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FLORIDA POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

OFFICERS 2012-2013

FPSSA President Sean D. Foreman

Barry University

sforeman@mail.barry.edu

Kevin M. Wagner, 1st Vice-President
& Program Chair 2013 Conference
Florida Atlantic University
kwagne15@fau.edu

David Hill, Secretary
Stetson University
dhill@stetson.edu

Marco Rimanelli
Editor, *Florida Political Chronicle*
Saint Leo University
Marco.Rimanelli@saintleo.edu

Kathryn A. DePalo, 2nd Vice-President
Florida International University
depalok@fiu.edu

Aubrey Jewett, Treasurer
University of Central Florida-Orlando
aubrey.jewett@ucf.edu

Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan
Editor Newsletter, *Political Scientist*
University South Florida-St. Petersburg
jsm2@stpt.usf.edu

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(staggered 3-years terms)

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St. Thomas University
GJamison@stu.edu

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Santa Fe Community College
vilma.fuentes@sfcollege.edu

Stephen Baker (2012-14)**
Jacksonville University
sbaker@ju.edu

Mark Logas (2012-15)
Valencia Community College
mlogas@valenciacollege.edu

Joseph Uscinski (2012-15)
University of Miami
uscinski@miami.edu

Denis Rey (2010-13)
University of Tampa
denis.rey@ut.edu

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University of West Florida-Pensacola
jevans@uwf.edu

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University of Tampa
manderson@ut.edu

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Tallahassee Community College
murgor@tcc.fl.edu

Ex-Officio Past-President
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Houman.sadri@ucf.edu

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President's Introduction: Florida Political Science Association in 2012 and Beyond!

FPSA President Sean D. Foreman, Ph.D., Barry University

Dear FPSA members and All Interested Readers,

2012 is an exciting year for Florida and for the Florida Political Science Association. Florida is again the largest battleground state and the biggest prize "up for grabs" in the Presidential Campaign. We have already had President Barack Obama and Governor Mitt Romney visit the state a number of times and are sure to see plenty more of them. We also have a closely contested U.S. Senate race for the Florida seat currently held by Democrat Bill Nelson. With just six seats separating the parties in the Senate each of these national races will be hotly followed.

Tampa will host the 2012 Republican National Convention from August 27-30. It is great to know that one of the major political parties will be meeting just down the road from where we held our 2012 FPSA Conference at the University of Tampa. There will be opportunities for our various universities' Faculty and students to get involved and to see the convention process up close.

Our 2012 FPSA annual meeting at the University of Tampa on March 17 was one of, if not, the largest conference ever held by our organization since its founding in 1972. We had more than 100 participants in panels and presentations representing 31 colleges and universities and members of the media. Our receipts were also the highest ever, which is a testament to the great stewardship of J. Edwin Benton (USF) as our longtime Secretary-Treasurer, and of our past President Houman Sadri (UCF).

The Secretary-Treasurer position requires major commitment and that is why in 2011 we voted to split it into two positions. I look forward to working now with Treasurer Aubrey Jewett (UCF), a long-time leader of this association, and Secretary David Hill (Stetson), who brings new energy to the FPSA. Thank you to all of the FPSA Executive Council who volunteer their time to make this organization a collegial and professional endeavor.

I am proud to see the *Florida Political Chronicle* now on-line in the FPSA website, for both its archived older volumes (all scanned and ready to be "re-read") and current issues. This is in great part thanks to our Editor, Marco Rimanelli (Saint Leo University), who was its Editor earlier in 1993-1999, and currently has also redesigned in color the volume that you are now reading. The *Florida Political Chronicle* will continue to be fresh and scholarly relevant in upcoming editions.

In the future, I hope to see our next conference at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami on 16 March 2013, exceed the bar we set this year. Kathryn DePalo (FIU) and Kevin Wagner (FAU) will be working hard to produce that program. We pride ourselves on being inclusive to both college and university Faculty, as well as to graduate students and promising undergraduates. I recall attending and presenting at FPSA conferences as a graduate student at FIU. It was an invaluable experience and very encouraging to be welcomed into this community of Florida political scholars.

I encourage you to submit your proposals for publication in upcoming editions of the *Florida Political Chronicle*. If you have any ideas for themes of future volumes, please let us know. Get involved with the FPSA and attend our annual meetings. The future is bright for Florida and the FPSA as we look beyond our banner year of 2012!

Best wishes,

Sean D. Foreman, Ph.D.
President FPSA

Editor's Introduction:
Old Issues, New Issues & On-line Archive!
Marco Rimanelli, Ph.D., Saint Leo University

Dear FPSA fellows and political readers,

the *Florida Political Chronicle* is the annual regional scholarly journal of the Florida Political Science Association on politics and international affairs, and encourages scholarly submissions from all Politics disciplines: American Politics, Political Theories, Comparative Politics, International Affairs and Security, Diplomatic History, Public Administration, International Political Economy, International Law and Organizations (see submissions requirements for essays and book-reviews at the back of this issue).

In this current "2012 Presidential Elections Issue" (vol.20, n.1-2, 2009-2012), the *Florida Political Chronicle* welcomes its readers with an Introduction from the new President of the Florida Political Science Association Sean Foreman (Barry University) on his vision of the future and his take on the 2012 Presidential Convention in Tampa. The journal also show-cases three topical scholarly essays on American politics and elections, which resonate in their scholarly findings as intellectually relevant to the 2012 U.S. Presidential Elections.

This "2012 Presidential Elections Issue" comes after an unexpectedly long hiatus (due to the earlier Editor's problems), but now regular publications have resumed under the renewed Editorship of Professor Marco Rimanelli (Saint Leo University) who was its Editor also in 1993-1999. Below are three other key changes:

1. Starting with this current "2012 Presidential Elections Issue" (vol.20, n.1-2, 2009-2012), the *Florida Political Chronicle* will be published in colour and only on-line, once or twice yearly, under this current format and art concept by its new Editor Marco Rimanelli. This "2012 Presidential Elections Issue" plus all on-line Archived past issues are available free to the public in the Chronicle Tab of the Florida Political Science Association's Website at <http://www.fpsanet.org/chronicle.html> or <http://www.fpsanet.org/>. Future issues are be available with password and FPSA simple subscription of \$40 yearly (please see p.73).
2. All previously unpublished scholarly essays and Best FPSA Graduate Student Awards are now finally showcased in both this current "2012 Presidential Elections Issue" of *Florida Political Chronicle* in Summer 2012 and the following double-issues of early-Fall 2012 (vol.21, n.1-2, 2010-2012) and December 2012 (vol.22, n.1-2, 2011-2012). New work will appear in future issues in Spring 2013 (vol.23, n.1-2, 2012-2013) and Fall 2013.
3. Also in Summer 2012 the FPSA has completed the process of creating on-line Archive of all previously printed issues of the *Florida Political Chronicle* (previously known since its foundation as *Political Chronicle*) now scanned for everybody to both peruse and research in the FPSA main website under the Tab *Chronicle* (<http://www.fpsanet.org/chronicle.html>). All archived issues from 1989 to 2009 are now available in "virtual" circulation to the public and FPSA subscribers with a password, which allows also on-line access to current issues (2009-2012 and 2010-2012, plus future 2011-2012 and 2012-2013). This on-line process also reduces printing costs, increases Journal subscriptions and distribution. These major changes to the *Florida Political Chronicle* were possible thanks to these hard-working people: exiting-FPSA President Houman Sadri (Central Florida University-Orlando), new-FPSA President Sean Foreman (Barry University), Secretary-Treasurer and "Institutional Pillar" J. Edwin Benton (University of South Florida-Tampa), FPSA Web-designers Doug Ryan and Ashlei Smith, and renewed Editor Marco Rimanelli (Saint Leo University).

The journal's current first essay, "**Life after Term Limits: are "Termed-Out" Women Legislators Less Politically Ambitious than their Male Counterparts?"** by Drs. Kathryn DePalo (Florida International University) and Susan MacManus (University of South Florida-Tampa) is their long-awaited trend-setting collaborative work with the help of Andrew Quecan (University of Texas-Law School). Their innovative analysis in U.S. politics compares gender differences in the post-legislative electoral career paths of 187 termed-out Florida State legislators since 2000.

The authors' findings show how termed-out women state legislators remain more politically ambitious than men by pursuing multiple attempts to other elective legislative offices at any level (but not executive or judicial positions preferred by men) to remain in power in term-limited states like Florida, even if they then tend to win more lower level offices (county, city, school) than higher level ones (national or state), as detailed in tables of data analysis. Yet the authors show how such "regressive ambition" is not "negative" for women (given major gender gaps at both higher and lower offices), who tend to remain in politics longer than many male colleagues.

The journal's second essay, "**Top 10 Reasons Why Barack Obama Won the U.S. Presidency in 2008 and What it Means in the 2012 Election**" by **FPSA President Sean Foreman (Barry University)** is a timely analysis of the 10 key points that allowed Senator Barack Obama (IL) to win the U.S. Presidency in 2008 over both Democratic Front-runner Senator Hillary Clinton (N.Y.) and rival Republican nominee Senator John McCain (AZ): 1) It was a Democrat's year (2008); 2) Change messages resonate with voters; 3) Obama raised more money (2008 vs. 2012); 4) McCain's vs. Romney's ages; 5) Youth vote and enthusiasm; 6) the Palin Factor in Vice-President selection; 7) Bradley Effect vs. Obama Effect; 8) Use of new Media (Facebook; Twitter; internet); 9) Liberal Media Bias; and 10) "It's the economy, stupid!" Dr. Foreman then compares those same 10 factors to see their influence in the 2012 Presidential Campaign between President Obama and Republican nominee Governor Mitt Romney, in a fight over campaign funding, voting behavior, voter registration, economy and Conservatism.

The third essay, "**Extending the Marginality Debate to the Senate: U.S. Senate Elections, 1978-2006**" by **Mr. J. Ryan Smallen** (ex-Graduate of the University of West Florida-Pensacola working in the Criminology field but soon to enter a Ph.D. in Politics) is the FPSA Best Graduate Student Paper Award of 2007. Smallen's *tour-de-force* on U.S. electioneering elaborates contemporary quantitative research on electoral competition in the U.S. House of Representatives to derive his theoretical applications of key findings on bi-party electoral competition also to the U.S. Senate (statistically more difficult to observe and interpret). Smallen's 30 years data-spread from 1978-2006 applies to U.S. Senate elections both the original theoretical works of David Mayhew's (1974) on electoral "marginality" and Gary Jacobson's (1987) percentage "seat-change", while also charting the differences between Mid-Term and Presidential elections cycles. His findings show that U.S. Senate elections significantly fluctuate in competitiveness over time and across Presidential vs. Mid-Term election cycles, with unexpected implications for electoral competition in both Chambers of the U.S. Congress and in scholarly inquiries into representation in contemporary politics. Significant are also the author's detailed tables of data analysis and implications.

The **Book Review** on John M. Barry, *The Great Influenza* (New York: Penguin, 2004), ISBN 0-14-303448-0, is an innovative medico-political investigative work, which offers a dreadful forgotten look at the quandary between public policy, military secrecy and the second greatest pandemic in history (after the 1300s Black Plague), which in the wake of World War I killed in 1918-20 over 100 millions military and civilians globally, spreading from infected U.S. troops in Kansas shipped to Europe's Western Front and far-beyond. This is an engrossing tale of woe that could in the future replay in our interconnected world if a new pandemic spreads through global communications.

As "New-Old" Editor of this regional scholarly political journal I am profoundly thankful to the FPSA's Presidents Houman Sadri and Sean Foreman for the honour of resuming editorship of the *Florida Political Chronicle* after my earlier appointment in 1993-1999. The *Florida Political Chronicle*, as a regional scholarly publication on politics and international affairs, embodies the U.S. Department of Education's new emphasis on public policy in universities. Together with all FPSA Officers we are committed to publishing a high-quality, modern, regional scholarly journal to keep enticing your intellectual fire as we have done since the original 1989 issues by our esteemed first Editor Bernie Schechterman.

Marco Rimanelli, Ph.D.
Editor Florida Political Chronicle

LIFE AFTER TERM LIMITS: ARE “TERMED-OUT” WOMEN LEGISLATORS LESS POLITICALLY AMBITIOUS THAN THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS?

**Kathryn A. DePalo, Ph.D., Florida International University &
Susan A. MacManus, Ph.D., University of South Florida-Tampa
(with Andrew F. Quecan, University of Texas—Law School)**

ABSTRACT: This probative study analyzes gender differences in the post-legislative electoral career paths of termed-out state legislators. The analysis, based on the post-legislative careers of 187 “termed-out” Florida legislators since 2000, shows that women are more likely to seek another elective office whether at the higher or lower level, run multiple times to win, seek legislative rather than executive or judicial positions, be more successful at winning lower level offices (county, city, school) than higher level (national or state) and resign to run for another position *before* reaching their term limit. Overall, termed-out women legislators are even more politically ambitious than men when careerism is defined as the desire to stay in elective office at *any* level. In fact, in term-limited environments, the concept of “regressive” ambition (seeking lower level offices) may be less of a negative where sizable gender gaps exist at both higher and lower office levels and representational equity is a goal at each. By 2012, it had become apparent that term limits are not always the deterrent to political “careerism” that proponents had predicted (and hoped) they would be.

Figure 1: Legislative Term Limits: a Revolving Door?¹



Cynthia Chestnut—D



Lois Frankel—D



Mike Fasano—R



Dennis Baxley—R

WHEN TERM LIMITS TAKE HOLD: CAREER PATHS & POLITICAL AMBITION

The adoption and implementation of state legislative term limits in 15 states has opened up a new line of inquiry into political ambition generally and legislators’ career paths specifically. To date, most of the studies of “what happens next?” have focused on the degree to which female (and minority) representation levels in state legislatures changed following the adoption of term limits. The expectation was that the open seats created by term limits would attract significantly larger numbers of female and minority candidates for those positions.

Other studies have focused more broadly on gender differences in ambition to seek higher office, primarily a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, rather than on how term limits affect that calculation (cf. Maddox, 2004; Powell, 2000; Carey, Niemi & Powell, 2000; Francis & Kenny, 1997; Steen, 2006; Maestas, Fulton, Maisel & Stone, 2006; Fulton, Maestas, Maisel & Stone, 2006).

Specifically, these analyses have concentrated on measuring levels and determinants of *progressive* career ambition—defined as desiring and seeking *higher* office, usually at the national level. The major reason for selecting legislators as the unit of analysis is that state legislatures historically have been viewed as the major “pipelines” sending new faces to the U.S. Congress. In the 112th Congress, former-state legislators comprised 41% of the U.S. Senators and 51% of the U.S. Representatives (National Conference of State Legislatures, February 2012). Most of these progressive political career ambition-oriented studies have been based on data generated from surveys of sitting state legislators, which are, in turn, used to predict their actual decision to run for the U.S. House of Representatives.

Ironically, there have been few comprehensive longitudinal studies tracking the degree to which termed-out legislators run for *any* office because of an intense desire to stay involved in elective politics (for an exception, see Lazarus, 2006). Yet the degree, if any, to which women attempt to stay in office longer than their termed-out male colleagues affects the likelihood that gender gaps in representational levels at both the higher and lower office levels will narrow. In 2012, the gender gap in Congress is over 80 percentage points with there being only 17 female U.S. Senators and 73 women U.S. House members. At the state level, women comprise 24% of all state legislators across the U.S. (25% of all State House members, 22% of all State Senators). Females hold 74 (24%) of the 317 State elective executive offices—6 Governors, 11 Lieutenant Governors, and 57 other offices ranging from Attorney General and Secretary of State to railroad Commissioner. Gender gaps are also wide at the lower office level, particularly in elected executive posts. Women make up only 18% of Mayors in cities with populations over 30,000, and just 12% in the nation’s 100 largest cities (all figures are from the Center for American Women and Politics, 2012).

This study seeks to fill these voids by tracking the post-term limit career paths of 187 state legislators over a six-year period. It concludes with a call to redefine what is meant by progressive political ambition in states with term limits on state legislators, but few on local offices, with higher salaries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Term limit supporters *expected* (and even wanted) to put a brake on political careerism and to interrupt the normal career progression path of politically-ambitious legislators (careerists)—from the State House to the State Senate to Congress, State Executive Offices, or the Judiciary. The rationale was that it would put new faces in office at every level—the “new blood” argument.

Proponents of state legislative term limits also argued that they would create more open seats, thereby attracting more female (and minority) candidates and producing more female legislators who would, in turn, run for higher office—the pipeline argument. There was no discussion of the degree to which term limits would impact on decisions to run for lower-level offices. Over time, some of the initial projections, particularly those related to halting future runs for office, have proven to be less clear-cut than expected and have raised new questions.

Curtailing Future Runs for Office?

Term limits have not significantly curbed political ambition (or careerism), when simply measured by the desire to seek another elective post. Term-limited members often run for other elective offices, including both higher and lower/local offices (Bowser, Chi & Little, 2006; Lazarus, 2006; Steen 2006; Tothoro, 2003). Lacking the ability to seek reelection, these state legislators often find little risk in running for other elective positions or in expressing their desire to do so (cf., Powell, 2003; Maestas, Fulton, Maisel & Stone, 2006; Lazarus, 2006; Moncrief, Powell & Storey, 2007).

Run for Another Post Before or After Term Limits Take Hold?

There has been growing interest in *when* state legislators make the decision to run for another office, particularly when faced with term limits. This raises the question of whether there are gender differences in the timing of their decision to run for another office—a decision which is bound to be driven at least in part by the availability of other posts, namely open seats.

Research has shown that some legislators decide not to wait until their time expires, opting to leave early to pursue other elective opportunities including moving from the State House to the State Senate chamber (Maddox, 2004; Powell, 2000; Copeland, 1992). The Joint Project on Term Limits (JPTL) has confirmed these findings in Arizona (Berman, 2005), Colorado (Straayer & Bowser, 2005), Ohio (Farmer & Little, 2005), Arkansas (English & Weberg, 2005), and California (Cain & Kousser, 2005), as well as in Michigan (Sarbaugh-Thompson, Thompson, Elder, Strate & Elling, 2004). However, these studies have not thoroughly examined the question of whether there are significant gender differences in these decisions.

Some researchers see the timing of when to seek another office as a good way to distinguish between the ambitious and the *really* ambitious. Maestas, Fulton, Maisel and Stone (2006) have formulated a two-stage model that treats the formation of political ambition to seek a higher office (U.S. House) as stage one, preceding the actual decision to run for such a post as stage two. They conclude that ambitious term-limited legislators are more willing to take advantage of opportunities to run for higher office sooner than their non-term-limited colleagues if such opportunities present themselves.

Gender Differences in Political Career Ambition among Term-Limited Legislators?

The findings of studies examining the impacts of term limits on women legislators have been mixed, depending upon the focus. Some researchers have concluded that term limits do not dramatically increase the number of women in the lower chamber because long-serving women legislators are not necessarily being replaced by other women (Carroll & Jenkins, 2005; Carroll & Jenkins, 2001). Others have found that term limits made it easier for women to move from the State House to the State Senate (English & Weberg, 2005; Richardson, Valentine & Stokes, 2004; Moen, Palmer & Powell, 2005).

There is a much more extensive body of research examining why more women in general do not seek elective office. Ironically, there is evidence that when women *do* run for office, they win at the same rates as men. The difficulty lies in getting them to run, rather than any systemic odds against them. Another analysis of 2008 survey data (Lawless & Fox, 2008) from a Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study (2000+ respondents) that began in 2001 found that “men are nearly 35% more likely than women to think of themselves as potential political candidates”—a gap that persists across political party, income level, age, race, profession and region (2008: p.5). They also found that among those who said they might consider running for office, men were nearly twice as likely as women to express interest in running for a federal position and 50% more likely to think of running for a state-level position. The

proportions of men and women who identified local posts as of greatest interest were not statistically different, although women were more likely than men to be interested in a School Board position.

Lawless and Fox (2008: p.1-2) conclude that the “persistent gender gap in political ambition” is due to women being:

- (1) less willing to endure the rigors of a political campaign;
- (2) less likely to be recruited to office;
- (3) less likely to have the freedom to reconcile work and family obligations with a political career;
- (4) less likely to think they are “qualified” to run for office; and
- (5) less likely to perceive a fair political environment.

But what about the gender differences in the future political career aspirations of persons who *have* been successful in running for and *winning* a state-level political office? One study of gender differences in progressive career ambition among state legislators, based on 1998 data from a survey of state legislators across the U.S., found that female state legislators are less ambitious than males to run for a U.S. House seat, primarily due to gender differences in child-care responsibilities. However, they are just as likely as their male counterparts to seek such a seat should the opportunity arise (Fulton, Maestas, Maisel & Stone, 2006: p.235). When the expected benefit of the office (subjective assessment of chances of winning in 1998 multiplied by Congressional ambition level) is higher, women are significantly *more* likely than their male counterparts to run for the U.S. House; the reverse is true when the expected benefit is lower. Based on this finding, the authors conclude that: “Because women are more responsive to the expected benefit than are men, they are somewhat more ‘strategic’ with respect to their run decisions” (Fulton, Maestas, Maisel & Stone, 2006: p.245). This study did not control for the presence of term limits in the model predicting the likelihood of *running* for a higher office (U.S. House).

Older women and single female state legislators are more likely to run for Congress than younger, married women legislators, with children at home (Fulton, Maestas, Maisel & Stone, 2006: p.245). Older women legislators, of whom there are more, are thought to be somewhat bolder than their younger female colleagues “because they feel that they have nothing to lose.” Several other studies have found that women are more calculating in their office-seeking decisions. For example, Gertzog (2002) in a study of female members of Congress from 1916-to-2000 observed that a growing number are “strategic politicians” as evidenced by their seeking an open seat.

What Next? National, State or Local Office?

Local offices are increasingly being viewed as more appealing than national or state-level offices or even another post in the other legislative chamber (cf., MacManus, Bullock, Padgett & Penberthy, 2006). Local offices are a viable option for those who wish to continue their political careers, especially for women with children who may choose to stay closer to home (in fairness, there is research showing no gender differences in those leaving state legislative offices due to familial obligations, although that research is several decades old; see Blair & Henry, 1981).

Local offices are often viewed by voters as equally or even more prestigious than state legislative posts (cf., MacManus, Bullock, Padgett & Penberthy, 2006; MacManus & Bullock, 1996). They have higher salaries and do not require extensive travel or a part-time dwelling in another location as a legislative post might do. In addition, many of these offices do not have term limits provisions (Tothero, 2003; MacManus, Bullock, Padgett & Penberthy, 2006) and may be easier for former legislators with significant name recognition to capture than a national or state-level office. Finally, local offices can also be very rewarding with high job satisfaction (Lascher, 1993a; Lascher, 1993b). Thus, local elective

positions may provide better opportunities for outgoing state legislators to *continue in elected office*, and may be a more attractive option for women in particular for the reasons outlined.

That said, a counter view is that running for local offices after holding a state legislative seat is an example of “regressive” rather than “progressive” ambition. Lazarus (2006: p.360) attributes Schlesinger (1966) with “coining the term ‘progressive ambition’ to describe the phenomenon of politicians moving from *less-desirable to more-desirable offices* throughout their careers” (emphasis added by authors). Lazarus equates regressive ambition among termed-out state legislators with running for lower offices, which have lower benefits. He states that regressive ambition is a “rare occurrence” but one that is more common among termed-out than non-termed out state legislators. However, in his analysis of state legislators’ career choices in 2000-2002, the only measure of regressive ambition included is “when a member of a state’s upper chamber runs for a seat in the state’s lower chamber.” Excluded were runs for *local offices* which Lazarus acknowledged that he “left...out of [his] analysis largely because of the difficulty in identifying whether a legislator sought a local office, since such data are not commonly kept by state governments” (Lazarus, 2006: p.380). What is clear is that he regards local positions as less desirable and seeking them as regressive ambition (his study did not include any analysis of gender differences in levels of regressive ambition).

Noticeably lacking are political career progression studies that track the degree to which term-limited legislators seek another elective office, including local posts, precisely because it is painstakingly time consuming and challenging to gather and verify such data. Consequently, there has been little thought given to whether definitions of progressive ambition based purely on the perceived prestige of the office next sought rather than the individual’s personal aspirations are as legitimate and meaningful in term-limited environments. There, local level offices may in fact be more desirable next steps and may permit longer—and thus more satisfying—careers in elective office.

What is Progressive Career Ambition in Term-Limited Environments?

It is important to note that researchers, like Maestas, Fulton, Maisel and Stone, define progressive ambition as “the general attraction one holds for a career in a different political office than the one he or she currently holds” (2006: p.197). However, they *operationalize* the concept in their research as seeking a *higher* office, specifically the U.S. House. Other researchers (Lazarus, 2006: p.358) have included in their definition of a higher office a seat in Upper Chamber of the state legislature or a state-wide office, in addition to the U.S. House.

The question raised in this article is whether defining ambition solely on the basis of seeking a higher office is too restrictive a definition of careerism in term-limited environments. Is a more accurate one, particularly as it relates to desirability and satisfaction, a career in a different political office than the one currently held, regardless of the level?

THE STUDY

The major purpose of this research is probative in nature—based on a single large, diverse and highly politically-competitive state (Florida). It seeks to determine whether there are significant gender differences in whether state legislators facing term limits decide to run for another office, when the decision is made and how successful was the venture. Specifically, the study examines whether there are significant gender differences in:

- (1) The rate at which legislators decide to run for another elective post as they approach, or reach term limits and their success at winning the posts.

- (2) The type of office sought—higher (national; state) vs. lower (State House if a Senator, city, county, judicial, school, special district).
- (3) The socioeconomic and political attributes of termed-out legislators (race/ethnicity, age, children, and political party affiliation) by type of office sought.
- (4) The timing of the decision to seek another office—pre- or post-term limits taking hold—and relative victory rates.
- (5) The frequency with which those who lose their first post-legislative race will run again and the type of position(s) they seek.

The Data

This study focuses on Florida where 8-year term limits have been in effect since 2000.² The career paths of 187 state legislators (House and Senate) who faced term limits between 2000 and 2007 are analyzed. Data for those seeking congressional, legislative, or other state offices were collected from the Florida Division of Elections.³ Data for local offices (county, city, school district, trial courts) were gathered from individual county supervisors of elections' websites.⁴ All other identifying information was found through local newspapers and state websites.⁵ It is important to note that the data were collected for the *universe* of legislators termed out during the seven year period (44 women; 143 men).⁶

The Hypotheses

Some of the hypotheses tested in this research are based on the results from previous research reviewed above. Others, where there has been no previous research, are formulated on the premise that the progressive career ambition of women is lower than that of men or on current statistics as to the proportion of women in various positions.

H1: A higher proportion of termed-out women choose to run for another office than termed-out men.

H2: A higher proportion of termed-out men than women seek and win higher office (national; state).

H3a: There is no gender difference in the proportion of termed-out legislators who seek a lower level office *OR*

H3b: A higher proportion of termed-out women than men will seek—and win—lower (especially local) offices.

H4: A higher proportion of termed-out women will seek—and win—school board posts.

H6: Termed-out female legislators are more likely to seek legislative-than executive-type posts after leaving the State House; for men is the reverse.

H7: Termed-out women legislators are more likely than their male counterparts to leave their legislative posts early (in advance of term limits taking hold), particularly to run for higher offices (state, national).

H8: Termed-out women legislators who run for another office are more likely than their male counterparts to be older, single, without children and Democrats, regardless of the office sought.

H9: Termed-out men are more likely than their female counterparts to seek additional offices multiple times after losing their first race post-term limits.

H10: Among those who choose *not* to run again for elective office, termed-out women will be more likely than men to be younger, married, with children and Democrats.

H11: Among those who do not seek another elective post after term limits, men are more likely to continue careers in politics (appointive posts; lobbyists) than their female counterparts.

RESULTS

The data confirm that women are much more likely to run for political office post-term limits than men, regardless of whether it is for a higher or lower office (see Table 1). In fact, 84% of the Florida female legislators opted to run for another post after their legislative service compared to 66% of the men (see Table 1). A higher percent of termed-out women than men ran for a higher office (61% vs. 46%). The comparable figures for a lower office were 23% vs. 20%. *In sum, women state legislators exhibit higher levels of political ambition (careerism) than men in pursuing further elective positions in this era of term limits.*

Choosing to Run for a Higher Office (National or State)

Term-limited legislators, *regardless of gender*, are more likely to seek higher offices than lower level positions. However, as hypothesized, a slightly higher proportion of women than men seek national or state offices after being driven out of the legislature by term limits or leaving prematurely (61% vs. 46% respectively; see Table 1).

Among those seeking higher office, as predicted, a higher proportion of termed-out female than male legislators sought offices in the U.S. House of Representatives (30% vs. 14%) and the State Senate (67% vs. 59%; see Table 2). Conversely, a slightly higher proportion of males than females made a run for the U.S. Senate (3% vs. 0%).

Gender differences in decisions to run for higher office executive posts were interesting in light of the fact that no previous research had examined this consequence of term limits. The results show that a higher proportion of male than female legislators sought a state-wide elected executive office (Governor; Cabinet) after term limits (25% vs. 4%). Thus, this research suggests that when it comes to seeking higher political offices beyond the state legislature, women are generally less likely to seek state-wide executive-level posts (see Table 2).

There are gender differences among the legislators who seek *higher* office after leaving their term-limited position. As predicted, a significantly higher percentage of women than men are: 55 and older (41% vs. 28%), unmarried (41% vs. 15%), without children (26% vs. 20%), and Democrats (52% vs. 28%). Somewhat unanticipated were the relatively small gender differences by race/ethnicity. A higher proportion of white females than males ran for a higher office (78% vs. 75%). A similar pattern occurred among African-American legislators. A slightly higher proportion of black females than males ran for a higher office (19% vs. 15%). However, the reverse was true among Hispanic termed-out legislators (males, 9% vs. females, 4%; see Table 3).

Electoral success rates—higher offices. Gender differences in the electoral success rates of termed-out legislators running for national and state level offices are rather mixed. Neither males nor females captured a U.S. Senate seat. As predicted, women had a considerably tougher time winning U.S. House seats than men (13% vs. 78%). This was particularly true for former-House members, none of whom were successful. In fact, the only two women who won a U.S. House seat were both former state senators—Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D) and Ginny Brown-Waite (R). Women House members did much better at getting elected to State Senate seats (50%) but still lagged behind their male termed-out legislators (63%; see Table 2).

The one superior female performance was in the state-wide elected executive office position. However, the “victory” occurred through appointment, rather than election. Toni Jennings (R), a former-State Senator and twice Senate President, was appointed as Lieutenant Governor by Governor Jeb Bush

(R) in 2003 after the resignation of Lt. Governor Frank Brogan, who left to become a university president (see Table 2).

In summary, termed-out women legislators are more likely to run for, but less likely to win, higher offices than their male counterparts. This is particularly the case when it comes to legislative posts (U.S. House, State Senate). The only success at “winning” a state-wide executive post (Lt. Governor) was through the appointment process.

Local Level Choices and Results

As predicted, a higher percentage of women than men ran for and won lower level offices. Of term-limited women 23% ran for lower/local office compared to 20% of the men (see Table 1). What is particularly interesting is that women were more likely to seek higher paying, more prestigious executive-type lower offices (county constitutional office, mayor, school board superintendent) while men were more likely to run for legislative posts (State House, County Commission, City Council, Special District) or judgeships (Circuit Court or county; see Table 2). No woman ran for a State House, City Council, Special District or judicial office. No man ran for a school-related position (School Superintendent or School Board).

Electoral success rates—lower offices. Eighty percent of the females who sought these lower offices won compared to 67% of their male colleagues. Obviously, there were gender differences in the positions sought, as mentioned above. But in the types of offices sought by both female and male term-limited legislators, women were more successful at winning county commission seats (100% vs. 54%), men at county constitutional officer (75% vs. 67%) and mayoral posts (100% vs. 50%; see Table 2).

In summary, these results differ from previous research in that they clearly show significant gender differences in the types of lower positions sought by termed-out state legislators, while confirming that women are more interested in and have an easier time of winning school-related posts.

Following the pattern observed among those running for higher office, there are gender differences among those running for lower-level offices. A significantly higher proportion of female than male termed-out legislators who ran for lower offices are: 55 and older (50% vs. 29%), single, divorced or widowed (40% vs. 18%), without children (40% vs. 18%) and Democrats (80% vs. 39%). White and black females are more likely to run than their male counterparts; the reverse is true among termed-out Hispanics seeking a lower office (see Table 3).

Timing of the Decision to Run for Another Office

There was a gender difference in the timing of when to run for another office. Women were more likely to resign to run for another post *before* being termed-out, confirming what others have suggested, namely that women are more strategic in their decisions as to when to run (see Table 4). Specifically, 36% of the women legislators resigned early to run for another office compared to 25% of the men.

Women were more likely to resign early to run for a *higher office* (81% vs. 69%), men for a *lower office* (31% vs. 19%). The most common higher office position for which an early resignation was made was the State Senate, usually as a consequence of an open seat. A majority of women (63%) and a plurality of men (42%) resigned early to seek such a position. At the lower office level, women were more likely to resign early to run for high-paying executive posts (school superintendent and county constitutional officer), men for county commission seats and judgeships.

Open seats as a factor. An overwhelming majority of both men and women who made the decision to run for another position *after* being termed-out opted to run for open seats, although men were more likely to

do so. In campaigns for higher office, 79% of women chose open seat races as did 85% of the termed-out men. Similar numbers are seen at the lower office level; 71% of the women legislators filed to run for an office with no incumbent in the race; for men, it was 94% (see Table 5).

The fact that termed-out women making “on-time” decisions to run for another office were more likely to select one held by an incumbent (no open seat) is interpreted by some as further evidence that women’s desires to continue a career in elective office are even stronger than men’s. Indeed, termed-out women are more willing to run for offices where the odds of winning (an incumbent in the race) are lower.

Electoral success rates. There are gender differences in the success rates among those who leave early to seek another office and those who run after being termed-out. Table 6 shows that among those who made decisions to leave the legislature *before* being termed-out to seek higher office, men won a higher proportion of their races than women (72% vs. 39%). Among those who ran for higher office *after* being termed-out, women did slightly better than men (43% vs. 41%).

In general, women who ran after being termed-out were only slightly more successful at winning *higher office posts* than females who ran before being termed out (43% vs. 39%). The reverse was true among termed-out male legislators; 72% who left early to run won compared to just 41% of those who ran after term limits took hold.

There were also gender-based differences in the success rate at capturing *lower level offices*, depending upon the timing of the run. Among those who left *before* being termed out, women were more victorious at winning local offices than men (100% vs. 55%). But among those who waited until being termed-out to seek a local office, men were more successful than women (81% vs. 71%; see Table 6).

In general, women who left early to run for local office were more successful at winning posts than those who waited until their legislative service was up (100% vs. 71%). The reverse was true among male legislators (55% who ran early won compared to 81% who waited until being termed out).

In summary, there are clear gender differences in term-limited legislators’ decisions as to when to run for another office and variations in success rates based on the timing of those decisions. Generally, women are more likely to leave legislative service to seek other offices before being termed out. However, they tend to be more successful when they wait to run until they are termed out and then run for a lower office. One of the reasons that women are less successful at capturing higher office posts is that they are more likely to seek them under more difficult circumstances (an incumbent-held seat). Women who choose to enter races where they are the clear underdogs are true “political careerists” — the highly ambitious who strongly desire to remain in elective office and to move up the political ladder. The number of women “political careerists” is on the upswing, although it still does not match that of their male counterparts.

If at First You don’t Succeed, Try, Try Again!

Perhaps nothing demonstrates political ambition (or “addiction to politics”) more than a state legislator who runs again after losing his/her first post-legislative race. The results of this analysis show that women were more persistent than men: 41% of the women legislators who lost their first race after term-limits ran again compared to 28% of their male counterparts. A higher percentage of the women ultimately won another elective office (57% vs. 50%).

Seven women and 10 termed-out males ran again after losing (or withdrawing from) their first race after leaving the legislature. All but two (one female, one male) had unsuccessfully made a run at a higher office (Congress, state-wide executive posts, State Senate).

On the second go-round, six of the seven women running again sought a lower (local) office, one a higher office (State Senate; see Table 7). Four ultimately won. All were elected to a local level office—city council, county commission or school board. Among the 10 male legislators running again, seven sought a local office, three a higher office. Four won—all at the local level (mayor; city commissioner; tax collector; special district board member). Two who were unsuccessful the second go-round ran a third time and won—both mayoral races.

In summary, the results show that a higher proportion of women than men were willing to run multiple times after leaving state legislative service and were successful at rejuvenating their elective political careers by capturing lower (local) offices. The successful men also ultimately landed at the local level. More broadly, a number of termed-out state legislators enjoyed elective office so much so that they did not let an initial loss deter them from running again—and found a lower level office more desirable than a higher office. This raises the issue of whether careerism should be viewed differently in term-limited environments and whether seeking a “lower” office is unequivocally “regressive ambition.”

This question is particularly relevant in circumstances where the salaries of these offices may be considerably higher than those attached to higher offices and where being able to stay closer to home may enhance the quality of one’s personal and family life. Is political ambition or careerism (the desirability to hold another office other than the one currently held) necessarily limited to seeking a higher office? At a minimum, more research needs to be done examining the relative satisfaction levels of persons who have held both types of positions.

To the State Legislature and Back Again: the Revolving Door

A growing number of state legislators who have left the legislature either because of term limits or a decision to run for another office end up trying to get back to the State House. In 2012 (the 20th anniversary of voter approved eight-year term limits on legislators), some 17 former legislators opted to make another run for the legislature. Most had become harsh critics of term limits which, in their opinion, had worsened the legislative process and the policy outcomes. Said one, “We’ve seen a decline in the institution. We’ve seen a lot of bad ideas become law, and I think the Legislature could use a little old-school advice” (Bousquet, 2012).

Taking a Pass: Those Choosing not to Run Again...Ever!

Some legislators choose not to pursue another elected office after they are termed-out. Among the termed-out legislators studied, a higher proportion of men (35%) than women (16%) made that decision (see Table 1). The males who chose not to run were 35-54 years of age, married with children, white, and Republicans with children. The females were generally older (over age 55), not married, without children, white and Democrats (see Table 3).

What is most interesting is that among the men who did not seek another elected office, a sizable number remained in the political arena, either by being (or hoping to be) appointed to a political post, becoming a lobbyist, or serving as a political consultant to others contemplating runs for office (see Table 8).⁷ In contrast, the women who left chose not to take a job in the political world, even an appointive one. It would be interesting to examine why. Is it that the political job network is still male-dominated or is that these women have simply had enough of politics?

CONCLUSION

This research based on an analysis of 187 Florida legislators scheduled to be “termed out” since 2000 has clearly shown that there are gender differences in their post-legislative elective office aspirations and successes. Overall, the results show that *women legislators exhibit a great deal more political ambition and boldness in pursuing further elective positions in this era of term limits than is generally assumed*. Specifically, we have found that termed-out women legislators are:

- (1) More likely than men to seek another elective office—higher (national/state) *and* lower level—after term limits. They are aggressive and ambitious.
- (2) More likely to resign to run for another post before being termed-out—to aggressively jump at a perceived opportunity, particularly when there is an open seat. But among those who do not leave their legislative posts early, women are more likely to run in incumbent-held seats—a phenomenon that some say reflects a higher level of ambition, namely a greater desire to stay in elective office (political “careerism”).
- (3) More successful at capturing *lower/local* elective offices (most commonly county- and school board-level posts) and least successful at winning higher offices, most notably seats in Congress and state executive posts.
- (4) Different than their male counterparts in their personal and political attributes (age, race/ethnicity) marital status, whether they have children, political party affiliation) regardless of the level of office sought. Generally a higher percentage of female than male post-legislative office-seekers are 55 or older, unmarried, without children, white or African American and Democrats.
- (5) More likely to run multiple times for an elective office after leaving the legislature and more successful at winning. But there are few gender differences in the type of office won by these multiple-time candidates; all ultimately won local-level positions.
- (6) More likely than men to stay out of the political arena as an appointee, lobbyist, or political consultant once they have made the decision not to seek any further elective office after being termed-out.

In summary, women legislators, while fewer in number, are even more interested in staying in the political game than men and are often bolder in their decisions as to what future office to seek and when as they face the reality of being “termed out.” As this study has shown, their political ambitions have not been dampened by term limits any more than men’s political aspirations. The real hold-up to getting more women in elective posts continues to be the greater reticence of women to run for political office, rather than other professions.

Perhaps the most important result of this study, the first to track the post-legislative candidacy decisions of several cohorts of termed-out legislators, is to prompt further research into how we define and measure the concepts of “progressive” and “regressive” political ambition in term-limited states, particularly as they relate to the desire to remain in elected office and, in the case of women, the gender gaps that exist at both the higher and lower office levels.

ENDNOTES

1. Photo Credits:

- Cynthia Chestnut: <http://www.alachuacounty.us/Depts/BOCC/Profiles/Pages/Chestnut.aspx>
- Lois Frankel: <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/sections/Representatives/details.aspx?MemberId=3046&SessionId=48>
- Mike Fasano: <http://www.flsenate.gov/senators/s11>
- Dennis Baxley:
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/details.aspx?MemberId=4200>

Legislative term limits were approved by Florida voters in 1992 & took effect in 2000. Here are the political career paths of the legislators featured in Figure 1:

- **Cynthia Chestnut:** 1987—Gainesville City Commission; 1989—selected Mayor-Commissioner, City of Gainesville; 1990-2000—Florida House of Representatives (termed-out); 2002 to 2010—Alachua County Commission, District 4, lost bid for reelection in 2010.
 - **Lois Frankel:** 1986-2000 Florida House of Representatives (termed-out); 2002—briefly entered gubernatorial election—dropped out; 2003-2011 Mayor West Palm Beach (termed-out); 2012—Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives .
 - **Mike Fasano:** 1994-2002 Florida House of Representatives (termed-out); 2002-2012—Florida Senate (termed-out); 2012—candidate for State House.
 - **Dennis Baxley:** 2000-2007 Florida House of Representatives (termed-out); 2010 Florida House of Representatives; 2012 candidate for newly-formed District 23 Florida House of Representatives.
2. State Senators are limited to two 4-years terms; State House members to four 2-years terms.
 3. All candidate tracking information for state offices is found at the Florida Secretary of State's website: <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/cand/index.asp>. Election results are found at: <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/elections/resltsarchive.index.asp>.
 4. A listing of all 67 county Supervisor of Elections websites and corresponding election results for local offices are found at <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/county/index.shtml>.
 5. Lobbyists must register with the State of Florida and can be found at: leg.state.fl.us/Lobbyist/index.cfm?Tab=lobbyist.
 6. Two legislators not included here are Tom Warner who left his house seat for an appointment as Florida's Solicitor General in 1999 and ran for Attorney General in 2002. Mark Weissman voluntarily left his house seat when he was redistricted out of office and ran again for his House seat (and lost) in 2004.
 7. We have not included those who were defeated for re-election.

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APPENDIXES:

Table 1

Incidence and Type of Office Pursued: Post-Term Limits* (2000-2007)				
Pursued Another Elected Office	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
Higher Office	27	61	65	46
Won	10	37	32	49
Lost	15	56	29	45
Appointed	1	4	2	3
Withdrew	1	4	2	3
Total	27	101	65	100
Lower/Local Office	10	23	28	20
Won	8	80	16	57
Lost	2	20	7	25
Appointed	0	0	3	11
Withdrew	0	0	2	7
Total	10	100	28	100
Did Not Pursue Elected Office	7	16	50	35
Total Term-Limited Legislators	44		143	

Notes: Totals may add to greater than 100 percent due to rounding.

*Relationships between gender and post-term limit actions are significant at the .10 level.

Table 2

Candidacy and Electoral Success Rates by Type of Office Sought: Post-Term Limits (2000-2007)						
Type of Office Sought	Women			Men		
	N	Ran (%)	Won (%)	N	Ran (%)	Won (%)
Higher Office						
U.S. House	8	30	13	9	14	78
U.S. Senate	0	0	0	2	3	0
Statewide elected executive office (Governor or Cabinet)	1	4	100**	16	25	19**
State Senate	18	67	50	38	59	63
Total	27	101*	41**	65	101*	52**
Lower/Local Office						
County- Commission	2	20	100	13	46	54**
County- Constitutional	3	30	67	4	14	75
Municipal- Council	0	0	0	2	7	50**
Municipal- Mayor	2	20	50	1	4	100
School Board Superintendent	2	20	100	0	0	0
School Board Member	1	10	100	0	0	0
Judicial	0	0	0	4	14	100**
Special District	0	0	0	1	4	100
State House	0	0	0	3	11	67
Total	10	100	80	28	100	67**

Notes: * Totals may add to greater than 100 percent due to rounding.

** Includes those appointed to elected office due to vacancies

All relationships are significant at the .05 level.

Table 3

Personal and Political Attributes of Term-Limited Legislators (2000-2007)									
Attribute	Gender	Elective Office Sought	Total	Under 35		35-54		55 & Over	
				N	%	N	%	N	%
Age	Women	Lower/Local Office	10	0	0	5	50	5	50
		Higher Office	27	1	4	15	56	11	41
		Did not run	7	0	0	2	29	5	71
	Men	Lower/Local Office	28	1	4	19	68	8	29
		Higher Office	65	2	3	45	69	18	28
		Did not run	50	2	4	25	50	23	46
Race/ Ethnicity	Gender	Elective Office Sought	Total	Black		Hispanic		White	
				N	%	N	%	N	%
	Women	Lower/Local Office	10	2	20	0	0	8	80
		Higher Office	27	5	19	1	4	21	78
		Did not run	7	2	29	0	0	5	71
	Men	Lower/Local Office	28	5	18	4	14	19	68
Higher Office		65	10	15	6	9	49	75	
Did not run		50	2	4	3	6	45	90	
Family	Gender	Elective Office Sought	Total	Married		Children			
				N	%	N	%		
	Women	Lower/Local Office	10	6	60	6	60		
		Higher Office	27	16	59	20	74		
		Did not run	7	3	43	3	43		
	Men	Lower/Local Office	28	23	82	23	82		
Higher Office		65	55	85	52	80			
Did not run		50	45	90	44	88			
Political Party	Gender	Elective Office Sought	Total	Democratic		Republican			
				N	%	N	%		
	Women	Lower/Local Office	10	8	80	2	20		
		Higher Office	27	14	52	13	48		
		Did not run	7	5	71	2	29		
	Men	Lower/Local Office	28	11	39	17	61		
Higher Office		65	18	28	47	72			
Did not run		50	16	32	34	68			

Table 4

Decision to Run for Elective Office <i>before</i> "Terming-Out" (2000-2007)				
Left before "Termed-Out"	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
	16	36	36	25
Higher Office	13	81	25	69
U.S. House	3	19	6	17
U.S. Senate	0	0	0	0
Statewide elected executive office (Governor & Cabinet)	0	0	4*	11
State Senate	10	63	15	42
Lower/Local Office	3	19	11	31
County- Commission	0	0	6	17
County- Constitutional Officer	1	6	2	6
Municipal- Council	0	0	0	0
Municipal- Mayor	0	0	0	0
School Board Superintendent	2	13	0	0
School Board Member	0	0	0	0
Judicial (Judgeship)	0	0	3*	8
Special District Board Member	0	0	0	0
State House	0	0	0	0
Total	16	101	36	101
Ran for Open Seats				
Higher Office	11	85	25*	100
Lower/Local Office	3	100	9	82

Notes: Totals may add to greater than 100% due to rounding.

* Includes those appointed to elected office.

Table 5

Decision to Run for Elective Office after “Terming-Out” (2000-2007)				
Type of Office	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
	21	48	55	39
Higher Office	14	67	39	71
U.S. House	5	24	3	5
U.S. Senate	0	0	2	4
Statewide elected executive office (Governor & Cabinet)	1	5	11	20
State Senate	8	38	23	42
Lower/Local Office	7	33	16	29
County- Commission	2	10	6	11
County- Constitutional Officer	2	10	2	4
Municipal- Council	0	0	2	4
Municipal- Mayor	2	10	1	2
School Board Superintendent	0	0	0	0
School Board Member	1	5	0	0
Judicial (Judgeship)	0	0	1	2
Special District Board Member	0	0	1	2
State House	0	0	2	4
Total	21	100	55	100
Ran immediately after leaving Legislature				
Higher Office	10	71	36	92
Lower/Local Office	6	86	12	75
Ran for Open Seats				
Higher Office	11	79	33	85
Lower/Local Office	5	71	15	94

Note: Includes those appointed to elected office.

Table 6

Success Rate in Run for Elective Office by Member Status (2000-2007)						
Term-Limited Members	Women			Men		
	N	Ran (%)	Won (%)	N	Ran (%)	Won (%)
	25	84	52	94	59	53
Higher Office	14	67	43	39	71	41
Lower/Local Office	7	33	71	16	29	81
Total	21	100	52	55	100	53
Left before "Termed-Out" to Run for Elective Office*	16	36	50	36	25	67
Higher Office	13	81	39	25	69	72
Lower/Local Office	3	19	100	11	31	55
Total	16	100	50	36	100	67

Note: * Includes those appointed to elective office.

Table 7

Track Record of Legislators Who Make Multiple Runs for Office: Post-Term Limits (2000-2007)				
Gender	Name	1 st Office Sought	2 nd Office Sought	3 rd Office Sought
Men	Daryl Jones	Defeated: Governor of Florida	Defeated: Lieutenant Governor of Florida	
	Buddy Dyer	Defeated: Attorney General	Elected: Mayor of Orlando	
	John Cosgrove	Defeated: Insurance Commissioner	Defeated: State Senate	Elected: Mayor of Town of Cutler Bay
	Willie Logan	Defeated: U.S. Senate	Defeated: Miami-Dade County Commission	
	Bill Sublette	Defeated: U.S. House	Defeated: Mayor of Orlando	
	Mario Diaz-Balart	Elected: State House	Elected: U.S. House	
	Jerry Melvin	Defeated: State Senate	Defeated: Okaloosa County Commission	
	George Albright	Defeated: State Senate	Elected: Tax Collector	
	Harry Goode	Defeated: State Senate	Defeated: State Senate	Elected: Mayor of Melbourne
	Everett Kelly	Defeated: State Senate	Elected: Lake County Water Authority	
	Roger Wishner	Defeated: Broward County Commissioner	Elected: Sunrise City Commissioner	
	John Rayson	Elected: Mayor of Pompano Beach	Defeated: Circuit Court Judge	
Women	Elaine Bloom	Defeated: U.S. House	Defeated: Mayor of North Miami Beach	
	Sharon Merchant	Defeated: State Senate	Defeated: State Senate	
	Denise Lee	Defeated: State Senate	Elected: Jacksonville City Council	
	Cindy Lerner	Defeated: State Senate	Defeated: Miami-Dade School Board	
	Cynthia Moore Chestnut	Defeated: State Senate	Elected: Alachua County Commission	
	Shirley Brown	Defeated: Sarasota Supervisor of Elections	Elected: Sarasota School Board	
	Stacey Ritter	Filed/Withdrew: State Senate	Elected: Broward County Commission	

Table 8

Profiles of Those Who Chose Not to Pursue Another Elected Office (2000-2007)				
Gender	N	%	Reason	Detail
Women	1	14	Appointed	Executive Branch (non-elective)
	5	71	Term-Limited	1 left in November 2006, not sure if will run for another office
	1	14	Resigned-Ethics Violations	Rep. Willye Dennis plead guilty to misuse of Federal funds
Total	7	99*		
Men	8	16	Appointed	Executive Branch (non-elective)
	3	6	Deceased	1 died in office, while the other 2 died approximately two years after leaving office
	2	4	Political consultants	State full-time occupation as political consultants
	22	44	Term-Limited	8 left in November 2006, 1 hoped for appointment in Gov. Crist's office, 3 have opened campaign accounts as of August 2007 to run for State Senate in November 2008
	14	28	Lobbyists	Includes those in "government relations" positions who are not yet eligible to register as a lobbyist due to State law
	1	2	Resigned-Ethics Violations	Rep. Steve Effman resigned after sex scandal
Total	50	100		

Note: Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

AUTHORS

Kathryn A. DePalo received her Ph.D. in Political Science from Florida International University in 2006 with a Dissertation on term limits effects on Florida's state legislature, which is now a book-manuscript, *Eight is Enough: the Case of Term Limits in Florida*. She holds a Master of Arts in Political Science from Florida Atlantic University and a B.A. in Communications from the University of Connecticut. Dr. DePalo is currently 2nd Vice-President of the Florida Political Science Association and since 2006 Full-time Faculty at Florida International University's Department of Politics and International Relations. She has extensive experience in state and local government processes and elections both in Connecticut and Florida. She has managed several political campaigns, including a successful county-wide judicial campaign in Broward County, Florida. Her teaching and research are on American Politics, Florida politics, state and local government, judicial process, and gender and politics.

Susan A. MacManus received her Ph.D. from Florida State University and M.A. from the University of Michigan, and is a Distinguished University Professor at the University of South Florida-Tampa's Department of Government and International Affairs, where she also served in the past as Chair. For the last six election cycles she has been Political Analyst at WFLA News Channel 8 (Tampa NBC affiliate). Since 2008, she has been a featured columnist on *sayfiereview.com*—a widely-read Florida-based political website. MacManus is co-author with Thomas R. Dye of *Politics in States and Communities*, 14th ed. (Prentice Hall, 2012), *Florida's Politics*, with Aubrey Jewett, Thomas R. Dye & David J. Bonanza, 3rd ed. (Florida Institute of Government, 2011) and *Florida's Politics: Ten Media Markets, One Powerful State* with Kevin Hill & Dario Moreno (Florida Institute of Government, 2004). She is also the author of *Young v. Old: Generational Combat in the 21st Century?* (Westview, 1996) and *Targeting Senior Voters* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004). She served as Chair of the Florida Elections Commission from 1999 to 2003 and helped the Collins Center for Public Policy Inc. draft Florida's Help America Vote Act State plan (voter, election official and poll worker education section) required by Congress to qualify for Federal funding under the Help America Vote Act.

Andrew F. Quecan is an Honors College graduate of the University of South Florida-Tampa. He holds a Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University and attends the University of Texas-Law School.

TOP 10 REASONS WHY BARACK OBAMA WON THE U.S. PRESIDENCY IN 2008 AND WHAT IT MEANS IN THE 2012 ELECTION

Sean D. Foreman, Ph.D., Barry University¹

ABSTRACT: This essay examines the 10 top reasons why Senator Barack Obama won the U.S. Presidency in 2008 and how those factors are shaping up for the 2012 Presidential Campaign. Data includes campaign funding, voting behavior, voter registration, and qualitative characteristics that explain Obama's 2008 Presidential Election victory. That information is used to consider his chances for a 2012 Presidential reelection from a campaigning perspective.

Top 10 Reasons Barack Obama won the U.S. Presidency in 2008

- 1) It was a Democrat's year
- 2) Change message resonated with voters
- 3) Obama raised more money
- 4) John McCain's age
- 5) Youth vote and enthusiasm
- 6) The Palin Factor in Vice-President Selection
- 7) Bradley Effect replaced by the Obama Effect
- 8) Use of new media
- 9) Media Bias (Liberal network support)
- 10) "It's the economy, stupid!"

INTRODUCTION

This essay emerged from a presentation that author gave on the one year anniversary of the 2008 election. There was interest in reflecting on the election of Barack Hussein Obama as the 44th President of the United States. It became clear that there were several compelling reasons why Obama won the presidential election on 2 November 2008.

As President Obama embarks on his reelection campaign in 2012 it is worth investigating how his chances look based on a comparison with those reasons that propelled him in 2008. The economic condition of the country remain an overriding concern in voters' minds. President Obama is now the incumbent in the White House and has a record to defend. The Democrats lost control of the House of Representatives in Obama's Mid-term election. In 2012 not only is the Presidency at stake but so is potential party control of the U.S. Senate.

A second reason to take this approach to analyzing the President's reelection chances is to provide a more qualitative view of the situation than fiscal forecasting models provide. Several scholars use models based on economic data to predict the outcome of models.² They have had success in recent years showing a high correlation between the performance of the economy and the vote for a

Democratic or Republican candidate for President. In a 2008 edition of *PS: Political Science* (v.48, n.8), the purveyors of nine leading forecaster models each predicted that Obama would win the Presidency. The median prediction of victory was 52% and he won by 54%.

Yale University Economist Ray Fair, who developed the standard-bearer model, shows that under economic conditions as of 28 January 2012, the President would hold a 50.3%-46.7% advantage. That is compared to 50%-46.6% in October 2011. In 2008, Fair predicted by October a 51.9%-48.1% Obama victory. The actual outcome was 53.4%-45.2%. His predictions were actually closest in early-2007 to the eventual election outcome.³

University of West Florida Political Science Professor Alfred Cuzán, uses four variables of Fair's model and adds a fifth which he terms "Fiscal Policy" based on Federal spending as percentage of gross domestic product. According to Cuzán, President Obama and his challenger would each get 47% of the vote based on the economy in February 2012. Under a "rosy" scenario, Cuzán sees that with improved economic conditions this year Obama would get 50% of the vote with his opponent garnering slightly less. Under this scenario Cuzán suggests that there could be a situation like in 2000, where one candidate wins the popular vote and the other one wins the Electoral College vote.⁴

Meanwhile a more qualitative approach is taken by American University History Professor Allan Lichtman, who successfully predicted the winner of each Presidential Election since 1984.⁵ Lichtman has 13 keys to winning the White House including four political, seven performance-based and two personality criteria. In August 2011, Lichtman predicted that Obama would win reelection in 2012 giving the incumbent an advantage in nine of his categories, the Republican an advantage in three, and one undecided factor. The undecided category – short-term economy – appears to be the ultimate key to the 2012 Presidential Election. A view of Lichtman's 13 keys in the 2012 Election is in Appendix 1.

With these various predictive models, it was this author's intent to closely examine the factors that led to Barack Obama's win in 2008 and to analyze how they would influence the election in 2012. With that, a look at the 10 reasons why Obama won will be reviewed, which in turn will be assessed with an eye toward the 2012 Presidential Campaign.

About the 2008 Presidential Campaign

The 2000 Presidential Election came down to the count in Florida and was decided 36 days after Election Day. The 2004 campaign is thought to have been decided in Ohio. In 2008, it was declared at around 11 p.m. that Illinois Senator Barack Obama won the Electoral College vote after picking up Florida and Ohio as well as Virginia along with all of the Democratic states from 2004 to clinch the race. He added North Carolina, Indiana, Iowa, Colorado, Nevada and New Mexico to bring the electoral vote total to 365 to 173.

Republican candidate, Arizona Senator John McCain in many ways looked to be defeated before the primaries even began. His campaign suffered from staff turnover and practically ran out of money. McCain came in fourth place in Iowa and carried his own bags through the airport to New Hampshire. Luckily for the "maverick" candidate New Hampshire voters were more aligned with McCain's moderate views than his more conservative opponents. From a field of 10 challengers, former-Governors Mitt Romney (Massachusetts) and Mike Huckabee (Arkansas) gave McCain the strongest competition for the nomination but McCain essentially clinched the nomination after Super Tuesday on 5 February 2008.

Obama and New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, the early front-runner, continued their contest and completed 53 primaries and caucuses through each state and Puerto Rico, Guam and Washington D.C. The battle over delegates and super delegates was heated through the summer. Obama won the nomination but there was concern that die-hard Clinton's supporters would not back

Obama. There was a perception that Obama snubbed Hillary Clinton by not selecting her for Vice-President. Instead Obama selected Joe Biden, a U.S. Senator from Delaware since 1972. Biden was a “Clinton ally” (Hillary and her husband ex-President Bill Clinton) and ideologically similar. This was seen as a good choice to satisfy the die-hard Clinton supporters. Biden himself, known for verbal gaffes on the campaign trail, said that he thought Hillary Clinton would make a better selection for vice president than he would. Whether that was a Freudian slip or an honest assessment, neither was a satisfactory explanation. Hillary Clinton stepped up and supported Obama and campaigned with him and her supporters came along. By the end of the Democratic National Convention the party finally united in its goal of electing Obama.

The Democratic National Convention was a highly scripted and well-orchestrated affair. On the first night Senator Ted Kennedy gave a courageous speech on the floor after leaving the hospital earlier that day with brain cancer. There was some concern that he would not be able to speak but the old Lion rose to the occasion. It marked the victory of the Kennedy-Obama wing of the party vs. the Clinton wing. The Clintons were given prominent roles with former president Bill Clinton making a momentous speech on Tuesday night and Hillary Clinton on Wednesday. She hit a home run of a speech and said support of Obama was essential in the name of defeating the Bush-McCain Republicans and seeing Democrats win the White House.

The Democrats won the White House and Barack Obama made history. For a variety of reasons, Obama cruised to a relatively easy victory.⁶ Here are the top ten, in no particular order, and based on the author’s observations and research though not scientifically selected.

1. It was a Democrat’s Year (2008)

The year 2008 was seen as a Democratic Party’s year to capture the White House. Whoever won the Democratic nomination was likely to be the favorite to win the open seat in the Oval Office. Much of the country had tired of President George W. Bush and the Republican Party brand was damaged, with the president “toxically unpopular even in many Red States.”⁷ In the end, also his father, former President George H.W. Bush stated on “Larry King Live” that the country was suffering from “Bush fatigue” having tired of the ruling family and George W. Bush’s sophomoric actions in the White House.

It appeared that the country was going to shift back to the Left-of-Center position after eight years of the George W. Bush Presidency. Democrats captured control of both chambers of Congress in 2006 picking up 31 seats in the House and six in the Senate. The main issues in that election were opposition to the war in Iraq and corruption tied to the lobbyist Jack Abramoff scandal. Public opinion had turned against the war and the Democratic leaders in Congress used the issue to rally voters. By 2008, Bush was very unpopular with less than 30% approval ratings mostly due to the Iraq War. Bush and McCain supported it; Obama famously opposed it in a speech as a State Senator from Illinois in October 2002.

Moreover, in 1980 when Ronald Reagan won, 40% of the country identified as Republican. In 2008, less than 30% identified as Republican. The political landscape had clearly shifted left and had more Democrat and Democrat leaning Americans in 2008 than in previous years.⁸

2. Change Message resonated with Voters (2008)

“Change.” “Change you can believe in.” “Yes We Can!” “*Si se puede!*” They were easy and catchy themes that captured simple ideas of hope and change. And they worked!

In many ways, Obama was the right person at the right time saying the right words for the American voters. Obama often invoked the words of Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. that America faced

the “fierce urgency of now” when citing why he decided to run against seemingly tough odds. Hillary Clinton was the early favorite to win the Democratic primary and another dozen hopefuls joined the fray. Obama was not widely known nationally except for his keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention in Boston when John Kerry was nominated as the party’s standard-bearer.

While Hillary Clinton was wildly popular with about half of Democratic voters who dreamt of the First Woman President of the U.S., but the other half were open to someone new. Obama personified newness in a game that had been dominated by white men for more than two centuries. He took the wind out of the sails of Hillary Clinton, whose own campaign was historic as she received 20 million primary votes, more than any other women in U.S. history. The Clinton campaign never settled on a slogan and lost the messaging battle to Obama early in the primary season.

Obama’s slogan was simple, his message was clear, albeit ambiguous: it worked!

3. Obama raised more Money (2008)

One of the keys to the Obama campaign was their record setting haul of campaign cash. Nearly three-quarters of a million dollar was raised by Obama. It was more than two times the amount raised by McCain (see Table 1) Obama raised the most money and had the most donors in campaign history.

**Table 1
Campaign Funds Raised and Spent – 2008**

Candidates	Barack Obama	John McCain
Raised	\$745 million	\$368 million
Spent	\$730 million	\$333 million

Obama pledged during the primary contest that he would take public funds and limit his ability to raise unlimited funds. But in June 2008 he changed his mind and decided to forgo matching funds making him the first major party candidate to do that since the system started in 1976.⁹

The enormous amount of cash that the Obama team was able to raise came from a variety of sources: large donors, small donors, traditional checks, and online contributions. The massive financial advantage allowed the campaign to staff headquarters in every state and to have the candidate on television in all the major markets. It enabled them to rapidly respond to attacks and stories that broke in the 24-hour news cycle.

4. John McCain’s Age (2008)

John McCain turned 72 years old on August 29, 2008 just days before the Republican National Convention that was held September 1-4. He would have been the oldest elected first-term President ever. Ronald Reagan was 69 years old when elected in 1980 and three weeks shy of 70 when he was inaugurated in January 1981. Reagan, who was 73 when he ran for reelection in 1984, famously quipped that he “would not make age an issue of this campaign.” At that point the popular incumbent President had many political assets, including a warm, grandfatherly persona that allowed him to keep his age from being a factor in his landslide reelection.

By contrast, the way McCain was shown in pictures perpetuated his age and perceived anger. McCain has a swollen left cheek from his time as a prisoner of war in Southeast Asia. His “bad” side was

often portrayed in pictures and on covers of magazines like *Newsweek* and *Economist*. It was commonly known that McCain twice had procedures to care for melanoma skin cancer, as well as the psychological trauma due to his time as a POW in North Viet-Nam.¹⁰ When asked about age McCain often joked and referred to his 94-year old mother who feistily defended him on the campaign trail as evidence of his strong genes. However, McCain had already outlived his father who died at 70 and grandfather who passed at age 61.

A Gallop Poll found that 23% of Americans thought that McCain's age would make him a less effective President compared to 65% that said it made no difference and 11% who thought he would be more effective. Among Obama voters the number jumped to 37% thinking that McCain would be less effective while 8% of McCain voters had concerns about his age. Gallup contrasted this question about McCain's age to Obama's race. They found 8% said Obama would be less effective while 82% thought there was no difference and 9% thought he would be more effective based on race.¹¹

In a Pew Research poll, 26% of voters had doubts about a McCain Presidency due to his age. The number jumped to 32% when surveyors informed respondents that McCain was 71 years old at the time. Interestingly, Pew found that McCain's age was more of a concern to older than younger voters. Of those at retirement age, 40% said McCain was too old while 24% of voters under 35 years old thought he was too old.¹²

In CNN exit polls when voters were asked if age was an important factor to them 84% of them said no and 15% said yes. When asked if it was a factor at all 60% said no and 39% said yes. Of those that said yes about two-thirds voted for Obama and of those that said no McCain got a majority of the vote.¹³

Still, reporters focused on the need for McCain to select a younger Vice-Presidential candidate to counter-balance any concerns and to match the then 46-year old Obama's appeal to younger voters.¹⁴

5. Youth Vote and Enthusiasm (2008)

Much was made out of the excitement and mobilization of young voters in 2008. What was striking about the political socialization of 18-29 years olds is that they steadily identified more with the Democratic Party from 1992 through 2008. Republicans and Republican-leaning held a 47%-46% lead over Democrats and Democrat-leaning in 1996. But Democrats gained advantage over the next decade and by 2008 Democrats/Dem-leaning had 58% identification compared to 33% for Republicans/Rep-leaning. The Pew Research numbers showed that Democrats actually had greater numbers in 2008 in all age categories and that the difference was even more significant among females. While party identification has waxed and waned over the past five decades the advantage toward Democrats enjoyed in the mid-to-late 2000s was seen, in part, as due to declining support for Bush.¹⁵

Further, exit polls showed that voters aged 18-29 favored Democrats with 66% of the vote compared to the 53% that Obama received overall.¹⁶ Still, while younger voters were more likely to support the Democratic candidates in 2008 it does not seem that they were decisive in determining the outcome of the election. The Pew Center research concluded from exit polls that Obama may not have won Indiana or North Carolina without the advantage of the youth vote but he would have still won key states of Ohio and Florida. Where younger voters were most helpful was with their volunteering for the campaign and active participation in trying to persuade their friends and relatives to vote. Also, a majority of young people reported having attended some sort of campaign event while only one in ten said that they donated money to a campaign.

Party identification is one factor but actually turning out to vote is quite another. Pew analysis of NBC exit polls shows that the 18-29 voters as a share of total turnout in 2008 (17%) was about the same as 2004 (16%). While it was higher in Indiana, Virginia and North Carolina, it was actually lower in

Pennsylvania and Ohio and relatively the same in Nevada and Wisconsin even after increased efforts to reach young voters in those last two pairs of states.¹⁷

Table 2
Percentage of 18-24 year old voter turnout and overall voter turnout in Presidential elections, 1972-2008

Year	% 18-24 year old vote	% overall Presidential vote
2008	44%	58%
2004	42%	59%
2000	32%	55%
1996	32%	54%
1992	43%	61%
1988	36%	57%
1984	41%	60%
1980	40%	59%
1976	42%	59%
1972	50%	63%

Source: U.S. Census

National Election Pool exit polls show a similar story. Voter turnout among young people in 2008 was higher than in recent cycles (52.2%), but just got back to the level of the 1992 election (52%). It was reported as 40% in both 1996 and 2000 and rose to 49% in 2004. It was actually the highest in the 1972 election (the first Presidential election after the 26th Amendment that granted the right to vote to 18 year olds).¹⁸

Where the youth vote may have mattered most is in the Democratic primaries. Obama courted young voters in Iowa at each campaign stop, especially looking to meet and take photos with first time voters.¹⁹ The advantage that Obama held with young voters—he won the 25-under crowd by 17,000 votes in his 20,000 vote margin—helped him to win the Iowa caucus and put him on the path to the nomination. His appeal to youth allowed him to build an army of volunteers and a reservoir of excitement that played a key role in his primary victory over Hillary Clinton.

6. The Palin Factor in Vice-President Selection (2008)

Rarely does the selection of a Vice-Presidential candidate have much significance in voter’s choice for President. John McCain stunned the political world when he selected the relatively unknown Alaska Governor Sarah Palin just prior to the Republican National Convention. Palin got a week of positive attention, and the ticket got a convention bounce of 43% to 48% in the national polls. But then as she did major media interviews it turned more too negative scrutiny.²⁰ The Palin pick would either prove to be brilliant or a bust. By the time of Election Day it seemed to be more of the later.

While a common popular myth is that Palin cost McCain the election, the numbers do not bear it out. In CNN exit polls, when asked “Was McCain selection of Palin a factor in your vote?” 56% of those

who voted for McCain said yes as opposed to 33% saying no. Meanwhile 65% of those who voted for Obama said no vs. 43% that said yes. However of the 7% of voters who said the selection of Palin was the most important factor in their decision 52% voted for Obama compared to 47% for McCain. The percentages were reversed for those who said it was an important factor (33% of voters). Those who said it was a minor factor (20% of voters) supported McCain by 66-33% while those who said it was not a factor (33%) voted for Obama by 65%-33%.²¹ By these measures Palin did not doom the McCain-Palin Republican ticket.

When asked if Palin was qualified to be President, 60% said no. Of those, 82% voted for Obama and 16% for McCain. Of the 38% who said yes, 91% supported McCain compared to 8% for Obama. By comparison, when asked if Biden was qualified to be President, 66% said yes and 32% said no. In a sign of partisanship, 71% of those who said yes voted for Obama while 80% of those who said no voted for McCain.²²

A more comprehensive view of individual vote choice was undertaken by Elis et.al. (2010).²³ By using the Associated Press-Yahoo News 2008 Election study panel with interviews of more than 2500 adults and tracking their voting intentions from November 2997 through December 2008 they found the “Palin Effect” to have cost the McCain campaign just under 2% of the vote. Given that he lost by 7%, Palin may have diminished the McCain vote but she did not single handedly cost him the election.

7. Bradley Effect replaced by the Obama Effect (2008)

Race was not the negative factor that some expected it to be in the campaign. The so-called Bradley Effect—a voter telling a pollster they will vote for an African-American candidate, but then the voter does not follow through with their intention in the voting booth—did not appear to be an issue. The Bradley Effect is named due to observations surrounding the 1982 California Governor’s election. Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley was consistently ahead in polls against George Deukmejian but lost. It is commonly interchanged with the Wilder Effect or the Dinkins Effect named after Douglas Wilder who narrowly won the Governor of Virginia in 1989 and former New York City Mayor David Dinkins who that same year barely won after holding around a 10% lead in the polls. Both Wilder and Dinkins won their races while Bradley lost his race. In the Presidential election, we may have witnessed a counter “Obama Effect” where Obama received a higher percentage of the vote in States like Pennsylvania, Ohio and Virginia than he had in the polls.²⁴

While 95% of African-Americans (13%% of the electorate) and 68% of Latinos (9% of the electorate) voted for Obama, 43% of Whites (74% of the electorate) voted for him. In the CNN exit polls, 90% said that race was not an important factor to them and 80% said that it was not a factor at all in their vote decision.²⁵

Obama won primary states where there were a majority of Black voters (South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana) and also states where there were very few Black voters (Iowa and Wisconsin). Hillary Clinton won in the battleground states of Pennsylvania, Ohio and New Jersey, where race may have been a factor. Conservative columnist Robert Novak claimed that the “dreaded Bradley Effect” was at play when Hillary Clinton beat Obama by 10 points in the Pennsylvania primary after being ahead by 3.6% in the exit polls.²⁶ Novak quoted noted pollster John Zogby who affirmed the existence of a Bradley Effect when voters are polled face-to-face. The columnist suggested, in April 2012, that McCain could be the winner in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and even Ohio. Actually, Obama won all 5 of those industrial states. In each State his vote total was greater than what the average of polls was prior to the election

The Southern States of Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina were places where historically a Black candidate would not fare well. In those States Obama surprised the pundits especially in winning Virginia, a state that had not voted for a Democrat since 1964, and North Carolina. In each of these states, except Kentucky and Tennessee, Obama actually finished higher than the pre-election polls indicated that he would (see Table 3).

Table 3
Difference between Obama Pre-Election Poll Average and Election Outcome

States	CNN Poll of Polls	RCP Poll Average Prior to Election	Actual Result (Election Outcome)	Difference between RCP Average of Polls & Election Outcome
Alabama	McCain + 24%	McCain + 23.3	McCain + 21.6%	Obama + 1.7
Indiana	McCain + 2%	McCain + 1.4	Obama +0.9	Obama + 0.5
Kentucky	McCain + 9%	McCain + 13.5	McCain + 16.4	McCain + 2.9
Michigan	Obama + 8%	Obama + 16.5	Obama + 13.5	Obama + 3
Minnesota	Obama + 15%	Obama + 9.8	Obama + 10.2	Obama + 0.4
North Carolina	Obama + 1%	McCain + 0.4	Obama + 0.4	Obama + 1
South Carolina	McCain + 22%	McCain + 10.0	McCain + 8.9	Obama +1.1
Ohio	Obama + 3%	Obama + 2.5	Obama + 4.0	Obama + 1.5
Pennsylvania	Obama + 8%	Obama + 10.4	Obama + 7.3	Obama +3.1
Tennessee	McCain + 16%	McCain + 14.0	McCain + 15.1	McCain + 1.1
Wisconsin	Obama + 12%	Obama + 13.9	Obama + 11.0	Obama + 2.9
Virginia	Obama + 5%	Obama + 6.3	Obama + 4.4	Obama + 1.9

Compiled by author

8. Use of New Media (2008)

The Obama campaign used “new media” to reach young voters, first time voters of all ages, and typical non-voters. If you attended an Obama event, they urged you to text them, thus putting you on their mailing list. They texted the Vice-Presidential pick to campaign supporters. Using “Facebook”, “YouTube” and other social media sites the campaign communicated with volunteers and benefited from free media and viral coverage of events.²⁷

The Obama campaign hired former-Presidential candidate and Vermont Governor Howard Dean's campaign team to run the new media component. They launched a professional web site and took internet fundraising to a new level. The Obama campaign is commonly seen as having used the new medium of the Internet to mobilize voters and get their messages out quickly.

9. Media Bias (2008)

It is common perception that the mainstream media outlets were in support of Barack Obama. Truth is usually based on perception. The 23 October 2006 cover of *Time Magazine* declared "Why Barack Obama could be the next President" and the magazine then named him one of the most influential people in the world even before his candidacy. Political pundit and host of MSNBC's *Hardball* Chris Matthews famously said that he "felt this trill up his leg" when hearing Obama speak and then claimed it was an objective assessment of American politics.²⁸

The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism found that during the primary campaign 69% coverage on Obama was positive as was 67% of the coverage of Hillary Clinton. Meanwhile 43% of the coverage of McCain was positive.²⁹ During the general Presidential Election Campaign the tone of coverage toward Obama was more tempered. But by comparison to McCain it was much more favorable.

Media Research Center's report "Obama's Margin of Victory: the Media" and Bernard Goldberg's book, *A Slobbering Love Affair: the True (and Pathetic) Story of the Torrid Romance between Barack Obama and the Mainstream Media*, further detail the slanted coverage particularly on ABC, CBS and NBC in favor of Obama. Those three networks produced 37% positive stories about Obama compared to 7% negative.³⁰ Connections to controversial figures like Rev Jeremiah Wright, Tony Reszko and Bill Ayers were downplayed or not covered. In sum, Obama was treated like a rock star in the mainstream media and some of his biggest fans were the people who were paid to objectively cover his campaign.

10. "It's the economy, stupid!" (2008)

Last, and certainly not least, the state of the economy in September 2008 was as much if not more of a reason why Obama won the presidency. The U.S. and global economic crisis made voters sympathetic to the party out of power. Spending on the war in Iraq coupled with tax breaks for upper income earners led to record deficits. In 1992, the campaign team for Bill Clinton famously coined the phrase "It's the economy, stupid" to sum up the national mood. By 2008, the slogan was part of the common parlance and came to aptly describe the country's situation as the 2005 housing, 2008 banking and 2010 credit crises erupted sequentially.

A first recession officially hit in December 2007. The unemployment rate rose sharply from about 4.5% in November 2007 to 6.5% in November 2008. Record housing foreclosures and credit card debt rocked the nation.

Then the collapse of the U.S. banking industry led to a loss of consumer confidence and amplified the calls for change in the White House. On 15 September 2008, investment giant Lehman Brothers declared bankruptcy. It was the beginning of a major meltdown on Wall Street as several banks and brokerages lost big money. McCain announced he would suspend his campaign in light of the historic economic crisis and called for a Presidential debate to be postponed. The move was met with skepticism and McCain ultimately backed off of his decision. It was the beginning of the end for the McCain campaign. His poll numbers dropped from an average in the RealClearPolitics polls of 45% to 42%. Obama would win the election by 52% to 44.5%.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

From 2008 to 2012

Ronald Reagan famously asked voters to consider during a debate in 1984, “Are you better off than you were four years ago?”³¹ This is a main question that retrospective voters ask themselves when voting in an election with an incumbent president. In many ways a vote on an incumbent is a referendum on their performance. The 2012 election is shaping up to be that way. Thus, a look at the reasons why Obama won in 2008 will help to assess the campaign in 2012.

1) It was a Democrat’s Year (2012)

While 2006 and 2008 were Democratic years, 2010 shifted electoral fortune back to the Republicans. The wave of 2010 discontent claimed Democratic causalities nationally. Republicans captured six Governors’ seats including the key electoral States of Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, while gaining more than 600 seats in all 50 State Legislatures. Republicans gained 63 seats in the House and six in the Senate. The Democratic House losses were 9 more than the 54 seats lost in the 1994 Mid-term election that ushered in the so-called Republican Revolution. The six Senate seats were short of what most analysts expected going into November but enough to make the upper chamber more competitive and responsive to bi-partisan efforts.³²

Leading up to the 2012 election a trend has not yet become clear. The debt ceiling debacle of August 2011 seemed to do damage to both parties and to Congress as a whole. Congress approval rates hover around 10% while the President has been below 50%.

The recall election of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker will be an important indicator of what might happen nationally. Beyond the Presidential race there will be at least six crucial Senate races in key electoral States like Florida, Virginia, Missouri and Massachusetts among others.³³ The mobilization of voters in those States can play a key role in the overall campaign.

Democratic strategist James Carville proclaimed that Democrats could be the national majority for the next 40 years.³⁴ But the political winds of change have quickly shifted and in 2012 the direction is not clearly identified. The Democratic advantage has not been sustained³⁵ (see Table 4).

Table 4
Percent change in self-identified Democratic voters from 2008 to 2010

States	2008 D%	2008 R%	2010 D%	2010 R%	% gap in voter id from 2008-2010	‘08 Obama victory margin %	% Obama Gap Change from 2008-10
Florida	48.2	39	42.7	39.6	-6.1	2.8	-3.3
Indiana	47.2	37.9	40.3	42.2	-11.2	1	-10.2
Minnesota	50.8	35.7	44.7	39.3	-9.7	10.2	0.5
Ohio	52.7	35	44.9	39.3	-12.1	4.6	-7.5
Pennsylvania	52.9	37.1	46.4	40	-9.4	10.3	0.9
Virginia	47.5	38.5	41.4	41.7	-9.3	6.3	-3
West Virginia	53.8	35	47.6	37.9	-9.1	-13.1	-22.2
Wisconsin	52.3	34.5	43.1	40.5	-15.2	13.9	-1.3

Source: Gallup Polls; Hotair.com³⁶

According to Gallup analysis of voter identification, the number of solid Democratic states declined from 30 in 2008 to 14 in 2010 and competitive states jumped from 10 to 18. Still Democrats have an advantage in more states. The general trend has actually been an increase in independent voters rather than Democratic or Republican. It appears again that whichever candidate can best appeal to independent and moderate voters will be the winner.

2) Change Message resonated with Voters (2012)

A catchy slogan worked in 2008 when the country was tired of the current administration and ready to change the course the country was on. It is much less clear if this clever and simple sound bite will move people to vote for Obama again in 2012.

Criticism especially from the African-American community has pointed to the common perception that there has not been major change in employment, education or social mobility aspects of Black community. Some leaders may push the notion that the 2008 slogan was just empty rhetoric and implore their members to not be fooled again. However, that would likely mean staying home and not voting in November, which would increase the Republican candidate's chances of victory.

While the slogan was clear in 2008, it has not yet been defined in 2012. According to *Politico* some that have been floated recently include: "Winning the Future", "We can't Wait", "An America Built to Last", "An Economy Built to Last—A Fair Shot."³⁷ What the ultimate message of the Obama reelection team will be is an important factor in the sound-bite society of today.

3) Obama raised more Money (2012)?

The money advantage certainly helped Obama to beat McCain and to have some coattails in some States. Leading into 2012 analysts suggested that the President's campaign would raise \$1 billion. While the White House did not promote this narrative it quickly became common among pundits and the Republican candidates.

Through February 2012 the Obama campaign had raised \$161.5 million³⁸. This was more than the main Republican candidates combined (Romney \$75.4 million, Santorum \$15.7 million, Gingrich \$20 million and Paul \$34 million). However, it was less than the Obama campaign raised at the same time in 2008.³⁹

But individual contributions will not be the most important factor to watch in 2012. It will be the unlimited contributions to SuperPACs thanks in part to the "Citizens United v. FEC" (2010) decision. The pro-Romney SuperPAC Restore our Future raised \$43 million as of the end of February. Restore our Future was largely responsible for Romney's success in Iowa, Florida, Ohio, Michigan and elsewhere where the committee significantly outspent rival groups and blanketed the air with negative ads against Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum.

The pro-Obama Super PAC Priorities USA Action has raised about \$6.5 million through February. One controversial donor is comedian Bill Maher who gave \$1 million. Some critics want the President to have that money returned to Maher because of the comedian's crude comments about women especially Sarah Palin and Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann. It is becoming clear that the big money donations to SuperPACs will be important and analysts will be assessing who is giving how much to which committees.

4) John McCain's age (2008) vs. Mitt Romney's age (2012)

McCain's age and health were minor though relevant issues in 2008. With Romney as the nominee it will not be an issue. Romney is 65 and appears to be fit and in good health. Now it is Vice-

President Joe Biden who is 69 and will turn 70 on November 20. It is not likely that Biden's age will become a campaign issue. But it could become part of the dialogue if a younger candidate is selected as the Republican running mate like Florida Senator Marco Rubio who is 40 or Wisconsin Representative Paul Ryan who is 42 years old.

Older voters will continue to be important with issues of Medicaid and Social Security reform as part of the debate. But the age of the candidates will be less of an issue than in 2008.

5) Youth Vote and Enthusiasm (2012)

The youth vote was seen as an important factor in fueling Obama's win in 2008. One of the unknowns at this point is whether there will be the same enthusiasm and actual voter turnout for the Obama campaign in 2012. It does appear, however, that the pool of younger voters will be larger than in 2008. More than 16 million additional "Millennials"—voters under 30—will be eligible to vote in 2012 than in 2008.⁴⁰ Whether they will vote or not is a great unknown, but if they do they are likely to support the incumbent Democratic administration by large percentages.

One of the keys to getting younger voters to vote is talking about issues important to them such as education, employment and the environment. It is one thing to reach them on their smart phones or social media sites. It is another to get and keep their interest about the Presidential Campaign and then getting them out to vote in November.

6) The Palin Factor in Vice-President Selection (2012)

The selection of Sarah Palin as McCain's running mate was a pivotal point in the 2008 Presidential Campaign. The book *Game Change* described the impact that the Palin selection came to be seen as in the Presidential Campaign. In early 2012 an HBO movie version of *Game Change* was released. It portrayed Palin as a candidate who was in over her head with the issues and the pressures of the campaign. The movie made for good entertainment for liberals while conservatives dismissed it as creative history. What is clear is that Republicans do not want to repeat the risk of selecting a largely unknown and untested candidate for Vice-President.

Florida Senator Rubio was often named in polls as a candidate that conservatives most wanted as their Vice-Presidential nominee. But Rubio has only been a Senator since January 2010 and before that served as a state representative for eight years. He is charismatic and has a compelling personal story. But while he can handle the press in tough interview and debate settings, his lack of national and international experience could have been a liability on the ticket. Rubio was not selected as the running mate, but will serve as an effective surrogate in the Hispanic community.

Wisconsin Representative Paul Ryan was selected on August 11 to be the Vice-Presidential nominee. Ryan brings a fresh perspective to the campaign as he is known for thinking about and advancing big ideas. As a 7-term U.S. Congressman Ryan has deep connections within the Republican Party. His credentials as a fiscal conservative were burnished with his ideologically-based "Ryan Plan" to slash Federal budget spending yet his voting record is not as conservative as popularly believed. Ryan actually voted in favor of the TARP and auto bailout bills as well as the AIG/executive pay legislation. All three votes can be criticized by pure fiscal conservatives and opponents of government intervention in the economy.

In general the advantages Ryan brings to the GOP ticket include that he knows Washington well, he is respected by people in politics and media, he has a reputation as a fiscal and budget hawk to appeal to the Tea Party, he has a solid social conservative voting record, and he brings youth and energy to the ticket. The potential weaknesses are that he comes from the U.S. House, which is widely

unpopular, he has not accomplished much legislatively in his 7 terms in the House, the “Ryan Plan” called for a radical and unpopular overhaul of Medicare, he is not well-known among the American public and at age 42 he is relatively young.

Both Ryan and Rubio share a lack of national name-recognition, youthful energy, Catholicism and a disproportional influence through the Tea Party within the Republican Party, but it is Ryan that has more experience and national pull in the party to appeal to Romney and consolidate his "conservative" credentials. Interestingly, Romney, a Mormon from Massachusetts, added a Catholic from Wisconsin as his running mate, leaving no Southern evangelical on the Republican ticket. Still the Ryan selection was seen as a nod to social conservatives, due to his strong pro-life and traditional marriage positions.

Whether the pick will solely shore up the base or also appeal to the moderate and independent voters in swing states is yet to be seen. Ryan will certainly make a more favorable impression on the national debate through his deep grasp of the issues. But whether he will have personal appeal and add votes to the ticket is something to be examined after these tight elections.

7) Bradley Effect replaced by the Obama Effect (2012)

It appears that race will be less of an issue in 2012 than it was in 2008. The excitement over the historic achievement of the first African-American President has subsided.

That said, racism continues to exist in the U.S. and the “race card” is a popular one for politicians on different sides of the aisle to try to play to their advantage. The tragic killing of Miami teenager Trayvon Martin in Sanford, FL by a leader of a neighborhood watch group has placed race issues back on the front burner in the American conscious. President Obama decided to weigh in on the matter—like he did when his friend and former Professor Henry Gates was wrongly arrested for entering his own home in Cambridge, MA—during a press conference. The President’s comment that, “if I had a son he would look like Trayvon”⁴¹ demonstrated that the Obama has a personal interest in the outcome of the situation.

Another “first” may come to the front of the debate. If the Republican nominee is Mitt Romney there will be questions raised about the first Mormon major candidate for President and how this will play with Evangelical Protestants and Catholics. Romney addressed religion in a well-documented speech during his bid for the 2008 Republican nomination. While he tries to put the issue behind him and reluctantly speaks about religion when asked about it, the mainstream media is likely to investigate the issue further. Pollsters will look for evidence that voters voted against Romney because of his Mormon faith.

8) Use of New Media (2012)

The use of e-mails, text messages, “Facebook”, “Twitter” and “YouTube” were beneficial for the Obama campaign in 2008. The uses of new media will continue to be an important factor in raising money, rallying voters, and spreading information. Both campaigns will use this effectively. Romney has been judicious with granting interviews, but has been more forthcoming in communicating with e-mail messages. The Obama team will blanket the internet and social media sites as the campaign hits full stride.

The Obama 2012 new media team is being assembled now.⁴² The bar was set high in 2008 and it will be difficult to top those groundbreaking efforts especially without new platforms. The challenge will be to do new things with the “old” platforms of “Facebook”, “Twitter” and “YouTube”. The difference is that the Obama team will be able to drive official White House communication systems while also pursuing voters through campaign-based pages.

9) Media Bias (2012)

It is likely that the Liberal media will push President Obama's reelection bid and slant their coverage again in his favor. The issue is whether they will be more critical than in 2008 since he has a record to defend. It is not likely that the Republican candidate will garner the same type of favor or popularity with the mainstream media. So President Obama will have an advantage again on the airwaves with more free positive press coverage.

10) "It's the economy, stupid!" (2012)

It is commonly thought that a President's reelection fate is based on the economy. The phrase "It's the economy, stupid" was popularized by Bill Clinton's Presidential campaign against President George H.W. Bush in 1992. He enjoyed 90% popularity ratings in 1991 after a quick victory in the First Gulf War to protect Kuwait from Iraq. But by the Summer of 1992 an economic recession and increases in gasoline prices placed Bush reelection bid in jeopardy.

The last three incumbent presidents to lose reelection each faced unemployment over seven%. Gerald Ford (7.7% in 1976), Jimmy Carter (7.5% in 1980) and George H.W. Bush (7.4% in 1992) each lost reelection. Ronald Reagan survived (and won by a landslide) in 1984 with 7.2% unemployment.⁴³

With unemployment at 8.3% in both January and February 2012 it is not likely to drop below 7% before November. The rate is higher among African-Americans (14.1%) and Hispanics (10.7%),⁴⁴ both key groups that the Obama campaign will be trying to reach and encouraging to vote.

A CNN poll in July 2012 found that about 60% of Americans thought that the economy would be better next year, a steady rise from 39% that expressed optimism in October 2011.⁴⁵ However, the "elephant in the room" is beginning to emerge as gas prices. Gas prices are dependent on many factors such as oil prices in the world market as well as other market forces, yet the U.S. President and government are often praised or blamed for the prices. The national average was \$1.79/gallon when Obama took office. Now it is around \$4 per gallon. Interestingly, Obama gets less blame for gas prices than George W. Bush did as President.⁴⁶

President Obama was asked at a White House press conference what he would say to critics who claim that Obama wanted higher gas prices as a way to wean Americans off of fossil fuels: "...from a political perspective, do you think the President of the United States, going into reelection, wants gas prices to go up even higher?" Obama said. "Is there anybody here who thinks that makes a lot of sense?"⁴⁷ It is not logical that the President wants to see record gas prices as he heads into a reelection campaign. Watch for prices to decrease after the Summer.

Analysis

Republicans will see 2012 as shaping up like the 1980 election. That year Republican challenger Ronald Reagan defeated incumbent Democrat Jimmy Carter 489 to 89 in the Electoral College despite Carter leading in the polls for much of the year. Republicans see the state of the economy and a lack of leadership in foreign policy as factors that will shape the 2012 outcome.

Democrats are likely to see 2012 as more like the 1996 election. That year Democratic incumbent Bill Clinton faced a weak challenge from Republican Senator Robert Dole of Kansas. Dole was next in line to be the Republican nominee and won mostly through party deference rather than from demonstrating that he was the strongest candidate (like Romney). Clinton was charismatic and widely popular with Democrats and independents despite ongoing legal investigations. Clinton easily won reelection with 379 to 159 votes in the Electoral College.

Which way the country goes will depend significantly on the state of the economy in October. Of the ten factors identified here, two will matter more than the others: the amount of money raised and spent by the candidates, and the condition of the economy. Barring any major foreign policy issues to change the focus, most voters will be concerned with their jobs, houses, and taxes. This is not much different than other years. But it will be more pronounced this year.

Discounting the importance of the other eight factors that I originally offered I turn to the Lichtman model to find further insight to the 2012 election outcome. Lichtman found nine factors in the Democrat's (Obama's) favor with three for the Republican candidate and one undecided. My assessment puts the race much closer with seven for the Democrats, five for the Republicans and one undecided.

The keys one though four are indisputable. Number five, short term economy, is likely to be the ultimate key. Lichtman is undecided on the issue. Given recent trends in gas prices, housing and unemployment, I see that issue breaking toward the Republicans. Gas prices may stabilize and unemployment has already done so, but they both need to decline for Obama to benefit from improved economic conditions.

I disagree with Lichtman on his numbers 7-9. He says that if major national policy changes have been enacted then that favors the incumbent candidate. However, the policies that he cites, health care reform and the economic stimulus, are quite unpopular in the population at large. These were two of the reasons why the Republicans won the majority of the House of Representatives in 2010. The Obama Administration did score a significant political victory on June 28 when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, aka ObamaCare. Yet the decision authored by Chief Justice John Roberts confirmed that the penalty for non-compliance with the individual mandate provision was indeed a tax. This factor will likely drive conservative opponents to vote in November.

On number 8, social unrest, there have been major social protests on both the right and the left during Obama's term. The Tea Party movements in 2010 saw tens of thousands attend protests and rallies and culminated in the Republican victories in the Mid-term Elections. The labor protests in the Wisconsin legislature produced months of social unrest that resulted in the recall of two State Senators. Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker survived recall in defiance of union opposition. And the "Occupy Wall Street" movement that took root in New York City in September 2011 led to raucous and sometimes violent clashes in dozens of U.S. cities during late-2011 and early-2012. While there was a brief respite in the action, the "occupiers" have been organizing and strategizing and could re-emerge.⁴⁸ There are expectations that these movements will actively try to disrupt the party's national conventions: the Democrats in Charlotte, NC, and the Republicans in Tampa, FL. While some of the "Occupy" crowd are Liberals and would support Obama, many more are Libertarians, anarchists or politically apathetic citizens. Thus, this could backfire on Liberals and cost Democrats votes.

With number 9, the Obama Administration has been largely free of scandal, but there are some potential hotspots that could erupt. The half-a-billion dollars in stimulus money to solar panel maker Solyndra led to Congressional investigations. They found no criminal wrongdoing and seem to have run their course. The "Fast and Furious" Scandal over the sale of weapons to Mexican cartels, one of which was used in the death of a U.S. Border Agent, still holds latent trouble for the administration. Attorney General Eric Holder was held in contempt of Congress by House Republicans for perceived stonewalling on the investigation. The General Services Administration (GSA) flap over extravagant conference spending and outrageous videos with government employees mocking work could have some backlash against the administration. It is important to note that both the "Fast and Furious" and GSA scandals have their roots in the previous George W. Bush Administration. But as President Harry Truman

famously noted “the buck stops here” on the President’s desk, and these issues are now ones under the auspices of the current administration.

Finally, Lichtman’s key number 12 about candidate charisma surprises me. He gives Republicans the edge by discounting President Obama’s personal charisma. He correctly gives Democrats the edge with the lack of charisma by the Republican candidate. While Obama has admittedly “led from behind” for much of his presidency in both domestic and international policy, he remains a formidable campaigner. He gives inspiring speeches and can play the partisan heart strings with tunes similar to Reagan and Clinton. Obama has already been winding up his campaign for weeks and will be in full swing by Summer 2012.

With the advantages of incumbency, the use of the bully pulpit, and the organization in place since the last campaign, the president will have plenty of resources to support his smooth campaign style. Even with an ailing economy and social divisions in the country, Obama still is sitting as the slight favorite to win reelection in the November 2012 Presidential Election Campaign.

Appendix 1

Allan Lichtman’s 13 Keys to the White House and 2012 Analysis

Lichtman’s Keys	Explanation	2012 Advantage
1. Party Mandate	Did incumbent party gain seats in previous midterm election?	Republican
2. Contest	Did incumbent have serious contest for party nomination?	Democrat
3. Incumbency	Is incumbent party candidate the sitting president?	Democrat
4. Third Party	Is there a significant third party challenger?	Democrat
5. Short-term economy	Is economy in a recession?	Undecided
6. Long-term economy	Is real per capita economic growth during the term equal to or in excess of mean growth during previous two terms?	Republican
7. Policy change	Has the incumbent administration effected major changes to national policy?	Democrat
8. Social unrest	Is there sustained social unrest during the term?	Democrat
9. Scandal	Has the incumbent administration been tainted by scandal?	Democrat
10. Foreign/military failure	Has the incumbent administration suffered any major foreign policy failures?	Democrat
11. Foreign/military success	Has the incumbent administration suffered any major foreign policy successes?	Democrat
12. Incumbent charisma	Is incumbent party candidate charismatic or a national hero?	Republican
13. Challenger charisma	Is challenger party candidate charismatic or a national hero?	Democrat

Lichtman outcome:

Democrats = 9

Republicans = 3

Undecided = 1

Appendix 2

Allan Lichtman’s 13 Keys to the White House and Foreman’s 2012 Analysis

Lichtman’s Keys	Explanation	Foreman’s 2012 Advantage
1. Party Mandate	Did incumbent party gain seats in previous midterm election?	Republican
2. Contest	Did incumbent have serious contest for party nomination?	Democrat
3. Incumbency	Is incumbent party candidate the sitting president?	Democrat
4. Third Party	Is there a significant third party challenger?	Democrat
5. Short-term economy	Is economy in a recession?	Republican
6. Long-term economy	Is real per capita economic growth during the term equal to or in excess of mean growth during previous two terms?	Republican
7. Policy change	Has the incumbent administration effected major changes to national policy?	Republican
8. Social unrest	Is there sustained social unrest during the term?	Republican
9. Scandal	Has the incumbent administration been tainted by scandal?	Undecided
10. Foreign/military failure	Has the incumbent administration suffered any major foreign policy failures?	Democrat
11. Foreign/military success	Has the incumbent administration suffered any major foreign policy successes?	Democrat
12. Incumbent charisma	Is incumbent party candidate charismatic or a national hero?	Democrat
13. Challenger charisma	Is challenger party candidate charismatic or a national hero?	Democrat

Foreman outcome:

Democrats = 7

Republicans = 5

Undecided = 1

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AUTHOR

Sean D. Foreman, holds a Ph.D. and M.A. from Florida International University. He is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Barry University in Miami Shores, and is currently President of the Florida Political Science Association. Dr. Foreman is Co-Editor of the book, *The Roads to Congress 2010* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, 2011) and author of the book chapter titled "Marco Rubio in Florida: the First Tea Party Senator—Or Not?" in William J. Miller & Jeremy D. Walling, Eds., *Tea Party Effects on the 2010 U.S. Senate Elections: Stuck in the Middle to Lose* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011). He also wrote a chapter about Mitt Romney in the forthcoming book by William J. Miller, Ed., *The Battle to Face Obama: the 2012 Republican Nomination* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012).

EXTENDING THE MARGINALITY DEBATE TO THE SENATE: U.S. SENATE ELECTIONS, 1978-2006

J. Ryan Smallen, M.A., University of West Florida-Pensacola
FPSA Best Graduate Paper Award 2007

ABSTRACT: To date, research on electoral competition has focused largely on the U.S. House of Representatives. Research has side-stepped the U.S. Senate for a number of reasons, not the least of which involves the small population size of the Senate making any significant statistical observations difficult. Nonetheless, the Senate has become theoretically central to the issue of electoral competition. In this essay, the original theoretical arguments and empirical measures of David Mayhew (1974) and Gary Jacobson (1987) are reinterpreted in light of the electoral returns of Senate elections over the last 30 years. Examining Senate elections from 1978-to-2006 the essay measures electoral marginality according to the 55% threshold suggested by Mayhew, as well as the percentage seat-change measure suggested by Jacobson. Senate elections have not become more competitive in recent years, but there do appear to be significant fluctuations in competitiveness over time and across rival electoral contexts (Presidential vs. Mid-Term election cycles). The findings of this analysis have implications not only for the study of electoral competition but also for broader inquiries into the nature of representation in contemporary politics. These implications are explored, as well as alternative explanations regarding both the marginality and seat-change in the Senate.

Introduction

Without a doubt the majority of all research conducted regarding marginality and competitiveness of elections has focused on the U.S. House of Representatives. This chamber is identified as the “House of the People” and members are elected every two years by direct popular vote. As a result, the predominant assumption is that Congress should be by far the most competitive house of the legislature and thus should exhibit a higher number of marginal congressional races. The most prominent political scientists to study congressional marginality are David Mayhew and Gary Jacobsen. Although, their research deals House elections, the core principles of their scholarship are relevant in studying also the U.S. Senate and will be used as a theoretical framework for this analysis.

In this essay the principles and elements of David Mayhew’s theory of the “vanishing marginals” and Gary Jacobsen’s theory on “marginality” and “seat-swings” in the House of Representatives are reinterpreted to apply also to the Senate. Two major questions drive the study:

- 1) In examining the Senate from 1978-to-2006 has the number of marginal Senate seats as defined by Mayhew increased or decreased?
- 2) If so, has this change in marginal Senate seats led to greater seat-changes than in previous decades?

After analyzing data and case-studies, I discuss some possible explanations for my findings and potential implications for future Senatorial races. My hypotheses are two:

- Senate elections today (2007) are more competitive than Senate elections were 10 or 20 years ago. As a result, a Senator is more likely to be engaged in a highly competitive Senate race and thus more likely to lose his or her seat.
- The political context of the election significantly affects Senate marginality and seat-change.

Literature on the Competitiveness of Congressional Elections

In his 1974 essay, "Congressional elections: the Case of the Vanishing Marginals", Mayhew established a causal relationship between elections identified as being "marginal" (<55% total vote) and a political phenomenon called "seat-swing", which is defined in two ways:

1. "Seat-swing" involves a gain over the previous election in the national proportion of popular votes cast for House candidates of the party in question. That is either party must become the beneficiary of a national trend in popular voting for the House.
2. "Seat-swing" involves a translation of popular vote gains into seat gains. For Mayhew, the "incumbency effect" is the primary of a decline of marginal elections within the House of Representatives. Consequently, he believes that the political phenomenon called "seat-swing" seems to have become a thing of the past (Mayhew 1974).

Mayhew suggests that as marginality decreases, seat-change decreases. Conversely as marginality increases, seat-change increases. As a result he believes that the likelihood of a "seat-swing" taking place is minimal as a result of the decreased competition in Congressional elections. Thus, Mayhew's fundamental assertion is that there is a causal relationship between marginality and seat-change (Mayhew 1974).

The work summarized by Jacobsen in his article, "The Marginals Never Vanished: Incumbency and Competition in Elections to the U.S. House of Representatives, 1952-1982", is a rebuttal to Mayhew's argument. For Jacobsen the data illustrates that House incumbents are no safer today than they were in the 1950s (Jacobsen 1987). First, Jacobsen asserts the marginals when properly defined have not declined and therefore are not in jeopardy of vanishing. Secondly, the overall swing ratio or "swing vote" has remained relatively the same over the years and thus is declining very little if at all. Consequently, he concludes that overall competition in congressional elections has not declined, but rather has remained relatively constant except for a few anomalous years. From 1952-to-1982, "vote margins increased without adding to incumbency security, diminishing security, or dampening swings because heterogeneity of inter-election vote swings increased at the same time" (Jacobsen 1987).

For Jacobsen, there exists little if any causal relationship between vote margins (marginality) and seat-change ("seat-swing"). The perceived decline in competition for House seats can be explained by: "the greater diosyncrasy and volatility of district-level voting that can expand reelection margins without making incumbents safer" (Jacobsen 1987). In the end, marginality is a poor indicator of competition in congressional elections. As a result he believes that the perceived change in vote margins and competition is a result of the complex and fluid nature of Congressional elections (Jacobsen 1987).

Looking to the Senate and the 17th Amendment

Prior to the 17th Amendment Senators were indirectly elected via State legislatures. Article I sec. 3 says, "The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each state, chosen by the legislature of the particular state." This provision was to ensure some sort of electoral stability and security. The Founding Fathers believed the Senate was the check against the popularly-elected House. An educated and knowledgeable group such as the state legislature would be better equipped to nominate and elect an individual with the qualifications necessary to carry out the important duties of a Senator. Consequently, the Founding Fathers believed that this method of election would insulate the Senate from the uneducated masses and instability of biennial direct elections (*Federalist #62*).

Although the system was initially developed with good intentions, the indirect election of Senators via State legislatures began to create a system of corruption, patron-client networks, and

cronyism among State legislatures and potential Senate candidates. Political deadlocks within legislatures resulting in vacancies remaining unfilled for substantial intervals led to calls for reform in the early-1900s (Cornell Law School). Furthermore, evidence of legislative selection by corrupt political organizations and special interest groups and neglected legislative duties as a consequence of protracted electoral contests began to fester among the political elite (Cornell Law School). Finally, after years of public and private dissatisfaction over the indirect system of electing Senators, the 17th Amendment amended the Constitution on 8 April 1913.

The language in the 17th Amendment said that, "The Senate of the United States will be composed of two Senators from each State *elected by the people* for a period of six years" (Cornell Law School). The approval of the 17th Amendment signified a monumental change in the manner in which Senators would be elected. The nation move from a system devoted to patron-client networks in which Senators were chosen based on their status or clout within the party or organization, to a system in which Senators were chosen based on their popular appeal. For the first time in the history, U.S. Senators were beholden to the will of the people rather than to special interest groups, State legislatures and party organization (Jacobsen & Kernell 1989).

Politicians in the United States operate in structure of opportunity. Unlike other political systems in which party organizations and party leaders coordinate career paths and decisions, the U.S. system promotes a structure of opportunity in which politicians in a perceived self help structure behave in strategic manner which will further their own self interests (Jacobsen & Kernell 1989). The more a politician has to risk the greater the possibility must be of winning before a politician will act (Jacobsen & Kernell 1989). As a result an increase in the quality and number of candidates begins to materialize when signs or conditions of the political environment are favorable; conversely when signs or conditions indicate an unfavorable political environment the quality and quantity of candidates is severely reduced (Jacobsen & Kernell 1989). Jacobsen's and Kernell's thesis suggests that the monumental change in the political environment brought about by the 17th Amendment might be associated with an increase in competition as a result of a greater number of quality candidates vying for Senate office. As result, the presence of "strategic politicians" may prove to be a significant variable in explaining potential increases in the number of marginal Senate seats (competitiveness), as well as "seat-swing".

Hypotheses

My initial hypothesis in this paper is that the number of marginal Senate seats per election has increased overall from 1978-to-2006. As a result, I suspect that today the Senate is more competitive (marginal) and experiences a higher level of turn-over (seat-change) than 10, 15 or 20 years ago. Incumbents are more likely today to be in a Senate race in which their chances of losing their seat are greater than at any other time in the history of the Senate.

My second hypothesis is that Mayhew's assertions of is a causal relationship between the number of marginal seats and seat-change is not the only factor when it comes to explaining marginality and seat-change. Further, I hypothesize that Jacobsen is relatively correct in so far as there exists very little evidence of a causal relationship between marginality and seat-change. Rather the percentage of the vote garnered by a particular candidate is not a viable indicator of the overall security or insecurity of the seat. Finally, although I expect that certain elements of Mayhew and Jacobsen's theory hold, I expect that the "political context" at the time of the election is a significant factor in determining competition in Senate elections.

Data/Methodology

I use a quantitative methodology of basic statistics to investigate my initial hypotheses. All of the raw election data compiled for this research was taken from both *Congressional Quarterly Politics in America 1980-2004* and Foxnews.com. Because of the unique structure Senate elections (1/3 of all Senate Seats are up for re-election every 2 years) I chose the period from 1978-to-2006 to get a more accurate and thorough sample group. This time span encompasses five election cycles, three terms for each group of Senate seats up for reelection. For the analysis, I divided the date by terms to examine the electoral experience of similarly situated Senators. Term A encompasses election years: 1978, 1984, 1990, 1996 and 2002. Term B encompasses election years: 1980, 1986, 1992, 1998 and 2004. Term C encompasses election years: 1982, 1988, 1994, 2000 and 2006. Variables include the percentage of the vote take by the incumbent, the percentage change in vote margin from the previous election, party identification, party seat and term. In regards to party change, if the Senate seat-changed parties from the previous election, I coded that a 1. If the party remained the same, and no change occurred from the previous election, I coded that a 0. Using Mayhew's definition of a marginal seat (55% of winning vote share) the popular vote by the winning candidate) to establish which seats were considered marginal, I took the raw total number of marginal seats and the raw total number of Senate seats to change parties, and annotated them on a line graph (Figure 1). Additionally, I divided total marginal seats by total number of seats to change parties come up with a percentage. Finally, I calculated the mean number of marginal Senate seats and the mean seat-change for each Senate Term (A, B, C) as well as the overall period from 1978-to-2006.

I further broke down the period from 1978-to-2006 in terms of Presidential election years (1980, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004) and Mid-Term election years (1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2006). In an effort to ascertain any electoral trends unique to Presidential election years and Mid-Term election Years, I wanted to investigate the potential influence of Campbell's surge and decline thesis concerning "Presidential Coattails" to determine if it had a significant influence on overall competitiveness (Campbell 1991). As a result, I took the raw the number of marginal Senate Seats as well as the raw number of Senate seats to change hands in Presidential election years (1988, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004) and plotted them together on a line graph. Additionally, I took the raw the number of marginal Senate Seats as well as the raw number of Senate seats to change hands for the Mid-Term election years (1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2006) and plotted them together on a line graph. Finally, I took the raw number of marginal seats and the raw number of seats to change parties for each term and plotted them together on a line graph.

Across years, in order to determine the distribution of Senate seats changing parties, I divided the total number of Senate seats to change parties into two distinct categories, seats to change from Republican to Democrat. I then divided the total number of Senate seats to change from Republican to Democrat to Republican by the total number of Senate seats to change for each individual election, to come up with a percentage. This data was plotted in an area graph.

As a final indicator, I calculated the Presidential approval rating for the sitting President at the time of each election and correlated two different sets of variables. The first set of correlated Presidential approval ratings with marginality and seat-change. The next set correlated Presidential approval ratings with percent marginal and percent seat-change for each party.

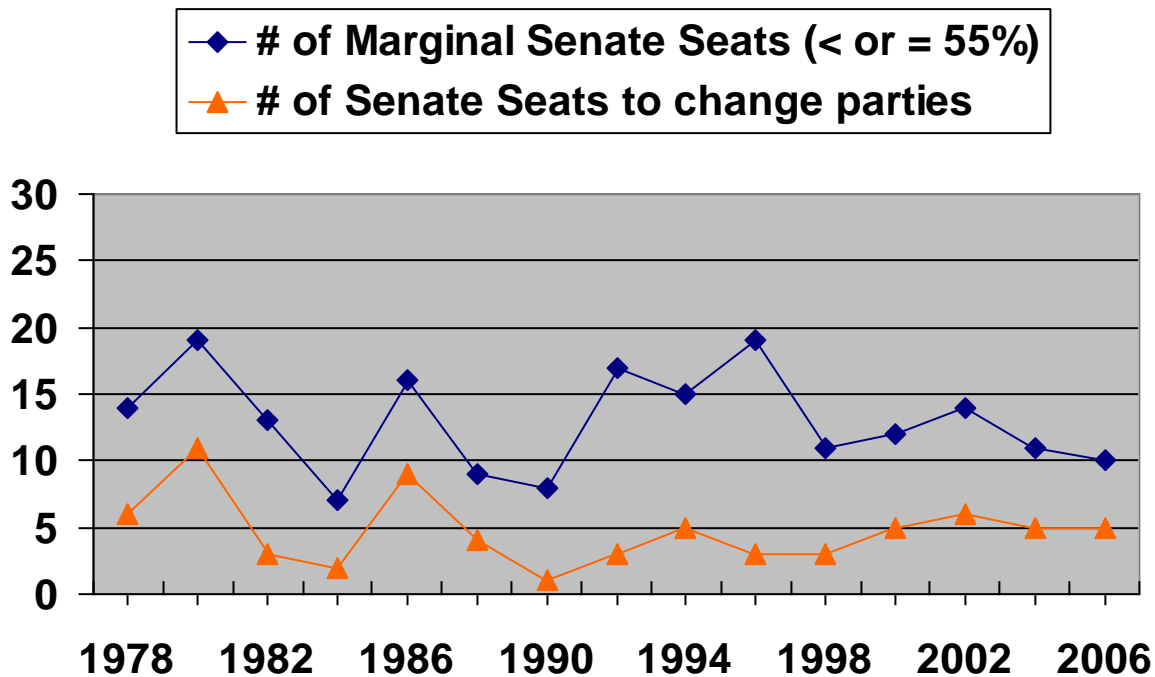
Analysis

The analysis presented here bears a number of significant implications for future research on the study of marginality and "seat-swing" in Senate races. My initial hypothesis was that the Senate was

more competitive today (2007) than it was 10, 20 or 30 years ago. However, Figure 1 below tells an entirely different story. The mean number of marginal Senate seats from 1978-to-2006 is 13. The mean number of Senate seats to change parties is 5. Overall, the mean number of marginal seats for all three time periods are within ± 1 of the mean for the entire period from 1978-to-2006. Furthermore, the mean number of Senate Seats to change parties are all within ± 2 of the mean number of seats to change parties for the entire period from 1978-to-2006.

Figure 1.
Raw Data Senate Elections 1978-2006

(All Data taken from *Congressional Quarterly* 1984-2006)



1978-1986

Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 14
Mean # of Senate Seats to Change Parties: 6

1988-1996

Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 14
Mean # of Senate Seats to Change Parties: 3

1998-2006

Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 12
Mean # of Senate Seats to Change Parties: 5

1978-2006

Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 13
Mean # of Senate Seats to Change Parties: 5

As far as marginality is concerned, the periods from 1978-to-1986 and 1988-to-1996 is the periods of time that exhibit the highest amount of marginality. Ultimately, the most recent period from 1998-to-2006 is the time period in which comparatively marginality has decreased in compared with the previous two time periods. As a result, it seems that when it comes to marginality the Senate today is less competitive that it was 10-to-20 years ago.

However, Figure 1 suggests an entirely different story when it comes to seat-change from 1978-to-2006. The time period from 1978-to-1986 has the highest mean number of seats to change parties

with 6, followed by the time period from 1998-to-2006 with 5, and lastly the time period from 1988-to-1996 with 3. Interestingly, each time period exhibits different characteristics associated with the general premises outline by David Mayhew & Gary Jacobsen.

From 1978-to-1986 the graph indicates there was a definite correlation between the number of marginal seats and the number of seats to change, as the number of marginal seats increased so to did the number of seats to change parties and vice-versa. This type of correlation reflects Mayhew's thesis that marginality is an indicator of seat-change, notably that there is a positive correlation or relationship between the two (Mayhew 1974). As expected, the period from 1978-to-1986 is the period of time that exhibits the highest average amount of marginal Senate Seats as well as the highest average number of Senate seats to change parties. Although the period from 1978-to-1986 is consistent with the principles of Mayhew's theory the period from 1988-1996 poses perhaps the biggest challenge to Mayhew's thesis.

Overall, Figure 1 illustrates that from 1988-to-1992 marginality and seat-change seem to coincide with each other. However, beginning in 1994 and lasting until 1998, marginality and seat-change seem to be inversely related to each other, as marginality decreases seat-change increases. This type of relationship is consistent with Jacobsen's theory. For Jacobsen, there exists little, if any, causal relationship between vote margins (marginality) and seat-change (seats swing). From 1988-1996, the average number of marginal seats, 14 is equivalent to the previous time period; however, the average number of seats to change parties decreases by 3 to a total of 3. As a result, from 1988-to-1996, marginality is not a sufficient indicator of seat-change (seat-swing; Jacobsen 1987). This would seem to indicate that there are other circumstances such as the "political context" that might be relevant in explaining the inverse relationship between marginality and "seat-swing" during this time period. Although the period from 1988-to-1996 was inconsistent with the previous period from 1978-to-1986, the period from 1998-to-2006 is a mirror image of the first time period with regards to the positive relationship between marginality and seat-swing (Mayhew 1974).

The period from 1998-2006 is a return to "normalcy" in so far as the period provides a positive correlation between marginality and seat-change (Mayhew 1974). Although the average number of marginal seats decreases by 2 to 12, the average number of seats to change parties increases by 2 to a total of 5. Although the average number of marginal seats decreases, the average number of seats to change parties increases. Figure 1 illustrates that the raw number of marginal seats and the raw number of seats to change parties coincides in every election from 1998-2006. In sum, it appears that the time-period 1998-2006 is the least competitive in terms of marginal seats, and is about average when it comes to seat-changes.

Finally, the period from 1998-2006 is without question the most stable or consistent when it comes to the number of marginal seats and the number of seats to change parties. The range of marginal seats from 1998-2006 is 4, with the highest being 14 in 2002 and the lowest being 10 in 2006. Furthermore, from 2000-2006, the range of the total number of seats to change parties is 1, with the highest being 6 in 2002 and a three-way tie for 5 in 2000, 2004 and 2006. There is little question that the period from 1998-2006 is the period in which there seems to be an increased amount of stability and consistency when it comes to marginality and seat-change. In the end, each time period exhibits a different set of characteristics; however, there are five major elections from 1978-2006 that require further explanation when it comes to understanding the cause of increased or decreased marginality and seat-change. They are as follows: 1980, 1986, 1992, 1996 and 2002. I selected these five elections because each election shows a significant increase in either marginality, seat-change or both, when compared to the previous election.

Significant Presidential Elections, 1978-2006

The 1980 election, a Presidential election year, is significant in that the total number of marginal seats increases from 14 to 19 and the total number of seats to change parties increased from 6 to 11 (see Figure 1). This would seem to indicate that marginality and seat-change is perhaps significantly influenced by the “political context” of an election cycle. In this case, the election of 1980 was preceded by a number of significant contextual factors, including inflation, low-economic growth, and the Iran hostage situation. Furthermore, President Jimmy Carter’s approval rating at the time of the election was a meager 37%, lending credence to the possibility of a correlation between the political context and marginality and seat-change (see Appendix C). Another possible cause for the increase in marginality and seat-change during this time could be “Reagan Revolution.” Either way there seems to be some sort of connection, between political context and marginality and seat-change.

The 1986 election shows an increase in the number of marginal seats from 7 in 1984 to 16 in 1986. Furthermore, the number of seats to change parties increases from 2 in 1984 to 9 in 1986 (see Figure 1). By and large, there were a number of factors that contributed to the increase in marginality and seat-change. For example, the election of 1986 was the election in which Reagan was entering his sixth year of his second term, a period in which most sitting Presidents end up losing a significant amount of seats. Furthermore, this was the period in which the Iran-Contra Scandal was beginning to develop. Finally, this was also the election in which a number of Freshmen Senators who rode Reagan’s “Presidential coat-tails” in 1986 were defeated. Interestingly enough; however, Reagan’s approval rating at was at 63% (see Appendix C). All of these events seem to substantiate the fact that the “political context” as measured by Presidential approval seems in part to explain in marginality and seat-swing.

The 1992 election saw a dramatic increase in the number of marginal seats from 8 in 1990 to 17 in 1992 (see Figure 1). Furthermore, the number of seats to change parties increases from 1 in 1990 to 3 in 1992. Again, during that electoral cycle there were a number of notable events that could have conceivably contributed to the increase in marginality and seat-change. For example, the United States was perceived to be in an economic recession. Furthermore, Presidents George H.W. Bush approval rating at the time of the election was 34% (see Appendix E). Again, it would seem that the political context of the situation, in this case the President’s dismal approval ratings, may have contributed to the overall increase in marginality and seat-change. Additionally, the increase in marginality and seat-change could be associated with the fact that it was a Presidential election year. All of these events are perhaps significant in explaining the overall influence of the political context on Senate marginality and seat-change.

The 1996 election is accompanied with an increase in the number of marginal seats from 15 in 1994 to 19 in 1996 (see Figure 1). Although there is an increase in the number of marginal seats, there is a decrease of 2 in the total number of seats to change parties from 5 in 1994 to 3 in 1996. Overall, there are a number of events or variables that could have contributed to an increase in marginality and a decrease in seat-change. For example, at the time, President Bill Clinton enjoyed an approval rating of 53% (See Appendix C). Furthermore, the United States had no real external threats and was experiencing a period of strong economic growth. In the end, it would seem that the increase in marginality could be attributed to negative “post-impeachment” feelings, while the decrease in seat-change could be attributed to the President’s approval rating and the “era of good feelings” within the United States as far as external threats and economic growth were concerned. In the end, the “political context” of the situation is perhaps related to an increase or decrease of marginality and seat-change.

Finally, the 2002 election, a mid-term election shows a minimal increase in marginality from 12 in 2000 to 14 in 2002 (see Figure 1). Furthermore, the number of seats to change parties increases from 5

in 2000 to 6 in 2002. In general, there are a number of events that may have contributed to an increase in marginality and seat-change. For example, at the time of the election, President George W. Bush enjoyed an approval rating of 59% (see Appendix C). Additionally, there was a “era of good feelings” that was present throughout the United States as a result of a “united” country post-September 11, 2001. Again, the five selected elections illustrate that there is without a doubt some sort of connection between the “political context” of the election the level of marginality or seat-change. However, the extent or significance of that relationship is something that has yet to be determined.

Presidential Election Years vs. Mid-Term Election Years

Having developed an overall graph to illustrate the electoral trend from 1978-2006, I divided the elections into two distinct rival categories, President election years and Mid-Term elections years to see if there are any patterns when it comes to marginality and seat-change. Figure 2a contains the Presidential election years (1980, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004) and Figure 2b contains the Mid-Term election Years (1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2006).

**Figure 2a.
Presidential Election Years**

(All data taken from Congressional Quarterly (1986-2004))

- Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 13
- Mean # of Senate Seats to Change Parties: 5

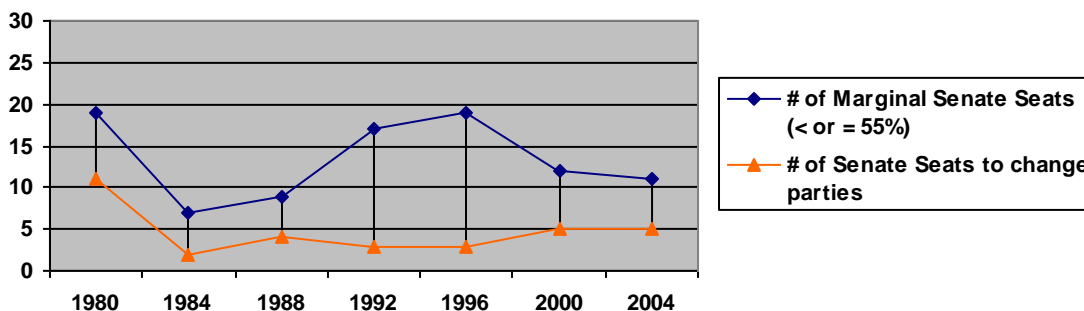


Figure 2a depicts the total number of marginal seats and the total number of seats to change parties for each Presidential election year (1980, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004). Overall, the average number of marginal seats during Presidential election years is 13 and the average number of seats to change parties is 5. Specifically, Figure 2a illustrates how volatile and unpredictable the trend is in comparison to the Mid-Term election trend illustrated in Figure 2b. At best the overall trend for Presidential is erratic and inconsistent, concerning the correlation between marginality and seat-change. The trend during Presidential election years appears to support Jacobsen’s assertions that there exists little if any causal relationship between vote margins (marginality) and “seat-swing” (seats changing parties) (Jacobsen 1987). However, as discussed previously, the inconsistent and erratic trend could be attributed to the increase in importance of the “political context” that is characteristic of Presidential election years. Unlike the trend exhibited by Presidential elections years; however, the trend of Mid-Term election years tends to illustrate an entirely different picture (see Figures 2a and 2b).

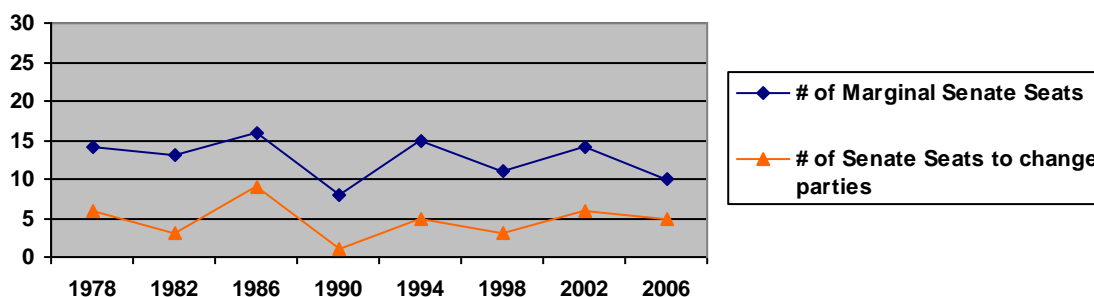
Figure 2b depicts the total number of marginal seats and the total number of seats to change parties for each mid-term election year (1990, 1994, 1998 and 2002). Taken as a whole, the average

number of marginal seats during Mid-Term election years is 13 and the average number of seats to change parties is 5. However, unlike the trend in Presidential election years, which can be characterized as volatile and unpredictable, the trend for Mid-Term election years is relatively consistent and predictable (see Figure 2a). This could be attributed to “incumbency effect” and “political context.”

Figure 2b.
Mid-Term Election Years

(All Data taken from *Congressional Quarterly* 1984-2006)

- Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 13
- Mean # of Senate Seats to Change Parties: 5



Every Mid-Term election year can be characterized as having a positive correlation between marginality and seat-change. As marginality increases so does seat-change, conversely as marginality decreases, seat-change decreases. As a result, the trend in Figure 2b seems to substantiate Mayhew’s theory, in which he asserts that there is a positive correlation between marginality and seat-change (Mayhew 1974). Interestingly enough, although Presidential election years are more volatile and erratic than the mid-term election years, both groups have the same average number of marginal seats and the same average number of seats to change parties.

Senate Classes

Additionally, beyond a comparison of Presidential election years and mid-term elections years I wanted to investigate the electoral patterns of Senatorial classes including: Term A (1978, 1984, 1990, 1996 and 2002), Term B (1980, 1986, 1992, 1998 and 2004) and Term C (1982, 1988, 1994, 2000 and 2006). In Figure 3a, 3b and 3c, the total number of marginal seats and the total number of seats to change parties for each term are plotted together on a line graph. Figure 3a, 3b and 3c is unique in that for each particular term (A, B, C) there is a different electoral trend. As a result, the terms must be examined separately.

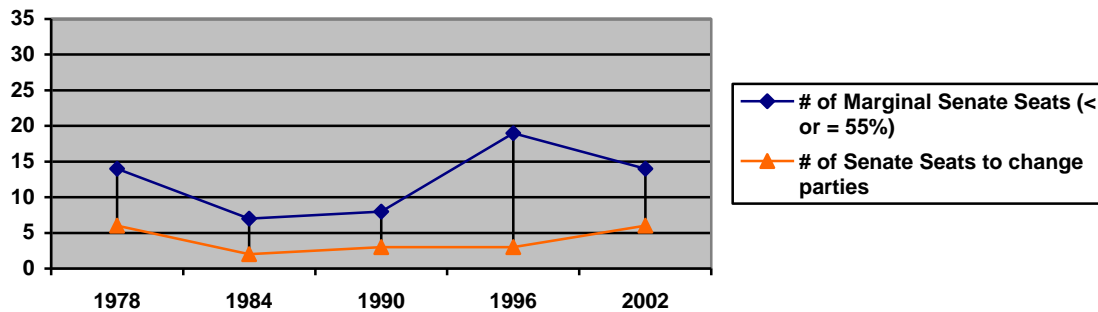
In Term A, the average number of marginal seats was 12, while the average number of seats to change parties was 4. Furthermore, in 1978, 1984 and 1990 there is a positive correlation between marginality and seat-change. However, in 1996 and 2002, there is a negative correlation between marginality and seat-changes. Additionally, the low mark for marginality was in 1984 where 7 seats are marginal and the high mark is 20 seats in 1996 (tying for the highest number of marginal seats over the entire period 1978-2006). Concerning seat-changes, the lowest point was in 1984 with 2 seats, while the highest mark of six was reached in 1978 and 2002. Interestingly, the 1984 Presidential election was the

low mark for both marginality and seat-change, while the 1996 Presidential election was the high mark for marginality in Term A.

Figure 3a.
Term A (1978, 1984, 1990, 1996 & 2002)

(All Data taken from *Congressional Quarterly*, 1984-2006)

Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 12
 Mean # of Senate Seats to change parties: 4

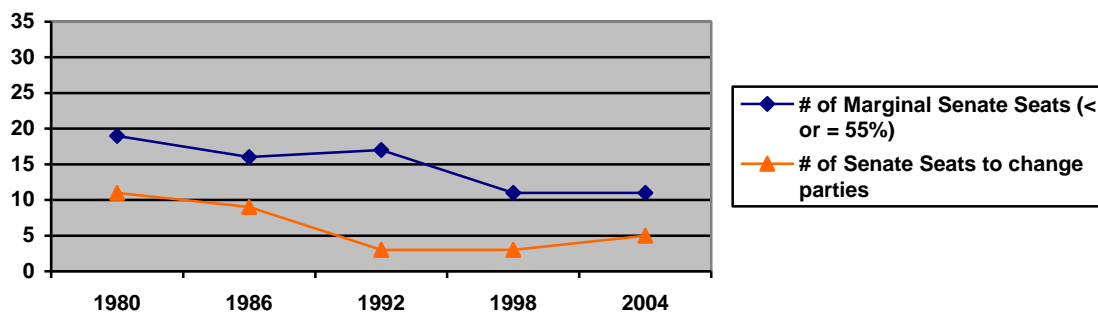


In the end, two things are evident from Term A. First, there seems to be an inconsistent relationship between marginality and seat-change at least for 2 out of 5 elections. As a result, it seems that both Mayhew and Jacobsen are correct in their assertions regarding marginality. Finally, it appears that the significance of the political context is sufficiently greater in President election years when it comes to influencing marginality and seat-change.

Figure 3b.
Term B (1980, 1986, 1992, 1998 & 2004)

(All Data taken from *Congressional Quarterly*, 1984-2006)

Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 15
 Mean # of Senate Seats to change parties: 6



Term B presents a far different electoral trend than that of Term A. For example, in Term B the average number of marginal seats is 15, while the average number of seats to change parties was six (see Figure 3b). As was the case in Term A, there is a period of two elections (1980 and 1986) in which

there is a positive correlation between marginality and seat-change. However, beginning with the election of 1992, followed by the elections of 1998 and 2004, a negative correlation develops between marginality and seat-change. However, by in large the overall marginality of Term B steadily decreases from 19 in 1980 to 11 in 2004, excluding the election in 1992. As far as seat-change is concerned the lowest mark, occurs in 1992 with 3 seats and highest mark occurs in 1980 with 11. Interestingly enough, the high mark for marginality and the high mark for seat-change occurs in the Presidential election of 1980. Furthermore, the lowest point for seat-change occurred in the President election of 1992.

Two things may explain the trend in Term B. First, it is clear that the “political context” associated with a Presidential election year significantly influences marginality and seat-change. Second, Term B contains within in it four Presidential Election years out of a total of five, compared to two Presidential election years in Term A and three Presidential ones in Term C.

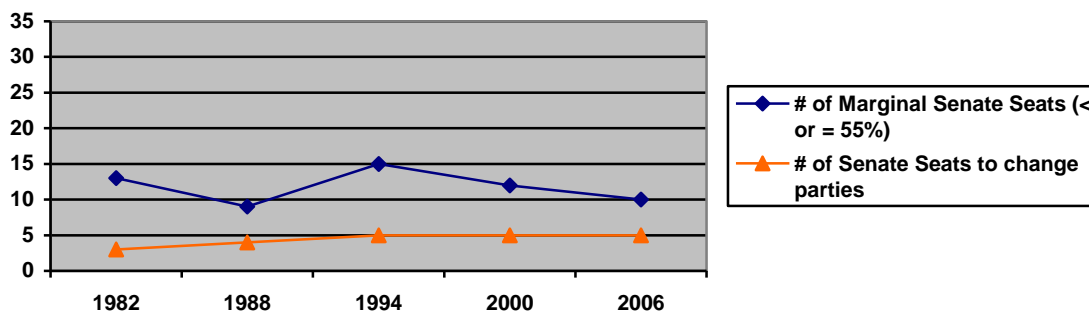
This may explain why Term B is by far the most marginal Senate term when compared to Term A and C. Furthermore, Figure 3b illustrates that on average Senate seats within Term B are more vulnerable to seat-change than their counterparts in Term A and C.

Term C much like Term A and B presents a far different electoral trend that is distinctly different from the other two terms (see Figure 3c). In Term C the average number of marginal seats was 12, while the average number of seats to change parties is 4. Unlike Terms A and B, Term C exhibits a negative correlation between marginality and seat-change in every election year except for the 1994 election. As a result, it would appear that Jacobsen’s assertions that there is a no casual relationship between marginality and seat-change would appear to be true in the case of Term C (Jacobsen 1987). As far as marginality is concerned, the lowest mark for Term C is 10 in 2006 while the highest mark was 15 in 1994. The lowest mark for seat-change is 3 in 1982 vs. the highest mark for seat-change is 5 in 1994.

Figure 3c.
Term C (1982, 1988, 1994, 2000 & 2006)

(All Data taken from *Congressional Quarterly*, 1984-2006)

Mean # of Marginal Senate Seats: 12
Mean # of Senate Seats to change parties: 4



Interestingly the high and low marks for both marginality and seat-change occur in Mid-Term election years, a departure from the previous two terms in which the high and low marks for marginality usually occur within Presidential election years. Finally, Figure 3c illustrates that while marginality fluctuates in Term C, seat-change remains relatively the same in all five elections cycles. In the end, all three Terms exhibit distinctly different electoral trends when it comes to marginality and seat-change. These differences could conceivably be due to a number of factors, including the “political context”, the

sitting President’s approval rating, wild partisan realignments that can occur in conjunction with each individual election.

Political Context vs. Partisan Seat-Change

Table 1 below shows the distribution (Republicans vs. Democrats) of the total number of Senate seats to change parties for each individual election from 1958-to-2004. Additionally, in Figure 4 below is the distribution of partisan seat-changes for each election cycle from 1978-to-2006. From 1978-to-2006 there were 15 elections. Five elections, however, are significant with regards to the number of seats to change parties, as well as the partisan distribution of those seats to change parties (Republicans vs. Democrats, see Table 1).

Table 1.
Percentage Distribution (Republicans vs. Democrats) of Total Number of Senate Seats to Change Parties per Year

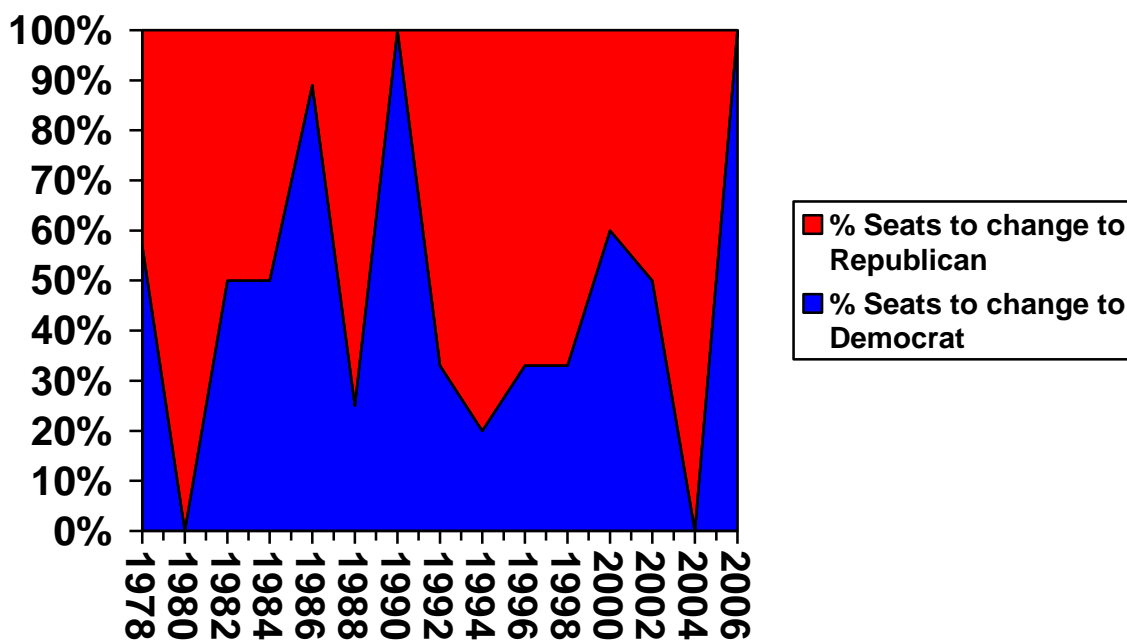
(All Data taken from *Congressional Quarterly*, 1984-2006)

Year	# of Seats Republicans to Democrats	# of Seats Democrats to Republicans	Total # of Seats to Change Parties
1978	0	3	7
1980	0	11	11
1982	2	2	4
1984	1	1	2
1986	8	1	9
1988	1	3	4
1990	1	0	1
1992	1	0	3
1994	1	4	5
1996	1	2	3
1998	1 6	3	
2000	3	2	5
2002	3 3	6	
2004	0	5	5
2006	4	0	4

In 1980, there is a total of 11 seats to change parties, the highest number of seats to change parties for any election from 1978-2006. Of those 11 all go from Democratic Senate seats to Republican Senate seats, a net gain of +11 seats for Republicans. Clearly, the election of 1980 is a devastating loss for the Democrats, which may be attributed the overriding political and economic context: as a Presidential election, it became a veritable “referendum” on the Carter Administration heralding in the “Reagan Revolution” (see Figure 4).

The second significant election is the 1986 election. In 1986, there is a total of 9 seats to change parties, 8 of which switched from Republican seats to Democrat and 1 of which switched from Democrats to Republicans. Clearly in this case the 1986 election is a devastating loss of seats for the Republicans (see Figure 4). Unlike, the election on 1980 the election of 1986 was a Mid-Term election year. Furthermore, the losses by the President’s party (Republicans) occurs during the sixth year of Reagan’s second Term, as is to be historically expected. The 1986 Presidential election was a referendum on the Reagan Administration’s performance in the previous six years.

Figure 4.
Distribution (Republicans vs. Democrats) as % of Total Numbers of Senate Seats Changing Parties per Year



The third significant election is the 1994 election, a Mid-Term election in the first term of President Clinton. In 1994, there were a total of 5 seats to change parties, 4 of which changed from Democrats to Republicans and 1 of which changed from Republican to Democrat (see Table 1). The loss of 4 seats by the party of the President in the second year of his first term is highly unusual (see Figure 4). Furthermore, this is also the first time in over forty years that the Republicans controlled both the House and the Senate. Ultimately, it appears the political context played a substantial role in the unexpected and devastating losses incurred by the Presidents party.

The fourth significant election is the 2004 election, a Presidential election year in which President George W. Bush was seeking a second Term. In 2004, there are a total of 5 seats to change parties, all 5 of which go from Democrat to Republican (see Table 1). Again this is highly unusual in that in the previous two instances in which sitting Presidents are seeking a second term (Reagan 1984, Clinton 1996) the distribution of seats to change parties is relatively the same ± 1 . However, in 2004, the Republicans pick up all five seats that change parties, a fairly significant event historically speaking (see Figure 4). Again, the political context at the time without a doubt plays a significant role. At the time President Bush enjoyed a 52% approval rating, the country was thriving economically, and the election itself was a referendum on the performance of the Bush Administration and more importantly the Republican Party (see Appendix E).

The last significant election is the 2006 election, a Mid-Term election in the second year of the second term of the sitting President. In 2006, there are a total of 4 seats to change parties, all four of which go from Republican to Democrat Senate seats (see Table 1 and Figure 4). Not surprisingly, the losses by the President's party (Republicans) occur during the sixth year of his administration. Similar to the 1986 election the substantial losses that occur during the 2006 election are not unexpected. At minimum the election of 2006 is a referendum on the performance of the Bush Administration and the performance of the Republican controlled House and Senate. Furthermore, the President's approval rating hovered at or below 40% at the time of the election, due to the most salience issue of the Second Gulf War (see Appendix C). In the end, although the results of the 2006 election was expected it points to the importance of the "political context" at least when taking about electoral marginality and seat-change.

In the end, there are a number of things that Table 1 and Figure 4 illustrate. First, it appears that seat-change does not capture the whole story when measuring electoral competition and change. Notably, it appears that partisan tides/party change are significant in accurately describing the political context of the election. Finally, the significant elections described above are characterized by not only a significant increase in seat-change, but also a lopsided partisan victory. My purpose here was to determine the correlation between the party of the sitting President and party marginality and seat-change. In Appendix A, I correlated the approval rating (in percent) of Republican and Democrat Presidents for each election with two variables, the raw number of Democrat and Republican seats to change parties for each election and the number of Democrat and Republican seats that were marginal.

There is an inverse correlation (-.748* Appendix A) between a Democratic President's approval rating and the number of Democratic seats to change parties. Notably, as a Democratic President's approval rating increases the number of Democratic seats to change parties decreases. There is also an inverse correlation (-.384 see Appendix A) between a Republican President's approval rating and the number of Republican seats to change parties; however, the correlation is not nearly as strong as the correlation between a Democratic President's Approval rating and Democratic seat-change. When it comes to marginality, there is an inverse correlation (-.854* see Appendix A) between a Democratic President's approval rating and the number of Democratic seats to be marginal. For example, as a Democratic President's approval rating increases, the number of Democratic seats to be marginal decreases. There is also an inverse correlation (-.384 see Appendix A) between a Republican President's approval rating and the number of Republican seats to be marginal. Once again, it is not nearly as strong as the correlation between a Democratic President's approval rating and the number of Democratic seats to be marginal.

Additionally, in Appendix B, I correlated the approval rating of Republican and Democrat Presidents with two variables, the percentage of Democrat and Republican seats to change and the percentage of Democrat and Republican seats that were marginal. When it comes to the percentage of Democratic seats to change parties, there is an inverse correlation (-.547 Appendix B), although not significant, between a Democratic Presidents approval rating and the percent of Democratic seats to change parties. In short, as a Democratic President's approval rating increases the proportion (percent) of democratic seats to change parties decreases. Alternatively, there is an inverse correlation (-.603* Appendix B), which is statistically significant, between a Republican President's approval rating and the proportion (percent) of Republican seats to change parties. Moreover, when it comes to the percentages of Democratic seats to be marginal, there is a positive correlation (.828* Appendix D), which is statistically significant, between a Democratic President's approval rating and the percent of Democratic seats that are marginal. This result was somewhat surprising. As Democratic Presidents' approval ratings go up, so to do the percentage of Democratic seats that are marginal.

Table 2

STATE	SEAT	% WON BY	PARTY	PARTY CHANGE	INCUMBENT
FLORIDA	1				
<u>1980</u>		52%	REP	1	Hawkins
1986		55%	DEM	1	Graham (DI)
<u>1992</u>		66%	DEM	0	Graham
1998		63%	DEM	0	Graham
<u>2004</u>		50%	REP	1	Martinez (OS)
	2				
1982		62%	DEM	0	Chiles
1988		50%	REP	1	Mack (OS)
1994		71%	REP	0	Mack
<u>2000</u>		51%	DEM	1	Nelson (OS)
2006		60%	DEM	0	Nelson
OHIO	1				
1982		56%	DEM	0	Metzenbaum
<u>1988</u>		57%	DEM	0	Metzenbaum
1994		53%	REP	1	DeWine (OS)
<u>2000</u>		60%	REP	0	DeWine
2006		56%	DEM	1	Brown (DI)
	2				
<u>1980</u>		68%	DEM	0	Glenn
1986		62%	DEM	0	Glenn
<u>1992</u>		51%	DEM	0	Glenn
1998		57%	REP	1	Vionovich (OS)
<u>2004</u>		64%	REP	0	Vionovich

0= No seat-change

1= Seat-changed parties

Presidential election years in italics

OS = Indicates Senate seat was an open seat

DI = Indicates Incumbent defeated by challenger

Ultimately, this could be due to a number of contextual factors including realignment of Southern Democrats. When it comes to the percentage of Republican seats to be marginal, there is an inverse correlation (-.254) of the findings. First, it appears that both Mayhew and Jacobson are correct in their assertions regarding marginality and seat-change. For example, in Florida every marginal seat was accompanied by a seat-change, substantiating Mayhew's claim of a real positive correlation between marginality and seat-change. Conversely, in Ohio, marginal seats were not accompanied by seat-change. It appears that in Ohio Jacobson's assertions are correct, notably that marginality is not a viable indicator of seat-change (see Table 2 above).

Secondly, Table 2 illustrates that Presidential election years affect marginality and seat-change. This is particularly true in Florida where 4 out of 5 marginal seats occur during Presidential election years. However, in Ohio, 1 out of 2 marginal seats occur during Presidential election years, indicating that Presidential election years are not the only predictor of marginality and seat-change.

Thirdly, Table 2 illustrates that there was a total of 7 marginal combined from the 1978-to-2006. Of those seven, 4 were open seats that resulted from the incumbent retiring from office. This indicates that open seats are particularly marginal and extremely vulnerable, especially during Presidential election years. While there seems to be increased marginality and seat-change during Presidential election years, there seems to be a decrease in marginality and seat-change in Mid-Term election years. For example, table 2 illustrates that 8 of 10 incumbents were re-elected in Mid-Term election years, indicating that these candidates enjoyed an "incumbency advantage." Ironically enough, Mid-Term election years were the only years in which an incumbent was defeated by a challenger (2 out of 10), in Florida in 1986 and in Ohio in 1998. In 1986, the incumbent defeat could be attributed to the partisan landslide victory in which a total of 9 seats changed parties (8 from Republican to Democrat) including the Florida seat. In the case of Ohio in 1998, although it was a Mid-Term election year the change in party could be attributed to the fact that the contest included an open seat.

In the end, it appears that there is a significant correlation between open seats, marginality and seat-change. Furthermore, it appears that Presidential election years significantly increase the likelihood of a seat being marginal and changing parties. For the most part incumbents enjoy a sizeable advantage in Mid-Term election years; however, when incumbents do lose during Mid-Term election years, it is usually a result of other factors such as partisan tides or open seat contests.

Findings and Implications

The analysis presented here bears a number of significant findings regarding Senate marginality and seat-change ("seat-swings"). For example, Figure 1 illustrates that from 1978-to-2006 over time Senate marginality and seat-changes remained relatively constant. Specifically, the average number of marginal seats for all three time periods (1978-1986, 1988-1996 and 1998-2006), are all within ± 2 of the average number of marginal seats (13) and the average number of seats to change parties (5) for the entire period 1978-2006. This indicates that although there were a number of high points and low points for marginality and seat-change, on average there has been neither a sustained increase nor a sustained decrease in Senate marginality or seat-change. As a result, it appears that the Senate is not more competitive or less competitive than it was 10 or 20 years ago, rather it is about the same comparatively.

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Secondly, there is a strong correlation between the national political context and Senate electoral competition. Specifically, there is a strong correlation between the approval rating of the President and the marginality and seat-change related candidates of the President's own party (see Appendixes A & B). Conversely, other political issues, such as political scandals, failed policies, war, party control and party realignment (political/election context) tend to significantly influence marginality and seat-change in the Senate.

Third, it is clear that Senate marginality and Senate seat-change are particularly susceptible to the political context of an election during Presidential elections years. In Mid-Term election years there is a positive correlation between marginality and seat-change (see Figure 2).

As marginality increases seat-change increases. This type of relationship supports Mayhew's original thesis that there is a casual relationship between marginality and seat-change (Mayhew 1974). Thus, Mid-Term elections appear to be more stable and predictable. This is most likely result of "incumbency effect" or the advantages incumbents have over new comers in Mid-Term elections. On the other hand, Senate marginality and seat-change are particularly vulnerable to the atmosphere of the political context in Presidential election years. In short, the political context significantly influences Senate marginality and seat-change. As the result, the trend in Presidential election years affirms Jacobsen's original premise that there is no relationship between marginality and seat-change (Jacobsen 1987). Ultimately, marginality and seat-change are in fact distinct. In sum, when it comes to the Senate, Mayhew and Jacobsen are both theoretically correct. On one hand, there are certain elections in which marginality and seat-change are related. On the other, there are certain elections in which there appears to be no relationship, indicating that other issues such as the political context of the election may affect marginality and seat-change independently of each other.

Finally, my original inspiration for researching the overall competitiveness of the Senate was *Federalist Paper #62* authored by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison (aka. *Publius*). In *Federalist Paper #62*, *Publius* discuss the qualifications of Senators the method by which they are to be selected, equal representation in the Senate, and the six-year term of senators. Specifically, *Publius* asserts that senators must be older and must be citizens of the United States longer than members of the House (*Federalist #62*). Furthermore, Senators should serve longer and need a broader knowledge of government affairs, particularly in the area of foreign relations (*Federalist #62*). *Publius* asserts the need for knowledgeable and tenured politicians in the Senate who have wisdom and expertise to carry out the extraordinary powers of the Senate (*Federalist #62*). Ultimately, Hamilton and Madison believe that the Senate unlike the House would provide a certain amount of stability that the popularly-elected House could not. By differing the ways in which Senators and Representatives were selected, *Publius* hoped that the Senate would be somewhat removed from the political context driving direct elections (*Federalist #62*). In 1913, however, the 17th Amendment was ratified changing the mode of election for Senators from the State legislatures to direct election by majority vote of the people of each State (17th Amendment, U.S. Constitution).

As a result, it appears that we are just now starting to see the adverse effects of the 17th Amendment that *Publius* outlined in *Federalist Paper #62* more than two hundred years ago. From 1978-to-2006 there was an average of 13 Senate seats per election that were considered marginal.

As a result, 40% of all Senate seats were considered marginal (competitive) a statistic that Hamilton and Madison would not have a problem with. However, on average there were 5 Senate seats to change parties each election from 1978-to-2006, which is approximately 15% or 1/6th of all Senate seats in a given election. *Publius* would be extremely concerned about given the fact that today in a given election the average number of Congressional seats to change parties is 35 or 8%. In the end, although marginality and seat-change in the Senate has remained relatively the same from 1978-to-2006, it appears that the Senate today experiences a higher amount of turnover than the House of Representatives.

In the end, greater competition in the Senate than in the House of Representatives would seem to run contrary to the original assertions laid out by Hamilton and Madison as *Publius* in their famous *Federalist Paper #62*.

**Appendix A:
Correlations between Presidential Approval Ratings, Marginal Seats & Seat-Changes by Party**

Presidents' Party			Presidential Approval Rating	Democrats Seats to Change	Republicans Seats to Change	Democrats Marginal Seats	Republicans Marginal Seats	
Democrats	Presidential Approval Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	<u>-.748(*)</u>	.447	<u>.691</u>	-.805(*)	
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.044	.187	.064	.027	
		N		6	6	6	6	
	Democrats seats to change	Pearson Correlation		1	-.503	-.854(*)	.754(*)	
		Sig. (1-tailed)			.155	.015	.042	
		N			6	6	6	
	Republicans seats to change	Pearson Correlation			1		.131	-.577
		Sig. (1-tailed)				.402	.115	
		N				6	6	
	Democrats marginal seats	Pearson Correlation				1		-.724
		Sig. (1-tailed)					.052	
		N					6	
Republicans marginal seats	Pearson Correlation						1	
	Sig. (1-tailed)							
	N							
Republicans	Presidential Approval Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.556	<u>-.384</u>	.094	<u>-.365</u>	
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.060	.154	.404	.167	
		N		9	9	9	9	
	Democrats seats to change	Pearson Correlation		1	-.480	.149	.110	
		Sig. (1-tailed)			.096	.351	.389	
		N			9	9	9	
	Republicans seats to change	Pearson Correlation			1		.461	-.132
		Sig. (1-tailed)				.106	.367	
		N				9	9	
	Democrats marginal seats	Pearson Correlation				1		-.215
		Sig. (1-tailed)					.289	
		N					9	
Republicans marginal seats	Pearson Correlation						1	
	Sig. (1-tailed)							
	N							

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Appendix B:
Correlations between Presidential Approval Ratings, Percent Marginality & Percentage Seat-Change by Party

Presidents' Party			Presidential Approval Rating	Democrats percentage Seat-change	Republicans percentage Seat-change	Democrats percentage of Marginal Seats	Republicans percentage of Marginal Seats	
Democrats	Presidential Approval Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	<u>-.547</u>	.547	<u>.828(*)</u>	-.828(*)	
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.131	.131	.021	.021	
		N		6	6	6	6	
	Democrats percent seat-change	Pearson Correlation		1	-1.000(**)		-.560	.560
		Sig. (1-tailed)				.124	.124	
		N			6	6	6	
	Republicans percent seat-change	Pearson Correlation			1	.560	-.560	
		Sig. (1-tailed)				.124	.124	
		N				6	6	
	Democrats percent of marginal seats	Pearson Correlation				1	-1.000(**)	
		Sig. (1-tailed)					.000	
		N					6	
Republicans percent of marginal seats	Pearson Correlation					1		
	Sig. (1-tailed)							
	N							
Republicans	Presidential Approval Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.603(*)	<u>-.603(*)</u>	.254	<u>-.254</u>	
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.043	.043	.255	.255	
		N		9	9	9	9	
	Democrats percent seat-change	Pearson Correlation		1	-1.000(**)		-.016	.016
		Sig. (1-tailed)				.484	.484	
		N			9	9	9	
	Republicans percent seat-change	Pearson Correlation			1	.016	-.016	
		Sig. (1-tailed)				.484	.484	
		N				9	9	
	Democrats percent of marginal seats	Pearson Correlation				1	-1.000(**)	
		Sig. (1-tailed)					.000	
		N					9	
Republicans percent of marginal seats	Pearson Correlation					1		
	Sig. (1-tailed)							
	N							

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

**Appendix C:
Presidential Approval Ratings 1978-2006**

Year	President	Presidents' Party	Presidential Approval Rating	% of Senate Seats Marginal
1978	J. Carter	D	49%	42%
1980	J. Carter	D	37%	56%
1982	R. Reagan	R	43%	39%
1984	R. Reagan	R	58%	21%
1986	R. Reagan	R	63%	47%
1988	R. Reagan	R	51%	27%
1990	G.H.W. Bush	R	58%	24%
1992	G.H.W. Bush	R	34%	50%
1994	B. Clinton	D	44%	45%
1996	B. Clinton	D	53%	58%
1998	B. Clinton	D	57%	32%
2000	B. Clinton	D	59%	36%
2002	G.W. Bush	R	65%	42%
2004	G.W. Bush	R	52%	32%
2006	G.W. Bush	R	40%	30%

AUTHOR

J. Ryan Smallen holds a Masters Degree in Political Science from the University of West Florida-Pensacola (2007) and a Bachelor Degree in Political Science from Iowa State University (2003). Ryan Smallen won the 2007 Best Graduate Paper Award of the Florida Political Science Association. He is currently working in the Criminal Justice Field in Florida and preparing to join a Ph.D. Program in Politics.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Florida Political Chronicle

MAIL Essays Submissions to:

Editor Marco Rimanelli, Ph.D.
Professor Political Science & International Affairs
SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY
Social Sciences Department
MC-2127, P.O.-Box 6665
Saint Leo, Florida, 33574-6665, U.S.A.
E-mail: marco.rimanelli@saintleo.edu

FPC & FPSA Subscriptions:

Treasurer Aubrey Jewett, Ph.D.
Florida Political Science Association
c/o Central Florida University
Political Sciences Department
HPH 302E
Orlando, FL, 32816-1356, U.S.A.
E-mail: Aubrey.jewett@ucf.edu

This "2012 Presidential Elections Issue" (vol.20, n.1-2, 2009-2012) and on-line Archive of past issues of the *Florida Political Chronicle* are available free in two parallel tabs on the Florida Political Science Association's Website at <http://www.fpsanet.org/chronicle.html> or <http://www.fpsanet.org/>. Future issues are available with password and FPSA simple subscription (\$40 yearly).

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The *Florida Political Chronicle* is the annual regional scholarly journal of the Florida Political Science Association (published with Saint Leo University) and encourages scholarly submissions from all Political Science disciplines: American Politics, Theories, Comparative Politics, International Affairs and Security, Diplomatic History, International Political Economy, Public Administration, International Law and Organizations.

Please send to Editor Marco Rimanelli (address & e-mail above) essays for consideration:

- Each essay must be sent both in double-spaced print & Word e-mail for record-keeping.
- Standard length varies, with maximum length around 10,000 words and 1-inch margins. Tables are accepted in the text and as appendixes.
- Add at the end a 2-paragraph Author's Biography.
- No PDF or Acrobat. If you have Acrobat you can use its selector and convert into Word.
- Style and footnoting preferred is the Chicago Manual of Style, but ADA and other styles are also accepted if the author/s has already a finished work.
- All essays are selected based on a "3 Blind Reviews" process (yes, I have 3 blind mice!) and those accepted for publication will add suggested changes and e-mail back the work.
- Any Book-Review for consideration must be 1 or 2 pages-long max. in Word.

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Aubrey Jewett, FPSA Treasurer
HPH 302E
Department of Political Science
University of Central Florida
Orlando, FL 32816-1356

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Saturday 16 March 2013

**Florida International University
Miami, Florida**

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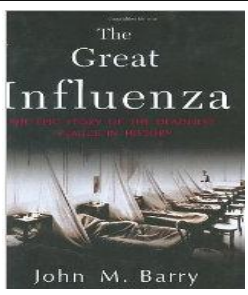
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Dr. Aubrey Jewett
FPSA Treasurer
HPH 302E
Department of Political Science
University of Central Florida-Orlando
Orlando, FL, 32816-1356



BOOK-REVIEW

John M. Barry's *The Great Influenza: Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History* (New York: (ISBN 0-14-303448-0 is a must read for all Political Scientists interested in the international and domestic repercussions of any new and explosively fast-moving Pandemic on world

governance, trade and security. Since the 1300s Black Plague/Death that killed 25% of Europe's much smaller population in the Middle-Ages, modern governments have been reluctant and unable to address the medical impact and political costs of trying to contain severe pandemics among the population at-large, as the Plague's last cyclical outbursts in the 1600s was followed by new cyclical outbreaks of influenza as another deadly disease continuing to today, with fast-mutating ability to strike through contact-infection 15%-to-40% of the population with a small death-rate of 0.1% (mostly young, elderly or weaker victims). But today the fear is that unexpected viral combinations jumping species as an avian-to-swine-to-human pandemics, like the 1918 Great Influenza (China's SARS in early-2000s was an avian-human flu) could spread globally with ultra-rapid modern communications and vanquish treatment and containments of such pandemics with millions dead like the Great Influenza, because pharmaceutical industries still cannot *quickly* mass-produce new vaccines.

With medicine in its infancy until the late-1800s, John Barry focuses a good third of his book on the development in America and Europe of modern medicine in research universities, with vivid biographical portraits of its major pioneers centered at the rival Johns Hopkins University Medical School and Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research/University. When the book finally opens to the medical, human and politico-military bureaucratic horrors of the Great Influenza, it vividly shows how this first global pandemic of the Twentieth Century undermined to the core the modern Medical establishment (killing also practitioners and nurses), while its virulence infected and killed through brief contacts countless millions of soldiers and civilians. Initially mislabeled as the "Spanish Influenza" (the first neutral country where the deadly infection was not censored) it was later willingly forgotten by war-weary shaken populations and governments who down-played its deathly toll to 20 million.

Now 80 years later, the Great Influenza (H1N1) is recognized as the first and most explosive mix-Avian and Human Flu (the medical fear since the 1997 Hong-Kong avian Influenza and other outbreaks in Asia in the early-2000s like SARS in China). It exploded from January 1918 to December 1920 with an extremely high 50% contagion-rate among young military and civilians and a shockingly death-rate of 10%-to-20% world-wide spreading from America to Europe along the transfers of U.S. military in World War I and infected ships world-wide. In 3 years 500 millions people were infected (27% of a world population of 1.8 billions) and 100 millions died (6% of world population), killing in the first six months 25 millions (more than AIDS killed in 25 years) and in a year as many killed as the Black Death did in a century: in the U.S.A. 675,000 died; in France 400,000; in Japan 400,000; in Great Britain 250,000; unknown hundred of thousands died in the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires; in Canada 50,000; in Black Africa 500,000; in Dutch Indonesia 1,5 millions; in India 17 millions; and 25%-to-70% pregnant women died with 25% survivors losing their fetus!

The medical, political and military chaos surrounding the Great Influenza's lightning global spread during the end of World War I, has made research on its impact extremely difficult with inadequate historical and epidemiological data, until by 2004 Historian John Barry's painstaking research points as originator to Haskell County in Western Kansas, where a new local combined avian-human influenza-mix spread its deadly hold from those rural farms to local new recruits sent to nearby overcrowded Camp Funston of Fort Riley (the second-largest U.S. military base), from where the infection spread quickly to

all of Kansas and all-points along the transfer of U.S. combat units to U.S. ports (Boston mostly), as well as to their European landing at the French port of Brest. The infection spread in the French country-side as U.S. troops moved to the Western Front, and from there to Spain, Great Britain and Europe, while Allied warships and supply ships spread it to Africa, Asia and Latin America, just as infected and malnourished German and Austrian troops suddenly collapsed stopping Berlin's victorious Summer 1918 offensives. This first wave of the Great Influenza pandemic (January-June 1918) sickened and paralyzed for weeks its victims, but killed only a significant number.

Yet a second more virulent wave (August 1918-December 1920) built on a stronger human-adapted mutation out of the confined trenches, and spread back from France to Boston, Philadelphia and New York, hitting the untouched American hinterland and also quickly re-infecting the global population. The dead (10%-to-20% of infected) were predominantly adults (99%), of which 50% were young soldiers and civilians (20-40 years-old), In bodies partially immunized by the first Influenza wave, now the mutated virus killed by overwhelming the body's immune system reactions through a cytokine storm (while weaker immunity among children, sick and elderly saved them this time).

Worse, the politico-military censorship of World War I America and Europe made sure that in each wartime country affected (from the U.S.A. to other Allies and also enemy Germany) public-military authority censored its massive spread, then denied it existence to an anxious public, later minimized its escalating casualties and finally quarantined military bases and cities across America. The political obtuseness of local politicians (like in Philadelphia and Boston) to the medical and security implications of the growing epidemic, meant that vital information on research and prevention was not shared or applied for months, allowing this pandemic to spread from military personnel transfer among bases, ships and ports, constantly infecting other healthy military and civilian populations. The Influenza's peak deaths were in 1918, stopping after the end of World War I and dying by late-1920 though a combination of medical break-throughs in vaccinations, the appalling number of deaths in victims "killing-off" most sources of infection once unchecked free movements and re-infections were stopped by strict medical quarantining of bases and cities, while the end of World War I and revolts in Eastern Europe shrunk the masses of tightly-packed military in European trenches, cantonments and occupation.

This book's tale of medical heroism, politico-military censorship and public policy folly, all quietly covered-up since 1920, still holds grave implications for us today. In an age of fast global communications the risk of new large-scale pandemics remains a serious warning of horrors both averted (AIDS; Ebola; Hong-Kong Flu; SARS) and yet lurking in the dark to strike and overwhelm us with world-wide deaths and mass-panic if pharmaceutical bottle-necks in vaccines production bring our science and civilization to crash faster than cures can be found and distributed to all in time.

Editor Marco Rimanelli



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