitive challengers. Apparently unions in Oklahoma gave some moderate advertising support to competitive candidates. Outside of these two groups, no other groups were perceived by candidates

[405] $t = 4.993$, $p < .000$.
[406] $t = 2.015$, $p < .054$.
[407] $t = 3.873$, $p < .003$; $t = 2.851$, $p < .017$.

to be important or even noticeable in supplying help with media advertising. Among Republicans, only two groups really stand out: interest groups (1.73) and county-level organizations (1.82). These two groups are the only noticeable organizations to Republicans challengers. It is interesting to note that noncompetitive challengers (2.25) actually found county-level party support more valuable than competitive challengers (1.57). Republican county committees clearly made a slightly important impact with the wrong group of candidates, indicating that party communication efforts went awry in 2002. Competitive Republican challengers were impressed only with interest group assistance (2.00). Despite the fact that the ODP (1.67) exceeded the RPO (1.36), neither party was important. Challengers, in fact, largely did not find groups important.

Open-seat candidates were the recipients of far more media support than both incumbents and challengers, both from the perspective of the party and the perspective of candidates.[408] The party pattern observed among incumbents and challengers prevails among open-seat candidates as well. That is, the ODP was most effective at the state level (1.89), more so than the RPO (1.50). Competitive candidates noticed ODP targeting tactics, as competitive open-seat candidates found the state-level committee of the ODP slightly important (2.67). The support reported by open-seat Democrats exceeds incumbents (2.20) and challengers (2.00). ODP targeted mailings and advertising support had a desired result. The Republican Party of Oklahoma, at the state-level, was not so effective (1.50). Party efforts by county-level (1.88) and district-level committees (1.75) were more effective, but trailed interest groups (2.38) and PACs (2.00). Clearly, interest groups and PACs were the most important group for all open-seat Republicans, demonstrating the overall ineffectiveness of GOP advertising efforts. When removing

[408] PACs $t = 3.771$, $p < .000$; district party $t = 2.036$, $p < .045$.

noncompetitive open-seat Republicans, county-level (2.67) and district-level committees (2.33) emerge as being slightly important but still trail interest groups (2.67) and PACs (3.33). While the county and district party organizations played some role with competitive candidates, they are not effective with all candidates. Democrats share this sentiment. The most important groups for competitive Democrats were also PACs (3.33) before party organizations. Again, when removing noncompetitive open-seat candidates, unions (2.00) emerge as a slightly important group. Party organizations are not consistently more important and trailed friends and family, PACs, unions, and interest groups.

The aggregate scores for the parties suggest that the overall impact of party assistance is unimportant and trails other groups. A careful examination shows that the Oklahoma Democratic Party at the state level played an important role in helping competitive candidates find media advertising and assisting in the development of candidate images. Unfortunately noncompetitive candidates outnumber competitive candidates. The Republican Party of Oklahoma was not equally effective, having only a minor effect on noncompetitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates. ODP targeting yielded desired results, but Republican efforts did not. This study shows both parties have a ways to go before candidates perceive them as valuable assets in providing the campaign with mass media advertising and developing the candidate's public image.

Candidates must also select their issue positions and will occasionally seek the input of others in order to determine exactly how their issue positions should appear. Consequently, a second question was placed in the survey asking respondents, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in

selecting your issue positions?" Table 4.8 summarizes this information. Some of the results mirror the results of the previous section; however, some of the results stand in stark contrast to the results of the previous section. Therefore, the parties play a complex and varied role in state legislative campaigns, and being valuable in one dimension of campaign communications does not necessarily make one valuable in the other dimension of campaign communications. Such is the case with providing the campaign with assistance in selecting issue positions, where the party is more successful in its efforts than with selecting advertising.

The state-level committee of the ODP was the most important party committee for candidates searching for assistance with media advertising and image developing; however, the state-level committee of the ODP (1.41) is not equally effective in helping candidates formulate issue positions. Rather, ODP county-level committees (1.85) were more effective. Similarly, the county-level committees (1.84) of the RPO were more effective in assisting with selecting issue positions than with media advertising and image developing. The RPO state-level committees and ODP state-level committee are worthless, though the RPO (1.51) not as much as the ODP (1.41). At the county level, the RPO and ODP left a larger impression, but the scores suggest they were still unimportant and ineffective. The MANOVA test for Table 4.8 indicates that party, seat type, and competitiveness were significant predictors of the likelihood of party assistance. As the discussion will reveal and the table already demonstrates, the Oklahoma Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Oklahoma played a limited role in assisting candidates with selecting issue positions.

Table 4.8: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in selecting your issue positions?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.00	4.40	3.33	4.00	4.50	3.71	4.13	3.90	4.50	4.00	3.83	4.33	4.33	4.42	4.17	3.67	3.57	3.80
County	2.50	1.60	4.00	2.27	2.25	2.29	1.19	1.00	1.50	2.11	1.83	2.67	1.83	1.67	2.17	1.67	1.57	1.80
District	1.38	1.20	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.89	1.67	2.33	1.11	1.17	1.00	1.42	1.43	1.40
State	2.00	2.20	1.67	1.55	1.25	1.71	1.25	1.00	1.67	1.67	1.33	2.33	1.39	1.25	1.67	1.25	1.00	1.60
LCCs	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.09	1.00	1.14	2.13	1.60	3.00	1.78	1.33	2.67	1.17	1.00	1.50	2.42	1.86	3.20
National	1.38	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.19	1.00	1.50	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.60
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.44	1.00	2.33	1.72	1.42	2.33	1.00	1.00	1.00
IGs	2.00	1.40	3.00	2.00	1.75	2.14	1.44	1.00	2.17	2.56	2.17	3.33	2.00	1.75	2.50	1.83	1.29	2.60
PACs	1.88	1.20	3.00	2.09	2.25	2.00	1.38	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.17	3.67	1.17	1.08	1.33	1.08	1.14	1.00
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Competitiveness X Position F = 1.828, p< .031; Party F = 2.916, p< .007; Competition F = 4.747, p< .000, Seat Type F = 3.363, p< .000

Incumbents in both parties do not rely on the RPO and ODP to select their issue positions; significantly more important than the RPO (1.25) and ODP (1.67) are the OHDC (2.42) and RSHC (2.13).[409] Democratic incumbents noticed the assistance of two groups: the OHDC (2.42) and interest groups (1.83). The legislative party was the most and only important group for Democratic incumbents. Incumbents did not use the ODP's state-level (1.25), district-level (1.42), and county-level committees (1.67). Republican incumbents also confirm the unimportance of the state party, as the state-level (1.25), district-level (1.13), and county-level committees (1.19) all received incredibly low scores. Outside of the RSHC (2.13), Republican incumbents did not perceive any other groups beneficial in campaign communications. Table 4.8 and Table 4.7 reveal that incumbents never relied on the RPO and ODP for any aspect of campaign communications. Republicans and Democrats instead found their respective legislative campaign committees to be the most important outside group for selecting issue positions. Finally, evidence suggests that interest groups played a slightly important role with competitive Democratic (2.60) and Republican incumbents (2.14) in selecting issue positions. Apart from this, incumbents do seek assistance in selecting issue positions.

Further underscoring the weakness of state-level parties, challengers perceive interest groups, political action committees, and county-level committees most helpful in selecting issue positions. Both Republicans and Democrats assessed their respective state-level party committee as being unimportant actors, with the RPO (1.55) slightly outperforming the ODP (1.39). The low mean scores, though, indicate that the differences are perhaps not too consequential as they are both relatively low. The party organizations that appear to have been significantly more beneficial were county-level

[409] $t = 3.110$, $p < .004$.

committees.[410] Republican (2.27) and Democratic challengers (1.83) were much more likely to perceive effective assistance from the county party than district or state parties. Interestingly, competitive Democratic challengers (2.17) were more complimentary of the assistance they received than noncompetitive Democrats (1.67), but no such discrepancy occurs within the Republican Party (2.29, 2.27). Democrats appeared to have been more discriminatory in their support, while the Republicans were more equitable in theirs. From the perspective of competitive Democratic challengers, outperforming Democratic county-level committees were unions (2.33) and interest groups (2.50). While the county-level committee may have played a slightly important role, this was offset by the increased activation of unions and interest groups. Republican county-level committees (2.27) were more effective than Democratic county-level committees because they receive a slightly important score and exceed the relative worth of interest groups (2.00) and PACs (2.09). Republicans challengers find the party slightly important, but Democratic challengers were not equally enthusiastic.

Just when it appears that the state parties are completely useless to candidates looking for assistance with campaign communication, we find data that suggests it would be inappropriate to completely remove the party from the discussion. Open-seat candidates, especially Republicans, were the most likely to indicate that the parties played a relatively important role in selecting issue positions.[411] Open-seat Republicans found party services relatively effective and important at both the county (2.50) and state level (2.00), and trailing party efforts were interest groups (2.00) and PACs (1.88). Other Republicans did not record such measures of appreciation for the party or other groups.

[410] GOP $t = 2.609$, $p < .026$; Democrat $t = 2.025$, $p < .070$.
[411] Just outside significance with $t = 1.741$, $p < .086$.

The RPO and its respective affiliates clearly reserved their highest levels of activism for open seats; similarly the ODP and its respective affiliates assisted open-seat candidates more than the other groups of candidates. The level of Democratic Party support at the county level (2.11) and the state level (1.67) trail the efforts of the Republican Party, indicating that the RPO was more effective than the ODP. Also, ODP county-level committees follow interest groups (2.56) and PACs (2.00) in relative effectiveness and importance. The ODP reserved most of its assistance for and was most effective with open-seat candidates; however, these contributions did not outweigh the assistance and effectiveness of non-party groups. The last observation is the disparity between the perceptions of competitive and noncompetitive open-seat candidates, as competitive candidates significantly found more groups important to their campaigns than noncompetitive open-seat candidates.[412]

The parties are at best only "slightly" important actors in the realm of campaign communications for state legislative candidates in Oklahoma. This survey finds that the ODP and RPO were more important to candidates when helping candidates formulate issue positions; however, they were not as effective or important in searching for assistance with media advertising and image developing. Thus, being good at one dimension of campaign communications does not necessarily make one good with the other dimension of campaign communications. The RPO was most effective with its county-level organizations with both functions, suggesting that the state-level party is neither effective nor helpful to Republican state legislative candidates. For Democrats, the state-level organization was better at assisting candidates with locating media advertising but not as effective as county-level organizations with developing issue

[412] County party, national party, PACs, IGs, and unions all significant no lower than $t = 2.133$, $p < .050$.

positions. Thus, depending on the item, different levels of the party organization are important to candidates. In both parties, a commonality is the support for open-seat candidates over challengers and incumbents and the support for competitive candidates over noncompetitive candidates. Incumbents do not utilize party resources nor do parties tend to offer much assistance to incumbents. In selected instances, the party is slightly important but is more consistently outperformed by other groups.

Fundraising

In Chapters Two and Three, I discussed how party financial services come in a variety of active, passive, and negative forms, and state parties have modeled themselves after the national party in many ways. Although the state parties in Oklahoma lack the financial contributions, financial assistance, and operating budgets of their national counterparts, the Republican Party of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Democratic Party have become increasingly viable independent financial networks. Both parties are more capable today of directly financing candidates than they have ever been because they maintain larger budgets, raise larger amounts of money, and donate higher amounts money than ever before. And, when they are incapable of directly financing the candidates themselves, they have established financial networks with party-allied and non-partisan individuals and organizations capable of directly assisting the candidates. This is increasingly necessary because in Oklahoma state legislative elections are becoming increasingly expensive (Hardt 2002).

Part of the financial acceleration cannot be owed to Oklahoma's campaign finance system. According to Jan Hardt, Oklahoma's Ethics Commission has created some notable regulations: one, it requires quarterly reports; two, all contributions for

campaigns and party committees are limited to $5,000 per calendar year; three, campaigns must report all expenditures; four, state officials are subject to disclosure rules; five, lobbyists must disclose all financial activities; six, the Ethics Commission must hold hearings when complaints are filed (Hardt 2002, 242). At times, particularly in regards to the $5,000 yearly limit, this has the effect of making Oklahoma's law more restrictive than federal laws. Individuals, PACs, and unions are all limited to a $5,000 yearly contribution limit to parties. Corporations are prohibited from giving to parties but are allowed to make donations to PACs that may in turn give to parties. Parties have a difficult time, therefore, raising funds in Oklahoma. And, parties are limited to a $5,000 yearly contribution to candidates, which further limits the financial reach of the RPO and ODP.[413] Recent attempts have been made to increase party contribution limits, but to no avail. The end result is that Oklahoma's parties are financially limited, allowing political action committees to play a much larger and consequential role in state legislative elections (Hardt 2002). Despite these limitations, Table 4.9 shows that the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma have become more proficient financial entities, as both parties have raised and donated larger sums of money to keep up with the rising costs of elections.

As in Texas and Louisiana, the open-seat governor's race accounted for the vast majority of expenditures and contributions in Oklahoma in 2002. Of the $29.3 million dollars raised in 2002, gubernatorial hopefuls raised $11.6 million of this money. Nonetheless, state legislative candidates raised the second most amount of money (Table 4.10). House candidates raised $5.6 million, but this averages out to only $26,908 per candidate (winners average $36,668, losers average only $23,289). Not coincidentally,

[413] All regulation information comes from the Oklahoma Ethics Commission at www.ethics.state.ok.us.

Table 4.9: State Party Giving

2002	Total Contributions	Total Raised
Democratic		
OKLAHOMA DEMOCRATIC PARTY	521	$ 603,910
DEMOCRATS OF OKLAHOMA STATE SENATE	810	$ 560,856
OKLAHOMA HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS PAC	722	$ 362,409
	2,053	$ 1,527,176
Republican		
OKLAHOMA REPUBLICAN PARTY	71	$ 717,990
REPUBLICAN STATE HOUSE CMTE OF OKLAHOMA	1,247	$ 481,292
OKLAHOMA REPUBLICAN SENATORIAL CMTE	370	$ 157,310
	1,688	$ 1,356,592
2000		
Democratic		
DEMOCRATS OF OKLAHOMA STATE SENATE	671	$ 592,898
OKLAHOMA DEMOCRATIC PARTY	835	$ 481,730
OKLAHOMA HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS PAC	977	$ 459,103
	2483	$ 1,533,730
Republican		
OKLAHOMA REPUBLICAN PARTY	101	$ 632,207
REPUBLICAN STATE HOUSE CMTE OF OKLAHOMA	1212	$ 331,585
OKLAHOMA REPUBLICAN SENATORIAL CMTE	566	$ 214,647
	1879	$ 1,178,439

incumbents average $34,722 versus $20,120 for challengers and $23,223 for open-seat candidates. In 2002, only 48 of the 101 (48.5%) seats featured two-party competition. Oklahoma's state legislative campaigns are more competitive than Texas' (37%), but less competitive than Louisiana's (56%). In contrast, state Senate races average $80,200 per candidate, but only 27% were contested (13 out of 48 races). In terms of amount of money raised per candidate, state House campaigns in Oklahoma are financially pedestrian in nature, lack the fiscal enormity of Louisiana and Texas, and clearly favor incumbents. Oklahoma trails both states in average expenditure per House candidate. This is partly a consequence of the relatively small population of Oklahoma's legislative

Table 4:10: Campaign Finance Totals by Election

	Total $	Total #	Average $
Governor	$11,627,700	14	$ 826,662
Judicial	$ -	4	$ -
Other Statewide	$ 5,083,637	25	$ 202,995
House	$ 5,568,080	204	$ 26,908
Senate	$ 4,207,543	52	$ 80,199
Party Committees	$ 2,883,767		

Office	Democrat	Republican
Governor	$ 5,537,264	$ 3,451,353
Judicial	$ -	$ -
Other Statewide	$ 2,567,267	$ 2,516,370
House	$ 2,939,283	$ 2,608,996
Senate	$ 2,994,966	$ 1,191,942
Total	$14,038,780	$ 9,768,661

Office	Winners	Losers	Incumbents	Challengers	Open Seat
Governor	$ 2,006,546	$ 1,144,284	$ 1,133,835	$ -	$ 703,793
Judicial	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Other Statewide	$ 430,775	$ 178,863	$ 259,561	$ 484,729	$ 161,431
House	$ 36,688	$ 23,289	$ 34,722	$ 20,120	$ 23,223
Senate	$ 114,892	$ 63,852	$ 111,214	$ 32,604	$ 75,272

districts. With only 3.4 million people and 101 legislative districts, the average district holds roughly 34,000 people. Consequently, legislative candidates do not require as many resources and, furthermore, do not need as much money to reach voters.

Discussions regarding the importance of party monetary activities would be inappropriate if Oklahoma's state political parties were financially destitute or absent from state legislative elections. Not only do the parties play a financial role in state legislative elections, but they also have financially active legislative campaign committees. Table 4.9 shows the increasingly active role of Oklahoma's political parties and Oklahoma's legislative campaign committees from 2000 to 2002. The Oklahoma Democratic Party collected $604,000 but the Republican Party of Oklahoma collected

$720,000. This is offset by the fact that Democratic LCCs have raised more funds than Republican LCCs. To assume party balance, though, is false for two reasons:

> First, just because these Democratic LCCs are raising more funds does not mean they are disbursing more funds to state legislative candidates. In 2002, the Oklahoma House Democratic Caucus contributed 21 times to only 11 candidates, for a grand total of $28,444. Yet, the Republican State House Caucus made 28 contributions to 21 candidates for a total of $53,000. Thus, the Republicans Party enjoys a slight financial advantage over the Democratic Party.
>
> Second, a consequence of top-down Republican advancement throughout the South, Oklahoma included, is the Republican dominance of congressional and senatorial delegations. Oklahoma's senators, particularly Don Nickles, have enjoyed token opposition and, with re-elections secured, have used their financial war chests for many other campaigns. These men serve as conduits and often funnel money to state legislative campaigns through organizations like the Republican Majority Fund. Don Nickles' Republican Majority Fund made 23 additional donations to House candidates for a total $52,750. The absence of statewide Democratic leadership gives additional fundraising advantages to Republicans.

Party contributions in Oklahoma, as measured in total dollars, do not exceed the contributions made by various legal, realty, medical, petroleum, and business political

action committees. As such, the most financially powerful groups are interest groups and their associated PACs – among them the Oklahoma Bankers Association, Oklahoma Association of General Contractors, and Oklahoma Independent Petroleum Association – who were likely to simultaneously contribute to Democrats and Republicans. In fact, Table 4.11 shows that party contributions rank 9th among all economic sectors in total contributions, accounting for only 2.82% of all expenditures. Consistent with other states and studies, the majority of candidates in Oklahoma finance a large portion of their own campaigns, as self-financing accounted for 16% of all contributions – the single largest plurality of contributions. Even though party expenditures account for less than three percent of all expenditures, the financial contributions of the ODP, RPO, OHDC, and RSHC make up two-thirds of this three percent. While party expenditures account for a small percentage of total expenditures, the political parties and legislative campaign committees make up the bulk of party expenditures. Nevertheless, they are not as financially generous as other actors and organizations.

Party organizations – legislative campaign committees and state political party organizations – played a role in 2002. The data suggests that the RPO and RSHC outspent the ODP and OHDC. Yet, to which candidates did the parties allocate their resources? Previous studies suggest that competitive open-seat candidates and incumbents typically benefit from LCCs, while competitive challengers and open-seat candidates generally benefit from state party activities (Gierzynski 1992, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998). Oklahoma shows some similarities and deviations from previous findings. First, the parties similarly and primarily funded challengers and open-seat candidates. Of the 28 candidates receiving RPO funds, 13 of them were challengers for a total of

Table 4.11: Campaign Donations by Sector

Economic Sector	Total Contributions	Total $	Percent of Total
Candidate Contributions	693	$ 4,825,636	16.43%
Lawyers & Lobbyists	6213	$ 2,910,252	9.91%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	6762	$ 2,696,882	9.18%
Other/Retiree/Civil Servants	14720	$ 2,190,257	7.46%
Energy & Natural Resources	4223	$ 2,181,381	7.43%
Health	4741	$ 1,645,735	5.60%
General Business	2494	$ 998,307	3.40%
Construction	2001	$ 906,524	3.09%
Party	751	$ 827,950	2.82%
Labor	732	$ 622,966	2.12%
Agriculture	2055	$ 531,046	1.81%
Transportation	906	$ 394,236	1.34%
Communications & Electronics	757	$ 345,514	1.18%
Ideology/Single Issue	105	$ 100,046	0.34%
Defense	4	$ 800	0.00%

$43,800. The remaining amount of money was divided between nine open-seat candidates ($30,650) and six incumbents ($19,100). When examining the average donations among these three groups, one finds that the average difference in donations among the three candidates is less than $200. In a similar fashion, the ODP funded challengers first. They provided three challengers with $7,500, one open-seat candidate with $1,000, and three incumbents with $2,000. The difference between the average donations to incumbents versus challengers is about $1,500. Although both parties practiced challenger-first strategies, the RPO's average distribution was more equitable than the ODP's average distribution.

Second, contrary to past literature on LCC spending habits, both the OHDC and RSHC practiced challenger-first strategies as well instead of incumbent protection strategies (Gierzynski 1993, Shea 1995, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998). The RSHC gave ten challengers a total of $24,000, seven open-seat candidates $14,000, and five incumbents $15,000. Incumbents received larger donations, but fewer were assisted.

The OHDC gave three challengers a total of $13,872, three open-seat candidates $13,063, and four incumbents $7,719. This suggests that both legislative campaign committees were preoccupied with expanding their legislative majority by challenging perceived vulnerable incumbents and then assisting open-seat candidates. Republicans could afford to do this because of groups like the New Leadership Fund and Republican Majority Fund; however, Democrats did not have equally substantial subsidiaries.[414] Interestingly, though the RPO and RSHC gave more money, they funded more losers than winners. Again, the presence of the New Leadership Fund and Republicans Majority Fund allowed Republican organizations to, perhaps, take more risks than their Democratic counterparts. The financially limited OHDC and ODP gave more to winners than losers. The parties are strategic in their donations. In funding more losers, Republicans took greater risks. Since they acquired an additional seat in the House, their financial efforts were not completely wasted. Conversely, the pick-up of one seat by the Republicans was their fewest in several election cycles, suggesting that Democratic spending patterns also might have been effective in assisting with holding off Republican advancement. Party donations, nevertheless, are not significant indictors of success.

Another interesting pattern was the fact that Republican organizations gave money to many similar recipients, creating considerable financial overlap. In interviews describing the donation process, the RPO gave what they could, which "wasn't much," based on a series of categories such as vulnerability of opponent, current amount of funds raised, and demographics of the district. One party official, in a position of authority to speak on the financial activities of the RPO during the 2002 elections, said that the RPO

[414] Larry Adair's WIN PAC did make 13 contributions totaling $26,004, but this still pales in comparison to the $98,700 of the New Leadership Fund and Republican Majority Fund.

operated independently from other party affiliates. National and state figures did attempt to influence the distribution of RPO funds, though this same official indicated they were not swayed by their appeals and still made their own independent assessments. When asked whether they brought members of the RSHC, or other groups, into their financial decisions the official demonstratively answered "no."[415] Interviews indicate the Republican Party of Oklahoma contributed at its own discretion, but the data suggests the opposite. Groups used either the exact same strategy or certain donations were indeed a signal for other party donations. Of the 34 Republican candidates that received funds from either of the two organizations, 20 candidates received funds simultaneously from the RSHC and RPO. In some cases, the combination of these donations compromised roughly 10% of a candidate's total contributions, a significant figure in Oklahoma. There was not equal financial overlap, however, between the ODP and the OHDC. Of the 13 candidates that received donations from either the ODP or OHDC, only four received money from both. Democratic targeting strategies by the ODP or OHDC differed from Republicans.

According to the data, interest groups and their respective PACs are the most significant financial players behind the candidates themselves. Candidates largely self-finance their campaigns, consistent with the friends-and-neighbors campaign philosophy largely present in state legislative elections in Oklahoma. Interviews with candidates verify the data that the party is not as important as other groups. One Democrat said, "You can't financially rely on the party because they can't do very much for you. I learned a long time ago, that if you win you go door-to-door, you hold babies, you shake hands, you go to fish fries, (and) you talk a lot more to your friends. Friends give you

[415] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

money. Friends get you elected."[416] A Republican candidate offered a similar view when he remarked, "The state party says they will give you money, but you don't hold your breath. I will ask others for money, but not the party."[417] Both candidates clearly evaluated their parties as "not at all important." All nine candidates that I spoke to did not actively solicit the state party for contributions or primarily rely on it for financial support. When the party did assist candidates, the assistance came from county committees. In this survey, 38% of the candidates had some financially related conversation with a county party committee, but only 26% had any financially related conversation with the state party. Both the RPO's and ODP's county-level committees supplied some direct contributions, but the bulk of their financial activities consisted of assisting candidates with organizing fundraisers, introducing candidates to donors, or recommending candidates to various donors. Some county committees did this frequently and some not so frequently; it largely depended on the self-initiative and experience of individual county officers. The parties are financial facilitators, not necessarily financial providers. They operate more like phone books, and less like ATM machines.

It is useful to examine the financial data to see if candidate perceptions are accurate. Although candidates occasionally have difficulty distinguishing who is responsible for initiating financial contributions and may not be privy to all the financial moves that occur behind the scenes, the information obtained from candidates is still useful for capturing the range of possible party influences in comparison to other organizations. After all, financial reports do not capture whether the other party efforts

[416] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[417] Interview with Author July 16th, 2004.

(i.e. fundraising or donor networks) still make a difference. One party official said it best when he told me, "What you need to understand, Josh, is that when you ask about donations in reference to fundraising you are only hitting the tip of the iceberg."[418] In the eyes of the candidates, is the myriad of party financial activities noticed or important?

Table 4.12 summarizes the mean scores to the question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising?" A MANOVA test for this table indicates that party, competitiveness, and seat type were all important predictors for the level of party activity. Verifying the financial data, the survey results indicate that candidates rely largely on themselves, friends, and family members to finance their state legislative campaigns. Consistent with literature, when they do not rely on themselves, friends, or family, they depend on the financial resources of interest groups and political action committees (Hogan 2002, Francia et al 2003, Herrnson 2004). Overall, Republican candidates notice more groups than Democrats. Regardless of party, competitive candidates also assess groups as being more effective and, therefore, more important than noncompetitive candidates. Lastly, both incumbents and open-seat candidates awarded higher levels of importance to groups than challengers. After this, the similarities end, as different patterns exist between the different parties and seat types. One clear fact is the relative unimportance of the financial contributions of the state party in comparison to interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees.

Consistent with facts presented in the preceding section, the candidates in this survey found the contributions of the state committees of the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma significantly trailed that of interest groups, political

[418] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

Table 4.12: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in fundraising?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.50	4.40	4.67	4.55	4.50	4.57	3.69	3.30	4.33	4.78	4.67	5.00	4.44	4.33	4.67	3.75	3.29	4.40
County	2.75	1.80	4.33	1.91	1.75	2.00	1.56	1.20	2.17	2.44	2.50	2.33	1.33	1.17	1.67	1.33	1.29	1.40
District	1.75	1.40	2.33	1.27	1.25	1.29	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.17	1.14	1.20
State	2.25	2.20	2.33	1.55	1.25	1.71	1.19	1.00	1.50	1.33	1.17	1.67	1.28	1.08	1.67	1.08	1.00	1.20
LCCs	1.75	1.00	3.00	1.18	1.00	1.29	2.13	1.50	3.17	1.33	1.17	1.67	1.06	1.00	1.17	2.50	2.00	3.20
National	1.38	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.31	1.10	1.67	1.11	1.00	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.08	1.00	1.20
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.78	1.17	3.00	1.56	1.17	2.33	1.50	1.00	2.20
IGs	2.13	1.60	3.00	1.55	1.25	1.71	2.19	1.90	2.67	2.00	1.67	2.67	1.72	1.25	2.67	1.75	1.57	2.00
PACs	1.88	1.40	2.67	1.27	1.25	1.29	2.56	1.90	3.67	2.00	1.50	3.00	1.22	1.08	1.50	2.17	1.43	3.20
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Comp X Party F = 5.539, p< .000; Party F = 8.246, p< .000; Competition F = 6.665 p< .000, Seat Type F = 4.360, p< .000

action committees, legislative campaign committees, and county party committees in importance.[419] The only two groups that scored lower were the national party and district party committees, which is logical given that district parties cannot disburse funds and the national party committees generally do not assist local elections. In fact, in the category of campaign finance, the Oklahoma Democratic Party receives its lowest score of importance, while the Republican Party of Oklahoma receives higher scores of importance.[420] As in Texas and Louisiana, the mean scores do not exceed the level of "slightly important" indicating that the overall importance of the state party is negligible compared to the value of other organizations.

Past research suggests that incumbents are large beneficiaries of interest groups and political action committees (Langbein 1986; Austen-Smith 1995; Rudolph 1999). In Oklahoma, incumbents did perceive interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees as being most important, with some variance between the two parties. The finance data showed that a few incumbents benefited from some ODP and RPO contributions, with more Republicans receiving funds than Democrats. Likewise, incumbents' perceptions match the financial data, as the survey shows incumbents significantly did not mention the ODP and RPO as being important.[421] Though the RPO (1.19-1.56) outperformed the ODP (1.08-1.33), the mean scores assigned to the party by incumbents are so low as to render the perception of parties as useless. The actual finance data suggests that Republicans benefited far more from their legislative campaign committees than Democrats; however, Democrats (2.50) perceived legislative committees far more important to them than Republicans (2.13). In fact,

[419] All four scores no lower than $t = 3.028$, $p < .003$.
[420] Missing significance with $t = 1.648$, $p < .104$.
[421] $t = 3.852$, $p < .001$.

Democrats give a higher score of importance to the OHDC (2.50) than PACs (2.17). Clearly, there is more to financial support than direct contributions. LCCs also operate as service networks to their constituents, providing indirect financial support as well – introducing donors to their colleagues and recommending donors support certain colleagues. Financial numbers alone tell only part of the story. Nevertheless, the financial data and survey data do commonly suggest that state parties are not important financial instruments for state legislators. Republicans (2.56) noticed PAC support more than Democrats noticed PACs (2.17) and LCCs (2.13). Behind PACs are interest groups, with Republicans (2.19) again perceiving interest groups to be more beneficial to them than Democrats (1.75). Finally, there are two other interesting items of note. First, some competitive Republican incumbents indicate some national party activity (1.67). Though the numbers are very small, this indicates the financial operations of Nickles attracted the attention of some incumbents. Second, in place of national party activity, competitive Democrats found the financial activities of unions (2.20) to have been significantly and slightly more important to them than noncompetitive incumbents.[422]

Challengers do not perceive the state-level committees of the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma as being important financial resources for their campaigns. Then again, most of the challengers in both parties did not find any groups important, although the financial data suggests they were more commonly targeted by party funds than other candidate types. First, consistent with the preceding data, Republican challengers perceive RPO activities at the state (1.55), district (1.55), and county level (1.55) more important than Democratic challengers perceive ODP at the state (1.28), district (1.06), and county level (1.33). Second, the assessments

[422] $t = 2.225$, $p < .035$.

by challengers towards the parties equal the assessments of incumbents. Third, Democrats generally did not perceive any party organizations to have been of any consequence, while competitive Republicans gave their highest and slightly important support for county-level party committees (2.00). Apparently, local Republican committees were either more active or more effective in 2002 than local Democratic committees. Third, Republicans were not complimentary of any other organizations including interest groups (1.55). Fourth, Democrats most noticed interest groups (1.72) and unions (1.56). When removing noncompetitive Democrats, these two groups become significantly important to competitive challengers (2.67, 2.33).[423] Some competitive challengers, therefore, accord some slightly important assistance from county-level committees, interest groups, and unions. Overall, the picture that emerges from challengers is that they do not perceive financial support from groups to be important, consistent with the financial data in the preceding section.

Open-seat candidates perceive more outside groups more important to them than other candidates. The single most important groups to open-seat candidates, from their perspective, actually turned out to be county-level party committees (2.59), followed by interest groups (2.06), and PACs (1.94). Open-seat candidates indicate county-level party committees were the most important and slightly important to their campaigns, significantly more so to them than challengers and incumbents.[424] Among Democrats, all other party committees, state (1.33), district (1.11), and legislative (1.33), are not at all important. Democratic open-seat candidates perceive county-level committees (2.44) their most important supporters followed by interest groups (2.00), PACs (2.00), and

[423] $t = 2.871$, $p < .011$; $t = 3.528$, $p < .003$.
[424] $t = 3.744$, $p < .000$.

unions (1.78). Way behind is the ODP (1.33) and OHDC (1.33). The pattern among Democrats is clear at this point; the state committee of the Oklahoma Democratic Party is not a significant financial player in state legislative elections. The state committee has failed to effectively provide substantial direct or indirect financial resources and, as a consequence, candidates do not find it important. Open-seat candidates indicate that the organizations closest to them in proximity are the most important (i.e. friends, family, county committees). Clearly, the ODP has a lot of work to do if it is to become more important to Democratic candidates. On the other hand, the RPO has been more effective. Republican open-seat candidates are more complimentary of party committees than non-party organizations. County-level party committees (2.75) exceed the state party (2.25), interest groups (2.13), PACs (1.88), and RSHC (1.75). The RPO has made an impact with Republican open-seat candidates and is considered a slightly important financial player. When removing noncompetitive open-seat candidates, all party committees retain their importance, but interest groups, PACs, and LCCs take a slightly more prominent role. Finally, all competitive candidates perceive all groups significantly more important to their campaigns than noncompetitive candidates.[425]

In conclusion, the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma are not significant financial organizations in state legislative elections in the state of Oklahoma from the perspective of candidates. A major finding in this section is that state parties are diffuse and fragmented in their ability to affect elections, financially or otherwise. Financially, they generally trail LCCs, PACs, interest groups, and unions in relative influence. When candidates do receive party assistance, they find county-level committees more helpful than the state organization. Regardless of party, competitive

[425] All groups no lower than $t = 2.263$, $p < .022$.

candidates and open-seat candidates were more receptive to party assistance. The party did not ignore incumbents, but LCCs and PACs supported incumbents at greater levels. Challengers and noncompetitive candidates perceive themselves to have been ignored. Finally, Republican candidates perceive group financial assistance more effective and, consequently, more important than Democrats. Most important, survey results indicate financial data does not necessarily or sufficiently indicate whom candidates find most important because so much financial activity is not in the form of direct donations and occurs behind the scenes. This is not a bad thing for Democrats who lack the financial prowess of Oklahoma Republicans. Nonetheless, the signals from this survey are ominous. If the parties want to be substantially important actors, then they must reassess the delivery and method of their financial services. As it stands currently, both party organizations are not significant financial players.

Gauging Public Opinion and Mobilizing Voters

In Chapters Two and Three, I discussed how grassroots mobilization has been and remains the most basic and most visible function of the party (Aldrich 1995, Blumberg et al 2003, Bibby 2003, Frendreis and Gitelson 1999, Hogan 2002, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004, White and Shea 2004). What is different today is the manner in which the parties gauge public opinion and mobilize voters. Studies show that parties have done this in a myriad of ways like conducting benchmark polls, compiling electronic voter databases, distributing posters and lawn signs, writing letters, mailing literature, monitoring news broadcasts, assisting voter registration, organizing get-out-the-vote drives, recruiting volunteer workers, arranging transportation, and phone banking (Frendreis and Gitelson 1999; Hogan 2002, Blumberg et al 2003, Francia et al. 2003,

Herrnson 2004). Parties are increasingly elevating the importance of gauging public opinion over mobilization because keeping accurate and up-to-date electronic databases can be as consequential and important as making sure that voters are even registered and that campaigns are stocked with volunteers (Herrnson 2004, White and Shea 2004). Yet, are candidates going to the state parties for this information? Previous studies show that some legislative candidates still rely on their state parties for voter information and mobilization, though this number is declining (Francia et al. 2003). Nevertheless, grassroots mobilization still ranks among the highest and most important function for parties (Hogan 2002, Francia et al. 2003, Herrnson 2004).

In Oklahoma, both parties keep computer databases with general information about registered voters and election statistics. The ease of accessing this information, the modernity of this information, and the usefulness of this information vary according to the source. In 2002, the ODP funded a major effort to finish the overhaul of the party database, known as "the voter file," a project originally started but never finished. The old database simply had raw, outdated data that was hard to navigate and not user-friendly. Past data requests took days, so candidates were often better off paying professionals to obtain voter information or finding experienced precinct or county officers. Since 2002, the ODP has maintained a newer, searchable database with the names of over 18,000 activists, volunteers, delegates, and donors and made it available to candidates at no cost. This project was made possible with the help of information and funds from the DNC, DCCC, DSCC, DLCC, DGA, and DAGA. Available in 2002, state legislative candidates obtained free voter information for the first time.[426]

[426] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.

In addition to the voter file, the party also launched the Native American Outreach Project, which was a GOTV effort aimed at under-registered Native American precincts. Jay Parmley, the ODP, and DNC believed that Native Americans were a valuable, but untapped electoral resource that could significantly bolster Democratic candidates. The party, with the help of local community leaders, registered Native Americans, recruited Native American campaign volunteers, and arranged transportation for Native Americans on Election Day. This effort also involved educating voters on absentee voting, canvassing door-to-door, and dropping Democratic-unity literature emphasizing straight-ticket voting. The Native American outreach actually had a spillover effect. The ODP, buoyed by positive comments of this program, sent a field advisor to Oklahoma City and Tulsa to establish a similarly designed Hispanic Outreach Project.[427]

The ODP also paid for an "ID call program" to find undecided voters and target them with mailings, one being a 142,000-piece mailing the last week of the campaign. The ID call program served two purposes. It gave precinct and county workers an idea of where to target their door-to-door efforts, literature drops, and phone-banks. The program also identified over 100,000 "likely Democratic voters" and volunteers were recruited to canvass their precincts simultaneously with phone banks and door-to-door canvassing. The party also aimed mobilization efforts in areas with significant numbers of Democrats and Independents, usually avoiding heavily Republican precincts. A field director worked to set up voter registration tables at shopping centers and meeting halls in urban precincts within North Tulsa and Oklahoma City to register and mobilize African American and Hispanic voters. Mobilization efforts also occurred in precincts featuring competitive races as well, and field staff was employed to organize and supervise county

[427] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.

efforts. Most GOTV efforts were not targeted with state legislative races in mind, though some consideration was given to those contests. Some legislative candidates were affected party efforts, but those outside the coverage area consequently found themselves ignored.[428] This was the extent of concerted mobilization efforts by the state party.

County committees were further encouraged to support local candidates with mobilization activities and create their own county mobilization efforts. The size, scope, and success of these efforts depended on the resources of particular county committees and the experience of county leaders. County committees were also expected to provide the candidates with the voter information acquired from the state committees. Other county leaders exchanged with candidates their own expertise regarding the issues and concerns of voters within the county, as well as messages and techniques that worked or did not work in the past. Some precinct and county leaders had detailed county and precinct maps, which they supplied to candidates on request. County usefulness varied from county to county according to the experience and activeness of county leaders.[429]

The principle emphasis of the Republican Party of Oklahoma during the 2002 election was "traditional party activities" that included, among other things, getting out the vote and registering voters.[430] Two statewide polls were conducted before the primaries, and one statewide poll was conducted after the primary. The polling data, among other tings, helped the party and candidates determine how and where to target media spots, direct mail, and phone banks. With the assistance of consultants and this polling data, the RPO also targeted its GOTV efforts in districts involving competitive contests, containing high amounts of undecided voters, and having a Republican

[428] Interview with Author July 8th, 2004.
[429] Interview with Author July 9th, 2004.
[430] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004

registration hovering between 45% and 55%. The RPO hired a coordinator to supervise and insure GOTV efforts in these "45-55" districts were appropriately and effectively organized. The RPO recruited "a couple hundred volunteers" in these "45-55" districts for canvassing door-to-door, dropping off leaflets, assisting with mailings, and manning phone banks. The party set a goal to register 35,000 new voters in these "45-55" districts, and the party claimed to have met its goal. Non-"45-55" districts were not a priority but still received some GOTV attention if polling indicated a competitive race. The party did not use phone banks and direct mail in these districts, but rather less costly, more personal techniques like door-to-door canvassing and literature drops. For statewide efforts, the party used its web page to advertise volunteer recruitment, link registration forms, request voting-day transportation, and highlight absentee ballot procedures. The RPO, therefore, made a conscious decision to focus GOTV efforts in Republican-concentrated precincts and hoped for conversions from undecided voters and independent voters in these areas. Although the state party arranged and planned these GOTV efforts, county-level committees did most of the actual labor and work.[431] RPO efforts did not appear to be as coordinated and extensive as ODP efforts.

Outside of the coordinated efforts of the state party, county committees were encouraged to conduct similar activities at their own discretion. Some, in fact, did organize their own mobilization efforts, recruit their own volunteers, and supplied information about voters. One county official hung signs showing the location (with a map) of the designated polling places, used a church bus to shuttle people to the election sites throughout the day, and held seminars in fellowship halls to answer questions about absentee procedures, polling locations, registration, and candidates. She even designed

[431] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004

and printed a newsletter about the candidates and issues and had county volunteers distribute them outside of football games, the county fair, and churches. Finally, the same individual supplied maps of all the precincts in the county, color-coded according to the percentage of registered Republicans.[432] Interviews indicate she is an exception, and not necessarily the rule. Other county committees relied on personal knowledge of county voting patterns, while others provided personally maintained precinct maps. Some county committees recruited volunteers for candidates or with candidates and allowed state legislative candidates to use the county headquarters as a place to stock signs, shirts, buttons, leaflets. County committees often became a central meeting place for volunteers to collect campaign items or conduct party campaign business, and as a location for to set up phone banks. Interviews with candidates and party officials indicated that phone banking and mailings were not nearly as common as personal, door-to-door canvassing. Others with access to past or present poll data would disseminate this information to candidates as well, or inform candidates of the Republican voter database. The sophistication and extensiveness of county GOTV efforts varied on a county-to-county basis depending on the resources, skills, experience, and knowledge of the county committee officer.[433]

In both parties, one quickly became aware of the heightened emphasis regarding the importance of reliable information, accurate precinct maps, and issue research. The information was helpful to candidates for targeting canvassing efforts. Despite an increasing desire for more technical information, it was also apparent that traditional mobilization efforts were in the greatest demand and most requested resource by

[432] Interview with Author July 10th, 2004.
[433] Interview with Author July 17th, 2004.

candidates. Candidates needed volunteers to personally go door-to-door in order to produce name recognition and get people out to vote. The largest problem prevalent in both parties was state-county coordination. Some county committees worked very effectively and with the state party; some county officers were not effective leaders, so party planning and coordination suffered. At the very least, a recurrent theme in all the interviews with past and present party officials and legislative candidates was the primary importance of simply turning people out.[434] This summarizes the extent of party efforts, and demonstrates how the Republican Party of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Democratic Party made voter mobilization an effort, though the method and emphasis varied by party.

Parties' have a tendency to inflate their importance in this area, so it is necessary to balance their perceived importance with evaluations from the candidates asking them who they felt were the most important groups in gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. The survey asked candidates three questions to assess three aspects of gauging public opinion and voter mobilization. The first question (Table 4.14 and Table 4.15) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information about voters?" The second question (Table 4.16) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day?" Finally, the third question (Table 4.17) asks, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with volunteer workers?" It is in the area of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters that the state parties receive some of their highest overall scores of importance.

[434] Interviews with Author July 7th & 17th, 2004.

Table 4.14: How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information about voters?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.25	3.40	3.00	2.64	3.25	2.29	2.44	2.40	2.50	3.89	4.00	3.67	3.61	3.75	3.33	1.83	1.71	2.00
County	3.13	2.20	4.67	2.55	2.50	2.57	1.81	1.20	2.83	2.89	2.83	3.00	1.89	1.83	2.00	2.33	2.14	2.60
District	1.38	1.20	1.67	1.36	1.50	1.29	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.33	1.17	1.67	1.28	1.17	1.50	1.42	1.14	1.80
State	2.00	1.80	2.33	2.18	1.75	2.43	1.50	1.30	1.83	1.89	1.83	2.00	1.67	1.67	1.67	1.92	1.71	2.20
LCCs	1.50	1.20	2.00	1.36	1.00	1.57	1.69	1.50	2.00	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.75	1.57	2.00
National	1.50	1.40	1.67	1.18	1.00	1.29	1.63	1.60	1.67	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.14	1.40
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.06	1.10	1.00	1.22	1.00	1.67	1.44	1.25	1.83	1.25	1.14	1.40
IGs	1.38	1.60	1.00	1.55	1.50	1.57	1.19	1.20	1.17	2.22	2.00	2.67	1.61	1.50	1.83	1.67	1.43	2.00
PACs	1.75	1.60	2.00	1.27	1.25	1.29	1.31	1.10	1.67	1.67	1.67	1.67	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.42	1.29	1.60
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Comp X Party F = 2.295, p< .029; Party F = 2.653, p< .013; Competition F = 1.602 p< .138, Seat Type F = 2.832, p< .000

Among the more fundamental expectations of political parties is to keep track of information about voters within precincts, counties, districts, and the state. Therefore, it should not be surprising that some of the highest mean scores of importance for party activities were in supplying information about voters. In light of the increased specialization, sophistication, and professionalization of campaigns, one resource that parties are going to great lengths to provide is the ability to supply information about voters. Table 4.14 displays the mean scores assessing the importance of groups in providing campaigns with information about voters. Party and seat type were significant predictors for the level of party activity. The two state parties were not equally effective, with the Republican Party of Oklahoma, from the perspective of candidates, delivering more useful information about voters than the Oklahoma Democratic Party. When indicating the importance of parties, candidates perceived county-level committees significantly more important to their campaigns than any other group.[435] Despite playing second fiddle to county-level committees, the state-level committees, with a few exceptions, outperformed other groups. Party groups played a significant role supplying information to candidates, more so than non-party groups.

LCCs are vital resources for incumbents. They provide many services during election and legislative seasons, and in many states have displaced the party as their predominant resource. In Oklahoma, the OHDC and RSHC are also valuable campaign resources, though they are having mixed amounts of success. They provided some incumbents with voter information but overall were not as important to incumbents as traditional state political party organizations.[436] The OHDC (1.75) outperformed the

[435] $t = 3.498$, $p < .001$.
[436] Almost significantly trailed county-level committees with $t = 1.842$, $p < .077$.

RSHC (1.69) among incumbents, though both scores do approach a level of indicating they were important. Democrats did not even find the OHDC to have been more useful than the ODP's state-level committees (1.92), but Republicans did find the RSHC more beneficial than the RPO's state-level committees (1.50). Democratic incumbents almost found the ODP (1.92) slightly important, but there is no doubt they perceived county-level committees (2.33) very helpful in supplying information about voters. Competitive Democrats indicate some slightly important assistance came from interest groups as well (2.00), but overall they were not important (1.67). Democratic incumbents perceived county-level committees more important than any other groups.

Republican incumbents were less satisfied with the quality of services from the party. Republicans found the Republican State House Caucus (1.69) to have been more helpful than the Republican party of Oklahoma (1.50), though the low mean scores of both suggest neither was effective. Republican incumbents noticed the assistance of county-level committees (1.81) more than other groups, and are moderately and significantly more important (2.83) to competitive incumbents.[437] Outside of this, Republican incumbents were not complimentary of the efforts of any other outside group for supplying information about voters. In both parties, competitive incumbents generally found party assistance significantly more important to them than noncompetitive incumbents.[438] The party is an important supplier of information to Democratic incumbents and competitive Republican incumbents

Despite the fact that Democratic incumbents are complimentary of ODP efforts at the state-level (1.92) and county-level (2.33), Democratic challengers were not equally

[437] $t = 4.075$, $p < .001$.
[438] $t = 3.969$, $p < .001$.

impressed by ODP assistance (1.67, 1.89). ODP efforts to supply information about voters were perceived by challengers less important than incumbents; so far the opposite scenario has occurred in this study. No other groups were useful to Democratic challengers. Nevertheless, Republican challengers found the efforts of state-level committees (2.18) and county-level committees (2.55) more effective than Democrats and slightly important to their campaigns. Even though Democratic incumbents perceived the ODP more important than the RPO, the opposite appears to be the case with challengers. Outside of state-level and county-level party assistance, Republican challengers did not find any other groups to have been of any consequence in supplying information about voters.

Table 4.15: How important were the following groups in providing campaigns with information about voters?

	Party		Position			Competitiveness	
	Democrat	Republican	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat	C	N-C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	3.13	2.69	2.18	3.24	3.59	2.70	3.07
County	2.26	2.34	2.04	2.14	3.00	2.77	1.98
District	1.33	1.26	1.25	1.31	1.35	1.50	1.16
State	1.79	1.83	1.68	1.86	1.94	2.07	1.64
LCCs	1.49	1.54	1.71	1.34	1.47	1.73	1.36
National	1.13	1.46	1.46	1.07	1.35	1.37	1.23
Union	1.33	1.03	1.14	1.28	1.12	1.30	1.11
IGs	1.77	1.34	1.39	1.59	1.82	1.67	1.50
PACs	1.38	1.40	1.36	1.24	1.71	1.53	1.30
N	39	35	28	29	17	30	44

The survey results from open-seat candidates parallel the results of challengers. That is, Republicans perceived RPO state-level (2.00) and county-level (3.13) committees more important than Democrats perceived ODP state-level (1.89) and county-level (2.89) committees in supplying information about voters. Republican open-

seat candidates found state-level and county-level assistance slightly important, but Democrats found only county-level committees slightly important. Furthermore, competitive and noncompetitive Democratic candidates held similar ideas regarding the value of party assistance, but competitive Republican open-seat candidates (4.67) were significantly more impressed by county-level committee assistance than noncompetitive Republican open-seat candidates (2.20).[439] Competitive Republican open-seat candidates found the information supplied by the county-level committee very important and more beneficial than any other group. Competitive Republican open-seat candidates also perceived LCCs to have been slightly important (2.00), but Democratic open-seat candidates, like Democratic incumbents, were not impressed by the OHDC. In lieu of LCCs, PACS gave Democratic open-seat candidates some voter information that they found slightly important (2.22). Aside from county-level committees and interest groups, no other groups were important. Party committees, especially at the county-level, are important to open-seat candidates

It is interesting to note that the efforts of the ODP state-level committee were appreciated more by incumbents than challengers and open-seat candidates. The ODP's work on the voter files paid off, as Democratic candidates found the party slightly important. Nevertheless, Republicans candidates still perceived RPO voter information more important. When candidates solicit party committees, they go to the county committees first and vice versa. With the exception of incumbents, Republicans appreciated the voter databases and poll information of the RPO more. All other groups are insignificant and unimportant. While the state parties are limited in Oklahoma, one

[439] $t = 3.539$, $p < .012$.

role they have an impact on is supplying information about voters. Nonetheless, supplying information is only one facet of the realm of gauging public opinion.

Interviews indicated that voter mobilization was a large party priority, and scholars and activists alike consider party mobilization activities the most fundamental and important of their functions (Hogan 2002, Francia et al 2003, Green and Gerber 2004). In Oklahoma, this is the case with Oklahoma Democratic Party, but this is not the case with the Republican Party of Oklahoma. Table 4.16 presents the results to the following question, "How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day?" The findings show that voter mobilization remains a key part of ODP operations, though it varies depending on the committee and candidate. Republicans were not as enthusiastic, reserving their highest scores solely for the efforts of their county-level party committees. Voter mobilization is a critical party activity, but not all state legislative candidates in Oklahoma are finding party efforts substantial. In fact, Republican mobilization efforts significantly lag Democratic mobilization efforts in the eyes of candidates.[440] Clearly, the perception among Republican candidates is not matching the perception of Republican officials. Interviews suggested that the RPO stresses mobilization a great deal, but Republican candidates seem to have found the efforts of the party lacking in 2002. Democrats are not having a similar problem.

Democratic incumbents perceive party assistance at various levels important to their campaigns, while Republican incumbents found only county-level committees slightly important. Democratic incumbents noticed OHDC (1.83) efforts more than Republican incumbents noticed the RSHC (1.38), which is similar to the assessment of

[440] $t = 2.066$, $p < .042$.

Table 4.16: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance registering voters and getting them to the polls on Election Day?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.13	4.40	3.67	4.18	4.50	4.00	3.75	3.40	4.33	4.67	4.50	5.00	4.44	4.33	4.67	4.33	4.57	4.00
County	2.63	2.00	3.67	2.36	2.00	2.57	2.06	1.30	3.33	3.00	2.83	3.33	2.06	1.92	2.33	2.42	2.00	3.00
District	1.63	1.20	2.33	1.27	1.50	1.14	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.78	1.67	2.00	1.33	1.00	2.00	1.75	1.43	2.20
State	1.63	1.40	2.00	1.27	1.25	1.29	1.13	1.10	1.17	1.56	1.50	1.67	1.50	1.42	1.67	2.08	1.71	2.60
LCCs	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.27	1.50	1.14	1.38	1.30	1.50	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.83	1.57	2.20
National	1.63	1.00	2.67	1.09	1.00	1.14	1.13	1.10	1.17	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.42	1.29	1.60
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.78	1.50	2.33	1.72	1.50	2.17	1.67	1.57	1.80
IGs	1.50	1.40	1.67	1.55	1.50	1.57	1.13	1.10	1.17	2.22	2.00	2.67	1.39	1.33	1.50	1.00	1.00	1.00
PACs	1.25	1.20	1.33	1.18	1.25	1.14	1.19	1.00	1.50	1.44	1.50	1.33	1.17	1.17	1.17	1.17	1.14	1.20
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Comp X Party F = 2.432, p< .021; Party F = 3.118, p< .004; Competition F = 3.230 p< .003, Seat Type F = 2.583, p< .001

incumbents in the previous section of supplying information about voters. Again, neither legislative campaign committee is important, unless one considers only the scores assigned by competitive Democratic incumbents (2.20). Only then does one find some slightly important mean scores. More importantly, Democratic incumbents cited the GOTV efforts of county-level (2.42) and state-level (2.08) committees as effective and, consequently, important. When removing noncompetitive Democratic incumbents, competitive Democratic incumbents found all party committees at the state (3.00), district (2.20), county (2.60), and legislative level (2.20) important to their campaigns. According to interviews, Democratic GOTV efforts were targeted towards, among other things, competitive districts, and the candidate's perceptions reflect this strategy. Republican incumbents were not so complimentary, finding only county-level committees important (2.06). The RPO's state-level committee (1.13) significantly lagged behind the ODP's state-level committee (2.08).[441] Republican incumbents did not find any other groups important.

A similar pattern emerges among challengers. Republican challengers only found county-level (2.36) GOTV efforts important, but did not find state-level (1.27), district-level (1.27), or non-party (1.57) efforts significantly important.[442] Democrats found party efforts at the county level (2.06) significantly more important than other party committees.[443] When only considering only competitive Democratic challengers, district-level committees (2.00) and unions (2.17) emerge as slightly important. Again we see noncompetitive and competitive candidates perceived Republican efforts

[441] $t = 2.962$, $p < .006$.
[442] $t = 3.638$, $p < .001$.
[443] $t = 3.344$, $p < .004$

similarly, but among Democrats, competitive candidates were far more positive.[444] An interesting finding of note is the emergence of union GOTV activities among competitive Democratic challengers. Unions apparently mobilized voters, and competitive challengers found these efforts to important to their campaigns.

The survey results of open-seat candidates are similar in many ways to challengers and incumbents; however, there are some subtle differences that deserve some further discussion. First, open-seat candidates find the same groups important to their campaign as incumbents and challengers. That is, open-seat candidates in both parties overwhelmingly find that the most important group in helping to mobilize voters for their campaigns were county-level party committees, although Democratic county organizations (3.00) outperformed (2.63) Republican county-level committees. Second, Republican open-seat candidates also indicate, in a deviation from previous patterns, that other groups played a slightly important role. When removing noncompetitive Republicans, competitive Republican open-seat candidates perceive county (3.67), district (2.33), state (2.00), and national committee (2.67) support slightly important to their campaigns.[445] Limited Republican mobilization efforts significantly impacted open-seat candidates more than incumbents and challengers. In contrast, Democratic mobilization efforts almost equally impacted incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates. Third, Democratic open-seat candidates, like challengers and incumbents, perceived county-level committees (3.00) very important and significantly more important than other party committees.[446] Of further interest, competitive Democratic

[444] $t = 3.226$, $p < .005$.
[445] County $t = 2.588$, $p < .041$; national $t = 2.588$, $p < .041$.
[446] $t = 3.250$, $p < .012$.

open-seat candidates found interest groups (2.67) and union (2.33) voter mobilization efforts important to their campaigns as well.

Voter mobilization and voter assistance are activities that are still emphasized by the RPO and ODP, though state legislative candidates perceive county-level committees of the RPO and ODP the most effective deliverers of these services. Nonetheless, the efforts of the Republican Party of Oklahoma were less important to state legislative candidates than efforts of the Oklahoma Democratic Party. Not only do the candidates of the two parties have different views, competitive candidates gave higher mean scores of importance than noncompetitive candidates. The parties admitted they targeted competitive districts; therefore, competitive candidates perceive party efforts as being more important to them than noncompetitive candidates. Open-seat candidates are also more often recipients of party assistance, though this is exaggerated more among Republicans than Democrats. All Democratic candidates substantially find party efforts important and more important than other groups. The low mean scores given to the RPO state-level committee suggests that the RPO has a lot more work to do to become important to state legislative candidates if voter mobilization and registration is important to the party. The ODP emphasizes mobilization and registration more and was more effective in 2002. Given the closeness of the governor's race in 2002, perhaps it would not hurt Republicans to try a little harder.

Finally, the last aspect of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters in this survey involved party efforts to supply campaigns with volunteer workers. Table 4.17 displays the overall scores of importance and the MANOVA tests for predictors of party activity. Both parties at the state level did a lousy job of supplying volunteer workers for

Table 4.17: How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with volunteer workers?

	Republican									Democrat								
	Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent			Open Seat			Challenger			Incumbent		
	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C	Total	N-C	C
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Family	4.00	4.80	2.67	4.36	4.25	4.43	3.94	3.60	4.50	4.67	4.50	5.00	4.39	4.25	4.67	4.25	4.29	4.20
County	3.00	2.00	4.67	2.73	2.75	2.71	1.81	1.70	2.00	2.00	1.83	2.33	1.89	1.58	2.50	2.33	2.29	2.40
District	1.63	1.20	2.33	1.45	1.50	1.43	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.78	1.67	2.00	1.17	1.17	1.17	1.17	1.14	1.20
State	1.38	1.00	2.00	1.55	1.25	1.71	1.13	1.00	1.33	1.56	1.50	1.67	1.44	1.50	1.33	1.33	1.29	1.40
LCCs	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.27	1.00	1.43	1.31	1.10	1.67	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.06	1.08	1.00	1.50	1.14	2.00
National	1.38	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.10	1.17	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Union	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.67	2.67	1.72	1.33	2.50	1.83	1.71	2.00
IGs	1.75	1.60	2.00	1.73	1.75	1.71	1.50	1.10	2.17	1.78	1.67	2.00	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.83	2.29	1.20
PACs	1.25	1.20	1.33	1.18	1.25	1.14	1.06	1.00	1.17	1.44	1.33	1.67	1.11	1.08	1.17	1.08	1.14	1.00
N	8	5	3	11	4	7	16	10	6	9	6	3	18	12	6	12	7	5

MANOVA: Competitiveness X Party F = 2.575, p< .015; Party F = 5.330, p< .000; Competition F = 1.840 p< .882, Seat Type F = 1.745, p< .042

state legislative candidates. In fact, barely a quarter of all the respondents of this survey indicated receiving any assistance from the Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma, though the presence of an open-seat gubernatorial election can explain some of this. The ODP and RPO (1.44, 1.33) receive very low mean scores of importance from candidates. Significantly more important to candidates than the state-level committees (1.38) are county-level committees (2.20).[447] Although the ODP slightly outperformed the RPO, the incredibly low scores suggest that state-level efforts were significantly unimportant. Since only a quarter of the candidates indicated receiving any state-level assistance, these low mean scores are not surprising. The most important groups in the eyes of candidates were county-level party committees, a group that 56% of the candidates in this survey indicated they solicited for volunteers. The level of party activity, according to the MANOVA test, is predicted by party and seat type.

Incumbents in both parties again did not find their legislative campaign committees to be important (1.50, 1.31), though Democrats felt the OHDC may have been marginally more effective. Of more importance in finding volunteers were the county-level party committees, with Democratic incumbents finding their respective county-level committees (2.33) more important than Republican county-level committees (1.81). Republican incumbents, in fact, did not find any groups important. Especially unimportant are the state-level committees (1.33, 1.13) and district-level committees (1.17, 1.13). Aside from the county-level committees, the only other groups of note among all incumbents are unions (1.83), with competitive Democratic incumbents finding them slightly important (2.00). All other groups are significantly unimportant to

[447] $t = 5.259$, $p < .000$.

all incumbents. The absence of any notable scores among all incumbents suggests that outside of county committees, finding campaign workers and volunteers is up to the candidates, their friends, and their families.

Challengers also indicate that the task of finding volunteer workers is largely a personal endeavor, though they receive very important assistance from friends and family (4.37). Challengers in both parties indicate that they did not find many groups very important in assisting them with recruiting or selecting volunteers. Democratic challengers relied predominantly on county-level committees for supplying workers (1.89), though the score is short of being important. Republican challengers, however, perceive county-level committees moderately important in supplying campaigns with volunteers (2.73). In fairness, removing noncompetitive challengers does cause county-level committees (2.50) and unions (2.50) to become slightly important to Democrats. The state-level committees clearly were not concerned with state legislative elections (1.44, 1.55); consequently, challengers perceived their assistance slightly and significantly unimportant.[448] It can be inferred that state-level committees are important to neither challengers nor incumbents. Republican challengers echo the observations of Republican incumbents. Republican challengers rely primarily on their county-level committees (2.73) followed by interest groups (1.73). That is it – there is certainly no important involvement by the RPO state-level committee. State-level committees are not effective suppliers of volunteers, so state legislative candidates do not find them very important. The same pattern that exists with incumbents also holds among challengers.

Like incumbents and challengers, Democratic open-seat candidates perceive county-level party committees the most important suppliers of volunteers. Democratic

[448] $t = 2.714$, $p < .011$.

open-seat candidates perceive county-level party committees (2.00) and unions (2.00) as important suppliers of volunteers; meanwhile, Republican open-seat candidates perceive only county-level party committees (3.00) important suppliers of volunteers. There is no significant difference in perceptions between the two parties, though Republican county-level committees were possibly more important than Democratic county-level committees. An interesting phenomenon that occurs with open-seat candidates and not other candidates is the number of groups that emerge as being slightly important when removing noncompetitive open-seat candidates. Competitive open-seat Democrats perceive unions (2.67), interest groups (2.00), and district-level committees (2.00) as being slightly important suppliers of volunteers. Competitive Republican open-seat candidates perceive interest groups (2.00), district-level committees (2.33), and district-level committees (2.00) as being slightly important suppliers of volunteers. Open-seat candidates perceive a wider variety of assistance coming from more groups than the other two types of candidates. In the end, county-level committees led the way in their assistance to state legislative candidates.

County-level assistance in supplying campaigns with volunteers is important to state legislative candidates, significantly more so than the assistance of other groups. County volunteer activities, therefore, were effective in 2002. Unions were also slightly important volunteer networks for Democratic state legislative campaigns. Absent from our discussion are the state-level committees of the ODP and RPO, as these two parties were unimportant to state legislative candidates and apparently did little to supply these campaigns with volunteers. State parties are not well organized volunteer networks for state legislative candidate.

In conclusion, this section finds that candidates perceive the Republican Party of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Democratic Party most effective in the area of gauging public opinion and voter mobilization. The state-level party committees are both most effective at supplying information about voters than anything else, with Republican committees being perceived slightly important. The second most important function of state-level party committees is their effort to register voters and mobilize voters on Election Day, though Republican candidates do not give the same positive appraisal as Democratic candidates. The RPO is clearly not an important GOTV resource or volunteer resource. The ODP is also not good at supplying volunteers. The key to understanding party-candidates' relationships is to look at the county level. Here, the party becomes very important, the most important resource to candidates in all three areas, though open-seat candidates and competitive candidates are slightly more positive than other candidate types.

Overall, the parties are maintaining their presence in the fundamental realm of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. Increasingly, there is more competition coming from legislative party organizations, interest groups, and unions. Parties are competing with other groups, and, so far, are losing this battle. If the assumptions of responsible party theory are to even begin to be discussed, then the parties must help candidates get elected. Regarding the fundamental feature of voter mobilization, the parties are not very important or are approaching a level of importance, from the perspective of the candidates in this study, as being anything more than just slightly important. If the party is not helping them to get elected, then we can never expect the parties to have much influence, if any, over governing.

Conclusion

Oklahoma has replaced its solid, one-party Democratic rule with a more competitive party environment currently favoring Republicans. Nevertheless, it would be inappropriate to suggest that either party is primarily responsible for this change as an outgrowth of its organizational development. Both parties, to some degree, suffer from organizational maladies that prevent them from acting as coherent, effective, powerful, or important organizations. The parties have struggled to interact efficiently with various committees, various constituents, various candidates, and various officeholders. Given the number of committees and the multiplicity of interests, it is little wonder that the chairman of either party is able to do much of anything beyond serving as a symbolic or fundraising figure. The parties find themselves struggling to maintain personnel and financial resources, which further impairs the functions of the party and reduces the quality of party services. This is no more evident than in state legislative elections.

The parties play a very limited role in the campaigns of state legislative candidates. Furthermore, the reputation that both parties hold among candidates as being limited and inconsequential has the additional effect of discouraging candidates from going to the party for help. State legislative elections in Oklahoma are still very local and lack the professionalism and sophistication of elections in other states or for other offices. The preferred campaign philosophy may be appropriately entitled "friends and neighbors" because candidates rely on their family, friends, and neighbors to act as their campaign personnel. With less need for groups, candidates do not seek group assistance. The lessened need for groups combined with the stereotype that parties are ineffective

campaign resources, creates an electoral environment that is not party-friendly. Yet, this does not mean the parties have no role or play no role in state legislative elections.

The days of parties playing the defining role are clearly over, but a new day when parties assist campaigns is in effect. The Oklahoma Democratic Party and Republican Party of Oklahoma recognize their limits, have come to grips with their roles, and have responded accordingly. As such, the ODP and RPO spend much of their time and energy doing what they do best, gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections. State legislative candidates are largely self-sufficient but are ill suited to mobilize vast segments of the population. Therefore, parties are best where candidates are weakest, i.e. supplying information about voters, registering voters, and recruiting volunteers. State legislative candidates primarily rely on county-level party committees in these three areas and find county-level party committees important in these three areas to their campaigns (Table 4.18). From the perspective of state legislative candidates, state-level committees are neither effective in these three areas nor are they important in these three areas (Table 4.19). State-level committees are, in fact, not important at all.

According to the surveyed candidates, both state-level party committees are not important during state legislative elections, as none of the mean scores for party services exceed a level of slightly important. The two parties received different scores of importance in different areas. The Oklahoma Democratic Party was most effective providing information about voters, registering and mobilizing voters, and assisting the candidates with advertising. Primarily, the Oklahoma Democratic Party is most effective playing a traditional party role. The Republican Party of Oklahoma is also best at providing information about voters for its candidates but was not noted for its voter

Table 4.18: Mean scores for county-level committees by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Party		Competitiveness		Seat Type		
	Democrat	GOP	C	N-C	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.74	1.71	2.10	1.48	1.32	1.86	2.18
Voter Information	2.26	2.34	2.77	1.98	2.04	2.14	3.00
Formulating Strategies	1.77	1.94	2.20	1.61	1.57	1.90	2.24
Registering Voters	2.38	2.29	2.93	1.93	2.21	2.17	2.82
Media Advertising	1.46	1.54	1.67	1.39	1.25	1.55	1.82
Assisting Fundraising	1.59	1.94	2.13	1.50	1.46	1.55	2.59
Formulating Issue Positions	1.85	1.83	1.39	2.00	1.39	2.00	2.29
Recruiting Workers	2.05	2.37	2.63	1.91	2.04	2.21	2.47
Campaign Management	1.59	1.71	1.90	1.48	1.36	1.69	2.06
Hiring Professionals	1.36	1.26	1.43	1.23	1.25	1.24	1.53
N	39	35	30	44	28	29	17

mobilization and advertising assistance. Surprisingly, the RPO appears to have received secondary credit for assisting with fundraising and selecting issue positions. Yet, a cautionary note is required. The mean scores are very low and very similar for a range of activities – recruiting, funding, selecting issues, introducing professionals, managing – suggesting two primary conclusions: one, the incredibly similar scores reflect that the party dispenses several services equally; two, though they dispensed these services equally they did not dispense them effectively. The mean scores are low for both parties, suggesting that overall, the party is not important to most candidates.

The next major trend that emerges from this table is that the ODP and RPO target their resources in a strategic fashion. Although the parties are generally unimportant and

are limited in the services they can provide, they are strategic and rational in how they dispense their resources. In other words, they provide goods and services where they think they will produce the most desirable result or have the greatest result (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie 1994). Therefore, competitive candidates generally were targets of more party activities and, consequently, found party services more important than noncompetitive candidates. Also, open-seat candidates were targets of more party activities and, consequently, also found party services more important than challengers and incumbents. Combining the two, the data shows that competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates were the recipients of more party attention than the other groups of candidates. Noncompetitive candidates and incumbents were generally ignored by the party and found party support completely unimportant.

If voter mobilization and voter assistance are activities that the parties invest a great deal of time and resources into, then one would expect to see some significant mean scores from the perspective of the candidates. This holds true at the county level, but not at the state level. The RPO, in fact, seems to have failed miserably in 2002 at registering and mobilizing voters compared to the ODP, even though it did make registering and mobilizing a party priority. The state-level party committees struggled to prove volunteers for state legislative campaigns. The fact that the state party spent so much time devoting resources to the governors and other congressional campaigns illustrates that the party is comparatively not as interested in state legislative races and its limited intervention is producing only marginal results. Yet, within this category is some evidence for optimism. Candidates indicated that information about voters is becoming increasingly important, and the parties appear to have partially responded. The parties

were most effective supplying voter information, though the RPO outperformed the ODP in this area suggesting the Democrats 2002 coordinated campaign fell short in some respects. More importantly, it indicates that the parties are capable of adapting. As the needs of candidates have changed, so too have the services that parties have provided. This is critical because parties will have no chance of succeeding if they cannot show the ability to adapt and be flexible.

Table 4.19: Mean scores for state-level committees by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Party		Competitiveness		Seat Type		
	Democrat	GOP	C	N-C	Incumbent	Challenger	Open Seat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.64	1.46	1.73	1.43	1.25	1.62	1.94
Voter Information	1.79	1.83	2.07	1.64	1.68	1.86	1.94
Registering Voters	1.69	1.29	1.67	1.39	1.54	1.41	1.59
Media Advertising	1.67	1.26	1.80	1.25	1.25	1.55	1.71
Accounting Reports	1.03	1.06	1.03	1.05	1.11	1.00	1.00
Assisting Fundraising	1.23	1.54	1.63	1.20	1.14	1.38	1.76
Formulating Issue Positions	1.41	1.51	1.73	1.27	1.25	1.45	1.82
Recruiting Workers	1.44	1.31	1.53	1.27	1.21	1.48	1.47
Formulating Strategies	1.41	1.31	1.47	1.30	1.18	1.45	1.53
Campaign Management	1.36	1.43	1.57	1.27	1.25	1.48	1.47
Hiring Professionals	1.46	1.49	1.63	1.36	1.25	1.52	1.76
N	39	35	30	44	28	29	17

There are some areas in which the parties do not excel. Clearly, the data shows that both parties are not capable of campaign management. They were not at all useful in assisting the campaign with creating campaign strategies or assisting campaigns with

management. Additionally, the ODP is not a financial manager. The ODP does not effectively assist with fundraising, donating funds, or connecting candidates to potential donors. Furthermore, the party was unsuccessful at introducing candidates to professionals or media consultants. The RPO appears to be more adept at providing financial services and introducing candidates to media and campaign professionals. Whereas mobilization was the ODP's strong point, mobilization was RPO's weakest link. This is surprising given the RPO's historical emphasis on grassroots mobilization. The surveys suggest the ODP outperformed the RPO in this area. The RPO did not play a substantial role in recruiting candidates either. Overall, the parties still mobilize and register voters, but the importance of their state-level committees is diminishing in this area.

The state parties have a lot of work to do because candidates do not find them very effective or very important in very mean areas. One party official's opinion seemed to sum up the quandary best when he said, "It's a damned if you do, damned if you don't scenario. They get upset for not helping, they get upset if you don't help enough, then, either way, they ignore you if they win."[449] It is simultaneously a frustrating and important time for the state parties. They do not do a lot of things very well, but they do some things well. They have emphasized activities that candidates find more important and concentrated less on other activities. This suggests that the parties are capable of adapting, but can they adapt quickly enough before they lose additional ground to interest groups and legislative campaign committees? The key to party growth is through the county committees. Clearly, state legislative candidates interact the most with these committees; therefore, the parties must strengthen state-county relationships, dispense

[449] Interview with Author July 9, 2004.

more functions to county committees, staff these county committees with qualified professionals, and then regulate them to make sure they are upholding their end of the bargain. Then, and only then, can the parties hope to play a more important role and, concomitantly, become more responsible and powerful political agents.

CHAPTER FIVE: A Comparative Examination

Under democracy one party always devotes its chief energies to trying to prove that the other party is unfit to rule - and both commonly succeed, and are right.

- H. L. Mencken

Introduction

The previous three chapters individually examined the states of Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma and described the types and importance of campaign services provided by the traditional state political party organizations to state legislative candidates within each state. The political parties within these three states receive varying scores of importance when delivering campaign services that differ according to the party, type of contest, and competitiveness of the candidate. Examining each state individually is a necessary but limited activity. It tells us nothing about whether the services provided by the Republican Party and Democratic Party are unique to each state, unique to each party, or are shared by the other parties or across the states. This chapter will determine: one, where the party is perceived to be important; two, when the party is perceived to be important; three, who is perceived to be important if the party is not; by use of a direct comparison across parties and states.

Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance compared in Texas, Louisiana & Oklahoma

One potentially important variable influencing perceptions of party strength is the environment of the state (Morehouse & Jewell 2003), as different contexts produce varying effects on organizational strength (Cotter et al. 1984). This section compares and contrasts candidate perceptions of party importance within one state to the other two

states without consideration to the individual parties. Regardless of the party, are there similarities and differences in Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma in candidate perceptions of party importance in terms of the level of importance and the types of services deemed important?

These questions are addressed in order to determine how much the perception of overall party activity differs within states or is a condition of the states. This chapter shows that state legislative candidates in Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana similarly gauge state parties as being, at best, only slightly important when solely providing grassroots services – providing candidates with information about voters, registering/mobilizing voters during elections, supplying volunteers. Candidates in each of the three states find parties wholly unimportant on the other four dimensions. Yet, in each state different party levels assume varying degrees of importance in the minds of candidates. For example, the state level committees in Louisiana are perceived to be more effective than the state level committees in Texas and Oklahoma, the district level committees in Texas are perceived to be more effective than the district level committees in Oklahoma, and the county level committees in Oklahoma are perceived to be more effective than the county level committees in Texas and Louisiana. Overall, Louisiana's political parties are perceived to have been more active and, consequently, slightly more useful to its legislative candidates than political parties in the other two states.

The most striking feature of Table 5.1 is the rather low scores of importance by candidates. Across all three states it is clear that only two activities – registering voters and providing information about voters – are areas of slight importance for the political parties. Providing information about voters was perceived to be the highest rated service

provided by state-level committees in Oklahoma and Louisiana, and the third highest rated activity for the state committee in Texas.

Table 5.1: Mean scores for State Party activities by State

	LA	TX	OK
	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.57 (.829)	1.45 (.630)	1.55 (1.075)
Voter Information	2.21 (1.160)	1.70 (.907)	1.81 (1.119)
Registering Voters	2.14 (1.158)	2.02 (1.229)	1.50 (.864)
Media Advertising	1.63 (.891)	1.82 (1.026)	1.47 (.864)
Assisting Fundraising	1.54 (.889)	1.30 (.579)	1.38 (.823)
Formulating Issue Positions	1.69 (.925)	1.52 (.802)	1.46 (.996)
Recruiting Workers	1.58 (.908)	1.70 (1.197)	1.38 (.696)
Formulating Strategies	1.55 (.964)	1.49 (.771)	1.36 (.653)
Campaign Management	1.50 (.912)	1.31 (.562)	1.39 (.825)
Hiring Professionals	1.46 (.794)	1.16 (.481)	1.47 (1.023)
N	101	83	74

* Cells contain mean values with standard errors in parentheses.
**Values in the table range from 1 "never important" to 5 "Extremely important."

Second to providing voter information was registering and mobilizing voters during elections. Candidates in Texas rated this service higher than any other service, though candidates in Louisiana and Oklahoma have them as their second and third areas, respectively. Though there is consensus on two of the top three services provided by the state-level committees, differences exist regarding the third most important party activity. In Louisiana, the third highest rated service from the perspective of candidates was "select issue positions," not a highly rated service in the other two states. Texas' state-level committees were cited for providing campaign workers and assisting candidates, with advertising as the third rated service. Finally, Oklahoma state legislative candidates

rated party influence on the decision to run as the third highest party service, though the mean score barely exceeded the mean score for registering/mobilizing voters.

Across all three states, state legislative candidates did not find state-level committees at all useful for fundraising, developing strategies, managing campaigns, and hiring consultants. State-level committees are noticed most by candidates when gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. Though each state's state-level committees are rated highest for the same functions, different mean scores suggest that the state-level committees do not play equally important roles in state legislative campaigns.

Table 5.1 shows that Louisiana's state-level committees were more important to its legislative candidates than state-level committees in Oklahoma and Texas because Louisiana's state-level committees had higher mean scores than the other two parties on eight of the ten variables.[450] Excluding Louisiana from the analysis, state legislative candidates equally noticed Texas and Oklahoma. Texas' state-level mean scores exceed Oklahoma's state-level mean scores on five of the ten variables. Thus, by mean scores alone, the party organizations in Louisiana were perceived by candidates to be relatively more active, effective, and important than their counterparts in Oklahoma and Texas, while Oklahoma and Texas appear to be perceived as equally active. Are Louisiana's state committees better than the other two state committees? It would be presumptuous to conclude that a particular state's state-level committees are more important without first comparing their scores to all other groups within their respective states. If the state-

[450] Actually, eleven variables were included in the survey; however, the accounting variable is dropped from the analysis and discussion in this chapter because the mean scores in this category approach zero and consistently failed all t-tests and MANOVA tests of significance in preceding chapters. It is an insignificant variable, it is not a party service, and its inclusion for comparative and summative purposes is, therefore, inappropriate.

level committees exceed the scores assessed to other groups, then one could conclude that the state-level committees are comparatively more important within their states.

After examining all the scores, I find that Louisiana's state-level committees exceed the top four three times; the mean score of Oklahoma's and Texas' state-level committees are in the top four two times. Therefore, Louisiana's state-level committees are only slightly more valuable to candidates in Louisiana than the state-level committees are to candidates in Oklahoma and Texas. Despite the fact that Louisiana's state-level committees had higher mean scores than Oklahoma and Texas on eight of the ten variables, the other groups in Louisiana also had higher mean scores. Louisiana's state legislative candidates found the support received from other groups more beneficial. Therefore, though Louisiana's state-level committees receive higher ratings, they are not comparatively more important than other groups within the state and are not necessarily much more important than Texas' state-level committees. Oklahoma's state-level committees, however, are clearly less valuable and not at all important.

So how important are the state-level committees across all three states? The mean scores assigned to the state-level committees are in the top four only seven times out of thirty categories across three states, and the mean score for state-level committees exceeds a 2.00 mean score, the categorical equivalent of "slightly important," only three times out of thirty categories. These numbers tell us that the state-level committees are not even "slightly important" and that candidates consistently turn to other groups before state-level committees. It is safe to say that the state-level committees indeed are comparatively unimportant and largely ineffective campaign resources for state legislative candidates. Yet, looking at the state-level committees alone as indication of

the effectiveness and importance of the state parties is inappropriate because state political parties encompass committees at the district and county levels.

Table 5.2: Mean scores for District Party activities by State

	TX	OK
	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.46 (.801)	1.34 (.880)
Voter Information	2.05 (1.324)	1.30 (.613)
Formulating Strategies	1.52 (.832)	1.49 (.996)
Registering Voters	2.28 (1.533)	1.43 (.845)
Media Advertising	1.49 (.832)	1.32 (.760)
Assisting Fundraising	1.42 (.683)	1.20 (.496)
Formulating Issue Positions	1.86 (1.072)	1.27 (.764)
Recruiting Workers	1.58 (1.072)	1.32 (.796)
Campaign Management	1.35 (.723)	1.32 (.796)
Hiring Professionals	1.19 (.653)	1.15 (.428)
N	83	74

* Cells contain mean values with standard errors in parentheses.
**Values in the table range from 1 "never important" to 5 "Extremely important."

Table 5.2 shows that Texas' district-level committees have been rated higher than district-level committees in Oklahoma on all ten variables. By mean scores alone, the district-level committees in Texas appear to have been more effective and valuable than their counterparts in Oklahoma. Nevertheless, out of the twenty categories (ten in each of the two states), only twice does the district-level party place within the top four. Both of these cases are in Texas. The overall low scores suggest that district-level committees, like their state-level counterparts, indeed are largely unimportant and ineffective campaign resources for state legislative candidates. The most egregious example is in Oklahoma, where district-level committees never exceed a mean score of 1.50.

Oklahoma's district-level committees are of no particular value in the minds of state legislative candidates. Yet, are the same results carried over to the county-level?

The real center of party-candidate relationships is not at the state or district level; rather, they are found at the county level. First, if one compares the mean scores assigned to county-level committees, then one finds county-level scores consistently exceed the mean scores of state and district committees. Second, if one compares the mean scores for county-level committees across the ten variables, then one discovers that county-level committees are much more likely than state- and district-level committees to place within the top four. For example, the state-level committee in Louisiana makes the top four only three times, but Louisiana's county-level committee do this four times. In Texas, the state-level committee are in the top four two times, but the county organization exceeds the top four five times. County-level committees are more valuable in the minds of candidates.

The value of county-level party committees is most apparent in Oklahoma, where the mean scores for county-level committees exceed the top four across all ten categories. Oklahoma's state legislative candidates rate Oklahoma's county party committees higher than state legislative candidates in Texas and Louisiana. Additionally, Oklahoma's county-level committees receive higher mean scores than Texas' county-level committees on six of the ten variables; Texas' county-level committees receive higher mean scores than Louisiana's county-level committees on nine of the ten variables. Exceeding the top four fifteen times in thirty cases, the above data shows that county-level committees are comparatively the more valuable level of the party organization, especially in Oklahoma.

The data indicates that state-level and district-level committees are generally unimportant, candidates do not notice them, their mean scores consistently fall below the level of "slightly important," and they do not consistently exceed the mean scores assigned to other groups. In contrast, county-level committees exceed 2.00 half the time and more consistently place within the top four, which indicates they are more valuable to state legislative candidates than state-level committees and district-level committees. Unfortunately, the county-level committee scores do not consistently exceed friends, family, interest groups, legislative campaign committees, and political action committees. Across all three states, only unions and national party organizations consistently score worse than state party organizations.

State legislative candidates do not rate traditional state political party organizations very high and find the county committees at best only slightly important on half the campaign functions. Yet, can one still comfortably conclude that overall the state parties are perceived by candidates not to be more important than interest groups, legislative campaign committees, and political action committees? Another way to definitively answer this question is go beyond mean scores and top fours and examine the type of activities that candidates give state, district, and county parties higher ratings. If different party levels are slightly important along different dimension, then one could reasonably conclude that the totality of party committee functions, with each committee being the best external group at a different campaign service, makes political parties a slightly important resource to state legislative candidates. Or, if all party levels are slightly important along the same dimension, then one could conclude that the political parties are specialists, limited in their importance because the reach of their services is

confined to a particular campaign function. This would reduce the chance that, overall, traditional state political party organizations are more valuable than other groups.

While it was shown previously that state-level committees receive their highest scores registering voters and providing voter information, it has not yet been discussed in which categories the county committees and district committees receive their highest marks. This is important given the fact that the district-level and, especially, county-level committees receive higher scores than state-level committees. Table 5.3 shows the mean scores given to county committees.

Table 5.3: Mean scores for County Party activities by State

	LA	TX	OK
	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.66 (.886)	1.71 (.819)	1.73 (1.242)
Voter Information	1.78 (1.119)	2.11 (1.448)	2.30 (1.190)
Formulating Strategies	1.63 (.967)	1.65 (.803)	1.85 (1.289)
Registering Voters	1.81 (1.206)	2.54 (1.655)	2.34 (1.253)
Media Advertising	1.45 (.700)	1.54 (.721)	1.50 (1.050)
Assisting Fundraising	1.57 (.876)	1.58 (.767)	1.76 (1.132)
Formulating Issue Positions	1.55 (.806)	1.87 (.894)	1.84 (1.324)
Recruiting Workers	1.94 (1.147)	2.81 (1.604)	2.20 (1.324)
Campaign Management	1.53 (.901)	1.45 (.547)	1.65 (1.078)
Hiring Professionals	1.35 (.767)	1.23 (.451)	1.31 (.681)
N	101	83	74

* Cells contain mean values with standard errors in parentheses.
**Values in the table range from 1 "never important" to 5 "Extremely important."

When examining the nature of county services, an interesting commonality is observed. The highest rated activities for county committees, as perceived by state legislative candidates, are identical across all states – supplying workers, registering voters, and providing information about voters. Whether looking at Oklahoma,

Louisiana, or Texas, the top three highest rated activities from the perspective of candidates is the same, though candidates in Oklahoma assigned a different order to the importance of the three activities. Furthermore, the mean scores assigned to these three activities are significantly higher than the mean scores assigned to the other seven activities. Thus, as the literature suggests and interview data verifies, county committees are the premier agents for the grassroots function of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections. County committees supply grassroots functions more effectively than state-level and district-level committees, and, consequently, are considered more important to state legislative candidates in this area. County committees and state committees are both given their highest marks for registering voters and providing voter information, suggesting thus far that state parties are specialists.

When examining the nature of district-level services, a similar commonality appears in Table 5.2 that was witnessed in Table 5.3. Although the pattern is not nearly as perfect as the preceding table, a clear picture emerges. District parties receive their highest scores when registering voters and providing voter information. In Oklahoma, the third most highest rated function is assisting with campaign strategies, while Texas is selecting issue positions. Apart from this difference on the third most important function, it is clear that consensus exists regarding the primary value of district-level committees. Across all three committees in all three states, the highest mean scores occur for the functions of registering/mobilizing voters and providing information about voters. In these two categories, the county, district, and state party also all place within the top four of all ranked external groups.

Again, the evidence shows that among the five dimensions reviewed in this study – campaign finance, decision to run, campaign management, campaign communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections – the traditional state political party organization is the leading group for only one of these dimensions – public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections. In the two areas of decision to run and campaign communications, party organizations display some varying degree of value and occasionally have higher mean scores than others groups, but the overall scores remain low and indicate unimportance. Finally, the parties never appear as a valuable or important resource in the areas of candidate finance and campaign management. The parties are specialists, and within their specialty some candidates give them the highest rating of all external groups and find them slightly important.

In summary, the following assessments can be made regarding overall party activity. The county-level committee is the most noticed party organization for state legislative candidates. Candidates in Oklahoma appreciated county-level committees more than candidates in Louisiana and Texas, while candidates in Louisiana appreciated state-level committees more than candidates in Oklahoma and Texas. Finally, candidates in Texas appreciated district-level committees more than candidates in Oklahoma. In different states, the different committees display varying levels of relative value, but the most effective and important level of the state political party organization is the county-level committee. For all committees, the parties are at best perceived as slightly important when supplying grassroots services – supplying candidates with information about voters and mobilizing voters during elections.

Democratic Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance compared to Republican Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance

The major parties differ in strength and provision of services (Cotter et al. 1984, Frendreis et al. 1994, Hogan 2002). Therefore, another potential factor influencing candidate perceptions of party assistance may be partisan affiliation. This section compares and contrasts Republican candidate perceptions of party assistance with Democratic candidate perceptions of party assistance all three states. A series of questions is answered in this section: one, what activities did Republicans and Democrats notice?; two, what similarities and differences emerge between the two parties?; three, of the two parties which was perceived to be more important to candidates when compared to each other and to other groups? Previously, state legislative candidates assigned their highest scores of party importance for providing information about voters and registering/mobilizing voters during elections. Additionally, the county-level committees supplied these services more effectively and, consequently, were rated higher than state-level committees and district-level committees. However, does the same pattern exist for candidates in both parties?

This section finds that Democratic candidates rate state-level committees higher than Republican candidates, Republicans and Democrats equally rate county-level committees, and Republicans rate district-level committees higher than Democratic candidates. Interestingly enough, candidates in both parties give their highest marks for the same services for each committee level, though the order of these services differs slightly. We will also see that competitive challengers and open-seat candidates rate party committees higher than noncompetitive challengers and incumbents.

Table 5.4 summarizes the mean scores across all states divided according to party, status, and competitiveness. Democratic state-level committees are rated higher when registering/mobilizing voters, supplying information about voters, and assisting with advertising. Overall, Democrats rate Democratic Party registration activities as being slightly important. Republican state-level committees are also rated higher by Republican candidates when registering/mobilizing voters and supplying information about voters; however, unlike the Democrats, supplying information about voters was more valuable to Republican candidates than registering voters. This is not surprising considering that traditional Republican constituencies are already largely registered. Also, Republican candidates did not find Republican Party attempts with advertising assistance to be as valuable as Democrats did; rather, the assistance they received in selecting issue positions was rated higher. Falling just outside of the top three for both parties is supplying campaigns with campaign workers. Therefore, at the state-level, candidates in both parties rate parties higher when supplying traditional grassroots functions of public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections.

Across these three states, Democrats assign higher scores than Republicans in six of the ten categories for state-level committees. Despite the fact that Republicans have increased representation in all three states and comprise the de facto majority party in two of these three states, the state-level committees for Democratic Party organizations are still rated higher by Democratic candidates than Republican candidates rate Republican state-level committees. Minority status, perhaps, has forced Democrats to rely upon more groups; as a consequence state-level committees have become more viable organizations to state legislative candidates.

Table 5.4: Mean scores for State Party activities by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Competitiveness		Seat Type			Party	
	N-C	C	Open Seat	Challenger	Incumbent	Republican	Democrat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.40 (.921)	1.69 (.775)	1.79 (1.016)	1.62 (.947)	1.31 (.590)	1.47 (.765)	1.58 (.928)
Voter Information	1.73 (1.190)	2.19 (.971)	2.12 (1.022)	2.00 (1.201)	1.78 (1.008)	1.87 (1.122)	1.99 (1.063)
Registering Voters	1.77 (1.173)	2.11 (1.088)	2.02 (1.129)	1.92 (1.190)	1.87 (1.095)	1.72 (1.089)	2.11 (1.329)
Media Advertising	1.48 (1.070)	1.87 (.781)	1.79 (.893)	1.70 (1.038)	1.53 (.848)	1.57 (.914)	1.73 (.953)
Assisting Fundraising	1.20 (.965)	1.71 (.520)	1.67 (.944)	1.50 (.900)	1.22 (.499)	1.41 (.810)	1.43 (.765)
Formulating Issues	1.40 (1.118)	1.79 (.670)	1.73 (.972)	1.62 (.990)	1.44 (.789)	1.63 (1.022)	1.51 (.788)
Recruiting Workers	1.45 (1.062)	1.71 (.872)	1.65 (1.027)	1.74 (1.133)	1.35 (.701)	1.57 (1.059)	1.56 (.870)
Formulating Strategies	1.37 (.892)	1.63 (.752)	1.65 (.861)	1.58 (.919)	1.31 (.676)	1.43 (.793)	1.53 (.853)
Campaign Management	1.27 (.875)	1.60 (.688)	1.58 (.893)	1.48 (.763)	1.27 (.744)	1.46 (.941)	1.36 (.609)
Hiring Professionals	1.29 (.890)	1.46 (.714)	1.50 (.960)	1.41 (.797)	1.26 (.702)	1.43 (.939)	1.31 (.631)
N	146	112	52	98	108	127	1.31

* Cells contain mean values with standard errors in parentheses.
**Values in the table range from 1 “never important” to 5 “Extremely important.”

Republicans give higher ratings than Democrats when selecting issue positions, assisting management, supplying campaign workers, and recommending campaign professionals. Two of these categories fall within the realm of campaign management, suggesting that Republican candidates noticed Republican management activities more. Democrats rated state-level committees higher than Republicans in the decision to run and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections. The remaining two dimensions – communications and financing – are evenly split. Nonetheless, the low scores suggest that both parties' state-level committees are not important to candidates in the area of campaign management, campaign finance, and the decision to run. There is some evidence that some candidates appreciate party communication services, though not on a consistent basis. Yet, state-level committees are but one facet of the state party organization. This study has already revealed that the real center of party-candidate interaction is not at the state level; rather, it is found further down at the district level and county level.

Table 5.5 displays the mean scores for county organizations. First, higher state-level committee ratings are not predictors for higher or important county-level committee ratings. Republican candidates rated Republican county-level committees evenly as Democrats rated Democratic county-level committees, which did not occur at the state-level. Second, both Democratic and Republican candidates give higher mean scores to county-level committees than state-level committees on eight of the ten variables; the state-level committees are rated higher only when assisting with advertising and recommending professionals. Third, Democratic candidates give higher mean scores to county-level committees than district-level committees on nine of the ten variables, and

Republican candidates give higher mean scores to county-level committees than district-level committees on eight of the ten variables. In both parties, candidates only rate the advertising assistance of district-level committees higher than county-level committees. Fourth, the mean score for county-level committees exceeds the tope four on six of the ten variables for Republicans and seven of the ten variables for Democrats, whereas Republican and Democratic state-level committees only exceed the top four on four variables. This data reveals that state legislative candidates in both parties perceive county-level committees as being the most valuable level of the party organization.

The parties display many similarities and differences. Republican candidates rated county-level committees higher for supplying campaigns with volunteers, followed by registering voters and supplying information about voters. While these top three services are also the top three for Democratic candidates, Democratic candidates rated registration services higher than the other two party services. Also, Democratic county-level committees received higher mean scores than Republican county-level committees in two of these three areas. Democrats were more impressed by county-level grassroots services than Republicans. This pattern was observed with state-level committees as well. Democratic county-level committees also receive higher mean scores than Republican county-level committees in the decision to run, mirroring state level observations. Republican county-level committees outscored Democratic county-level committees in fundraising, selecting issues, supplying workers, assisting with management, and recommending professionals, though none of these scores in either party approaches any level of importance. Republican county-level committees outscored Democratic county-level committees in campaign management and candidate

Table 5.5: Mean scores for County Party activities by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Competitiveness		Seat Type			Party	
	N-C	C	Open Seat	Challenger	Incumbent	Republican	Democrat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.52 (1.063)	1.93 (.873)	2.08 (1.045)	1.78 (1.145)	1.44 (.674)	1.69 (.957)	1.71 (1.004)
Voter Information	1.91 (1.229)	2.20 (1.286)	2.38 (1.360)	2.05 (1.247)	1.85 (1.214)	1.94 (1.256)	2.12 (1.277)
Formulating Strategies	1.53 (1.088)	1.93 (.941)	1.83 (.964)	1.86 (1.131)	1.50 (.922)	1.69 (1.065)	1.71 (.988)
Registering Voters	2.03 (1.373)	2.41 (1.428)	2.48 (1.393)	2.19 (1.352)	2.06 (1.461)	2.09 (1.369)	2.31 (1.446)
Media Advertising	1.40 (.819)	1.62 (.809)	1.67 (.879)	1.57 (.873)	1.33 (.710)	1.48 (.834)	1.50 (.807)
Assisting Fundraising	1.40 (1.075)	1.92 (.720)	2.00 (1.155)	1.71 (.952)	1.37 (.678)	1.69 (.949)	1.57 (.903)
Formulating Issue Positions	1.55 (1.099)	1.98 (.903)	2.04 (1.102)	1.92 (1.090)	1.43 (.800)	1.78 (1.046)	1.69 (.984)
Recruiting Workers	2.12 (1.342)	2.52 (1.428)	2.48 (1.393)	2.41 (1.435)	2.10 (1.367)	2.33 (1.453)	2.26 (1.356)
Campaign Management	1.42 (.928)	1.70 (.794)	1.81 (.817)	1.56 (.909)	1.39 (.818)	1.55 (.897)	1.53 (.835)
Hiring Professionals	1.21 (.680)	1.42 (.621)	1.48 (.641)	1.30 (.613)	1.21 (.684)	1.34 (.681)	1.26 (.627)
N	146	112	52	98	108	127	131

* Cells contain mean values with standard errors in parentheses.
**Values in the table range from 1 “never important” to 5 “Extremely important.”

financing but split the category of campaign communications. Nonetheless, the real difference between the two parties emerges at the district level.

The district-level committee scores display much more variability. Table 5.6 shows Republican district-level committees outscored Democratic district-level committees in nine of the ten categories. Showing an increased role and effectiveness of district-level committees within Republican state political party organizations, Republican district-level committees have higher mean scores than state-level committees in five of the ten categories compared to only one of the ten categories in the Democratic Party. Recalling the finding that Democratic state-level committees outscored Republican state-level committees, one can conclude that Republican district-level committees are perceived to be much more valuable to Republican candidates. Candidates rate district-level committees differently than the other two committees.

District-level committees in both parties share the exact same top two, with registering/mobilizing voters and supplying information about voters being the top two rated functions. Republican ratings almost approached a level of slightly important, but just missed the threshold. Democratic candidates judged Democratic committees to be slightly important when registering voters, but that was it, and no other scores approach importance. The third rated function provided by district-level committees is selecting issue positions. This is not a service in the top three of either the state or county committees, demonstrating that district-level committees do occasionally engage in different services than county and state-level committees. Regardless, district-level committees concentrate primarily on public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections like the other two committees. Most importantly, Republican candidates

Table 5.6: Mean scores for District Party activities by party, competitiveness, and seat type

	Competitiveness		Seat Type			Party	
	N-C	C	Open Seat	Challenger	Incumbent	Republican	Democrat
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.36 (.908)	1.65 (.777)	1.73 (1.031)	1.53 (.933)	1.32 (.609)	1.53 (.880)	1.44 (.815)
Voter Information	1.71 (1.184)	2.13 (1.013)	1.94 (1.128)	1.93 (1.197)	1.82 (1.018)	1.93 (1.120)	1.85 (1.111)
Formulating Strategies	1.38 (1.031)	1.71 (.765)	1.71 (1.085)	1.59 (.963)	1.37 (.723)	1.61 (.953)	1.44 (.853)
Registering Voters	1.78 (1.352)	2.24 (1.255)	2.13 (1431)	1.93 (1.406)	1.95 (1.165)	1.96 (1.324)	2.00 (1.329)
Media Advertising	1.41 (.852)	1.63 (.742)	1.60 (.979)	1.47 (.796)	1.49 (.696)	1.51 (.772)	1.5 (.835)
Assisting Fundraising	1.23 (.743)	1.66 (.441)	1.56 (.761)	1.49 (.557)	1.28 (.571)	1.49 (.706)	1.34 (.436)
Formulating Issue Positions	1.48 (1.001)	1.84 (.939)	1.85 (1.110)	1.62 (.914)	1.55 (.971)	1.69 (.902)	1.59 (1.068)
Recruiting Workers	1.38 (1.037)	1.70 (.878)	1.75 (1.170)	1.58 (.981)	1.34 (.785)	1.57 (.997)	1.46 (.917)
Campaign Management	1.27 (.889)	1.58 (.617)	1.65 (1.157)	1.40 (.618)	1.29 (.577)	1.46 (.764)	1.34 (.749)
Hiring Professionals	1.21 (.688)	1.41 (.417)	1.38 (.672)	1.30 (.583)	1.26 (.461)	1.37 (.637)	1.23 (.456)
N	146	112	52	98	108	127	131

* Cells contain mean values with standard errors in parentheses.
**Values in the table range from 1 “never important” to 5 “Extremely important.”

rated Republican district-level higher than Democratic candidates rated Democratic district-level committees.

Whether talking about the county, district, or state-level committees, the two traditional state political party organizations display some similarities and differences regarding their highest rated functions from the perspective of state legislative candidates. The first similarity is that both parties are rated highest when supplying information about voters and registering/mobilizing voters during elections. The Republican Party and Democratic Party focus on public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections, with Democrats perceiving the Democratic Party to have done a better job than Republicans. It is further interesting that both parties at the county and district levels have the exact same items in the top three, though the ranking of this top three differs slightly between the two parties. The highest rated level of the party organization is the county-level committee.

Other differences between the two parties were harder to find. Republican district-level committees played a larger role within the Republican Party organization during state legislative elections, while Democratic state-level committees played a slightly larger role among Democrats. Republican candidates also consistently rated different party activities higher than Democratic candidates. Republican candidates rated the Republican Party higher when selecting issue positions, supplying workers, assisting with campaign management, and recommending professionals. The ratings for the two parties split when recruiting, fundraising, advertising, and developing strategies. Democratic committees generally scored better in supplying information about voters and registering/mobilizing voters. The two parties are rated differently for different

functions, but overall both parties at all levels excelled at public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections.

Finally, the preceding three tables also reveal some other interesting results that should be noted. First, all three tables show that competitive candidates rate state political party activities higher than noncompetitive candidates. This reaffirms the strategic and rational nature of parties – they target their services for those who have the best chance of winning – and candidates notice these strategic effects. Secondly, the tables show that open-seat candidates rate party activities higher than challengers, and challengers higher than incumbents. Political parties are not highly rated as incumbent resources. This indicates two possibilities. One, while party assistance is strategic and parties give to those who stand the best chance of winning; traditional state political party organizations do not support incumbents because incumbents have access to so many other resources including legislative campaign committees. Two, traditional state political party organizations do support incumbents but are finding their relative influence outweighed by the fact that incumbents receive substantial support from many other competing non-party groups. With incumbents having so many groups biding for their time and attention, the traditional political party is pushed to the periphery of candidate perceptions.

Influences on Candidate Perceptions of Party Assistance

The first and most striking finding was the low mean scores of party importance. Very few candidates found external groups beyond friends and family useful to their campaigns. However, state legislative candidates have varying perceptions of the

importance of party, which indicates that some factors are clearly more important than others in explaining candidates' evaluations of party assistance.

One observed difference was a partisan factor. Consistent with the literature (Cotter et al. 1984, Frendreis et al. 1994, Gierzynski 1992, Hogan 20002), the tables show that though both parties emphasize grassroots services, they produce different evaluations among candidates. The parties clearly differ in organizational strength, capacity, and service provisions, which reflect the traditional resources and services the parties have historically relied upon and provided (Cotter et al. 1984, Francia et al. 2003). Based upon the preliminary observations and literature, I hypothesize that party affiliation will predict the types of services candidates find more or less important to their campaigns, with Democrats giving higher scores to traditional grassroots services and Republicans giving higher scores on other services like fundraising and issue positions.

Another potentially significant variable affecting perceptions of party importance was state party strength. Professionalism (Squire 2002) and two-party competition (Rosenthal 1995) are two factors significantly associated with strong party committees in certain states. Louisiana is considered the most competitive state of the three (Morehouse and Jewell 2003) but Oklahoma is considered the most professional of the three (Squire 2002). Therefore, I hypothesize that candidates in Louisiana will report greater levels of importance, all other things being equal, followed by Oklahoma and Texas.

The last factors of importance are candidate status – incumbent, challenger, open seat – and competitiveness – competitive, noncompetitive. Incumbents generally win re-election (Jewell and Breaux 1998), so they would seem to be the rational recipients of party assistance and, concomitantly, more likely to give higher ratings to parties.

However, given the creation and rise of legislative campaign committees by incumbents to address the inadequacies of TSPPOs (Gierzynski 1992, Shea 1995), one would also expect incumbents to note the importance of legislative campaign committees (Gierzynski 1992, Shea 1995). I hypothesize that incumbency will be a significant and positive factor in candidate perceptions towards LCCs and TSPPOs.

Political parties are strategic in the targeting of their limited campaigns resources (Herrnson 1988). Given the importance of competition (Gierzynski and Breaux 1998, Herrnson 1988), I hypothesize competitiveness to be a predictor of positive perceptions of party assistance. In a similar fashion, open-seat candidates are generally more competitive and generally receive more attention from party and non-party groups (Gaddie and Bullock 2000). Therefore, I further hypothesize that the presence of an open-seat to be a predictor of positive perceptions of party importance, while uncompetitive candidates and challengers are hypothesized to be negatively associated with positive perceptions of party importance.

The previous sections highlight the substantial and systematic variations that appear in candidate perceptions of party assistance, but care must now be taken to explain these variations. Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression is used to test the hypotheses – partisanship, context, candidate status, and competitiveness – developed in the previous sections.[451] The scores of importance become the dependent variable. Additional

[451] An ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis minimizes the sum-of-squared differences between a response (dependent) variable and a weighted combination of predictor (independent) variables. The estimated coefficients reflect how changes in the predictors affect the response but the response is assumed to be numerical, in the sense that changes in the level of the response are equivalent throughout the range of the response. It could be argued that these relationships do not necessarily hold for ordinal variables, in which the choice and number of response categories can be quite arbitrary. In this case a Polytomous Universal Model (PLUM) ordinal regression procedure would suffice. However, a series of summated scales were created to condense the information for three dimensions: grassroots, management, and overall party services (their appropriateness was tested with a Cronbach Alpha reliability test). When large

dummy variables were included to account for gender (male or female), type of district (rural or urban), and outcome (win or loss).[452] The first set of equations uses total state, district, county, and legislative party scores of importance as the dependent variables, which was created by summing the scores across all ten factors into one variable.[453] The results are displayed in Table 5.7 and indicate that some factors are clearly more important in explaining candidates' evaluations of the importance of party assistance.

The most important predictor in explaining candidates' perceptions of party importance was competitiveness. For each of the four models, competitiveness is a statistically significant variable in the anticipated direction. Competitive candidates are significantly more likely to perceive state, district, county, and legislative assistance as important. However, the different sizes and directions of the state dummy coefficients show that candidate perceptions differ dramatically across states. For example, candidates in Oklahoma significantly rate their district party and legislative party organizations in a negative fashion; meanwhile candidates in Louisiana positively rate

---

summated scales are used with a PLUM model, the PLUM outputs yield a range of scores, constants, and probabilities that are very large and are very cumbersome to present. In these cases OLS is still quite appropriate (Menard 2002). Some of the dependent variables were not summed and keep their original five-point scale format, making PLUM the more appropriate choice. In order to keep the presentation of all the regression coefficients consistent, I avoided using coefficients from two different regression models and present only the coefficients from the OLS models. This allows me to avoid switching between PLUM and OLS coefficients. An additional complication with the PLUM model is that the coefficients take on different meanings and directions when the independent variables are dichotomous and polytomous (Borooah 2002). All regressions were run using both PLUM and OLS procedures. The OLS results did not differ substantially from the PLUM results and the OLS results were substantively easier to understand and present. Therefore, only OLS coefficients, standard errors, and levels of significance are presented. Finally, my study, data, and scales are similar to studies conducted by Peter Francia (2003), Paul Herrnson (1988, 1989), and Keith Hogan (2002), who all used OLS procedures for their multivariate analyses.

[452] The variables gender and district type are included in the models but left off the tables because they never approached significance at a $p<.10$ level.

[453] A reliability analysis, Cronbach Alpha, was conducted for each of the four scales to determine the appropriateness of the scale. Cronbach Alpha is a model of internal consistency based on the average inter-item correlation. Accounting is discarded from the scale because in each of the four tests the Cronbach Alpha score increased with the deletion of this variable and this variable showed poor inter-item correlation. The Cronbach Alpha results for county was .909, district was .907, state was .891, and LCC was .914.

their state-level committees. Therefore, two-party competition is a more significant predictor of party importance than legislative professionalism. Finally, the party coefficient is never significant, indicating that party is not a significant predictor for differences across party levels and party services in perceptions of party importance.

Table 5.7 Factors Influencing Scores of Importance by Level of Party

	County	District	State	LCC
Oklahoma	-.201	-3.006***	-.681	-2.128*
	(1.220)	(1.047)	(1.016)	(1.124)
Louisiana	-1.647	NA	1.652*	1.601
	(1.138)	NA	(.948)	(1.048)
Democrat	.388	-.585	.615	-1.326
	(.964)	(1.064)	(.803)	(.888)
Open	-.315	2.272	.092	2.396*
	(1.469)	(1.826)	(1.224)	(1.353)
Incumbents	-7.1313***	-.145	-3.139*	6.214***
	(2.155)	(2.336)	(1.795)	(1.984)
Win	5.490***	-1.555	1.347	3.229*
	(1.928)	(2.088)	(1.605)	(1.775)
Comp.	2.632***	2.934***	2.793***	4.854***
	(.984)	(1.066)	(.820)	(.906)
Constant	17.105***	15.611***	14.248***	10.988***
	(1.375)	(1.398)	(1.146)	(1.266)
R^2	.128	.145	.112	.345
N	256	155	256	256

* p < .10; ** p < .05, *** p > .01

Note: The dependent variable is the sum of all scores of importance for each level of party (ten items), and can take values ranging from 10 to 50. Cells contain unstandardized OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Texas and Challenger are the omitted categories. The NA for Louisiana is due to the fact that they have no district committees.

This dissertation focuses on the fact that traditional state political party organizations are at best only slightly important to competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates in the single category of grassroots services. Yet,

emerging more clearly from this regression analysis is a second and equally important finding that shows LCCs have become the party of incumbents and emphasize incumbent protection. Observed earlier but more clearly isolated in these models is the clear and significant relationship between LCCs and incumbents. Incumbents are significantly though negatively associated with county and state party assistance, and significantly though positively associated with legislative party assistance. The largest coefficient in the LCC model is for incumbency, proving that LCCs have become the party of incumbents and emphasize incumbent protection. These findings echo those of Robbie Hogan (2002) who observed a similar pattern in seven other states.

Also emerging in the LCC model is winning. Winning and incumbency by definition and analysis are highly correlated because incumbents have high re-election rates (Morehouse and Jewell 2003), so it not surprising that winning emerges in the LCC model as a significant predictor of positive perceptions of party importance. However, the relationship between winning and incumbency did not meet a level of producing collinearity in the model, which instills complete confidence in the independent effects and coefficients. LCCs have become the party of incumbents and emphasize incumbent protection, but it should also be noted that they do not wholly neglect other individuals.

Winning and incumbency are significant predictors, but the competitive context of an election also cannot be ignored. Consistent with other studies (Kazee 1994, Hogan 2002), this analysis finds that the competitive context of an election is also a significant indicator for traditional party organizations and legislative party organizations. Studies show that elections involving incumbents are increasingly non-competitive (Morehouse and Jewell 2003), and correlation analysis performed on the data reaffirms that

competitiveness is not correlated to incumbency in these models. Although LCCs are primarily the party of incumbents and clearly emphasize incumbent protection, they do not shy away from supporting other candidates because competitiveness and open seat are significant and positive predictors of perceptions of LCC importance and, simultaneously, TSPPO importance. This model shows that LCCs strategically target other races in order to increase their legislative numbers. Not all LCCs, however, are the same, as the dummy variable for Oklahoma is negatively and significantly associated with LCC importance. Candidates in Oklahoma are lass likely than candidates in Texas and Louisiana to positively view LCC assistance. Finally, my model best predicts legislative party perceptions, as the total explained variance in the equation is much better than for the county, district, or state committees.

Another way to assess these variables' influence is to examine their effects on the categories of party functions for each party level. The dependent variables "grassroots" and "management" are scales built from the three questions representing these categories.[454] The dependent variables of fundraising and recruiting contained only one question so these two categories are scaled.[455] The dependent variables for issue positions and media advertising were initially scaled into one variable called "communications" but were later split because when significant predictors within these

[454] Grassroots comprises the three factors of supplying voter information, registering voters, and recruiting workers. Management comprises the three questions of formulating strategy, assisting campaign management, and hiring professionals. The individual variables were summed then divided by the maximum value of the range in order to create an interval-level dependent variable that is consistent across equations (i.e. bound by 0 and 1, a proportion). This facilitates the comparing of coefficients across equations, which cannot be done if the variables had been left in a summed format. Reliability results (Cronbach Alpha) for "grassroots" were as follows: county = .894, district = .876, state = .885, LCC = .888. Reliability results (Cronbach Alpha) for "management" were as follows: county = .894, district = .829, state = .853, and LCC = .830.

[455] The dependent variables fundraising, recruiting, advertising, and issue positions were was also divided by the maximum value of the range to make comparisons across equations appropriate.

two categories were lost and performed poorly in its reliability test. Table 5.8 and Table 5.9 display the results of these twenty-four regression models.

One of the most powerful and positive predictors of the usefulness of party assistance is the competitiveness of the candidate. Across twenty-four regressions, competitiveness is a significant predictor in the anticipated direction twenty-three times. Competitiveness clearly affects a candidates' perception of party importance, whether it is towards county, district, state, or legislative committees. When a candidate is competitive, his or her perception of party importance increases. Similarly, when a candidate wins, the perception of party importance increases though it is neither as consistent nor powerful of a predictor like competitiveness. Winning affected positive evaluations of party importance in the models for grassroots, fundraising, and issue positions. Winning and competitive, two uncorrelated contextual factors, affect a candidates' evaluation of party importance.

The next most consistent, powerful, and significant predictor is incumbency. Incumbency positively affects a candidates' perception of legislative party importance, as it is the most significant and powerful coefficient for all but one LCC model. Again, LCCs have become the party of incumbents and emphasize incumbent protection. Contrary to some (Jewell and Breaux 1998, Gierzynski and Breaux 1998) and consistent with others (Hogan 2002), incumbency is a negative predictor of one's perception of county, district, and state party importance. The negative incumbent variable also tells us that being a challenger or open seat candidate affects a candidates' perception of county, district, and state party importance, as challengers and open-seat candidates were more likely to positively perceive the usefulness of party services. The incumbency

Table 5.8 Factors Influencing Scores of Importance for Categories of Activities by Level of Party

	Grassroots				Management			
	County	District	State	LCC	County	District	State	LCC
Oklahoma	-.053	-.122***	-.053*	.019	.034	-.006	.023	-.042
	(.038)	(.032)	(.028)	(.020)	(.023)	(.021)	(.021)	(.029)
Louisiana	-.118***	NA	.039	.058***	.023	NA	.040**	.016
	(.036)	NA	(.026)	(.019)	(.021)	NA	(.020)	(.027)
Democrat	.036	.002	.035	-.033**	-.007	-.018	-.012	-.041*
	(.030)	(.032)	(.022)	(.016)	(.018)	(.021)	(.017)	(.023)
Open	-.023	.060	-.023	.004	.001	.028	.017	.051
	(.046)	(.055)	(.034)	(.025)	(.028)	(.037)	(.025)	(.034)
Incumbents	-.215***	.017	-.110**	.049	-.082**	-.031	-.017	.150***
	(.068)	(.071)	(.049)	(.036)	(.041)	(.047)	(.037)	(.050)
Win	.195***	-.066	.076*	.040	.055	.002	-.018	.032
	(.061)	(.063)	(.044)	(.032)	(.036)	(.042)	(.033)	(.045)
Comp.	.053*	.080***	.058***	.042**	.047**	.048***	.041***	.105***
	(.031)	(.032)	(.023)	(.016)	(.019)	(.021)	(.017)	(.023)
Constant	.457***	.373***	.928***	.223***	.258***	.255***	.257***	.244***
	(.043)	(.042)	(.474)	(.023)	(.026)	(.028)	(.024)	(.032)
R^2	.123	.155	.101	.163	.087	.087	.080	.248
N	256	155	256	256	256	155	256	256

	Recruiting				Fundraising			
	County	District	State	LCC	County	District	State	LCC
Oklahoma	.000	-.031	.024	-.054	.040	-.048***	.018	-.053
	(.039)	(.034)	(.034)	(.042)	(.035)	(.024)	(.030)	(.046)
Louisiana	-.007	NA	.037	.125***	.018	NA	.067***	.095**
	(.036)	NA	(.032)	(.039)	(.032)	NA	(.028)	(.043)
Democrat	.020	-.011	.032	-.008	-.025	-.067***	.010	-.050
	(.031)	(.027)	(.032)	(.033)	(.027)	(.024)	(.024)	(.036)
Open	.066	.049	.043	.077	-.023	.003	.010	.104**
	(.047)	(.040)	(.041)	(.050)	(.042)	(.041)	(.036)	(.055)
Incumbents	-.063	-.016	-.045	.175**	-.274***	-.070	-.097*	.245***
	(.068)	(.059)	(.060)	(.074)	(.061)	(.053)	(.053)	(.081)
Win	-.013	-.040	-.025	.062	.209***	.053	.040	.163**
	(.061)	(.053)	(.053)	(.066)	(.055)	(.047)	(.047)	(.073)
Comp.	.074**	.052*	.050*	.106***	.099***	.064***	.109***	.204***
	(.031)	(.027)	(.027)	(.034)	(.028)	(.024)	(.024)	(.037)
Constant	.397***	.358***	.328***	.241***	.386***	.360***	.292***	.201***
	(.044)	(.038)	(.038)	(.047)	(.039)	(.031)	(.034)	(.052)
R	.091	.083	.082	.229	.178	.163	.151	.355
N	256	155	256	256	256	155	256	256

* p < .10; ** p < .05, *** p > .01

Cells contain unstandardized OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Texas and Challenger are the omitted categories. The NA for Louisiana is due to the fact that they have no district committees.

Table 5.9 Factors Influencing Scores of Importance for Categories of Activities by Level of Party

	Media Advertising				Issue Positions			
	County	District	State	LCC	County	District	State	LCC
Oklahoma	-.014	-.043	-.088	-.194***	-.007	-.152***	-.014	-.146***
	(.033)	(.032)	(.037)	(.041)	(.039)	(.038)	(.036)	(.046)
Louisiana	-.012	NA	-.046**	-.016	-.055	NA	.060*	-.078*
	(.031)	NA	(.035)	(.039)	(.036)	NA	(.034)	(.042)
Democrat	.010	-.008	.050*	.005	-.019	.026	-.025	-.002
	(.026)	(.033)	(.029)	(.033)	(.031)	(.039)	(.029)	(.036)
Open	-.003	.062	.010	.107***	-.035	.105	-.017	.104*
	(.040)	(.056)	(.045)	(.050)	(.047)	(.066)	(.044)	(.055)
Incumbents	-.120**	.031	-.052	.226***	-.259	.048	-.113*	.160**
	(.058)	(.072)	(.066)	(.073)	(.069)	(.085)	(.064)	(.080)
Win	.071	-.079	.029	.106*	.166***	-.063	.076	.208***
	(.052)	(.064)	(.059)	(.065)	(.061)	(.076)	(.057)	(.072)
Comp.	.035	.069**	.088***	.140***	.075**	.084**	.077***	.210***
	(.027)	(.033)	(.030)	(.033)	(.031)	(.039)	(.029)	(.037)
Constant	.360***	.393***	.391***	.275***	.453***	.421***	.356***	.257***
	(.037)	(.043)	(.033)	(.047)	(.044)	(.051)	(.041)	(.024)
R^2	.053	.085	.078	.329	.142	.153	.076	.334
N	256	155	256	256	256	155	256	256

* p < .10; ** p < .05, *** p > .01

Cells contain unstandardized OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Texas and Challenger are the omitted categories. The NA for Louisiana is due to the fact that they have no district committees.

coefficients are also powerful, significant, and negative in the "grassroots" model for state and county committees, indicating that candidate status is most influential predictor in the area of grassroots services. Challengers and open-seat candidates are more likely to find political party grassroots assistance slightly important to their campaigns, while incumbents identify LCCs as their party and provider of incumbent protection.

Regarding the state dummy variables, the impacts are inconsistent across the various party functions with states that score low or high on one category not necessarily scoring similar on other categories. One example of consistency within the model is the negative coefficients reported for Oklahoma at the district level across all party services.

State context can affect a candidates' perception of the importance of various committees providing various services. In this case, Oklahoma's state legislative candidates are not at all likely to perceive district committees to be important. The Louisiana variable is positive and significant at the state level for the areas of management, issue positions, and fundraising, but negative and significant at the county level for grassroots. These results suggests that Louisiana's candidates rated state committees instead of parish committees as being more useful to their campaign in several instances, and that by rating one level of party service positively does not automatically translate into positive support for another party level. While state is an inconsistent predictor, it is a predictor of candidates' perceptions towards some party functions distributed by some party committees, reaffirming the results in Table 5.7. Also carrying over from Table 5.7 is the effect of the state on a candidates' perception of LCC importance. In the two models for media advertising and issue positions, Oklahoma is a statistically significant variable in a negative direction. All the other coefficients remain negative but fall outside of significance, indicating that Oklahoma's state legislative candidates found Oklahoma LCCs to lack usefulness and importance. The state dummy variable is inconsistent and comparatively weak, which indicates that the state does not equally effect party perceptions of party importance.

The analysis also reveals the effect of party. For example, previous tables showed how Democrats rated legislative campaign committees lower than Republican rated legislative campaign committees. In the OLS models for LCCs, the Democrat dummy variable is negative and statistically significant. All other things being equal, Republicans have higher perceptions of the importance of LCCs than Democrats. I

expected to see similar relationships for the grassroots and fundraising party models but this did not occur. Party was not a significant predictor of candidate perceptions' of traditional state political party organization importance in almost all campaign service dimensions. When party emerges as a statistically significant factor, the coefficients are smaller than the other significant coefficients. This indicates that party is a comparatively weaker predictor of perceptions of party importance behind incumbency and competitiveness.

When examining the totality of significant coefficients, one discovers that state and party are less significant, less consistent, and much weaker predictors of party importance than candidate status – incumbency, winning, and competitiveness. All other things being equal, competitive challengers and competitive open seats candidates are more likely to find their political parties slightly important campaign service providers in the area of grassroots, fundraising, and issue positions. The competitive context is very important. While this fits with literature that suggests campaigns are candidate-centered (Wattenberg 1992, 1998), it is somewhat at odds with literature arguing that parties are providing more useful and varying campaign services (Cotter et al. 1984).

Finally, the preceding tables are strongest when reporting the activities of legislative campaign committees. The variance explained in the LCC models across all party functions is much higher than for the county, district, and state models. This is probably due to the different functions of the various party organizations and how they allocate their resources (Hogan 2002). Either way, LCCs have become the party of incumbents and primarily emphasize incumbent protection. Thus, most of the campaign services provided by traditional state political party organizations are not helpful as

perceived by candidates, though there is tremendous variation in these perceptions that are partially explained by contextual, party, and candidate factors.

Finally, the regression proved and disproved the preceding hypotheses:

- I hypothesized that party affiliation would predict the types of services candidates find more or less important, with Democrats giving higher scores to traditional grassroots services and Republicans giving higher scores on other services like fundraising and issue positions. This hypothesis was not confirmed, indicating that party was not a significant indicator for the types of services candidates would be predisposed to find more or less important.
- I hypothesized that candidates in Louisiana would report greater levels of importance, all other things being equal, followed by Oklahoma and Texas. This hypothesis was confirmed and indicates that competitiveness is a more significant indicator for the perception of party importance than professionalism.
- I hypothesized that incumbency would be a significant and positive factor in candidate perceptions towards LCCs and TSPPOs. This hypothesis was simultaneously confirmed and refuted. Incumbency is a significantly large and positive factor in candidate perceptions towards LCCs, but a significant and negative factor in candidate perceptions towards TSPPOs.
- I hypothesized competitiveness would be a predictor of positive perceptions of party assistance. This hypothesis was confirmed, as competitiveness is also a large predictor of positive perceptions of party assistance.

- I hypothesized that the presence of an open-seat would be a predictor of positive perceptions of party importance and challengers would be negatively associated with positive perceptions of party importance. Open-seat status and challenger status alone is not a predictor of positive perceptions of party importance. However, together these two groups are a predictor of positive perceptions of party importance.

Thus far this analysis has determined where the party is perceived to be important and when the party is perceived to be important. The traditional state political party organization is not a highly important electoral service provider for state legislative candidates. Within the traditional realm of grassroots functions, there is some evidence of increased perceptions of party importance, though these perceptions apply largely only to competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates that comprise the minority of all candidates running in state legislative elections. If the parties are not significant electoral resource for state legislative candidates, then who is? This final task of this chapter is to consider who, if any, is perceived important to candidates running for the state legislature.

Candidate Perceptions of Group Assistance

Traditional state political party organizations are not helpful to candidates and most candidates do not believe that that the party is helpful to their own election efforts. Only competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates find some slightly important support from traditional state political party organizations when they provide traditional grassroots functions of supplying information about voters, registering voters, and supplying campaign workers. In the meantime, who, if anyone, is important in other

realms of party functions? Table 5.10 shows the top groups for candidate types within each campaign service area.

Quickly and prominently emerging from this table is the fact that campaigning for the state legislature in Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana is largely a personal enterprise, as most candidates rely on themselves, their friends, and their families. Regardless of the party, type of election, or the competitiveness of the candidate, friends and family come first and are the most, often times the only, important resource from the perspective of all state legislative candidates for all campaign services. The scores given to friends and family exceed "moderately important" (3.00 mean score) 87% of the time and exceed "very important" (4.00 mean score) 30% of the time. This finding reaffirms the research of Richard Fenno (1978) – who included friends and family within the "inner circle" of a politician – and Keith Gaddie (2005) – who included friends and family within "core constituency" of ambitious candidates – by demonstrating that state legislative candidates do not simply rely upon friends and family for emotional support, but also perceive them to be moderately or very important financial, communications, management, and mobilization service providers. State legislative candidates clearly perceive external groups as less important than friends and family in campaign finance, decision to run, management, communications, and public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during state legislative elections. Core constituencies, primarily comprised of friends and family, are vital service providers and take a heightened role in state and local campaigns.

The table also shows incumbents rely on their respective legislative campaign committees and not traditional state political party organizations, more evidence for the point made earlier regarding the fact that LCCs have become the party of incumbents and

Table 5.10: Ranking of Importance by Candidate Type*

	Democrat	GOP	Incumbent	Challenger	Open	Competitive
Recruiting						
	Friends*	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	LCC	LCC	**LCC**	County	**County**	LCC
	County	County	PAC	State	LCC	County
	IG	PAC	IG	District	State	PAC
Formulating strategies						
	Friends	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	County	LCC	**LCC**	County	County	**LCC**
	LCCs	PACs	PAC	District	LCCs	County
	IG	IG	IG	PAC	PACs	PA
Campaign management						
	Friends	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	IG	LCC	**LCC**	IG	County	LCC
	County	IG	IG	County	IG	IG
	LCC	County	PAC	State	District	County
Hiring professionals						
	Friends	**Friends**	**Friends**	**Friends**	***Friends***	**Friends**
	LCCs	LCCs	**LCC**	IG	LCC	LCC
	State	IG	IG	State	State	IG
	IG	State	PAC	County	County	PAC
Assisting media advertising						
	Friends	**Friends**	**Friends**	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	LCC	**IG**	**LCC**	IG	**IG**	**IG**
	State	LCC	IG	State	**PAC**	**LCC**
	IG	PAC	PAC	County	LCC	**PAC**
Formulating issue positions						
	Friends	***Friends***	**Friends**	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	IG	**LCC**	**LCC**	**IG**	**IG**	**IG**
	LCC	IG	IG	County	**County**	**LCC**
	County	PAC	PAC	State	**LCC**	**PAC**
Fundraising						
	Friends	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	IG	**IG**	**LCC**	**IG**	**IG**	**IG**
	PAC	**PAC**	**IG**	PAC	**PAC**	**PAC**
	LCC	**LCC**	**PAC**	County	**County**	**LCC**
Supplying Voter Information						
	Friends	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	County	County	County	**County**	**County**	**County**
	State	District	District	**State**	**State**	**State**
	District	State	LCC	District	District	**District**
Registering Voters						
	Friends	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	County	**County**	**County**	**County**	**County**	**County**
	State	District	District	District	**District**	**District**
	District	State	State	State	**State**	**State**
Supplying Workers						
	Friends	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***	***Friends***
	County	**County**	**County**	**County**	**County**	**County**
	IG	IG	IG	Union	IG	IG
	Unions	PAC	PAC	IG	Union	Union

***Bolded** items reflect groups with mean scores exceeding 2.00 (at least 'slightly important').
Bolded/italicized items reflect groups with mean scores exceeding 3.00 (at least 'moderately important').
** "Friends" represents the category "Friends and Family."

emphasize incumbent protection. Incumbents additionally rank interest groups and political action committees as the second and third highest groups behind LCCs and ahead of TSPPOs. Even in the area of fundraising, an area dominated by interest groups and political action committees, incumbents perceive legislative campaign committees to be more important. In seven of the ten categories, LCCs are given a mean score that exceeds "slightly important" from the perspective of incumbents. In six of these seven categories, no other group receives an equivalent score. The only time LCCs do not appear as one of the top organizations for incumbents are in the three categories that comprise grassroots services, indicating that incumbents do not rely upon traditional political party organizations except when needing grassroots services. For incumbents, LCCs have become the party but this party is not yet a grassroots service provider.

Legislative campaign committees primarily emphasize incumbent protection, but show limited signs of becoming an emerging resource for open-seat candidates. LCCs have not yet consistently displaced traditional state political party organizations among open-seat candidates because they trail county-level committees on eight of the ten variables. However, the differences between the mean scores of county-level committees and legislative campaign committees in several categories are incredibly small and suggest that LCCs are not far behind. LCCs do exceed state-level and district-level committees on eight of the ten variables, though in only one instance does the mean score exceed "slightly important." In terms of being slightly important, LCCs seem to have a specialized group of candidates – incumbents. In terms of being noticed, LCCs are noticed by other candidates but only once does this approach the level of "slightly important." In two categories – communications and fundraising – interest groups and

political action committees are slightly important groups and exceed traditional state political party organizations. Only in the category of grassroots functions do open-seat candidates solidly rate parties higher and show no evidence of relying upon other organizations.

Competitive candidates consistently rank legislative campaign committees, interest groups, and political action committees higher than other groups. In the area of campaign communications and campaign financing, interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees receives scores equivalent to "slightly important." Elsewhere in campaign management and the decision to run, these groups are ranked highest but their scores are short of being "slightly important." Interestingly, the results for competitive candidates refute the notion that LCCs only help incumbents. In two of the categories – recruiting and management – LCCs receive the highest mean scores, and in two other categories – communications and finance – LCCs receive "slightly important" mean scores. From the competitive candidate's perspective, traditional state political party organizations are only slightly important in one category – gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. The cumulative body of evidence suggests that interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees are more often mentioned and more often important than TSPPOs to competitive candidates.

Taken together, the data for competitive candidates and open-seat candidates suggest legislative campaign committees, interest groups, and political action committees are more important than traditional state political party organizations in four of the five dimensions reviewed in this study. Combined with the results of incumbents, the table

shows that LCC are primarily concerned with incumbent protection, but are also occasionally concerned with incumbent creation. Though LCCs principally focus on incumbents, they have not all together neglected open-seat candidates and competitive candidates. They are not, however, challenger resources.

Challengers generally rank county, district, and state party committees higher than IGs, PACs, and LCCs in the dimensions of the decision to run and grassroots. Challenger perceptions of party influence on the decision to run are interesting and hopeful, but the scores are low enough to still render party recruiting worthless. Outside of this, even challengers rank interest groups and political action committees higher than TSPPOs in the areas of campaign management, campaign communications, and campaign financing. Although interest groups and political action committees are generally incumbent resources, their desire for access (Langbein 1986) still places them in contact with challengers. Challengers do notice interest group support, though the scores they assign are significantly lower and unimportant compared to the scores given by incumbents, open-seat, and competitive candidates. The consistently low scores given by all challengers to all groups indicate that they perceive the least effective assistance from external groups.

Democrats and Republicans also similarly assess group importance. To them the highest rated groups in four of the five dimensions are interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees. IGs, PACs, and LCCs are slightly important in the realm of candidate financing and campaign communications but not equally important in the realms of campaign management and recruiting.

Consistently receiving higher scores of importance than traditional state political party organizations are legislative campaign committees, interest groups, and political action committees. Specifically in the areas of media advertising, formulating issue positions, and campaign financing, interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees receive scores exceeding the categorical equivalent of "slightly important" and consistently exceed the mean scores given to traditional state political party organizations. In the areas of recruiting and management, interest groups, legislative campaign committees, political action committees, and traditional state political party organizations play a mixed role.

One thing is certain; TSPPOs are neither consistently important nor ranked higher than other groups. In only one dimension –gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters – is the traditional state political party organization the dominant and singly important organization. In this single dimension, the traditional state political party organization is lead by county-level committees. Core constituencies are very important to state legislative candidates, but the evidence also suggests that core constituencies are also geographically defined because county-level committees are slightly important to candidates when gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters. This explains the high rankings by state legislative candidates towards county-level traditional state political party organizations. Groups closest to the candidate in personal and geographical terms play important roles in local campaigns like state legislative campaigns. When looking at all non-grassroots activities for candidates, the pattern is clear. Interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees are consistently rated higher than TSPPOs and other groups, but the scores are still consistently low enough to suggest

that even most open seat candidates find running for the state legislature to be a personal endeavor.

Overall interest groups and legislative campaign committees are the highest rated external groups by state legislative candidates. Political action committees and traditional state political party organizations take a backseat to these two groups. In two dimensions – decision to run and campaign management – the complete absence of any slightly important rankings indicate that state legislative candidates make the decision to run their campaigns without extensive and notable support. In the area of campaign communications, LCCs, PACs, and IGs receive higher rankings than in the realm of decision to run and communications but the scores are consistently low and unimportant. It is only in the area of campaign financing that we see these external groups consistently receiving scores above a mean of 2.00 ("slightly important"). Yet, the fact that these scores fail to exceed 3.00 ("moderately important") still indicate candidates for state legislature are left to finance their own campaigns and are not impressed with the financial support of other groups outside of friends and family. In the last dimension of grassroots services, the only group that dominates this area and receives means score of "slightly important" are traditional state political party organizations. Parties are relevant but not paramount.

The absence of high scores across most dimensions underscores the personal nature and the value of core constituencies when running for the state legislature in Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana. Most candidates do not perceive groups to be very important to their campaign efforts, though it does vary from service to service. Running for the state legislature is all about utilizing the support of family, friends, and neighbors.

When candidates rely upon outside groups, they most likely lean on legislative campaign committees, interest groups, and political action committees. The most important scores for these groups in the area of fundraising and the lowest scores are in the dimension of grassroots. This meshes with candidate-centered party literature (Wattenberg 1992, 1998). It is still incomplete to say that groups are not helpful but the helpfulness does translate into importance.

Comparing the Perceptions of Incumbents, Challengers and Open-Seat Candidates

While the data suggests that incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates have different views on the importance of party organizations, this does not tell us if there were differences between the two parties in their relationship with incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates. That is, do open-seat candidates, followed by challengers and incumbents, in both parties similarly rank the usefulness of group support? Or, do candidates in one party give higher score than similar candidates in the other party? Table 5.11 displays the mean scores for the state-level committees divided by the candidate's status to determine whether candidates within the two parties' equally discriminated in their perceptions of party influence.

To answering the first question, both parties' state-level committees are rated higher by open-seat candidates than challengers and incumbents, as Republican state-level committees and Democratic state-level committees received higher scores from open-seat candidates than from challengers or incumbents. Although open-seat candidates in both parties give higher mean scores than challengers and incumbents, there are some party differences. Democratic challengers gave higher scores than open-seat candidates to state-level committees on three issues – funding, supplying workers, and

recommending professionals. Republican challengers were only once more complimentary than open-seat candidates for supplying campaign workers. Therefore, challengers in both parties were more perceptive of state-level committee support in supplying workers than any other candidates, although Democratic challengers were also complimentary of other state-level services while Republican challengers were not. Challengers in both parties also give higher mean scores to the state-level committees than incumbents across all ten categories. Incumbents in both parties do not find state-level committee support as valuable as other committees, though Democratic incumbents gave higher scores to state-level committees than other committees for registering voters but Republicans did not. Summing up, state-level committees receive higher scores from open-seat candidates than from challengers and incumbents, though the disparity is greater in the Republican Party than the Democratic Party.

Table 5.11: State party activity by Party and Seat Type

	Democrat			Republican		
	I	C	O	I	C	O
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.39	1.65	1.87	1.24	1.59	1.72
Voter Information	1.87	2.07	2.09	1.69	1.91	2.14
Registering Voters	2.09	2.11	2.13	1.65	1.68	1.93
Media Advertising	1.67	1.72	1.87	1.39	1.68	1.72
Assisting Fundraising	1.20	1.59	1.57	1.24	1.39	1.76
Formulating Issue Positions	1.39	1.57	1.65	1.50	1.68	1.79
Recruiting Workers	1.39	1.69	1.65	1.31	1.82	1.66
Formulating Strategies	1.26	1.67	1.83	1.35	1.48	1.52
Campaign Management	1.22	1.44	1.48	1.31	1.52	1.66
Hiring Professionals	1.15	1.43	1.39	1.37	1.39	1.59
N	54	54	23	54	44	29

The second major finding in Table 5.11 is that Democratic state-level committees outscored Republican state-level committees among challengers. However, Republican

state-level committees outscored Democratic state-level committees among open-seat candidates and incumbents. Therefore, the parties' state-level committees have different levels of impact among different candidates. Of the ten categories reported in the table, Republican open-seat candidates and incumbents gave Republican state-level committees higher mean scores than Democratic open-seat candidates and incumbents on six of the ten categories. Republican state-level committees were more valuable to Republican incumbents and open-seat candidates than Democratic organizations. Yet, Democratic challengers gave Democratic state-level committees higher scores than Republican challengers on seven of the ten categories. The two parties' state-level committees left varying impressions on different groups.

When examining the areas that Republicans outscored Democrats, there is consistency on the part of candidates regarding the type of services. Republicans generally outscored Democrats in the areas of selecting issue positions, providing volunteers, assisting with management, funding campaigns, and finding professionals. Therefore, Republican state-level committees receive higher scores than Democrats in two dimensions – campaign management and candidate financing. Yet, the Democrats receive higher scores than Republicans in two dimensions – public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections and in the decision to run. As far as campaign communications, the state-level committees split, with Republicans receiving higher scores on selecting issue positions, and Democrats receiving higher scores on advertising. Candidate perceptions reflect the historical differences of the top-down nature of Republican Party advancement versus the bottom-up nature of the Democratic Party (Herrnson 2004). State-level committees are important to varying degrees among

different candidates for different services with open-seat candidates giving the highest scores. Does the same pattern hold at the county level as well?

Table 5.12 displays county-level committee mean scores. Previously, it was shown that Republican state-level committees outscore Democrats among open-seat candidates and incumbents and Democratic state-level committees outscore Republicans among challengers; however, the opposite trend occurs at the county level where Republican county-level committees outscored Democratic county-level committees among challengers and Democratic county-level committees outscored Republican county-level committees among open-seat candidates. Among incumbents, the parties split evenly among the ten categories.

Table 5.12: County party activity by Party and Seat Type

	Democrat			Republican		
	I	C	O	I	C	O
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.46	1.76	2.17	1.43	1.80	2.00
Voter Information	1.94	2.13	2.52	1.76	1.95	2.28
Formulating Strategies	1.54	1.87	1.74	1.46	1.84	1.90
Registering Voters	2.15	2.28	2.74	1.98	2.09	2.28
Media Advertising	1.37	1.56	1.70	1.30	1.59	1.66
Assisting Fundraising	1.31	1.67	1.96	1.43	1.77	2.03
Formulating Issue Positions	1.43	1.85	1.96	1.43	2.00	2.10
Recruiting Workers	2.07	2.41	2.35	2.13	2.41	2.59
Campaign Management	1.37	1.56	1.83	1.41	1.57	1.79
Hiring Professionals	1.17	1.26	1.48	1.26	1.34	1.48
N	54	54	23	54	44	29

Looking at the type of services where Democrats receive higher scores than Republicans, the results mirror state-level committees. At the state and county level, Republicans received higher scores for funding, selecting issue positions, supplying workers, assisting with management, and recommending professionals. Republican

county-level committees, like Republican state-level committees, score higher on the two dimensions of campaign management and candidate financing. Yet, Democratic county-level committees, like Democratic state-level committees, score higher on the two dimensions of public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections and in the decision to run. Neither party holds an advantage over the other in campaign communications.

At the county level, Republican county-level committees receive higher scores from open-seat candidates, then challengers, and then incumbents across all ten categories. Democrats also receive higher scores from open-seat candidates, then challengers, then incumbents, but it is not unanimous as seen in the Republican Party. There are two categories where Democratic challengers give higher scores than open-seat candidates – developing strategies and supplying workers. It is safe to conclude that county-level committees largely mirror state-level committees regarding the types of services delivered and the types of candidates who award the party for these services.

The final piece of the puzzle is district-level committees. Do district-level committees in both parties exhibit the same patterns as state-level and county-level committees? Table 5.13 displays the results for district-level committees. First, the perceptions of open-seat candidates towards district-level committees mirror their perceptions towards state and county-level committees. Republican and Democratic district-level committees receive higher mean scores across all ten categories from open-seat candidates then challengers and incumbents. Again, the pattern observed among Democrats is not unanimous like Republicans. Democratic challengers gave higher scores to district-level committees in the areas of supplying information about voters and

funding. Also, Democratic incumbents gave higher scores than challengers to district-level committees in the areas of registering voters, assisting with advertising, and selecting issue positions. This does not similarly occur among Republicans showing that Democratic Party services had a more varying impact than Republican Party services.

Table 5.13: District party activity by Party and Seat Type

	Democrat			Republican		
	I	C	O	I	C	O
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.30	1.46	1.74	1.35	1.61	1.72
Voter Information	1.80	1.89	1.87	1.85	1.98	2.00
Formulating Strategies	1.26	1.56	1.61	1.48	1.64	1.79
Registering Voters	1.98	1.94	2.17	1.93	1.91	2.10
Media Advertising	1.57	1.37	1.61	1.41	1.59	1.59
Assisting Fundraising	1.20	1.46	1.39	1.35	1.52	1.69
Formulating Issue Positions	1.54	1.50	1.91	1.56	1.77	1.79
Recruiting Workers	1.33	1.50	1.65	1.35	1.68	1.83
Campaign Management	1.24	1.33	1.61	1.33	1.48	1.69
Hiring Professionals	1.19	1.22	1.35	1.33	1.39	1.41
N	54	54	23	54	44	29

Table 5.13 also shows that the mean scores for Republican district committees are higher than the mean scores for Democratic district committees across most categories, with the only two exceptions appearing among incumbents and open-seat candidates in the areas of registering voters and advertising. As seen previously, Democratic Party candidates found parties more useful for registering voters and assisting with advertising. Overall, Republicans rank Republican district-level party committees higher than Democrats rank Democratic district-level committees.

Candidate perceptions indicate that open-seat candidates are more likely to favor parties, followed by challengers and then incumbents. Whether examining the state, district, or county committees, challengers generally give higher scores to party

organizations than incumbents, but open-seat candidates generally give higher scores than challengers. Candidates challenging for office notice party services more than those already holding office. Is one party outperforming the other party within certain groups? Overall, Republican state political party organizations have outscored Democratic state political party organizations within each group of candidates. Out of ten categories across three committee levels, Republican political party organization scores exceed Democratic political party organization scores among incumbents and challengers on nineteen of the thirty categories, and open-seat candidates on eighteen of the thirty categories. Republican Party organizations have outscored Democratic Party organizations, indicating that Republican candidates were generally more impressed by Republican Party efforts. The categories that Republicans dominated were recommending professionals, assisting with management, selecting issue positions, supplying workers, and funding. The Democrats dominated recruiting, supplying information about voters, selecting advertising, and registering voters. Republicans are better in the dimensions of campaign management and candidate financing. Democrats are better at gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections and in the decision to run. The area of campaign communications was essentially a tie.

To the last question of whether party services were perceived equally by different candidates, the answer is no. Republican open-seat candidates noticed party efforts more than challengers and challengers more than incumbents. Republican open-seat candidates noticed party efforts more than challengers on twenty-nine of the thirty categories, while Democratic open-seat candidates noticed party efforts more than challengers on twenty-three of the thirty categories. Open-seat candidates are far more

likely to notice the party than other groups. Additionally, Republicans challengers noticed party efforts more than incumbents on twenty-nine of the thirty categories, while Democratic challengers noticed party efforts more than incumbents on twenty-seven of the thirty categories. This is not entirely surprising, because literature does indicate that incumbents are more likely to consider themselves and not other groups as the architects of their own success (Herrnson 1988, 2004). Republican open-seat candidates and challengers disproportionately rated Republican Party services higher than Democratic Party open-seat candidates and challengers noticed Democratic Party services.

The absence of party importance among incumbents can be explained by the presence of legislative campaign committees, which in recent years have become more important resources to incumbents beyond simply giving campaign donations (Gierzynski 1992, Shea 1995, Rosenthal 1995). Table 5.14 displays the result for legislative campaign committees. Reflecting the inadequacies of traditional state political party organizations, LCCs were created by incumbents and have displaced TSPPOs as a noticeable campaign resource. The perceptions of LCC importance have permeated open-seat candidates as well. LCCs are not challenger resources. LCCs have outscored political party organizations to different degrees, with Republican LCCs being noticed more than Democratic LCCs. Republican LCCs receive mean scores from incumbents that exceed state-level committees in all ten of the categories and exceed county-level committees in eight of the ten categories. Republican LCCs also exceed Republican state-level committees among open-seat candidates in six of the ten categories but outscored Republican county-level committees on only three of the ten categories. In contrast, Democratic LCCs receive mean scores from incumbents that exceed state-level

committees in all ten categories and exceed county-level committees in seven of the ten categories. Democratic LCCs also exceed Democratic state-level committees among open-seat candidates in three of the ten categories, and outperformed Democratic county-level committees on only two of the ten categories. Republican LCCs are more powerful campaign resources than Democratic LCCs to open-seat candidates and incumbents.

Table 5.14: LCC activity by Party and Seat Type

	Democrat			Republican		
	I	C	O	I	C	O
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	2.22	1.31	1.78	2.28	1.36	1.83
Voter Information	1.65	1.22	1.43	1.94	1.25	1.59
Formulating Strategies	2.09	1.28	1.70	2.52	1.32	1.90
Registering Voters	1.50	1.13	1.26	1.72	1.20	1.38
Media Advertising	2.43	1.22	1.74	2.43	1.23	1.90
Assisting Fundraising	2.59	1.20	1.74	2.80	1.27	2.17
Formulating Issue Positions	2.44	1.19	2.00	2.59	1.27	2.03
Recruiting Workers	1.44	1.15	1.26	1.61	1.34	1.24
Campaign Management	1.94	1.15	1.43	2.22	1.34	1.66
Hiring Professionals	1.83	1.20	1.61	2.19	1.43	1.79
N	54	54	23	54	44	29

The last major trend observed is the head-to-head differences between Republican and Democratic LCCs; Republican LCCs receive higher scores than Democratic LCCs. Republican LCCs receive higher mean scores from Republican candidates than Democratic candidates on nine of the ten categories for incumbents and open-seat candidates. Republican LCCs are perceived more valuable to Republican incumbents and Republican open-seat candidates than Democratic incumbents and Democratic open-seat candidates. While their Republican counterparts have outscored and outperformed Democratic LCCs, Democratic LCCs are still more important than the parties among incumbents, but not yet among open-seat candidates.

In both parties, the areas that the LCCs are not better than TSPPOs involve gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections – registering voters, supplying information about voters, and recruiting volunteers. If the LCCs develop these services, then they could potentially become more important than county-level party committees. Among open-seat candidates, it is in the dimensions of campaign communication and candidate financing – variables of funding and selecting issue positions – that the LCCs have gained their foothold. They are not yet significant providers of campaign management, the decision to run, and gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during election. The fact that party organizations are not effective at campaign communications and fundraising partly explains why the LCCs have become increasingly more influential campaign vehicles among open-seat candidates. They are filling in where the state parties have left off or generally failed. Overall, we find that LCCs are one group leading the way, but interest groups, political action committees, friends, and families are consistently as important, if not more, than the parties in all but one dimension.

In conclusion, both parties favor open-seat candidates more than challengers and challengers more than incumbents, and the candidate's perceptions mirror this reality. Candidates in both parties do not perceive party influence to the same degree, as Republican open-seat candidates are more complimentary towards party committees than Democratic open-seat candidates. Democratic challengers are more likely to notice party efforts more than other Democratic candidates than Republican challengers notice party efforts in comparison to other Republican candidates. The parties' various committees play varying roles of importance among these various candidates, with Republican

district-level committees being more valuable than Democratic district-level committees. The county, district, and state committees of the two parties generally provide the same top three services, but are not necessarily similar in importance when providing these services. The Republican Party at the state, district, and county-level receives its highest marks in fundraising, selecting issues, recruiting volunteers, managing campaigns, and hiring professionals. In terms of management, communications, and fundraising, Republicans are outperforming Democrats. Regardless of the level of organization, the Democrats appear to have the edge in recruiting and mobilizing. Democrats have better grassroots organizations than Republicans, as they consistently outscored Republicans when supplying information about voters and registering voters. Regardless of party, both groups are more effective at the county level, followed by the district level and then the state level. The parties are primarily challenger resources and not at all incumbent resources. In place of the parties, incumbents now overwhelmingly seek assistance from legislative campaign committees, with this pattern more evident among Republicans than Democrats. We are even witnessing the increased effectiveness of the LCCs among open-seat candidates as well.

Thus far, care has been taken to show how different states host different levels of party activities, and different committees play different roles and provide different services. The two parties' various committees emphasize different services to different candidates and, as a result, various candidates hold varying perceptions regarding the importance or unimportance of parties. We have also seen that the parties do not equally target all types of candidates. The next section focuses on the differences between the two parties within the states. That is, within the Democratic Party, which states have the

most important party organizations, what types of services are they providing, and which level of the party is the most important? Concomitantly, within the Republican Party, which states have the most important party organizations, what types of services are they providing, and which level of the party is the most important?

Comparing the Perceptions of all Six Party Organizations

Recalling the overall analysis of Democrats versus Republicans, Democratic party committees outscored Republican party committees in six of the ten categories at the state level, five of the ten categories at the county level, and only one of the ten categories at the district level. Intra-party and inter-party differences were found within these overall party scores, suggesting that some of the variance between the two parties could be explained by the fact that the parties were not completely and similarly effective with different candidates – subtle variations within the party are the product of the different perceptions of candidates. Additional variances regarding party importance were also noted among states. The analysis of party activity previously indicates that different party committees are ranked higher in certain states, yet this section explores how different levels of importance within the two parties are the products of the various state parties. That is, within the Republican Party and Democratic Party, are there: one, similarities and differences among Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma in the overall perceptions of party importance?; two, similarities and differences among Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma in the perceptions of the types of important services?

Earlier tables showed the highest rated county-level committees from the perspective of candidates were found in Oklahoma, the highest rated district-level committee was found in Texas, and the highest rated state-level committees were found

in Louisiana. Do these differences hold true for candidates within both parties? In other words, within the Republican Party, are the highest rated state-level committees from the perspective of all Republican candidates still found in Louisiana and within the Democratic Party, are the highest rated district state-level committees from the perspective of all Democratic candidates still found in Texas?

Table 5.15: Mean scores for State Party activities by Party and State

	Democrat			Republican		
	LA	TX	OK	LA	TX	OK
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.57	1.53	1.64	1.58	1.38	1.46
Voter Information	2.14	1.97	1.79	2.29	1.49	1.83
Registering Voters	2.16	2.47	1.69	2.11	1.68	1.29
Media Advertising	1.66	1.89	1.67	1.60	1.77	1.26
Assisting Fundraising	1.57	1.42	1.23	1.51	1.21	1.54
Formulating Issue Positions	1.61	1.47	1.41	1.80	1.55	1.51
Recruiting Workers	1.50	1.78	1.44	1.69	1.64	1.31
Formulating Strategies	1.50	1.69	1.41	1.62	1.34	1.31
Campaign Management	1.38	1.33	1.36	1.67	1.30	1.43
Hiring Professionals	1.29	1.17	1.46	1.67	1.15	1.49
N	56	36	39	45	47	39

Table 5.15 shows that the mean scores for the Republican state-level committee in Louisiana exceed Oklahoma and Texas in eight of the ten categories, with Oklahoma Republicans giving a higher score in fundraising and Texas Republicans giving a higher score in advertising. From the perspective of Republican state legislative candidates, the Republican Party of Louisiana (RPL) is slightly important in two categories – registering voters and supplying information about voters – while state legislative candidates in Oklahoma and Texas never indicate state-level committees being slightly important. Thus, Louisiana's state-level committee exceeds the other two in instances of perceived importance. When comparing the perceptions of the state-level committee in Oklahoma

to the perceptions of the state-level committee in Texas, the two states split with higher scores in five categories apiece.

When counting the number of times that candidates' give mean scores that place state-level committees within their top-four groups, Louisiana's state-level committees rank in the top four in only two categories – supplying information about voters and registering voters. In contrast, Oklahoma's state-level committees, though having a higher mean score in only one category, place within the top four in four categories – hiring professionals, supplying information about voters, candidate recruiting, and registering voters. Texas' state-level party committee never places in the top four. Relatively speaking, the RPL's state-level committee is perceived slightly important twice and then distinctly fades from candidate perceptions. The Republican Party of Oklahoma's (RPO) state-level committee is never perceived important but is noticed more often. The Republican Party of Texas' (RPT) state-level committee is perceived not at all important and is never noticed in any categories by Republican state legislative candidates.

Within the Democratic Party, the Louisiana Democratic Party state-level committee does not enjoy a decided advantage in perceptions of importance. The state-level committees in Louisiana and Texas rank within candidates' top four in four categories apiece. When looking to see how many times Texas' state-level mean scores place in the top four versus Louisiana, Texas' state-level committee places in the top four six times to Louisiana's four. In recruiting and hiring professionals the ODP state committee receives higher scores than the Louisiana Democratic Party (LDP) and Texas Democratic Party (TDP). Yet, Democrats in Oklahoma rank the Oklahoma Democratic

Party's (ODP) state-level committee within the top four six times. Therefore, Texas' and Louisiana's state-level committees from the perception of candidates are ranked equally within the Democratic Party. Oklahoma's state legislative candidates perceive the ODP's state-level committee as less useful, less noticed, and never important.

In conclusion, at the state level, the RPL exceeds the RPO and the RPT among Republican candidates. Among Democratic candidate's, the TDP and LDP have performed comparably, with the ODP a distant third.

District-level trends parallel state-level trends, though there are some differences. Overall, candidates in Texas give higher scores for district-level committees. Examining candidate perceptions within the Republican Party, the RPT's district-level committee is ranked higher than the RPO's district-level committee in all ten categories. Table 5.16 shows the RPT is ranked higher than the RPO across all ten categories. Additionally, candidates place the RPT's district-level committees in the top four six times, but candidates in Oklahoma never rank the RPO's district-level committees within the top four.

Table 5.16: Mean scores for District Party activities by Party and State

	Democrat		Republican	
	TX	OK	TX	OK
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.28	1.33	1.60	1.34
Voter Information	1.97	1.33	2.11	1.26
Formulating Strategies	1.25	1.51	1.72	1.46
Registering Voters	2.19	1.56	2.34	1.29
Media Advertising	1.42	1.33	1.55	1.31
Assisting Fundraising	1.22	1.10	1.57	1.31
Formulating Issue Positions	1.78	1.38	1.91	1.14
Recruiting Workers	1.53	1.31	1.62	1.34
Campaign Management	1.19	1.38	1.47	1.26
Hiring Professionals	1.08	1.21	1.28	1.09
N	36	39	47	39

Among Democrats, state legislative candidates perceive the TDP's district organizations more important than the ODP's district organizations. The ODP's district-level committees join their Republican counterparts as being the least important and least useful party committees from the perspective of state legislative candidates in Oklahoma. The ODP ranks higher in only four categories, rank in the top four only three times, and never receive a score on any category higher than slightly important. In comparison, the TDP's district-level committees place within the top four two times and are deemed slightly important once in the category of "registering voters."

At the county level, similar and different perceptions emerge as seen in Table 5.17. Previously it was found that county-level committee activities in Oklahoma were perceived more important than county-level committees in the other two states. Within the two parties, these perceptions are similarly maintained, as the Oklahoma Democratic county-level committees and Oklahoma Republican county-level committees rank higher within their respective parties from the perspective of Oklahoma's state legislative candidates. Candidates within both parties in Louisiana perceived their county-level committees less important than candidates in the other states. Within the Democratic Party, candidates give higher scores to the ODP's county-level committees in six categories versus two categories a piece for the TDP and the LDP. When looking at the number of times the county-level committees placed in the top four, the comparable usefulness of Oklahoma's county-level committees to candidates becomes more apparent. The ODP's county-level committees placed in the top four in all ten categories, versus six for Texas and five for Louisiana. The ODP's county-level committees are ranked higher and are perceived more important by candidates in Oklahoma than candidates in Texas

followed by candidates in Louisiana. What is further interesting is the fact that the three county-level committees in the Democratic Party receive scores that rank them as slightly important role in the same three categories – supplying information about voters, registering voters, and supplying campaign workers for campaigns.

Table 5.17: Mean scores for County Party activities by Party and State

	Democrat			Republican		
	LA	TX	OK	LA	TX	OK
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	1.68	1.72	1.74	1.64	1.70	1.71
Voter Information	2.00	2.17	2.26	1.51	2.06	2.34
Formulating Strategies	1.73	1.61	1.77	1.51	1.68	1.94
Registering Voters	2.07	2.58	2.38	1.49	2.51	2.29
Media Advertising	1.54	1.50	1.46	1.33	1.57	1.54
Assisting Fundraising	1.68	1.39	1.59	1.44	1.72	1.94
Formulating Issue Positions	1.52	1.81	1.85	1.60	1.91	1.83
Recruiting Workers	2.04	2.83	2.05	1.82	2.79	2.37
Campaign Management	1.54	1.44	1.59	1.53	1.45	1.71
Hiring Professionals	1.23	1.19	1.36	1.49	1.26	1.26
N	56	36	39	45	47	39

Many of the same patterns of candidate perceptions hold true in the Republican Party. The RPO's county-level committees and RPT's county-level committees both receive higher mean scores from Republican candidates in four of the ten categories; however, head-to-head they split. When looking at the number of times candidates rank the county-level committees within the top four, the increased usefulness of Oklahoma's county-level committees over Texas' becomes more apparent. The RPO's county-level committees place in the top four ten times, to Texas' four and Louisiana's one. In both parties, Louisiana's county-level committees are perceived by candidates to play a weaker role and are not important. The RPT and RPO do not rank much higher to but candidates perceive them to be slightly important in three categories – supplying

information about voters, registering voters, and supplying campaign workers. Overall, candidates in Oklahoma rank the RPO's county-level committees higher than the other county committees observed in this study.

Comparing Table 5.15, Table 5.16, and Table 5.17, success at one committee-level does automatically generate success at another as each level of each state party ranks differently from the perspective of candidates. When looking across the states, the parties within the same state did not necessarily excel in the same areas; therefore, each party in each state left a separate and distinct impression to their respective candidates.

Table 5.18: Mean scores for LCC activities by Party and State

	Democrat			Republican		
	LA	TX	OK	LA	TX	OK
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Decision to Run	2.18	1.53	1.41	2.18	1.81	1.51
Voter Information	1.45	1.36	1.49	1.80	1.51	1.54
Formulating Strategies	1.77	1.75	1.51	2.18	1.96	1.69
Registering Voters	1.38	1.14	1.36	1.87	1.23	1.26
Media Advertising	1.96	2.03	1.38	2.16	2.15	1.20
Assisting Fundraising	2.21	1.67	1.56	2.42	2.13	1.74
Formulating Issue Positions	1.75	2.17	1.69	2.11	2.26	1.54
Recruiting Workers	1.36	1.19	1.28	1.76	1.28	1.23
Campaign Management	1.54	1.58	1.46	2.11	1.68	1.51
Hiring Professionals	1.52	1.64	1.46	2.13	1.87	1.40
N	56	36	39	45	47	39

Finally, some attention should be given to the legislative campaign committees in this study, as evidence suggests they are not equally important in these three states. Table 5.18 displays LCC mean scores. One trend that emerges is that high rankings of one party's LCC seem to have been a predictor for high rankings of its counterpart LCC. For example, the two highest rated LCCs were found in Louisiana, with Louisiana's Republican LCC outscoring the Democratic LCC. Additionally, these two LCCs ranked

higher than the other four LCCs in Oklahoma and Texas. From the perspective of candidates the Louisiana Republican LCC ranks higher than the Republican LCCs in Oklahoma and Texas, with Texas' LCC a distant second and Oklahoma's third. Louisiana's Democratic LCC was ranked higher than Texas', but the difference was not as great among Democrats as Republicans. Louisiana's Democratic LCCs ranked higher in six categories to Texas' three and split with Texas by ranking in the top four seven times. Oklahoma's Democratic LCC placed third by placing in the top four only four times and having the highest mean scores in only one category.

Oklahoma's Democratic LCCs were not at all important in their state, while Louisiana's was rated slightly important twice and Texas once. In contrast, Louisiana's Republican LCC was rated slightly important in seven categories to Texas' four and Oklahoma's none. This analysis does not support the claim that LCCs thrive where TSPPOs falter and that group assistance is a zero-sum game. Some of the strongest levels of party activity were recorded in Louisiana, and the strongest LCCs were recorded in Louisiana. If anything, this study finds that strong parties are more likely to simultaneously promote the development of strong LCCs. This is intuitive in the sense that in order to take on strong organizations, a group's organization must be strong as well. The weaker the group's competing organization, the less strong your organization has to be to be noticed by candidates.

Conclusion

State political party organizations are specialists and candidates perceive them to be specialists. Overall, both parties are best at public opinion gathering and voter mobilization during elections. The two categories of supplying information about voters

and registering/mobilizing voters during elections were the source of the highest mean scores for parties. Candidates sporadically notice other party activities, but not as consistently nor significantly as these two activities. Unfortunately, parties generally fail to play an important role in the other four areas examined in this study. Legislative campaign committees, political action committees, interest groups, and, most importantly, friends and family are consistently more important to state legislative candidates across the other four dimensions – the decision to run, campaign communications, candidate finance, campaign management – as the mean scores for the parties are generally low and do not consistently exceed the scores assigned to these other groups. Across all categories and displayed earlier in Table 5.10, the state political party organizations consistently outperform only unions and national party organizations.

There are factors related to positive perceptions of party importance. This chapter found that contextual factors – state and party – are not as significant as candidate factors – competitiveness and incumbency. Challengers and open-seat candidates who are competitive and/or win are more likely to positively assess party contributions, while incumbents are more likely to negatively assess party contributions in favor of legislative party contributions. These patterns hold across the various party services, though are most evident in the strongest area of party campaign services – grassroots functions.

This chapter also significantly isolates the specialized connection between legislative campaign committees and incumbents. For incumbents LCCs have become the party and primarily concern themselves with incumbency protection. Nevertheless, while LCC are primarily concerned with incumbent protection, there is evidence to suggest that they are occasionally concerned with incumbent creation. Competitive open-seat

candidates also perceive LCC importance, though not as consistently and strongly as incumbents. LCCs are definitely not challenger resources.

Among the other significant findings from this chapter are:

- Republican district-level committees play a larger role within the Republican Party, while Democratic state-level committees play a larger role within the Democratic Party.
- Republican candidates appreciated party services more when selecting issue positions, supplying workers, assisting with campaign management, and recommending professionals.
- The various committees of the two parties split in usefulness when recruiting, fundraising, advertising, and developing strategies.
- Democratic candidates were more complimentary when supplying information about voters and registering/mobilizing voters.
- Candidate reserves their highest party scores for county-level committees.
- The highest county scores appear in Oklahoma, highest state mean scores appear in Louisiana, and the highest district mean scores appear in Texas.
- Competitive candidates give higher mean scores for state political party activities than noncompetitive candidates, which is reaffirmed in the OLS models.
- Open-seat candidates give higher party evaluations than challengers and incumbents, though this pattern is clearer among Republicans than Democrats.
- LCCs, interest groups, and PACs receive higher scores then state legislative candidates than traditional state political party organizations.

- Republican LCCs receive higher scores than Democratic LCCs, with the highest scores going to the Republican LCC in Louisiana.
- The only consistently important group to candidates running for the state legislature is friends and family and all other groups are not very important to state legislative candidates.
- Running for the state legislature is an intensely personal endeavor from the perspective of candidates.

These findings provide a perspective of party campaign assistance that is often overlooked in party literature. Candidate perceptions of party activities vary systemically with the type of activity, the party level, and the circumstances of the candidate and election. Unfortunately, we also find that state legislative candidates give relatively low marks to most external organizations, including the traditional state political party organizations. Outside of grassroots functions, the traditional state political party organization is neither useful nor important to candidates. Running for the state legislature is a personal, candidate-centered endeavor, and parties provide narrow and specific services towards those endeavors.

CHAPTER SIX: The Future of State Parties in the New Millennium

Wherever there are men, there will be parties.

- Thomas Jefferson

At one time, American politics was party-centered, but this is no longer the case. Today American politics is candidate-centered (Wattenberg 1991). The initial transformation from party-centered to candidate-centered politics paralyzed the parties and temporarily rendered them obsolete, irrelevant, archaic, and unimportant (Broder 1972). Progressive reforms and judicial mandates yanked from the party their hegemony over the nomination process and, subsequently, from campaigns (Pomper 1998). In the South, progressive reforms were less problematic to party development than the absence of a viable opposition party. The lack of competition obfuscated organizational development and pitted electoral battles within parties and not between parties. The lack of competition between two parties, the lack of party control over nominations, and the lack of a permanent party organization forced individuals to campaign with their own campaign organizations and without party support (Key 1949). V.O. Key would write "In most of the South most of the time party machinery is an impotent mechanism dedicated largely to the performance of routine duties" (1984, 387). As such, parties were neither in demand nor required for successful campaigns.

As time wore on, campaigns became more costly and more complex, and the need for campaign support beyond the candidate's organization increased. With parties incapable of supplying critical functions, interest groups, political action committees, and legislative campaign committees took an increasingly active role in campaigns. Without strong parties to dictate themes and identities, elections focused on candidates, their

issues, and their personalities. These ambitious office seekers and officeholders could ignore parties, choose their own issues, create their own networks, and form their own coalitions. The mass media allowed candidates to broadcast their nonpartisan themes to an increasingly nonpartisan electorate. The absence of party labels forced voters to make election-by-election and office-by-office decisions based on these personalities, themes, and issues. Open nomination processes allowed new voters to avoid declarations of permanent party allegiance and a new generation of independents, free agents, and crossover voters emerged. The writers of the period witnessed the fact that the party could no longer control nominations, set issues, provide money and personnel, and deliver votes; hence, the party had declined or was over (Broder 1972). Nevertheless, the parties never completely waned, and today a two-party system persists.

While the party obituary may have been appropriate for decline scholars then, its applicability must be questioned now. As noted in the first chapter, the party decline school became such a prominent part of our party literature that many current texts continue to show its biases. You will not find anyone presently identifying himself as a member of the party decline school in favor of a new label, "candidate-centered." Often, this candidate-centered literature reads similarly to decline literature because their assumptions mirror those of the party decline school. Candidate-centered scholarship focuses on money and voter allegiance, and since the parties tend to lack both they are rendered unimportant. The point of this dissertation, ironically, is not to challenge the fact that campaigns are candidate-centered, but to investigate whether the assumption of party unimportance derived from party allegiance and financial reports is indeed appropriate.

This study challenges the assumptions of candidate-centered scholarship in several ways. First, finance data alone is not a measure of party importance or unimportance, as campaign contributions are only one facet, albeit an important one, of a campaign. This study also shows that contributions are not the only example of financial activities. Second, party importance or unimportance can only be declared when examining the totality of party roles within an election. The major dimensions of a campaign are candidate recruitment and selection, campaign management, campaign communication, candidate financing, and gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections. Third, party registration and voting behavior tells us something about the party-in-the-electorate, but it tells us nothing about the party-as-organization. As the first chapter explained, the party has never been formally and appropriately defined from the vantage point of the electorate or with the voter in mind. Fourth, this study discusses the actions of the party organization during elections as described by the personnel of the party. Party behavior is not voting behavior but organizational behavior.

Fifth and finally, party importance or unimportance can only be declared by those whom the activities intend to influence, i.e. the candidates. Campaigns are like icebergs, and the public typically sees only the tips of these icebergs. Another 90% exists below the surface, and a good researcher must go there to find out what is really going on during campaigns. Included among those who know are party personnel, but party personnel are predisposed to inflating party importance. The candidates themselves can only declare importance or unimportance. Therefore, this study goes to the center of the campaigns, to the candidates themselves, and asks them directly to assess the importance of party activities.

But so what? What can we learn from investigating the role of traditional state political party organizations in state legislative elections? A focus on the role of traditional state political party organizations in state legislative elections is necessary for several reasons. First, the majority of elected and party officials are at the state level. Second, state legislatures are responsible for public policy that represents hundreds of billions of dollars in annual expenditures. Third, what happens at these levels is relevant for electoral and partisan politics at other levels. Fourth, state party leaders themselves believe their organizations are relevant in regard to state offices. Fifth, today's traditional state political party organizations have evolved into well-financed, permanent, professional, and viable organizations.

Sixth, and finally, representative democracy is built around campaigns, and party competition promotes electoral participation. When party competition declines, turnout will inevitably fall. Ergo, democracy needs parties, hence the adage "Democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties." Party government or responsible party government stands to revitalize our representative democracy. However, if traditional state political party organizations have any hopes of governing, then they must first play vital roles in elections. They cannot become responsible organizations capable of enacting programmatic desires without first developing obligations from policymakers that are first initiated during campaigns. In order to assess the possibilities for responsible party government, we must be able to effectively and systematically discern what the parties are doing and whether candidates find these activities critical to their electoral success. This study tells us whether parties are prepared for this role first by ascertaining the importance of party activities during state legislative campaigns.

This dissertation set out with two primary objectives: to determine if traditional state party organizations make a difference in elections and to discuss whether traditional state party organizations are capable of adapting to and surviving in the contemporary candidate-centered political environment. First, do traditional state political party organizations make a difference in elections? This question is not easy to answer, and a simple yes or no is inappropriate. When talking with party officials at various levels, it is clear that most people within the party feel that the presence or absence of party activities in certain state legislative contests has had consequences. The best descriptive for this is "making campaigning easier."[456] Party officials consistently felt certain party activities made campaigning easier by reducing candidate burdens – they recommend administrative strategies, show how to conduct opposition research, disseminate talking points of words to emphasize or avoid, provide lists of media outlets, subsidize advertising, facilitate contacts between candidates and professionals, maintain voter/donor/volunteer databases for candidates, supply volunteers to assist with phone banks or neighborhood canvassing, and register voters.

Party officials genuinely believe these are all activities that candidates appreciate, make campaigning easier, and, occasionally, are consequential to outcomes. These are accessories that can be delivered to or utilized by candidates if they desire; however, by no means do parties attempt to hijack, take control over, insert themselves into, or dictate how state legislative campaigns are run or what services they must utilize. Some candidates use the state party, but some do not. Therefore, Aldrich's (1995) view of a party "in service to candidates" is probably the best, most succinct description of the role of the state party. The party provides services that may be accessed at the candidate's

[456] Interview with the Author on July 17th, 2004.

discretion and on his terms, which eases the candidate's burden and frees him to concentrate on other things. From the perspective of those within the party, this makes a difference and, concomitantly, allows the traditional state political party organization to be important. Responding to whether the party makes a difference, one party chair said,

> I sincerely believe my efforts, the [parties'] efforts, make a difference – not for everyone, probably not even in most cases – but we make a difference. Too many people have told me 'Thanks, I could not have done this without your help.' I know some of this is flattery, but I think you have to believe them. And if I cease to believe them, then I have to quit.[457]

From the perspective of the party, their services are important.

From the perspective of candidates, one obtains a different opinion based on the status of their particular campaign. For example, the noncompetitive candidate will insist that the party is worthless, never fulfilled promises, never advertised its services, never provided funds, had outdated information, was hard to contact, and did not provide any information that they did not already know. One candidate's former campaign manager said, "Party? What party? They said they would do this and this and this, but, in the end, did not do anything. In fact, the guy I worked for was so pissed, that he switched parties."[458] This study did not find many noncompetitive candidates who had positive things to say about the party, so from their perspective, the party was neither important nor made a difference. Survey data in the previous chapters overwhelming and convincingly affirmed this observation, as the mean scores from noncompetitive candidates were significantly lower than competitive candidates and in the unimportant range.

---

[457] Interview with the Author on July 17th, 2004.
[458] Interview with the Author on July 4th, 2004.

On the other hand, incumbents will not necessarily describe a worthless party as much as a "used-less" party. Incumbents generally did not have use for party services, though they were aware of what the party could do or what the party could provide. For incumbents, the party was used less and existed as a backup option behind political action committees, interest groups, and, most importantly, legislative campaign committees. One incumbent told me, "I just didn't need them; [Head of the LCC] gave me everything I needed or sent me to someone who had what I needed." Would he have used the party if his LCC were unavailable? "Maybe, but I doubt it," though he further said, "I have met consultants and other groups, especially those PACs, that could have helped me as well…I probably would have gone to them first. You typically do not go to the party because they are limited in what they can do and most of my colleagues find them ineffective."[459] All the incumbents that I talked to generally shared this assessment. For incumbents, the party was neither used nor important. Their respective LCC was important and made a difference. Again, these observations and conclusions were verified throughout the pervious chapters in the survey data.

From the perspective of competitive challengers and open-seat candidates, the party did provide some services that they specifically cited as being slightly important. For example, some Democratic candidates consistently cited party registration and get-out-the-vote activities as being a critical component to electoral success or electoral competitiveness. One candidate explained, "My district was targeted by the coordinated campaign, and so they made this big effort to register all these people and arranged transportation for some elderly and black folks. That was one less thing I had to spend my time on, and I could keep my volunteers in the neighborhood or on the phones. In my

[459] Interview with the Author on July 16th, 2004

opinion, that made a big difference."[460] Across all states, competitive candidates and open-seat candidates indicated they often lacked the time and manpower to register and mobilize large groups of voters within their district or precincts, so party efforts solely within gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters during elections give candidates the flexibility, time, and resources to focus on other campaign activities, particularly raising funds. The quantitative data supported these assessments, as party scores were highest on the question regarding mobilization and registration.

Second to voter registration and GOTV drives, competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates also appreciated when party members were able to supply precinct or district data, information, or maps. For them it was a cheap and easy way to identify who and what areas needed to be targeted. Related to this, they also appreciated the ability of the party, particularly county-level party committees, to provide or recruit manpower for candidates. The personal accounts are verified by the survey data showing parties were slightly effective at the county-level when mobilizing voters, registering voters, supplying information, and recruiting volunteers for certain candidates. One candidate said, "I think they're [party] important. [Laughing] They're a mess, a lot of times they don't know what they're doing and they've certainly angered me off a few times. But at the end of the day, I don't think you can discount what they've done for me and what they've done for others."[461] None of these candidates generally felt the party was the most important group to their campaign, which was reinforced by the survey data showing at best only slightly important scores in only one campaign dimension of voter mobilization. County-level party committees are decent grassroots mobilization

[460] Interview with the Author on July 17th, 2004.
[461] Interview with the Author on August 3, 2004.

resources, but district-level and state-level parties are ineffective resources. All candidates clearly did not express much optimism in state-level recruitment, communications, management, and fundraising.

In summary, do traditional state political party organizations make a difference in elections? For those who work for the party, many sincerely believe that their participation can make a difference, to the extent of helping or preventing campaigns from succeeding. In certain campaigns – competitive challengers and competitive open-seats – with specified services – gauging public opinion or mobilizing voters during elections – county-level and parish-level party committees are slightly important to campaigns and the most important external resource to candidates. In a small number of cases, this may have directly made a difference. Survey data shows that this varies, though, to some extent across Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. County-level committees in Oklahoma are slightly more important to candidates than they are in Texas or Louisiana. District-level committees are less important and less valuable to candidates in the realm of gauging public opinion and mobilizing voters, more so in Oklahoma. State-level party committees are rarely important resources and are even less valuable to candidates than district-level and county-level committees, especially in Oklahoma and Texas. Nevertheless, most candidates did not feel the party altered the course of their campaign and had no effect on the outcome.

Overall party impacts are minimal because parties primarily service competitive challengers and competitive open-seat candidates, who do not comprise the majority of candidates competing in state legislative elections. The party is only a mobilization and registration resource but is not a recruitment, communication, management, and financial

resource. A positive prologue to this assessment is the fact in the near future, the number of competitive state legislative contests could increase because term limits in Oklahoma and Louisiana guarantee an increase in the number of open-seat elections. Thus, all things being equal, the conditions could be ripe for increased party importance in the next round of state legislative elections if proactive steps are taken to increase the size, scope, and strategy of traditional state political party organization campaign activities.

The second question asks whether traditional state political party organizations are capable of adapting to the changing nature of state legislative elections. This dissertation concludes that parties are capable of adapting and presently are adapting. Admittedly, this study lacked an explicit longitudinal time-series design capable of clearly isolating the exact nature of and degree to which our parties have adapted on an election-by-election or year-to-year basis. Nevertheless, one can still compare the survey results and interviews of the 2002-2003 elections with the historical context presented at the start of the three chapters on Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma. Limited and appropriate generalizations about the long-term adaptation of our parties may still be made.

It is clear that all six parties have made adjustments, and are still adjusting, to the present candidate-centered environment. All six parties under investigation have changed considerably since the 1950s. For starters, the six political parties in all three states have permanent, year-round organizations. Party chairs, executive directors, communication directors, finance directors, executive committees, and numerous sub-committees comprise these organizations. The existence of a continuously staffed party apparatus reflects a minimum level of organizational stability and permanence.

Additionally, the six political parties are receiving more donations and dispensing more funds. These funds are being raised by targeted direct-mail strategies and fundraisers perfected and recommended by the national committees. Political parties maintain complex budgets, have permanent headquarters, and are staffed at least part-time. These are the obvious signs of organizational development, but what about the less obvious signs of campaign adaptation?

John White and Daniel Shea (2004) have tabbed this era of party politics the "Information Age," when state parties are meeting increased demands for information. During the period of this study, all six parties were either upgrading or modernizing their databases. In Oklahoma, the ODP was compiling a searchable voter, donor, and volunteer computer database. The RPO, RPL, and RPT were all working with the RNC and party consultants to construct, upgrade, and update databases. All parties were working towards making their databases more-user-friendly, bringing their information up to date, and advertising these services to candidates. Political parties recognize the candidate's need for technical assistance and information, and they are taking steps to meet this demand. Candidates have an increasing need for specialized pieces of technical information in order to target audiences; the state parties are responding by creating, maintaining, and modernizing this information themselves. This specificity allows parties to target individual constituencies with literature and other campaign advertising. In addition to the information age, we are in a World Wide Web age. All six parties maintain webpages that allow people to donate, volunteer, or contact their party officials. All six parties have webpages that list all precinct chairs, county chairs, district chairs, and executive officials, and many of them even have links to party-allied groups,

consultants, committees, list servers, email updates, party announcements, platforms, and party events. These services can be applicable to both the general public and candidates. While these web pages are relatively simple and not that powerful, they do represent an attempt to adapt to the information and computer age of a candidate-centered election environment. Parties are adapting.

Building coalitions and networks has also become a priority for candidates, and state parties are developing in this area as well. The state parties have established coalitions with interest groups, PACs, and professional consultants. State parties are relying more and more on consultants to run direct mail, supply polling information, assist with fundraising, and develop media advertisements and campaign literature. By perfecting these services, the parties make themselves more functional and useable for candidates. Though on some basic level the parties are in competition with other groups, political realities have forced parties to learn to live with and work alongside many of these PACs and interest groups. To date, though, the parties continue to avoid relationships with LCCs. Not only are parties able to increase their functionality, but they are also more prepared to connect candidates to other groups, professionals, donors, and candidates who can meet campaign needs. While this sounds like the antithesis of party adaptability, the ability to create networks reflects the recognition on the part of parties that they cannot do everything and sometimes the most useful thing the party can do is recommend the next best solution. In this capacity, the party acts as a broker, a role it did not exercise in the past. Parties are adapting.

With organizational coherence and stable financing, state parties are now capable of participating more in coordinated or parallel campaigns. National parties will not

allow state parties to participate without first developing a proposal detailing strategies, services, manpower, and sources of funding. This reduces campaign overhead for candidates and parties and aims to improve the communication between national parties, state parties, and candidates. Additionally, parties are organizing workshops to educate campaign managers and party professionals on how to do opposition research and how to disseminate their candidate's information on the web, radio, print, and television. As parties increase and perfect these workshops, they are adapting to the environment.

The parties are supplying many new functions based on the reality of what modern campaigns need and what today's candidate desires. Although the parties have launched many new services, they have not abandoned many traditional functions. Parties continue to recruit, though they are more limited in influence because of present nomination and party rules that have lessened the party monopoly over these procedures. Nevertheless, parties are more willing to openly assist candidates in this context. The state parties continue to regularly host registration drives, distribute posters and signs, and encourage voters, in a variety of ways, to turn out on election day. Political parties still maintain their grassroots functions; however, they are simultaneously transforming other sectors of the party to meet the newer technical, informational needs of candidates. Today, the parties are more sophisticated and strategic entities with permanent structures more capable of sustaining themselves regardless of personalities and political tides. Over the long run, parties have adapted and will continue to adapt, as they are organic entities. They may not be innovative or cutting edge, but they are not wholly static and archaic.

In contrast to the tendency to declare the party irrelevant, this dissertation shows that the traditional state political party organizations play a limited role in state legislative elections. This participation can be consequential at times when providing grassroots services. This has occurred only because the parties have adapted. Parties recognize and accept the candidate-centered environment that dominates today's political environment and are working within this environment to be of service to candidates. Candidates do not want state parties running the show, and parties do not want to run the show. Candidates do want support services made available to them, and parties are taking steps to provide more of this. Parties do not supply all the important and innovative services in demand and are a dominant group in any campaign, but they do not have to have an influence. Parties are relevant but are not important.

John Aldrich argues that political parties are the "creature of politicians, the ambitious office seeker and office holder. They have created and maintained, used or abused, reformed or ignored the political party when doing so has furthered their goals and ambitions" (1995, 4). This study verifies and modifies this statement. The state political party is not a resource available to all candidates, nor is it a resource that all candidates are comfortable with using. Political parties exist largely to serve the needs of the ambitious, competitive office seeker. The consistent presence of low scores of unimportance from incumbents and noncompetitive candidates indicates that the traditional state political party organization is not necessarily the creature of ambitious office holders and noncompetitive office seekers, as they have come to rely more on a host of other entities such as friends, family, legislative campaign committees, political action committees, and interest groups. For incumbents, the "party" is the legislative

organization. To be sure, political parties are still influenced by officeholders but are less beholden to them than in the past.

In contrast to declaring the party irrelevant, this dissertation concludes that party organizations are organic; they respond to changes and search for their proper roles. While party behavior falls short of the dictates of the responsible party model, parties can have a small influence in the election of candidates. Electing candidates to office has been and presently remains the number-one concern of American parties, but it is also the first and most necessary condition for responsibility and strength. The state political parties must have an influence on more candidates and must somehow bridge the gap with incumbents if they are to be more consequential and responsible electoral mechanisms. This requires that the parties continue to remain active organizations, continue to elect strong chairs, maintain independence from current officeholders, increase their financial bases, continue to develop and perfect campaign services, make coherent policy statements, and effectively sanction or reward candidates according to their ability to display party discipline. Indeed, parties are pressed to win office in order to have governing coalitions and then enact policies, but they do not use and enact policies to win offices and create governing coalitions. This dissertation now enters into a final discussion on the trends of the six state parties and makes some assessments regarding their future possibilities and development.

Louisiana

Republican gains in Louisiana have been equally dramatic and frustrating. In 1970, the state Senate had no Republicans and the state House had one Republican. Today there are 37 Republicans in the House and 15 Republicans in the Senate; both

totals are the highest since Reconstruction. In 1995 and 1999 Louisiana elected and reelected Mike Foster to consecutive terms for governor, and in 2004 elected its first-post Reconstruction Republican Senator and five Republican U.S. Representatives. Despite the fact that only 25% of Louisianans are registered as Republicans, 42% of those who voted in 2004 identified themselves as Democrats, and 41% identified themselves as Republicans. Bush won Louisiana with 57% of the vote, an increase over 2000. Although the Republicans lost the governor's race in 2003, African American Mayor of New Orleans, Ray Nagin, stunningly broke from the Democratic ranks and publicly endorsed the Republican gubernatorial candidate, Bobby Jindal (Hill et al. 2003). Term limits are set to hit the Louisiana Legislature in 2007, which will disproportionately affect Democratic legislators and make 2007 a very exciting and critical election season.

While it would be an oversimplification to attribute all these Republican successes to a strengthened Republican Party of Louisiana, the RPL has been able to provide more services for its candidates than ever before and has played a role in some of these advances. There is little doubt that the open primary was initially a boon for RPL development, but to assign this feature as the sole reason for Republican success does a great disservice to the hard work of past chairs of the Republican Party of Louisiana. Today, the open primary is more of a hindrance than a help to both parties. Unlike the 1960s and 1970s, today the party is capable of keeping most of its leadership positions filled and supplies candidates in most legislative races. In recent years, party leadership has been stable and the party continues to raise and dispense more funds than ever before. The current party chair, Roger Villere, has re-established ties with the RNC that suffered from the hasty and abrupt departure of Pat Brister. The RNC and RPL are planning a

parallel campaign for the 2007 election cycle. The RPL intends to launch a new donor, volunteer, and voter web-based database and is currently recruiting candidates for 2007. The RPL has begun to target the Louisiana House and Senate districts that will be vacated due to term limits. If the RPL continues to raise funds, then it should be able to do even more in 2007. This study shows that the RPL would be well served to largely repeat the mobilization techniques of 2003 but stress modernizing its recruiting efforts, advertising options, dissemination of issue points, and organizing its donor and consultant networks. The RPL must also spend more time improving SREC-PEC communication.

Alas, not all is well within the Republican Party. Roger Villere is having difficulty keeping the various factions of Republicans on the same page. He recently solidified his position in a standoff with David Vitter, who wanted to name the new state party executive director. Vitter was pushing for the appointment of John Deiz, but Villere won with his selection of Ellen Wray (formerly the political director of GOPAC headed up by former Oklahoma Congressman J.C. Watts). Vitter represents the religious and socially conservative wing of the party. The "Religious Right," led by Senator Vitter, is in conflict with the economic conservatives, led by David Treen and shipping magnate Donald "Boysie" Bollinger. Bollinger supplies a large portion of the party finances, so a Vitter takeover of the RPL could be a financial disaster. Although David Treen is no longer an officeholder, his voice still carries tremendous weight within Republican circles. Furthermore, it is a poorly guarded secret that David Treen does not like David

Vitter personally or professionally. This feud threatens to paralyze party progress and destroy party coherence (Brown 2005).[462]

Another problem Louisiana Republicans are having is preventing the RNC meddling that comes with RNC financial involvement. RPL-RNC relations were strained in 2004, when, against the wishes of many Republicans, the RPL endorsed Billy Tauzin III, a fiscal conservative, over Craig Romero, a social conservative. The RPL endorsed Tauzin III in order to secure financial pledges from the RNC, RCCC, and Billy Tauzin II, because funds had been scarce after the election failures of 2003. The RPL's endorsement of Tauzin, and his subsequent loss to Melancon, influenced over 50 Republicans in the SREC and PEC to resign and switch their partisan affiliation. Many Louisiana Republicans remain miffed at RNC meddling. Until the Republican Party of Louisiana can mend its fences between Treen-Vitter, Tauzin-Romero, and social conservatives-fiscal conservatives, the Republican Party of Louisiana will be stymied by its own organizational infighting, infighting that caused the party to suspend its last party convention.

Organizational incoherence at the state level has had an effect on relationships with the parish committees and Republican Women's Clubs. As a result, many Parish Committees and Women's Clubs operate independently from the party, which detracts from the party attempts to develop unified themes, messages, and services. If the RPL develops a deeper financial base, receives more financial pledges from the RNC, and reconciles the competing Republican factions, then it could become a stronger, more coherent factor in state legislative elections. The appearance of unity and a party platform could bring together various Republican interests, create more legislative unity,

[462] Interview with Author July 4th, 2005.

and foster party-candidate relationships. Without unity and funds, the party has no chance of being an effective campaign service. The open primary already handicaps what the party can do, so it makes little sense for Republicans to further handicap themselves with inter-party squabbles.

The Louisiana Democratic Party remains tenacious, though it is also not without its problems. The Catholic, French Acadian parishes and the African American river parishes still serve as a bastion for Democratic strength. Democrats own the edge in official registration and enjoy comfortable, though no longer veto-proof, majorities in both state legislative bodies. The Democrats scored a major victory in 2003 when they not only defeated Mike Foster's handpicked successor for governor but also swept every statewide office except for Secretary of State – held by Republican Fox McKeithen from 1987 to his death only weeks ago. Although the Democrats lost three seats in the state House in 2003, this was a considerable departure from the loss of seven seats in 1999. In 2004, Melancon, a Democrat, defeated the son of longtime US Representative Billy Tauzin to regain the Democratic-leaning 3rd Congressional District. Many attributed Democratic Party successes in 2003 to the LDP and former chairman Mike Skinner, who, despite a poor relationship with Governor Blanco, was able to work with the Governor and help her win her gubernatorial election. The LDP continues to raise more funds than the RPL and has a deeper financial base. If Blanco's approval ratings increase to the point where a strong Republican does not run – though Congressman Jindal and Senator Vitter are rumored to be considering challenges – then the LDP will be freed to concentrate even more on state legislative elections.[463]

[463] Interview with Author July 4th, 2005.

The LDP is very busy right now, and new Party Chair, Jim Bernhard, is actively touring the state raising funds and recruiting viable candidates for when the term limits hit in 2007. Jim Bernhard has already held three Executive Committee meetings in 2005, recently called for and held elections to fill all 210 seats, has traveled to over 30 parishes in the last year, and hosted a luncheon with the Senate President and Speaker of the House in order to improve LDP-legislative relations. Jim Bernhard is a former lobbyists and fundraiser, so he has financial and political experience. Helping the transition, Chairman Jim Bernhard retained Skinner's staff, which has worked together for two years (Hill 2005). The LDP was best in 2003 when registering voters and mobilizing voters, so the party would be well served to repeat its GOTV procedures though add some new elements. If the SDEC communicated with PECs better, then it could expand the scope of party operations and improve the coordination of GOTV plans and procedures. Bernhard has been sending out bi-monthly party messages addressing party themes and advertising LDP activities. Last month, the party hosted Beaucoup Blues, the first statewide grassroots and election planning conference in preparation for the 2007 election cycle.[464]

Democrats have factional problems of their own. African Americans, at one-third of the population, comprise only 25% of all registered voters, which means that they are slowly becoming more irrelevant in state politics outside of New Orleans. Democrats need African Americans to become a much more effective and better-registered voting force if the LDP is to maintain an edge in state elections. The African American New Orleans political machine BOLD is capable of mobilizing large lumbers of adherents on Election Day, but LDP-BOLD relations are strained by the complaints that the party does

[464] Interview with Author July 27th, 2005.

not take them seriously enough. To date, an African American has not yet won a statewide election. The Louisiana Democratic Party must find a way to incorporate BOLD more into the party organization to foster LDP-African American relations without alienating white Democrats. The LDP should incorporate some BOLD campaign techniques (recruiting, networking, advertising) into its campaign repertoire. Many Democrats, however, are fighting daily to remove the stigma that their party is the "black party" in favor of government handouts for African Americans in New Orleans. Though this reeks of racism, the fact is that many members of the LDP are afraid of an African American takeover of the party, and Louisiana has not completely moved out of the specter of racial politics.

This is illustrated by what happened last year in the 7th Congressional District, a Democratic-leaning district where African Americans make up a significant part of the electorate. It was won by David Boustany, a Republican, because Don Cravins, an African American, refused to endorse and support Willie Mount, the Democratic nominee, after the run-off. This refusal was based on the fact that the LDP partially funded one of her "Democratic Unity" mailings before the primary. Cravins interpreted this action as an LDP endorsement, a Cleo Fields-like slap in the face, and urged his supporters not to vote. African American turnout in the runoff was indeed low and caused Mount to lose to Boustany (Crouere 2004).

Many PEC members in South Louisiana are not yet enthusiastic about Chairman Bernhard and his newest Executive Director, Caroline Roemer. Jim Bernhard was a registered Republican in 2000 and Executive Director of the Shaw group, which donated large sums of money to Bush in 2000 and 2004. Caroline Roemer, daughter of the

former Governor Buddy Roemer, switched her partisan affiliation in January of 2005 before being elected Executive Director in February of 2005. Chairman Bernhard was selected because of his relationship with Governor Blanco and his fundraising experience. Many long-time Democrats are uncomfortable with two recent partisan converts in their two highest party positions.[465] Will the LDP also remain independent from the governor's office? A test for the LDP will arrive in 2007 if Democratic Lieutenant Governor Mitch Landrieu decides to run against Democratic Governor Kathleen Blanco. If Democrats can avoid a contested gubernatorial election, then it will free up substantial party resources for state legislative candidates.

The state parties in Louisiana could have been in decent shape and were in decent shape until August of 2005. In late 2005, two massive hurricanes, Katrina and Rita, struck the Gulf Coast region and destroyed the political, economic, financial, and social infrastructure of a large portion of Louisiana. Though the damage was physical and financial, the rebuilding has taken time, energy, and resources away from the Louisiana Democratic Party and Republican Party of Louisiana. It is too early at this time to discern the long-term side effects these storms will have on the ability of the political parties to be active in the next round of state legislative elections in 2007.

Prior to this catastrophic event, this study found that Louisiana's parties from the perspective of candidates were slightly more effective at the state-level than the other four parties in this survey. Louisiana has weaker parish-level committees, indicating that both parties need to improve state-parish relationships. The absence of district committees reduces the size of the party and increases the odds of party coherence. Louisiana's odd-year election cycle additionally allows the LDP and RPL to focus on

[465] Interview with Author July 27th, 2005.

state races and not federal elections like the parties in Texas and Oklahoma. Nevertheless, odd-year races keep the party very busy by guaranteeing an election cycle three out of every four years. Parties are always more active during election cycles; however, this also stretches the resources of the party. A yearly election forces the parties, if they are to be effective, to constantly bring in enough funds and reduces the opportunity to stockpile resources to meet the demands for services. The largest hindrance for Louisiana's political parties remains the open primary, which both parties are actively trying to end. Both Republicans and Democrats feel the open primary has hindered party development in the primary process and reduces party discipline. If both parties solve their factional problems and strengthen their parish-state relationships, the parties could be a more effective and efficient campaign resource to candidates. After all, research shows that campaigns using the party organization work well, if there is an effective party organization. With two-thirds of the House soon retiring, the opportunity for responsible party development is ripe.

Texas

The party on the rise in Texas is obviously the Republican Party of Texas. Republicans occupy or hold majorities in the governor's office, lieutenant governor's office, attorney general's office, state judgeships, railroad commission, State House, State Senate, U.S. Congress, and both U.S. Senate seats. Making matters worse, Republicans have swept all statewide offices in the last two election cycles, and a Democrat has not occupied the governor's mansion in 10 years. Republicans were able to redraw the congressional districts in 2003 because legislative Democrats were incapable of holding together their delegation. The resulting districts allowed Republicans to solidify their

status as the de facto majority party as they took an 88 to 62 advantage over Democrats. The 2004 election saw Democrats regain one seat in the House and hold steady in the Senate. The RPT has not single-handedly had a say in this process, but the party has contributed to Republican growth and Republican growth has strengthened organizational development. The Texas Democratic Party finds itself as the opposition party and is presently coping with its identity as an opposition party.

Texas' parties are relatively weaker than Louisiana's at the state level and weaker than Oklahoma at the county level. Texas' holds an advantage with its district level committees, but Oklahoma's district-committees are symbolic, and Louisiana has no district-committees. It would be too simplistic to blame party problems on funds; however, money is a big problem in both parties. Both parties are presently struggling to keep even. The BCFRA of 2002 has made it more challenging for parties because it limits party transfers. That has affected the TDP less than the RPT, because for years TDP-DNC relationships have been strained and/or non-existent. The TDP's largest problem is a shrinking financial pool resulting from a shrinking number of Democrats. One still must pay heed to the BCFRA. The TDP, in fact, removed its DNC link from its webpage in 2001 and discourages Democrats in Texas from donating to the DNC.[466] The TDP feels as though it has been ignored by the DNC, but the DNC feels the Texas is noncompetitive and a waste of resources. The TDP feels the reason for its noncompetitive status is a lack of DNC funds and resources. The chicken meets the egg. The RPT was benefiting from recently renewed RNC funding, but the BCFRA has quickly shut down this reopened pipeline. The ethics investigations into TAB and TRMPAC have also hindered short-term financial flexibility, as neither group is currently

[466] Interview with Author July 12th, 2004.

active with RPT as they wait for the stigmas of their investigations to fade. The RPT will have to invest more energy into its fundraising than in the past. Money is especially critical in Texas because of the absence of financial limits, the number of races, the average cost of state legislative elections, and the size of the state.

Not surprisingly, the biggest hindrance to party development is actually the geographical and numerical size of Texas. Geography is a handicap because the state level committee must monitor 254 counties spread over 261,194 square miles. Both parties have compounded this problem with an unwieldy party bureaucracy. A complaint in both parties, besides money, was the structure of temporary and permanent organizations spread across the state, Senate districts, counties, and precincts. Although these structures ensure representation and coverage, they also guarantees unresponsiveness, inefficiency, and a lack of coordination. Chairmen in both parties have difficulties controlling the party bureaucracy beyond the state level because county and district chairs operate independently, are harder to monitor, and are difficult to control. The result is that the party is only as effective as individual district and county committee officers, and party development suffers when county and district chairs are lazy or incompetent. Again, both parties had individuals that praised the autonomy and aggressiveness of some county and district committees but expressed disdain at the inability of the party to more effectively oversee and sanction incompetent committees. If the party chair had an oversight officer and some committees were eliminated, then the parties could become more efficient, and the functionality of the party could increase. The state-level party at the present time is absolutely ill suited to run state legislative campaigns, and the only hope for party growth is presently at the district and county

level. The RPT and TDP should consider eliminating the two committees and replacing them with a singular committee structure not necessarily tied to all 254 counties.

Compounding the problem is the fact that all 150 legislative races simultaneously compete with judicial, congressional, commission, and statewide offices. Louisiana had the strongest parties, despite the presence of a nomination system that penalizes the party. One of the reasons for this is the simple fact that the parties do not have to compete with federal races. The sheer volume of offices makes it difficult for the TDP and RPT to direct their resources primarily to state legislative races. If Texas were to amend its rules to hold off-year elections, then this would take the federal spotlight off of state elections. Combined with bureaucratic streamlining and increased finances, then, and only then, could the RPT and TDP become more efficient, coherent, and, most importantly, critical campaign resources.

On a positive note, both parties have enjoyed stable leadership. The TDP has a relatively new chair, Charles Soechting, who replaced longtime chair Molly Beth Malcolm. Going back to the 1980s, the TDP has enjoyed the luxury of chairs with long tenures. Stable leadership promotes organizational stability, organizational coherence, and policy stability. As long as the stable leaders are effective leaders, then the party is secure. In Oklahoma and Texas, party chairs have not historically hung around as long. Stability gives the party the opportunity to develop strong leaders, imperative in a state as large and with as many committees as Texas. This was proven in 2004 when Charles Soechting openly confronted Ron Wilson, an African American Democrat from Houston since 1976 and a supporter of Tom Craddick. Soechting personally recruited and supported Anna Allen prior to the primaries, and she beat Ron Wilson by double digits

(McNeely 2004). This is party campaigning at its finest and could be replicated if Soechting remains focused on state legislative elections and continues to increase party resources. Not to be outdone, the RPT has also had relatively stable leadership.

Charles Soechting is already taking steps for 2006, and his immediate goal has been to expand fundraising; assemble a network of lobbyists, consultants and think tanks; and develop poll-tested messages. Soechting recently proposed developing a professional party think tank to work independently from the state committee. Also in the party plan is data collection, as many candidates have already complained that the current batch of statistics is already outdated due to rapidly-changing demographics around Dallas, Houston, El Paso, and San Antonio. The party has had discussions with consultant Glenn Smith, who started the Texas-based MoveOn.org spin-off called DriveDemocracy.org, about developing internet components and resources. The TDP is discussing whether a site like StepUpTexas.com, which focuses solely on recruiting and advertising candidates in Texas, could seriously increase the power or visibility of party recruiting efforts. Finally, the party has brought in a consultant to discuss reorganization strategies to make the party more efficient within DNC requirements.[467]

If the party is not streamlined, then future factional problems raised by conflicting ethnic and racial groups threaten to permanently place the party on the periphery for a long time. While Anglos will continue to be the voting majority in Texas for the next decade, universal messages do not appeal to all races and do not guarantee automatic Hispanic support. The TDP and RPT will have to find a way to reconcile Hispanic and non-Hispanic demands. Finally, the new generation of voters in Texas has few, if any, ties to the Democratic Party and has witnessed Republican surges. These new voters are

[467] Interview with the Author July 13th, 2005.

more apt to vote Republican in all elections, are able to vote for a Republican in all elections, and are voting Republican most of the time. Democrats must reassess the party image and find a way to make Democratic voting popular again. One TDP member told me, "It's not cool to be a Democrat."[468] The state party organizations should be a leading figure in this revival, which could further improve party-candidate relationships. As it stands now, the party is incredibly weak and there are no relationships.

Texas Republicans have many of the same obstacles as the TDP. First, the current party chair, Tina Benkiser, had to fend off a very public and sharp campaign from Gina Parker, who attacked Benkiser for being too moderate. Right now, the big battle within the party, like Louisiana, is between social conservatives and fiscal conservatives. Publicizing an internal factional dispute within party, Parker challenged Benkiser for not being conservative enough. As one Republican complained, "Our convention was a damned revival."[469] Notable guests included Roy Moore, the Alabama judge who publicly refused to remove the Ten Commandments from the Federal Court. Also, a resolution passed that called for a return to "biblical principles." Most recently, Governor Perry held a public bill signing in a church with Rod Parsley, a distinguished guest who made some controversial remarks about homosexuality (Blumenthal 2005). "Moderate" Kay Bailey Hutchinson considered a run against "conservative" Perry, though at this point that is not going to happen. Instead, the "moderate" Strayhorn, current comptroller who has already been publicly attacked by RPT Chairwoman Tina Benkiser, will run. It remains to be seen if the social-fiscal rift will alienate enough voters, including Hispanics, from the Republican Party towards a conservative Democrat.

[468] Interview with Author July 21st, 2004.
[469] Interview with Author August 5th, 2004.

If the TDP candidate is conservative enough, like Chris Bell or John Sands, then Democrats could siphon some moderates at the gubernatorial and legislative level.[470]

Second, the RPT relies heavily on other groups to fill its financial needs for candidates. With other groups supplying the campaign contributions, the party is free to use its resources on other campaign services like advertising, workshops, and polling. More recently, two powerful Republican-allied groups, Texas Association of Businesses and the Texans for Republican Majority PAC, underwent some serious legal challenges regarding their financial practices in state legislative contests.[471] The actions of Speaker Tom Craddick also have been scrutinized to determine if his campaign committees violated any ethics laws. Since the Ethics Commission is notoriously weak, not much is expected to happen in the way of penalties or actions. Nevertheless, will these financial controversies stymie, in the short run, some of the financial operations of the RPT or create a public relations backlash tarnishing Republican fundraising or Republican images? Will Benkiser keep the RPT clear of the scandals of Craddick and DeLay?

Third, Benkiser has to be more innovative in her leadership. She lost some political capital by publicly accusing Democratic State Representative Hubert Vo of financial improprieties. Hoping to deflect controversy from Craddick, not a single legislative Republican publicly backed her challenge. Many Republicans appreciate Benkiser, but she lacks the charisma and innovativeness to keep the party aggressive.[472] Can she convert the RPT from an opposition party to a majority party? Her leadership and campaign activities currently trail Soechting, as she has not yet offered any new ideas for the 2006 elections. Presently, the party intends to focus again on traditional

[470] Interview with the Author July 13th, 2005.
[471] Interview with the Author July 13th, 2005.
[472] Interview with the Author July 13th, 2005.

mobilization activities and rely on district and county committees to do most of the party work in 2006. The RPT must develop technology, communications, and advertising to improve its relationship with candidates, its weakest area according to this survey. The RPT also must improve its county-state communications, planning, and coordination. If the RPT could buttress weak services and capitalize on its successful activities, then it could become a more serious player in state legislative elections.

The state parties in Texas are not in good shape, though it appears the TDP is taking more steps to improve at this time than the RPT. The TDP is more homogeneous and is showing signs of taking serious steps to become more innovative and aggressive. Unfortunately, the parties will continue to have to deal with geography, unwieldy bureaucracies, and finances. As long as Texas holds state elections in even-numbered years, the party will continue to pay more attention to higher offices than the state legislature. To talk about party activities in state legislative elections is to presently discuss the activities of Texas' district and county committees. Therefore, the present parties will go only so far as these subcommittees take them.

Oklahoma

In Oklahoma, Republicans have reason for optimism, but Democrats are staring into a barrel of despair. Even though Democrats have a majority in the State Senate, control the governor's mansion, and retain a slim 51%-49% partisan registration advantage, Republicans continue to dominate state politics, and the Republican Party of Oklahoma continues to prosper. Republicans may not officially hold a registration advantage, but in the 2004 state elections, 43% of those who voted identified themselves as Republicans to the Democrats' 40%. Republicans are one cycle away from holding a

majority in registration if Gary Jones emphasizes registration like he did in 2004. Democrats hold the state Senate, but their advantage has shrunk to four seats down from eighteen seats only four years prior. Their four-seat advantage in the state Senate is precarious because 9 Democrats will be prevented by term limits from seeking re-election. Republicans control the State House by 13 seats, after being down 21 seats four years ago. The Republican hold five of six Congressional Districts and both U.S. Senate seats. The latest Senate election drew national attention, as Dr. Tom Coburn edged out Brad Carson in an incredibly negative and divisive election featured on Meet the Press, New York Times, and Washington Post.

Finances are the largest problem for Oklahoma's parties. Traditionally Oklahoma's parties and state legislative candidates rely heavily on the support of safe, state-level incumbents. Nickels was a generous contributor to state legislative elections, as was Inhofe, Keating, and J.C. Watts. Nickels, Keating, and Watts are gone, and Inhofe may soon retire. The safe and senior status of the Oklahoma congressional delegation may change, changing legislative financial prospects. Democratic state legislative candidates have no support at the top of the ticket, and this does not stand to improve in 2006. State-level Democrats may have tough challenges. Brad Henry has weak re-elect numbers and may have a tough fight on his hands with Ernest Istook (Gaddie 2005). If J.C. Watts enters the fray, though doubtful at this writing, then Henry will need every penny he raises. Either way, Brad Henry is not likely to have many funds left to support other candidates. The only other notable Democrat is Dan Boren; though he is looking at a relatively easy re-election bid, he is still a freshman with an amateur war chest. He too will probably be hard pressed to find many extra funds for legislative candidates. The

Oklahoma Democratic Party will probably not receive much from the DNC, in spite of Dean's "50 State Strategy." Oklahoma is a red state, thus siphoning off a large percentage of funds it would otherwise be entitled to. The ODP and TDP will be in the same boat and will need to find innovative ways to raise money.

The ODP is in an incredibly dire position at this moment because of a terribly mismanaged coordinated campaign effort in 2004. Brad Carson, though not only the only contributor to the mess, is largely responsible for the ODP's present $480,000 debt. Records show the party owes $13,240 to the Internal Revenue Service for federal unemployment taxes and $18,876 to the Oklahoma Tax Commission for state payroll withholding taxes. Nearly 80 part-time campaign workers remain unpaid and the party still owes $97,515 to Cap Ad Communications for "get out the vote" calls (Felchner 2005). Hurt the most is the formerly vibrant Tulsa County Democratic Party, whose losses and debts have forced the temporary closing of the normally operating county headquarters. On top of this, the party has recently undergone a change in leadership, electing Lisa Pryor, a woman with very limited political experience beyond a failed effort at a state Senate campaign in 2004 against incumbent Jonathon Nicholls. Her political résumé is simply "friend of Brad Henry," a fact alone that caused many Democrats to oppose her candidacy.[473] The financial wreck is striking considering the success of the coordinated campaign in 2002. Jay Parmley had kept the party financially stable and had stalled Republican gains. The dramatic change between 2002 and 2004, though, shows the volatility and unpredictability of political environments and how susceptible Oklahoma's parties are to national events. Now observers must see if Lisa Pryor can

[473] Interview with the Author July 8th, 2005.

quickly turn the party around before next year and quickly adopt successful campaign activities for state legislative candidates.

The Republican Party of Oklahoma, comparatively speaking, is in good shape. In an interview in 2004 an official said:

> We had good candidates. Someone asked me, they said, 'When did you first think that you would actually take over the House of Representatives?' I said at 5:00 on Wednesday of filing. Because we knew who our people were, we knew who theirs were, and it was match-play, and we matched up extremely well, and then when it came time, we got our people out to vote. We worked on getting people registered to vote. We set a goal of 50,000 new registered voters, I think we ended up with 92,000.[474]

As chair, Gary Jones has proven to be a solid, though unspectacular, party leader. Not as charismatic as other chairs, Gary Jones has quietly and successfully done a good job with fundamental party activities like recruiting candidates, registering voters, and mobilizing voters. He has been a grassroots chair in the mold of Bellmon, and adept, though not spectacular, at fundraising. Jones is a quiet and steady chair, but has not shown the innovation to take the party to the next level. It is no secret that the BCFRA has made RPO fundraising much more difficult, though the state party still brought in more money in 2004 than 2002. The party will need more funds if it is to supply more campaign resources.

While quiet and steady leadership is good, Jones does not have the forcefulness and charisma to take a strong-armed role with county chairs. Like Texas, the RPO is only as effective as its county-level officers. Unlike Texas, Jones can take a personally more active role in state legislative elections, as Oklahoma is a geographically compact and numerically small state. Jones' leadership, for most Republicans, has been much

[474] Interview December 19, 2004.

more solid than that of his predecessor, Chad Alexander, whom many blamed for Republican failures of 2002. One thing still holding back the Republican Party is stronger county leadership and a more aggressive leadership. Many times the ORP acts as though it is still the opposition party and not the majority party, in that it reacts but it is not proactive. The ORP is very traditional in its campaign roles with its emphasis on grassroots mobilization and canvassing, but it must determine how it can improve its databases, voter profiles, donor networks, communication strategies, issue maintenance, party communication, committee coordination, and fundraising. The RPO is poised to take over the state Senate but can do even more damage if it makes more dramatic campaign changes.

The key to party growth for both parties in Oklahoma is through the county committees, as Oklahoma had the strongest county committees of the three states in this study and simultaneously had the weakest state-level committees of all the states in this study. Therefore, both parties must strengthen county-state communications. Either the chairs must be proactive or district-committees need to become more real and less symbolic. Additionally the RPO needs to find more effective county leaders and recruiters in rural areas in Eastern Oklahoma, while the ODP needs to find more effective county leaders and recruiters for Western Oklahoma. The ODP also needs to energize its under-registered and under-voting minority population in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. State legislative candidates interact with county committees, so these county committees need to become more instrumental agents. As it stands now, most candidates do think of the party when running for office, so the party must additionally create more effective and beneficial party services to cause candidates to rely on them.

The strengthening of ODP and RPO can happen with the strengthening of state-county relationships, the dispensing of more functions to county committees, staffing of county committees with qualified professionals, and increasing the fiscal prowess of county and state committees. While reluctant to boil down party weaknesses solely to finances, that is the largest problem plaguing Democrats right now. The ODP needs to solve its financial crises and bail out the Tulsa County Democratic Party. The ODP needs to examine what it did right in 2002 and model that again in 2006, as 2004 was not at all successful. Both parties need to utilize more communication strategies, incorporate more opinion research, and strengthen voter, donor, and volunteer databases. Both parties need to strengthen technology to find cheaper and more efficient ways to contact voters, donors, volunteers, and candidates. The parties need to be more innovative outside of their traditional mobilization techniques. Then, and only then, can the parties hope to play a more important role and become more responsible agents.

Parting Thoughts

In conclusion, traditional state political party organizations must focus on organizational revitalization, technological innovations, fundraising techniques, and committee coordination if they are to play a role in state legislative elections. They must also commit to playing a role in state legislative elections. Party activism can increase competition. Competitive elections stand to increase electoral participation, which is critical in an age when people are less apt to participate. Party reorganization could revitalize the party-in-the-electorate. If the party-in-the-electorate grows, then officeholders and office seekers may be more apt to carry party messages and party themes, and may be more apt to work with the state parties. If the parties can improve on

and continue to recruit activists and candidates, hone messages, develop financial skills, recommend consultants, mobilize voters, and register voters, then the parties can influence candidates. By improving their reputation though successful campaign ventures they then can increase future abilities to assert themselves in campaigns. The presence of more officeholders that feel obligated to reward the party would increase the policymaking influence of the party, thereby strengthening the party-in-government. Collectively these developments increase the possibility that the traditional state political party organizations can forge a cohesive network with policy capacities. Even in times of minority status, the opposition party can draw on its coherence to formulate a unified opposition that can reward itself from the failures of the majority party to satisfy voters through policy. These developments are the very tenets of the responsible party paradigm espoused over 50 years ago. Yet, the factional disputes, resource shortages, and survey data suggest that the parties are far from this but are capable of this with commitment, time, resources, and innovation.

Regardless of how close or far the parties are to this paradigm, the traditional state political party organizations are still alive. Granted, the parties have a lot of work to do, but they still persist nonetheless. They have adapted, are organic, and presently are striving to place themselves within the modern candidate-centered electoral environment. The candidate-centered environment guarantees that state legislative candidates will govern their own campaigns and likely will not rely much on outside groups. Groups indeed stand at the periphery, but occasionally they are capable of making a difference to some candidates in some elections. Candidates will rely on them if they prove themselves effective or necessary; this study indicates that legislative campaign

committees have done this with incumbents. While traditional state political party organizations may not be an important group, they cannot be completely discounted because they remain mobilization networks. Candidates generally do not consider parties when running but will use them when they need mobilization support. The parties must use this rapport to propel themselves into other areas in the future. Alas, the parties can ill afford to sit back, given the quickly evolving nature of American campaigns and other groups. They must continually seek innovation, expand techniques that work, perfect areas that are not effective, develop solid financial networks, and improve their coordination with their own committees. If the state parties commit to state legislative elections, then they may become a future force and an actor that politicians will not want to ignore. As it stands now, they are limited, and candidates generally do not think about them.

Parties can increase representation and accountability. Limited parties limit representation and accountability, and strengthened parties strengthen representation and accountability. The political parties are already established political networks, so it makes sense to work with them to become more effective campaign machines. By making them more effective campaign machines, we make our democracy even more effective.

WORKS CITED

Agranoff, Robert. 1976. *The New Style in Election Campaigns*. 2nd Edition. Boston: Holbrook.

Aistrup, Joseph and R. Keith Gaddie. 1999. *Candidate Recruitment and the New Southern Party System*. Paper delivered at the Southern Political Science Association, Savannah, GA.

Alexander, Herbert. 1984. *Financing Politics: Money, Elections, and Political Reform*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Aldrich, John. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Aldrich, John. 2000. "Southern Parties in State and Nation." *Journal of Politics* 62: 643-670.

Appleton, Andrew and Daniel S. Ward. 1994. "Understanding Organizational Innovation and Party-Building." In Daniel Shea and John C. Green, eds., *The State of State Parties*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Austen-Smith, David. 1995. "Campaign Contributions and Access." *American Political Science Review* 89: 566-581.

Balz, Dan. 1998. "Parties Make a High Stakes Texas Stand." *Washington Post*. June 30 A1.

Bardes, Barbara A., and Robert W. Oldendick. 2003. Public Opinion: Measuring the American Mind. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Barone, Michael, and Richard E. Cohen. 1998. *The Almanac of American Politics 2003*. Washington D.C.: National Journal.

Barone, Michael, and Richard E. Cohen. 2003. *The Almanac of American Politics 2003*. Washington D.C.: National Journal.

Bartley, Numan V. 1995. *The New South: 1945-1980*. *A History of the South, Volume XI*. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter, eds. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press

Beck, Paul A. and Marjorie R. Hershey. 2000. *Party Politics in America*. 9th Edition. New York: Longman Publishers.

Bednar, Nancy L. and Allen D. Hertzke. 1995. "Oklahoma: The Christian Right and Republican Realignment." In Mark J. Rozell and Clyde Wilcox, eds., *God at the Grassroots*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Bernstein, Jake and Dave Mann. 2004. "Scandal in the Speaker's Office." *The Texas Observer*. February 2.

Bibby, John. 2002. "State Party Organizations: Strengthened and Adapting to Candidate-Centered Politics and Nationalization." In L. Sandy Maisel, ed., *The Parties Respond*. 4th Edition. Boulder: Westview Press.

Bibby, John. 2003. *Parties, Politics, and Elections in America*. 5th Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Bibby, John, and Thomas M. Holbrook. 1995. "Parties and Elections." In Virginia Gray and Herbert Jacob, eds., *Politics in the American States*. 6th Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Bishop, Bill. 2005. "Texas: Polarized Landslide Country." *SouthNow* 8 (January) 9.

Black, Earl and Merle Black. 1987. *Politics and Society in the South*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Black, Earl and Merle Black. 1992. *The Vital South*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Black, Earl and Merle Black. 2002. *The Rise of Southern Republicans*. Cambridge: Belknap Press.

Bland, Laura. 2003. "Racicot Names Louisiana's Pat Brister Chair of Republican State Chairmen." *Press Release* Republican National Committee April 1.

Blumberg, Melani J., William Binning, and John C. Green. 2003. "No Mo[mentum] in Ohio: Local Parties and the 2000 Presidential Campaign." In John C. Green and Rick Farmer, eds., *The State of the Parties*. 4th Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Blumenthal, Ralph. 2005. "Texas Governor Draws Criticism for a Bill-Signing Event at an Evangelical School." *New York Times* June 6.

Borooah, Vani Kant. 2002. *Logit and probit*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Breaux, David A., and Anthony Gierzynski. 1998. "Candidate Revenues and Expenditures in State Legislative Primaries." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Bridges, Tyler. 1999. "Southern Comfort." *The New Republic*. February 22.

Broder, David. 1972. *The Party's Over: The Failure of American Politics*. New York: Harper.

Brown, Jim. 2003. "Election Analysis." *PoliticsLa.com* October 10.

Brown, Jim. 2005. "Time for Political Trash Talkin'" *PoliticsLa.com* April 14.

Brown, Lyle C., Joyce A. Langenegger, Sonia R. Garcia, and Ted A. Lewis. 2004. *Practicing Texas Politics*. 12th Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Bruce, John. "Texas: The Emergence of the Christian Right." Mark J. Rozell and Clyde Wilcox, eds., *God at the Grassroots*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Bullock, Charles S. and Mark J. Rozell. 2003. *The New Politics of the Old South*. 2nd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Burke, Edmund. [1770] 1839. "Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents." In *The Works of Edmund Burke*. Reprint. Boston: Little, Brown.

Casdorph, Paul D. 1965. *A History of the Republican Party in Texas, 1865-1965*. Austin: Pemberton Press.

Cassie, William E., and Joel A. Thompson. 1998. "Patterns of PAC Contributions to State Legislative Candidates." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Champagne, Anthony, and Rick Collis. 1984. "Texas." In Alan Rosenthal and Maureen Moakley, eds., *The Political Life of the American States*. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Clucas, Richard A. 1992. "Legislative Leadership and Campaign Support in California." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19: 417-428.

Clucas, Richard A. 1994. "The Effect of Campaign Contributions on the Power of California Assembly Speaker." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19: 417-428.

Cohen, Jeffrey, and Paul Kantor. 2001. "Decline and Resurgence in the American Party System." In Jeffrey E. Cohen, Richard Fleisher, and Paul Kantor. eds. *American Political Parties: Decline or Resurgence?* Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Coleman, John C. 1999. "Party Images and Candidate-Centered Campaigns in 1996: What's Money Got to Do with It?" In John C. Green and Daniel M. Shea, eds., *The State of the Parties*. 3rd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Committee on Political Parties. 1950. "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System." *American Political Science Review* 44, Supplement.

Cosman, Bernard. 1966. *Five States for Goldwater*. Kingsport, TN: University of Alabama Press.

Cotter, Cornelius P., James L. Gibson, John F. Bibby, and Robert J. Huckshorn. 1984. *Party Organizations in American Politics*. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Crotty, William J. 1984. *American Political Parties in Decline*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Crouere, Jeff. 2003. "Louisiana Election – Making Black Inroads." *BayouBuzz.com*. October 24.

Crouere, Jeff. 2003. "Louisiana Election 2004: Louisiana Political Party Unity is Essential." *BayouBuzz.com*. December 14.

Damore, David F., and Thomas G. Hansford. 1999. "The Allocation of Party Controlled Campaign Resources in the House of Representatives, 1989-1996." *Political Research Quarterly* 52: 371-385.

Davidson, Chandler. 1990. *Race and Class in Texas Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Dwyre, Diane, and Robin Kolodny. 2002. "Throwing Out the Rule Book: Party Financing of the 2000 Elections." In David B. Magleby, ed., *Financing the 2000 Election*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Elazar, Daniel. [1972] 1984. *American Federalism: A View from the States*. 3rd Ed. New York: Harper and Row.

Eldersveld, Samuel. 1982. *Political Parties in American Society*. New York: Basic Books.

Eldersveld, Samuel. 1964. *Political Parties: A Behavioral Analysis*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Epstein, Leon D. 1986. *Political Parties in the American Mold*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Erikson, Robert S., Gerald C. Wright, and John P. McIver. 1993. *Statehouse Democracy: Public Opinion and Policy in the American States*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Feigenbaum, Edward D. and James A. Palmer. 2002. *Campaign Finance Law*. Washington D.C.: Federal Election Commission.

Felchner, Morgan E. 2005. "Making ends meet: state parties struggle to shore up their finances." *Campaigns and Elections*. August.

Fenno, Richard. 1978. Home Style: House Members in Their Own Districts. Boston: Little, Brown.

Fikac, Peggy and Rebecca Rodriguez. 2004. "Challenger yields to GOP chairwoman at state convention." *San Antonio Express-News*. June 6.

Francia, Peter L., Paul S. Herrnson, John P. Frendreis, and Alan R. Gitelson. 2003. "The Battle for the Legislature: Party Campaigning in State House and State Senate Elections." In John C. Green and Rick Farmer, eds., *The State of the Parties*. 4th Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Frendreis, John P., James L. Gibson, and Laura L. Vertz. 1990. "The Electoral Relevance of Local Party Organizations." *American Political Science Review* 84(1): 225-35.

Frendreis, John, and Alan R. Gitelson. 1999. "Local Parties in the 1990s." In John C. Green and Daniel M. Shea, eds., *The State of the Parties*. 3rd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Gaddie, Ronald Keith. 1999. "Party Building and Republican Growth in Oklahoma." In Gary W. Copeland, Ronald Keith Gaddie, and Craig C. Williams, eds., *The Almanac of Oklahoma Politics 2000*. Edmond, OK: OPSA Press.

Gaddie, Ronald Keith. 2004. *Born to Run: Origins of the Political Career*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Gaddie, Ronald Keith. 2005. "Oklahoma: Republican Realignment Continues." *SouthNow* 8 (January) 14.

Gaddie, Ronald Keith and Charles S. Bullock. 2000. *Elections to Open Seats in the U.S. House*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Gaddie, Ronald Keith and Gary Copeland. 2003. "Oklahoma: The Secular Realignment Continues." In Charles S. Bullock and Mark J. Rozell, eds., *The New Politics of the Old South*. 2nd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Gerber, Alan S and Donald P Green. 2004. *Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Your Voter Turnout*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Gibson, James L., Cornelius P. Cotter, John F. Bibby, Robert J. Huckshorn. 1983. "Assessing Party Organizational Strength." *American Journal of Political Science* 27: 193-222.

Gibson, James L., Cornelius P. Cotter, John F. Bibby, Robert J. Huckshorn. 1985. "Wither the Local Parties? A Cross-Sectional and Longitudinal Analysis of the Strength of Party Organizations." *American Journal of Political Science* 29: 139-160.

Gibson, James L., John P. Frendreis, and Laura L. Vertz. 1989. "Party Dynamics in the 1980s: Change in County Party Organizational Strength, 1980-1984." *American Journal of Political Science* 33: 67-90.

Gibson, James L. and Susan E. Scarrow. 1993. "State and Local Party Organizations in American Politics." In Eric Uslaner, ed., *American Political Parties*. Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers.

Gierzynski, Anthony and David A. Breaux. 1993. "Money and the Party Vote in State House Elections." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 18: 515-533.

Gierzynski, Anthony and David A. Breaux. 1998. "The Financing Role of Parties." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Gierzynski, Anthony. 1992. *Legislative Party Campaign Committees in the American States*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Gierzynski, Anthony. 1998. "A Framework for the Study of Campaign Finance." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Gierzynski, Anthony. 2000. *Money Rules: Financing Elections in America*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Gierzynski, Anthony. 2002. "Financing Gubernatorial and State Legislative Elections." In David B. Magleby, ed., *Financing the 2000 Election*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Giles, Michael W., and Kaenan Hertz. 1994. "Racial Threat and Partisan Identification." *American Political Science Review* 88: 317-326.

Gimpel, James. 1986. *Legislating the Revolution: The Contract with America in its First 100 Days*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Gimpel, James and Jason Schuknecht. 2003. *Patchwork Nation: Sectionalism and Political Change in American Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Gizzi, John. 2003. "Texas Turnover." *Human Events*. November 3.

Goodhart, Noah J. 1999. "The New Party Machine: Information Technology in State Political Parties." In John C. Green and Daniel M. Shea, eds., *The State of the Parties*. 3rd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Gray, Virginia. 2005. "The Socioeconomic and Political Context of States." In Virginia Gray and Herbert Jacob, eds., *Politics in the American States*. 6th Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Green, George N. 1979. *The Establishment in Texas Politics*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood.

Green, John C. 1995. "The Christian Right and the 1995 Elections: An Overview." In Mark J. Rozell and Clyde Wilcox, eds., *God at the Grassroots*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Green, John C., and Paul S. Herrnson. 2002. "The Search for Responsibility." In John C. Green and Paul S. Herrnson, eds., *Responsible Partisanship?* Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press.

Hale, Jon F. and Stephen T. Kean. 1996. "Oklahoma." In Andrew Appleton and Daniel Ward, eds., *State Party Profiles: A 50-State Guide to Developments, Organization, and Resources*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Hall, Richard and Frank Wayman. 1990. "Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees," *American Political Science Review* 84: 797-820.

Hardt, Jan. 2002. "The Fuel Behind Oklahoma's Politics – The role of Money." In David Schultz, ed., *Money, Politics, and Campaign Finance Reform Law in the State*. Durham: Carolina Academic Press.

Harmel, Robert. 1986. "Minority Partisanship in One-Party Predominant Legislatures: A Five State Study." *Journal of Politics* 48: 729-740.

Haynie, Randy. 2002. *Grassroots Guide to Louisiana Politics: Lobbying the Louisiana Legislature*. Volume III. Baton Rouge: Louisiana Governmental Studies, Inc.

Herman, Ken. 2004. "Wilson Pays Price for Siding with GOP." *Austin-American Statesman*. March 11, A1.

Herrnson, Paul S. 1986. "Do Parties Make a Difference? The Role of Party Organizations in Congressional Elections." *Journal of Politics* 48: 589-615.

Herrnson, Paul S. 1988. *Party Campaigning in the 1980s*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Herrnson, Paul S. 1989. "National Party Decision Making Strategies, and Resource Distribution in Congressional Elections." *Western Political Quarterly* 42: 301-323.

Herrnson, Paul S. 1992. "Campaign Professionalism and Fundraising in Congressional Elections." *Journal of Politics* 54: 859-870.

Herrnson, Paul S. 2002. "National Party Organizations at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century." In L. Sandy Maisel, ed., *The Parties Respond*. 4th Edition. Boulder: Westview Press.

Herrnson, Paul S. 2004. *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington*. 4th Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Herrnson, Paul S., and Kelly D. Patterson. 2002. "Financing the 2000 Congressional Elections. In David B. Magleby, ed., *Financing the 2000 Election*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Hershey, Marjorie R. and Paul A. Beck. 2003. *Party Politics in America*. 10th Edition. New York: Longman Publishers.

Hill, John, Mike Hasten, Melody Brumble and Michelle Mahfoufi. 2003. "New Orleans mayor crosses party lines, endorses Jindal." *Capitol Watch* capitolwatch.reallouisiana.com November 3.

Hogan, Robert E. 2002. "Candidate Perceptions of Political Party Campaigning Activity in State Legislative Elections." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 2: 66-85.

Hogan, Robert E. "Louisiana: Two-Party Growth and Increasing Party Polarization." *American Review of Politics* 24: 53-68.

Hogan, Robert E., and Keith E. Hamm. 1998. "Variations in District-Level Campaign Spending in State Legislatures." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Hogan, Robert E., and Joel A. Thomson. 1998. "Minorities and Campaign Contributions." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Huckshorn, Robert J. *Party Leadership in the States*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Hurt, Charles. 2004. "Democrats Howl at Party Hopping" *The Washington Times* August 10.

Jeansonne, Glenn. 1977. *Leander Perez, Boss of the Delta*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Jensen, Richard J. 1971. *The Winning of the Midwest: Social and Political Conflict, 1886–1896*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Jewell, Malcolm E. 1981. "The State of U.S. State Legislative Research." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 6: 1-25.

Jewell, Malcolm E. 1982. *Representation in State Legislatures*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Jewell, Malcolm E., and Sarah M. Morehouse. 2001. *Political Parties and Elections in American States*. 4th Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Johnson, Hannibal. 2002. *Acres of Aspiration: The all-Black towns of Oklahoma*. Austin: Eakin Press.

Jones, Stephen. 1974. *Oklahoma Politics in State and Nation*. Enid, OK: Haymaker Press.

Jones, Ruth S., and Thomas J. Borris. 1985. "Strategic Contributing in Legislative Campaigns: The Case of Minnesota." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 10: 89-105.

Kaplan, Dave. 1986. "The 1986 Election: Louisiana." *CQ Weekly* October 11, pg. 2434.

Kaplan, Dave. 1993. "Context for Controversy." *CQ Weekly* November 13, pg. 3143.

Katz, Richard S. and Robin Kolodny. 1994. "Party Organization as an Empty Vessel: Parties in American Politics." In Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair, eds., *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Kazee, Thomas A., and Mary C. Thornberry. 1990. "Where's the Party? Congressional Candidate Recruitment and American Party Organizations." *Western Political Quarterly* 43: 61-80.

Kazee, Thomas A. 1980. "The Decision to Run for the U.S. Congress: Challenger Attitudes in the 1970s." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 5: 79-100.

Kazee, Thomas A. 1994. *Who Runs for Congress: Ambition, Context, and Candidate Emergence*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Keefe, William J. 1994. *Parties, Politics, and Public Policy in America*. 7th edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Keller, Lanny. 2005. "Recently Competitive, Louisiana Now Trending Red." *SouthNow* 8 (January) 5.

Kerr, Robert. 2003. "Oklahoma Coach Sends Star to the Showers." *SouthNow* 4 (January) 14.

Key, V.O., Jr. [1949] 1984. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Reprint. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Kirkpatrick, Samuel, David R. Morgan, and Thomas G. Kielhorn. 1977. *The Oklahoma Voter: Politics, Elections, and Parties in the Sooner State*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Klarman, Michael. 2004. *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press,

Knaggs, John R. 1986. *Two-party Texas: The John Tower Era, 1961-1984*. Austin: Eakin Press.

Kolodny, Robin. 2000. "Electoral Partnerships: Political Consultants and Political Parties." In James A. Thurber and Candace J. Nelson, eds., *Campaign Warriors: Political Consultants in Elections*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Kolodny, Robin and Diana Dwyre. 2002. "Throwing out the Rule Book: Party Financing of the 2000 Elections." In David B. Magleby, ed., *Financing the 2000 Election.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Kraemer, Richard H., Charldean Newell, and David F. Prindle. 2005. *Texas Politics*. 9th Edition. Belmont, CA: Thompson Wadsworth.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1999. "The Party Effect from A to Z and Beyond." *Journal of Politics* 61:832-840.

Krehbiel, Keith. 2000. "Party Discipline and Measures of Partisanship." *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 212-227.

Kuzenski, John C. 1995. "David Duke and the Nonpartisan Primary." In John C. Kuzenski, Charles S. Bullock, and Ronald Keith Gaddie, eds., *David Duke and the Politics of Race in the South*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

La Raja, Ray. 2002. "Political Parties in the Era of Soft Money." In L. Sandy Maisel, ed., *The Parties Respond*. 4th Edition. Boulder: Westview Press.

Lamare, James W., J.L. Polinard, and Robert D. Wrinkle. 2003a. "Texas: The Lone Star (Wars) State." In Charles S. Bullock and Mark J. Rozell, eds., *The New Politics of the Old South*. 2nd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Lamare, James W., J.L. Polinard, and Robert D. Wrinkle. 2003b. "Texas: Religion and Politics in God's Country." In John Green, Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, eds., *The Christian Right in American Politics: Marching to the Millennium*. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Lamis, Alexander. 1990. *The Two-Party South*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lamis, Alexander. 1999. *Southern Politics in the 1990s*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Langbein, Laura. 1986. "Money and Access: Some Empirical Evidence." *Journal of Politics* 48: 1052-1062.

Liebling, A.J. 1970. *The Earl of Louisiana*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Madigan, Tim. 2001. *The Burning*. New York: St Martin's Press.

Magleby, David B. "A High Stakes Election." In David B. Magleby, ed., *Financing the 2002 Election*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution.

Malbin, Michael. 1980. *Parties, Interest Groups and Campaign Finance Laws*. Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute.

Malbin, Michael. 1984. *Money and Politics in the United States: Financing Elections in the 1980s*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House.

Maisel, L. Sandy, Cherie Maestas, and Walter J. Stone. 2002. "The Party Role in Congressional Competition." In L. Sandy Maisel, ed., *The Parties Respond*. 4th Edition. Boulder: Westview Press.

Maisel, L. Sandy and David Buckley. 2005. *Parties and Elections in America*. 4th Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Mayhew, David. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

McKay, Seth Shepard. 1952. *Texas Politics, 1906-1944*. Lubbock: Texas Tech Press.

McNeely, Dave. 2004. “For Incumbent Democrats, Some Heads Are Starting to Roll.” *Austin-American Statesman*. March 10, A12.

Menard, Scott (2002). *Applied logistic regression analysis, 2nd Edition*. Series: Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences, No. 106. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Merle, Renae. 1998. “Bill White says he won’t run for re-election.” *Texas Reporter-News*. April 26.

Moncrief, Gary F. 1998. “Candidate Spending in State Legislative Races.” In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Moncrief, Gary F., Joel A. Thompson, and William Cassie. 1996. “Revisiting the State of U.S. State Legislative Research.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 21: 301-335.

Moncrief, Gary F., Joel A. Thompson, and Karl T. Kurtz. 1996. “The Old Statehouse, It Ain’t What It Used to Be.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 21: 57-72.

Monroe, J.P. 2001. *The Political Party Matrix*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Morehouse, Sarah McCally and Malcolm E. Jewell. 2003. *State Politics, Parties and Policy*. 2nd Edition. Boston: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Morgan, David R, Robert E. England, and George C. Humphrey. 1991. *Oklahoma Politics and Policies: Governing the Sooner State*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Martorano, Nancy, R. Bruce Anderson, and Keith Hamm. 2001. "A Transforming South: Exploring Patterns of State House Seat Contestation." *The American Review of Politics* 21 (Spring): 201-224.

Murray, Richard and Sam Attlesey. 1999. “Texas: Republicans Gallop Ahead.” In Alexander Lamis, ed., *Southern Politics in the 1990s*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Nelson, Albert J. 1996. *Democrats Under Siege in the Sunbelt Megastates: California, Florida, and Texas*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Ostrogorski, Moisei. 1964. *Democracy and Organization of Political Parties*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Parent, Wayne T. 1997. "Louisiana." Andrew Appleton and Daniel Ward, eds., *State Party Profiles: A 50-State Guide to Developments, Organization, and Resources*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Parent, Wayne T. 2004. *Inside the Carnival: Unmasking Louisiana Politics*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Parent, Wayne and Huey Perry. 2003. "Louisiana: African Americans, Republicans, and Party Competition." In Charles S. Bullock and Mark J. Rozell, eds., *The New Politics of the Old South*. 2nd Edition. L Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Patterson, Samuel C. 1984. "Iowa." In Alan Rosenthal and Maureen Moakley, eds., *The Political Life of the American States*. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Patterson, Samuel C. 1995. "Legislative Politics in the States." In Virginia Gray and Herbert Jacob, eds., *Politics in the American States*. 6th Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Patterson, Samuel C., and Roger M. Scully. 1999. "The Meaning of the Legislative Party." In John C. Green and Daniel M. Shea, eds., *The State of the Parties*. 3rd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Pomper, Gerald M. 1998. "The Alleged Decline of American Parties." In John G. Geer, ed., *Politicians and Party Politics*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Pomper, Gerald M. 1999. "Parliamentary Government in the United States?" In John C. Green and Daniel M. Shea, eds., *The State of the Parties*. 3rd Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Posler, Brian D. and Daniel S. Ward. 1997. "Texas." Andrew Appleton and Daniel Ward, eds., *State Party Profiles: A 50-State Guide to Developments, Organization, and Resources*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Prezeworski, Adam and Henry Teune. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: John Wiley.

Ranney, Austin. 1954. *The Doctrine of Responsible Party Government*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Rausch, John David, Jr. 2002. "Big Money in the Lone Star State: The Absence of Campaign Finance Regulation and Politics in Texas." In David Schultz, ed., *Money, Politics, and Campaign Finance Reform Law in the State*. Durham: Carolina Academic Press.

Reichley, A. James. 1992. *The Life of the Parties*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Renwick, Edward F. T. Wayne Parent, and Jack Wardlaw. 1999. "Louisiana: Still *Sui Generis* Like Huey." In Alexander Lamis, ed., *Southern Politics in the 1990s*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Rosenbloom, David. 1972. *The Political Marketplace.* New York: Quadrangle Books.

Rosenthal, Alan. 1996. "The Legislature: Unraveling of Institutional Fabric." In Carl E. Van Horn, ed., *The State of the States*. 3rd Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Rosenthal, Alan. 1998. *The Decline of Representative Democracy*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Rosenthal, Cindy Simon. 1995. "New Party or Campaign Bank Account? Explaining the Rise of State Legislative Campaign Committees." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 20: 249-268.

Rosenthal, Cindy Simon. 1995. *Women's Ways of Political Leadership*. Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Oklahoma.

Rudolph, Thomas J. 1999. "Corporate and Labor PAC Contributions in House Elections: Measuring the Effects of Majority Party Status." *The Journal of Politics* 61: 195-206.

Salmore, Stephen A., and Barbara G. Salmore. 1996. "The Transformation of State Electoral Politics." In Carl E. Van Horn, ed., *The State of the States*. 3rd Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Schattschneider, E.E. 1942. *Party Government*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Wilson.

Schier, Steven E. 2000. *By Invitation Only: The Rise of Exclusive Politics in the United States*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1985. "The New American Party." *American Political Science Review* 79: 1152-1169.

Schudson, Michael. 1998. *The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life*. New York: Free Press.

Schumpeter, Joseph. 1942. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Shea, Daniel M. 1995. *Transforming Democracy*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In L. Sandy Maisel, ed., *The Parties Respond*. 4th Edition. Boulder: Westview Press.

Sorauf, Frank. 1984. *Party Politics in America*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Stonecash, Jeffrey M. 1988. "Working at the Margins: Campaign Finance and Party Strength in New York Assembly Elections." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 13: 477-493.

Stonecash, Jeffrey M., and Sarah Keith. 1996. "Maintaining a Political Party" Providing and Withdrawing Party Campaign Funds." *Political Parties* 2: 313-328.

Tagaris, Tim. 2004. "In Depth: Melancon vs. Tauzin III (LA-3)." *Swing State Project*. November 26. http://www.swingstateproject.com/2004/11/in_depth_melanc.html.

Tagaris, Tim. 2004. "In Depth: Mount vs. Boustany (LA-7)." *Swing State Project*. November 28. http://www.swingstateproject.com/louisiana/index.php?page=2.

Theodoulou, Stella Z. 1985. "The Louisiana Republican Party, 1948-1984." *Tulane Studies in Political Science*. New Orleans: Tulane University.

Thielemann, Gregory and Donald R. Dixon. 1994. "Explaining Rational Contributors And the Elections for the 71st Texas House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19: 495-506.

Thompson, Joel A., and William Cassie. 1992. "Party and PAC Contributions to North Carolina Legislative Candidates." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17: 409-416.

Thompson, Joel A., William Cassie, and Malcolm Jewell. 1994. "A Sacred Cow or just a Lot of Bull? Party and PAC Money in State Legislative Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* 47: 223-237.

Thompson, Joel A., and Gary C. Moncrief. 1998. "Exploring the 'Lost World' of Campaign Finance." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Thompson, Joel A., Gary C. Moncrief, and Keith E. Hamm. 1998. "Gender, Candidate Attributes, and Campaign Contributions." In Joel A. Thompson and Gary C. Moncrief, eds., *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Tidmore, Chris. "The Weekly's Inside Political Track." *The Louisiana Weekly* August 16.

Thurber, James A. and Candice J. Nelson. 2000. *Campaign Warriors: Political Consultants in Elections*, Brookings Institute.

Van Horn, Carl E. 1996. "The Quiet Revolution." In Carl E. Van Horn, ed., *The State of the States*. 3rd Edition. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Ward, Daniel S. "The Continuing Search for Party Influence in Congress: A View from the Committees." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 18: 211-230.

Wattenberg, Martin P. 1998. *The Decline of American Political Parties, 1952-96*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wattenberg, Martin P. 1991. The Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Weeks, O. Douglas. 1972. "Texas: Land of Conservative Expansiveness." In William C. Harvard, ed., *The Changing Politics of the South*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

White, Kenneth and Daniel Shea. 2004. *New Party Politics*. 2nd Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Wilehouwer, Peter W. and Brad Lockerbie. 1994. "Party Contacting and Political Participation, 1952-90." *American Journal of Political Science* 38: 211-229.

Wilson, James Q. 1962. *The Amateur Democrat: Club Politics in Three Cities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

APPENDIX A: Survey Instrument for Candidates

The following is a questionnaire seeking to understand the nature of state legislator/state political party relationships before, during, and after campaigns. Please fill out the questionnaire in the space provided or attach additional pages, as you feel necessary. Please feel free to explain or expand any answers. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Please do not place your name anywhere to this survey.

1. What was your/candidate's party affiliation?
    a. Democrat
    b. Republican
    c. Independent
    d. Other _____
2. What was your/candidate's position in the general election?
    a. Incumbent
    b. Challenger
    c. Open seats (no incumbent)
3. How did you/your candidate do in the general election?
    a. Won
    b. Lost
4. In your opinion, how competitive was the election?
    a. Very competitive
    b. Moderately completive
    c. Slightly competitive
    d. Not competitive
    e. No major party opposition
5. How important do you believe the following factors were in determining the outcome of the election? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

    1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

    a. Candidate's image & personality 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Candidate's party affiliation 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Issues 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Incumbent's advantages of office 1 2 3 4 5
    e. Gubernatorial election 1 2 3 4 5
6. How many times have you/your candidate run for office?
    a. First time
    b. Second time
    c. 3-5 times
    d. More than 5
7. How many times have you/your candidate been involved in a campaign for office?
    a. First time
    b. Second time
    c. 3-5 times
    d. More than 5

8. How important do you believe each of the following groups were in influencing your/the candidate's decision to run for office? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

   1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

   a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
   b. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
   c. District party 1 2 3 4 5
   d. State party 1 2 3 4 5
   e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
   f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
   g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
   h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
   i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

9. For each of the following services did your campaign hire staff members, pay on a consulting basis, use party workers, use other volunteers, or did you/candidate provide them? Circle all that apply for each category.

   1 = hired staff 2 = paid consultants 3 = party workers 4 = other volunteers 5 = candidate provided 6 = did not use the services

   a. Campaign management 1 2 3 4 5 6
   b. Media advertising 1 2 3 4 5 6
   c. Polling 1 2 3 4 5 6
   d. Fundraising 1 2 3 4 5 6
   e. Legal advice 1 2 3 4 5 6
   f. Accounting 1 2 3 4 5 6
   g. State ethics reporting 1 2 3 4 5 6

10. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with **information about voters** (survey data, demographic data, etc.)? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

    1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

    a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
    b. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
    c. District party 1 2 3 4 5
    d. State party 1 2 3 4 5
    e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
    f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
    g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
    h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
    i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

11. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with **assistance in registering voters** and **getting them to the polls** on Election Day? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

    1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

    a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
    b. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
    c. District party 1 2 3 4 5
    d. State party 1 2 3 4 5

e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

12. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with **mass media advertising** and **developing the candidate's public image**? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
b. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
c. District party 1 2 3 4 5
d. State party 1 2 3 4 5
e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

13. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with **accounting** and **filing reports with the state ethics committee**? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
b. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
c. District party 1 2 3 4 5
d. State party 1 2 3 4 5
e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

14. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with **assistance in fundraising**, including introductions to potential campaign contributors and developing a direct-mail fundraising system? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
b. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
c. District party 1 2 3 4 5
d. State party 1 2 3 4 5
e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

15. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in **selecting your/the candidate's issue positions**? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not	2 = slightly	3 = moderately	4 = very	5 = extremely
a. Family & friends	1	2	3	4	5
b. City/County Party	1	2	3	4	5
c. District party	1	2	3	4	5
d. State party	1	2	3	4	5
e. Legislative campaign committee	1	2	3	4	5
f. National Party Committee	1	2	3	4	5
g. Labor Unions	1	2	3	4	5
h. Other interest groups	1	2	3	4	5
i. Political Action Committees	1	2	3	4	5

16. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with **volunteer workers**? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not	2 = slightly	3 = moderately	4 = very	5 = extremely
a. Family & friends	1	2	3	4	5
b. City/County Party	1	2	3	4	5
c. District party	1	2	3	4	5
d. State party	1	2	3	4	5
e. Legislative campaign committee	1	2	3	4	5
f. National Party Committee	1	2	3	4	5
g. Labor Unions	1	2	3	4	5
h. Other interest groups	1	2	3	4	5
i. Political Action Committees	1	2	3	4	5

17. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with **the formulation of a campaign strategy**? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not	2 = slightly	3 = moderately	4 = very	5 = extremely
a. Family & friends	1	2	3	4	5
b. City/County Party	1	2	3	4	5
c. District party	1	2	3	4	5
d. State party	1	2	3	4	5
e. Legislative campaign committee	1	2	3	4	5
f. National Party Committee	1	2	3	4	5
g. Labor Unions	1	2	3	4	5
h. Other interest groups	1	2	3	4	5
i. Political Action Committees	1	2	3	4	5

18. How important were the following groups in providing the campaign with assistance in **overall campaign management**? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not	2 = slightly	3 = moderately	4 = very	5 = extremely
a. Family & friends	1	2	3	4	5
b. City/County Party	1	2	3	4	5
c. District party	1	2	3	4	5

d. State party 1 2 3 4 5
e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

19. How important were the following groups in assisting you/the candidate in **hiring pollsters, media consultants** and **other campaign professionals**? Circle the number associated with the most appropriate choice for each factor.

1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
b. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
c. District party 1 2 3 4 5
d. State party 1 2 3 4 5
e. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
f. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
g. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
h. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
i. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

20. Overall, how difficult did you feel it was to raise money in this election?
    a. Very difficult
    b. Fairly difficult
    c. Slightly difficult
    d. No problem

21. How much difficulty did you/candidate have raising money during each of the following stages?

1 = Very difficult 2 = Fairly difficult 3 = Slightly difficult 4 = No problem

a. Prior to active campaigning 1 2 3 4
b. Prior to general election 1 2 3 4
c. Early in general election 1 2 3 4
d. Late (last 3 weeks) in general election 1 2 3 4

22. When did your campaign receive most of its contributions? For each of the following kinds of contributions indicate whether they **came mostly** (1) before you/the candidate began actively campaigning, (2) prior to the general election, (3) early in the general election, (4) late in the general election, or (5) whether they were spread evenly throughout.

a. Family & friends 1 2 3 4 5
b. Individuals 1 2 3 4 5
c. City/County Party 1 2 3 4 5
d. District party 1 2 3 4 5
e. State party 1 2 3 4 5
f. Legislative campaign committee 1 2 3 4 5
g. National Party Committee 1 2 3 4 5
h. Labor Unions 1 2 3 4 5
i. Other interest groups 1 2 3 4 5
j. Political Action Committees 1 2 3 4 5

23. How important were the following techniques to your fundraising efforts? Circle the appropriate technique.

1 = not 2 = slightly 3 = moderately 4 = very 5 = extremely

a.	Direct mail	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Television ads	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Asking individuals/groups for money	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Large fundraising functions	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Requesting funds from committees	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Contact with political action committees	1	2	3	4	5

24. How would you describe the view of you/your candidate on most political matters compared to those of your state?
    a. Radical
    b. Very liberal
    c. Liberal
    d. Moderate
    e. Conservative
    f. Very conservative
    g. Reactionary
25. How would you describe the view of you/your candidate on most political matters compared to those of your state party?
    a. Radical
    b. Very liberal
    c. Liberal
    d. Moderate
    e. Conservative
    f. Very conservative
    g. Reactionary

APPENDIX B: Survey Instrument for Party Officials

Interview Questions to be asked to state political party members (e.g. chairman, executive committee members, and state central committee members)

1. How did you get your position?
2. How long ago did you become involved in politics?
3. Did someone cause you to become involved or was it by your own design?
4. Have you ever held an elected position?
5. Have you ever worked on the staff of an elected official?
6. Would you like to hold public office some day?
7. Describe you/your organization's activities in candidate recruitment.
8. Have you/your organization ever encouraged anyone to run for office for the first time?
9. Did the party give this person help?
10. Who requested the support, you, the party or the candidate?
11. Have you/your organization ever encouraged a current officeholder to seek another office?
12. Did the party give this person help?
13. Who requested the support, you, the party or the candidate?
14. Have you/your organization ever discouraged anyone from running or seeking a higher elected office?
15. Describe you/your organization's activities in campaign management.
16. Did you/your organization help staff campaigns and hire party workers?
17. Did you/your organization assist the campaign with accounting or filing ethics reports?
18. Did you/your organization talk with or work with candidates/campaigns?
19. How often and what did you talk about?
20. Did you/your organization talk with or work with candidates/campaigns in developing strategies?
21. Did you/your organization work on specific projects with candidates/campaigns?
22. How often and what type of projects?
23. When it comes to making important decisions for the campaign, how much influence do you think you/your organization had on campaigns?
24. How would you describe your/your organization's relationship with candidates?
25. Describe you/your organization's activities in campaign communications.
26. Did you/your organization help develop a candidate's public image?
27. Did you/your organization help with media advertising?
28. Describe you/your organization's activities in fundraising.
29. What type of campaigns (challenger, incumbent, open seat) do you think you supported most in the last electoral cycle and why?
30. Did you assist a candidate/campaign in raising funds?
31. If so, what type of assistance did you provide?
32. If not, why not?
33. Where would you guess most of your resources came from?

34. Describe you/your organization's activities in collecting voter information and mobilizing the electorate.
35. Did you/your organization collect information about the voter and distribute it to the campaigns?
36. Did you/your organization register voters and get them to the polls on Election Day?
37. What are some party building strategies that you would like to initiate or see initiated in the future?