Book Prospectus

First to the Party:
The Group Origins of Party Transformation

Christopher Baylor
College of the Holy Cross

For further details, please contact

Christopher Baylor
Visiting Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science
College of the Holy Cross
1 College St.
Worcester, MA 01610
Tel: 617-460-3350
Email: cbaylor@holycross.edu
Overview

Parties are formed to do political battle, but they cannot fight about everything. How they decide which issues to contest is therefore a central problem for understanding democracy. This book hives off a piece of that problem. Its argument is that potential issues become actual issues when organized groups invade party nomination processes to select candidates committed to their issues and interests. Where the candidates go, the parties also go. This argument is applied to the two most important party transformations of the 20th century -- the Democratic Party’s embrace of civil rights in the 1940s and 50s, and the Republican Party’s embrace of cultural conservatism in the 1980s. In the first case, civil rights and labor activists sent delegates to their party’s national nominating conventions with the purpose of forcing presidential nominees to stand against southern Jim Crow laws and discrimination in employment. In the second, religious activists entered state-level presidential primaries to mobilize support for pro-life candidates. The basic mechanism of controlling party agendas was the same: control nominations in order to control what parties stand for. Only the means of making nominations, controlling conventions or controlling primaries, differed across the two cases. The key idea is, as E. E. Schattschneider (1942) put it, “He who makes nominations owns the party.” This argument disputes the standard notion of the relationship between parties and issues. In the usual formulation, parties take positions on issues in order to win elections, thereby giving voice and agency to what majorities want. In contrast, I argue that parties mainly represent the groups that control their nominations. Representing group interests is not the same as representing popular majorities. If civil rights groups and cultural conservatives had needed to wait until popular majorities supported their demands, their path to representation would have been longer and more difficult than it was.

This book also address another issue central to democracy: How do parties remain politically competitive while standing up for the interest of sometimes unpopular groups? The general answer to this question was supplied six decades ago by the economist Kenneth Arrow (1951), who won the Nobel Prize for his effort. His answer was that, in a political system with multiple independent issues of varying popularity, no dominant or natural majority exists. Rather, many majority coalitions are possible, depending on which issues are grouped with which other issues. The two historical studies in the book provide clear illustrations of Arrow’s profound but frequently overlooked point. The Democratic Party could have been competitive in the 1940s and 50s either by continuing to rely on the overwhelming support of southern whites and picking up northern votes when conditions were favorable, or by turning to blacks and labor as its core groups. Similarly, the Republican Party in the 1980s could have been competitive by combining economic conservatism and cultural moderation, or by combining economic conservatism and cultural conservatism. The choices actually made by the parties in these circumstances were, as this book argues, less a response to general electoral pressures than to activist influence in nominations. Voters are far more important for deciding between party agendas more than for determining the agendas (Bawn et al., 2012).
Another basic question about democratic politics is whether parties or interest group dominate the dynamics of political parties. Without denying the importance of politicians as managers of party coalitions, this book comes down on the side of group-centered parties. The reason is that politicians cannot get their careers off the ground unless they can win primaries, and they cannot win nominations for offices they do not already hold without the active aid of organized groups in their parties. Lyndon Johnson’s turnabout on civil rights is, as I will show, clear evidence for the influence of nominating constituencies on the actions of leading politicians; the conversions of Ronald Reagan and the two presidents Bush on cultural issues before their runs for the presidential nominations are another good illustration (Karol, 2008). In forcing ambitious politicians to toe their line as a precondition for high party nominations, organized groups show themselves to be the dominant players in political parties.

The arguments used to explain this book's two historical cases remain important for understanding contemporary cases of party position change. A leading issue for Republican activists is a reduction of the size of government, including popular programs like social security and Medicare; a leading issue for Democratic activists is equal rights for gays, lesbians, and transgender individuals. I conclude the book with sketches indicating that these issues gained traction more through newly-energized activists pressing for the nomination of candidates committed to them than from the policy demands of electoral majorities.

This study is based on an unusual mix of evidence. I have examined every archival source of papers, diaries and personal notes that I can find on the actions, attitudes, and motives of the key players in the realignment on civil rights in the 1940s and 1950s. For the realignment on cultural issues, I have again examined all available archives and have, in addition, obtained interviews with many of participants who are still alive. The result is a deeper and more credible account of the dynamics of party change than could be obtained by other means.

In moments of profound change, the deepest political forces often come to light. With its fine-grained analysis of two cases of major party change, First to the Party seeks to leverage this observation into a clearer understanding of classic issues of parties, representation, and democracy.

**Scope and Findings**

Civil rights and cultural conservatism are test cases for two conceptions of parties. For much of the twentieth century, neither dimension of issues mapped on neatly to the dominant strain of economic issues in America. Over time, they became highly correlated with economic liberalism and conservatism. The process by which they transformed reveals the forces that control the direction of political parties. According to one theory of parties, ambitious politicians shepherd party transformation. Instead, I found that politicians, when confronted with new demands, layered new constituencies on top of old constituencies. They straddled competing demands instead of choosing one side. This is not the material from which realignments are made. Organized groups
insisted on more. They displaced older constituencies against the wishes of politicians. Groups external to the party were the first to advocate for party transformation. Politicians reluctantly follow suit years or even decades later. Groups, not politicians, were “first to the party.”

Conventional accounts of political parties are candidate-centered, emphasizing the entrepreneurial skills of office-holders. Candidates, looking to win elections, discover issues they can use to win the allegiance of potential supporters. In modern times, they also develop expensive media campaigns to highlight their personalities and experience, bypassing party and interest group activists (e.g., Patterson 1980; Aldrich 1995; and Hager and Mayer 2000). Downs (1957) seminal theory of politics holds that parties compete for the median voter by becoming more centrist. If the conventional accounts are true, why are contemporary parties polarized compared with the public (Abramowitz and Saunders 1998, 2008; Jacobson 2000, 2004; Layman, Carsey, Horowitz 2006; and McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008)? My answer is that the Downsian model of party politics, in which candidates maximize votes without the mediation of organized groups, is fundamentally flawed. Parties in fact respond more to organized groups, like Tea Party organizations, the National Rifle Association, and MoveOn.org, than to median voters. Parties take positions far from the median voter because the groups that compose them take positions even further from the median voter.

Some recent political science research has moved toward a more group-centered view. Feinstein and Schickler (2008) and Schickler, Pearson, and Feinstein (2010) offer powerful evidence that the CIO influenced both the state and national Democratic Party to favor civil rights. They show that Democratic support in Congress for civil rights correlates with union activity, but they do not detail what organizational strategies the CIO employed to bring about this change or their motive for doing so. Moreover, they do not use this case to form a general theory of group-party dynamics. Bawn et al. (2012) emphasize that voter ignorance creates “blind-spots,” in which parties can satisfy intense activists because moderate voters usually ignore them. They provide considerable evidence that polarized parties create an ideological brand to satisfy activists, not voters. Yet they do not draw out the mixture of interests that impelled unions to transform the Democratic Party on race, and offer few details on the mechanism of change. Nor do they flesh the distinction between grass roots activists and interest group leaders. This book shows that group leaders mobilized followers politically at a grassroots level, and their members often followed the group’s lead in spite of disagreements on issues such as labor unions and civil rights. Layman et al. (2010) show that interest groups can extend political conflict to new domains by entering party primaries, nominating candidates committed to their policies, and thereby building leverage within the party. They only briefly sketch how organizational imperatives might guide interest groups, without showing how their awkward fit with existing parties ultimately shapes the transformation. Groups can change parties by working with each other to alter the incentives of ambitious politicians.

First to the Party fills these gaps with a textured examination of group-party interactions between civil rights groups, unions, cultural conservatives and the respective parties they
influenced. The Democratic Party, which was once the party of secession, took the lead in promoting civil rights from the 1940s to the 1960s. Few politicians in either party took much interest in the issue until the 1940s, when unions and civil rights groups worked to change the Democratic Party on race. In subsequent decades, these groups ensured that party platforms and nominees were at least as liberal. And the Republican Party, which was once dominated by mainline Protestants, became the home of religious fundamentalists reacting to changing cultural norms. Pentecostal and Southern Baptist churches had traditionally avoided political controversy but began urging their congregations to vote as a religious duty in the 1980s. Concentrated in the South, they shed their Democratic heritage and built viable Republican parties in the former Confederate states. In both cases, a group faced opposition within its chosen party but marginalized their opponents and nominated politicians committed to their priorities.

The groups had their own organizational interests and group dynamics shaping their political behavior, quite separate from recruitment efforts by any politician. In fact, the NAACP steadfastly resisted appeals from nationally-known Republican leaders before African American voters identified with either party. In time, racial liberalism was conjoined with economic liberalism and cultural conservatism with economic conservatism, among both voters and politicians.

Two marginal social groups - civil rights activists and religious conservatives – achieved many of their goals by becoming core players in a political party. Existing office holders would promise benefits but seldom risked alienating core supporters or median voters. New groups needed to have a hand in the nominating process. In the former case, this meant sending sympathetic blocks of delegates to national conventions. The mechanism for nominating candidates changed radically by the 1970s, and groups instead mobilized voters for primaries and caucuses. In both cases, they needed to register voters and turn them out, and found them in union halls and churches, where people gathered for non-political reasons. They displaced established interests who resisted new entrants with incompatible or competing agendas, and socialized their followers to adopt the positions of allied partisans. Groups rather than politicians drove the process, creating transformed parties that would stand up for rather than straddle the issues they cared about.

My conclusion is based on years of archival research and interviews. I sifted through tens of thousands of documents from a dozen different archives in ten different states. I also met with original participants when available. I spent an hour or more interviewing fifty activists who had participated in over 30 organizations and campaigns. In particular, I focused on Iowa and South Carolina, where caucus and primary results help to winnow the field of Republican presidential candidates.

Intended Audience

This manuscript dovetails with a growing literature examining the role of activists in American politics. Bawn et al. (2012) argue that “intense policy demanders” exploit voter inattention in order to push parties further from the median voter. I provide a fine-grained, blow-by-blow account of this process in two of the most important cases of party transformation. No one can come to grips with party transformation without considering
these cases. The historical evidence affects our understanding of parties in a way that quantitative evidence does not, uncovering process in addition to correlations and outcomes. American Political Development scholars and historians will also be interested. They increasingly agree that the Democratic Party was quicker to embrace civil rights than originally thought, but disagree on why (see Lee, 2002; Chen, 2009; Karol, 2009; Schickler, Pearson, and Feinstein 2010; and Schickler and Caughey 2011). *First to the Party* goes beyond these accounts by examining how labor and civil rights groups with a troubled history were able to fit together in the party of economic liberalism. Moreover, it situates this transformation in a broader model of party politics. Likewise, the cultural conservative transformation of the Republican Party has been extensively examined (e.g., Oldfield 1996; Layman 2001; Martin 2005; and Williams 2012) without a general account of party transformation in mind. More general audiences will be interested in how parties become so polarized in recent years. The second case study shows how the Republican Party came to embrace the cultural issues often thought to divide “red” and “blue” America. Finally, political junkies will take an interest in the case material. Some of the information from the campaigns of Adlai Stevenson, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush has never been published before.

**Chapter Overview**

Each case study is preceded by a brief section overview that reviews pertinent findings from other political scientists.

*Chapter One: Unwanted Relatives at the Party*

This chapter sets up the puzzle of the manuscript and situates it in political science literature on political parties. Among other political scientists, Carmines and Stimson (1989) and Aldrich (1995) view parties as the servants of ambitious politicians, who take positions in order to win elections. Yet, parties frequently take positions at odds with electoral majorities and even the majority of voters registered with their own party. The Democratic Party supported gay rights in the 1980s and 1990s, when homosexuals lacked majority support. Likewise, Republican members of Congress have opposed gun registration and licensing requirements even when surveys from the National Rifle Association showed a public consensus in their favor (Wright 1981). Most Americans favor abortion rights in the case of rape and incest but the Republican platform continues to oppose abortion in all cases.

This discrepancy between theory and practice exists because party scholars have largely lost sight of the role of groups, the “raw materials” of politics, in shaping and transforming parties (Schattschneider 2004). Most recent literature on political parties focuses on ambitious office seekers and office holders, not groups. Sociologists have explored the dynamics of organizations and social movements, but rarely demonstrate their impact on parties, and often overlook the role of leadership.
Some political scientists (Bawn et al. 2012) have offered theories on how groups and activists change parties, but not uncovered the sequence in particular historical cases. Important episodes of party transformation provide us with the opportunity to examine what forces control the trajectory of parties. My historical account reveals complex processes in which multiple variables are changing at the same time. In the two most important cases of party transformation in the twentieth century, powerful groups inside the parties initially opposed the agenda of new groups. I show how the interests, rivalries, and leadership of underrepresented organizations change parties, and when the political environment provides the opportunity to do so.

Chapter Two: The Dilemmas of African Americans

Chapter Two reviews the neglect of African Americans by both political parties from the end of Reconstruction to the New Deal. Here and there, Republicans proposed anti-lynching laws, but they never passed. African Americans had some allies in the Democratic Party (e.g., New York Senator Robert Wagner), but party chairs and presidents refused to stick their necks out, especially when the South was such a reliable supporter of the party.

Given the indifference of leaders in both parties, what did African Americans leaders and institutions suggest as a course of action? Most African Americans were working class, but unlike the white working class, did not rely on white unions to fight for their economic or political interests. Organized labor’s troubling history of racial discrimination persisted well past the New Deal, when African Americans began to abandon the party of Lincoln. A young crowd of intellectuals in NAACP was willing to look past this history and pursue a political and economic alliance with the white working class. However, the organization as a whole focused narrowly on civil rights until the beginning of the 1940s. Executive Secretary Walter White, in particular, believed that shifting the organization’s focus to economics would weaken his position in the organization. This sets the stage for the next chapter, which shows why they chose an alliance with labor during the 1940s. This alliance with labor brought the NAACP firmly into an alliance of liberals that sought to displace the white South from the Democratic Party. The internal politics of organizations prevented a black-blue alliance until the organizations changed and managed their differences effectively in the 1940s.

Chapter Three: Overcoming a Troubled History

Using primary sources, I document why the NAACP, the most influential civil rights organization, chose to broaden its focus around 1940. The organization suffered from declining membership and funding, and needed to maintain its appeal in the face of more radical competitors. When unions flourished under the protection of the Wagner Act and New Deal jurisprudence, black workers increasingly joined closed shop unions whatever their imperfections. The NAACP worked with unions to help African Americans gain access to closed shops and inject civil rights into Democratic Party politics. It even tolerated continued union discrimination while keeping their eyes on the prize of political
and economic clout. Efforts by Republicans to divide African Americans and unions failed. Republican leaders such as Robert Taft and Thomas Dewey pursued black votes as vigorously as any Democratic leaders, but the NAACP saw greater benefit in a potential alliance with labor in the Democratic Party. I consider what an alliance between the NAACP and other groups, such as business, might have looked like, and why they were unlikely to succeed in the long term.

Given the propensity of interest groups to focus on the politics of the day, the NAACP’s tenacious pursuit of a labor alliance is exceptional. It was fraught with risk, but ultimately successful. The NAACP changed its organizational identity to accommodate labor as its tide was rising. Unusual coalition maintenance of this sort explains why some groups are able to obtain positions of power in political parties while others flounder into obsolescence. The civil rights transformation of the Democratic Party traces back to the shifting interests of groups like the NAACP, rather than the initiative of politicians.

Chapter Four: Making a CIO-NAACP Alliance

Chapter Four explains the extent of the CIO’s interest in civil rights and how it developed. Various forms of racial discrimination impeded the CIO’s ability to establish new affiliates, but integrating labor unions was costly and often unsuccessful, and far from an inevitable consequence of focusing on unskilled labor. The CIO had a political agenda beyond prosperity for its own workers, and African American voters could help them enact this agenda. The CIO’s national political objectives varied less across regions and workplaces, where integration sometimes got in the way of organizing. Without the work of the NAACP, its outreach to black voters and workers would have been far less effective, and the leadership might have caved in to race-baiting.

The coincidence of organizational imperatives across the NAACP and CIO was fortunate for the former. The CIO had the ability to transform the Democratic Party into the party of civil rights and brought this about by the late 1940s. This chapter discusses some of the controversial actions the CIO undertook to demonstrate their fidelity to civil rights. This coincidence of interests across organizations made for an effective liberal coalition, and set the stage for a takeover of the Democratic Party.

Many would ascribe the conjunction of civil rights and economic liberalism to ideology. Various interest group leaders and their ideological backgrounds are profiled. Although ideologically opposed to racism, they were also willing to set aside their ideology when it did not serve their organizational interests. To measure the effect of pundits on African Americans, I analyzed a sample of black newspapers from the 1920s to the 1940s. Newspapers seemed to change their positions on unions and economic liberalism at the same time as black interest groups. Furthermore, they endorsed Republican presidential candidates well after black voters had supported Democratic presidential candidates.

Chapter Five: Twisting the Donkey’s Tail
The new alliance between labor and blacks led to the reconstruction of the Democratic Party as the vehicle for the aspirations of both groups. The NAACP became involved in liberal causes other than civil rights and all but endorsed the Democratic Party by the end of the decade. The CIO supported the legislative and judicial agenda of the NAACP and helped to marginalize Southern opponents of civil rights from the Democratic Party.

This chapter includes an extended discussion of the 1948 Democratic convention, which announced the first bold civil rights platform in the party’s history. At first, Truman and his key advisor Clark Clifford thought he could win over black voters with civil rights without facing serious defections from the South. But the Southern response was so severe that Truman was forced to reconsider. Truman was willing to layer new groups on top of the party, but not to displace older groups. He therefore resisted a strong civil rights platform to the end at the 1948 convention, while the CIO and Americans for Democratic Action passed a bold civil rights plank against his instructions. Group pressure at the convention, rather than general election calculations, forced him to side in favor of civil rights from there on.

Chapter Six: Maintaining the Democratic Trajectory on Civil Rights

The 1948 convention was reflective of a new balance of power in the party. Labor unions and their liberal allies made civil rights a litmus test for presidential nominations from 1948-1960. Serious presidential contenders distanced themselves from whatever ties they had to the Southern wing of the party. Although Adlai Stevenson is often viewed as a conciliator, I contend that he was more liberal on civil rights than Truman, and that the platforms improved upon the 1948 platform – if only subtly.

Most revealing is the struggle for the 1960 nomination. Senator Lyndon Johnson became an active proponent of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 in order to have a chance at winning a national convention, in spite of what his Texas constituents might have wanted. John F. Kennedy initially thought that he was most in need of Southern support to gain the Democratic nomination, but when the NAACP criticized him during his reelection to the Senate, he was made to choose between the two factions. He chose to prioritize the liberal wing of the party. His followers pushed for an unprecedented civil rights plank in order to deflect a potential challenge from Adlai Stevenson and his liberal followers. Civil Rights were the key to liberal support, and liberal support was the key to winning the Democratic nomination.

Stepping back from the meticulous detail of the foregoing chapters, I revisit the overall theory in light of the evidence presented. Civil rights had become a litmus test, rather than a taboo, in the Democratic Party. As presented in these chapters, organizational leaders were responsible for the formation and management of a coalition that transformed the Democratic Party. Other political scientists might point to ambitious politicians who supported the 1948 plank in order to deflect the third party challenge from Henry Wallace. For example, party bosses voted for the plank, but had not played a role in introducing the proposal. Their willingness to support a stronger plank but not initiate one is more consistent with the idea that outside pressure groups were the driving force.
force. Several “moving parts” of the party – national politicians, party bosses, interest
groups, and splinter parties – influenced the outcome. I conclude that labor and civil
rights were the most important ones.

Chapter Seven: The Dynamics of Conservative Religious Sects

Theological conservatives, including Protestant fundamentalists and evangelicals, were
once reliable Democratic voters. Although fiercely anti-communist, their positions on
other issues did not clearly align with one of the parties. Additionally, their own schisms
and jealousies inhibited cooperation. The decentralized nature also made it difficult for
conservative sects to work en masse for political causes. In one sign of the changing
times, a conservative faction took over the Southern Baptist Convention before the Moral
Majority was formed or Reagan became president. The growth of religious broadcasting
also had important implications for cultural conservatism in the Republican Party. Broad
political themes were one way to capture a market niche and expand ones viewership.
Ultimately, cultural issues proved to be a somewhat effective way to unite culturally
conservative denominations in spite of their theological differences

Chapter Eight: The First Wave of Cultural Conservative Politics

In the 1970s, new issues such as abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment animated
theological conservatives, although the development of grievances and willingness to
become politically active varied across churches and organizations. Chapter Eight
considers the extent to which theological conservatives became politically active on their
own, without taking inspiration from organized groups and national political elites.

Cultural conservatives found themselves in similar circumstances to African Americans
in the 1940s. Both parties were aware of their potential as voters, but unwilling to
alienate other groups in order to win their votes. During the Carter administration, an
informal group of conservative strategists dubbed by journalists as “The New Right” was
frustrated by what they viewed as the party’s moderation. As they saw it, “establishment” Republicans used conservative rhetoric, but they were far from
aggressively supportive of conservative policies. Searching for new conservative votes,
they noted the increasing dissatisfaction of theological conservatives traditionally
affiliated with the Democratic Party. They approached theologically conservative
broadcasters and pastors to register voters, distribute literature, and defeat cultural
liberals in primary battles.

Chapter Nine: The Reagan Revolution in the Context of Party Change

Reagan was the first president to be elected in the wake of the first wave of cultural
conservatism. But what role did he play in the party transformation? Chapter Nine
argues that he welcomed the support of religious conservatives but did not build the
organizational infrastructure necessary to mobilize them or effect long term. That work
was left up to the religious conservatives themselves. In fact, Reagan, like Truman,
preferred to straddle the demands of the new groups in the party. For example, Reagan’s
1980 campaign kept its evangelical outreach director, Bob Billings, under a tightly controlled schedule and prevented him from talking to the mainstream press. That being said, Reagan was mostly responsive to the cultural conservative agenda in office. Given divided government and previous Supreme Court decisions, Reagan’s policies accomplished what any president could reasonably be expected to achieve. This is what a theory predicated on group control predicts, since politicians want to be responsive to groups with unusual preferences, but do not want to call attention his support during elections.

Some might attribute the Reagan Revolution to pundits who had been combining economic and cultural conservatism years earlier (Lichtman 2008; Noel 2012). National Review, for example espoused an ideology of “fusionism” that valued both liberty and tradition. Fusionism was quite different from the ideas espoused by evangelical Christians. Even the ideas of Francis Schaeffer, which are cited by nearly all leaders of the Christian Right, were only selectively incorporated into the new conservative agenda.

Chapter Ten: Eating the Elephant, One Bite at a Time

Chapter Ten considers the efforts of the Christian Coalition and its predecessors to capture the party machinery in state governments. In particular, it focuses on the strategic states of Iowa and South Carolina. Iowa’s caucuses have the potential to provide name recognition and momentum for the victors. Conservative Christians form nearly half of the Republican electorate, giving them the chance to winnow the nominating contest. No state is better suited than South Carolina to provide candidates with momentum going into Super Tuesday, after which a clear frontrunner for the nomination has usually emerged. Southern Baptists and other evangelical Christians comprise a large percentage of the South Carolina electorate, and can potentially halt the advance of secular candidates who do well in the New Hampshire primary.

Following Pat Robertson’s unsuccessful campaign in 1988, his key supporters organized successfully on a grass roots level. Robertson’s Christian Coalition networked through lay members of church congregations and encouraged them to pursue lower-level offices. In Iowa and South Carolina, they gained considerable control over state party officials, who played an important role in advising, vetting, recruiting, and endorsing candidates. In South Carolina, state party officials narrowly defeated an attempt by Pat Robertson’s supporters to switch from a primary to a convention based system, challenging the credentials of their delegates in court. They could not, however, prevent them from taking over state party offices in the long term.

Chapter Eleven: The Cultural Conservative Vector

In the 1988 election, Republican candidates all hoped to woo the cultural conservative wing of the party. Evangelical Christians were no long an optional voting bloc, but one needed both in the primary and general election. George H.W. Bush refashioned his religious image and language years before the election. He met with nearly 1,000 evangelical “targets” ranked by their influence both in and out of their congregations.
Bush moderated his positions after the primary, but lost considerable support the more he vacillated. In his reelection campaign, he had to present the ticket as even more culturally conservative and lost control of the convention (as Dole would four years later). George W. Bush followed in his father’s footsteps and cultivated conservative religious leaders with coded language taught by members of the evangelical movement. Like Adlai Stevenson and John F. Kennedy, most of these candidates hired campaign advisors directly from the new voting bloc to network with influential cue givers.

Cultural conservatives have not been able to elect one of their own against the wishes of establishment politicians – each nominee since 1980 was also supported by governors, senators, and state party leaders. In fact, they have divided among themselves over the relative importance of principles, electability, and religious denomination. However, the cultural views of establishment politicians have more closely approximated those of the Christian Right over time. The failure of Rudy Giuliani to win any states, or the inability of McCain to select Joe Lieberman as his running mate, show that they possess a royal veto, even if they are not kingmakers.

Chapter Twelve: Conclusion

I conclude by summarizing how my case studies follow a surprisingly similar plot line. African Americans and cultural conservatives lacked representation in both parties. The former wanted access to the Democratic Party, but faced entrenched opposition from Southern opponents of civil rights. The latter wanted access to the Republican Party, but encountered hostility from Republican moderates. Leaders mobilized non political organizations for political goals. Existing office-holders saw civil rights and cultural issues as dangerous and favored a “big tent.” External groups needed to play a strong role in the nomination process before they could narrow the tent opening and change the parties.

I offer a tentative way to think about ideology and interest in party transformation. Ideology is best thought of as a bundle of issue positions. Groups can choose between many bundles, but the ideologies that flourish are those that are institutionalized in political parties. Parties adopt an ideology on the basis of the groups in their party coalition, and groups adopt the ideology that best accommodate their interests. Group interest, rather than ideology, is the prime mover.

Chapter Twelve also explores the continuing relevance of the transformations given the tension between politicians and groups within parties in recent years. This includes a brief discussion of the Tea Party and the similarities it bears to the case studies of the book. Tea Partiers have arguably had more success in defeating candidates clearly favored by incumbent Republican politicians. There is no sign that parties will be changed by a different mechanism anytime soon. As long as some voters are motivated and organized, while others are not paying attention, parties represent some interests better than others. Some interests are never organized into effective groups, and other possible ways of combining groups into parties are lost to the dustbin of history. Many
voters are left to choose from two party bundles stitched together by activists whose views scarcely resemble their own.

**Timeline**

I expect the manuscript will be ready to review by December, 2013. The manuscript is currently 388 pages.

**Author Credentials**

I am a Visiting Assistant Professor at the College of the Holy Cross, and a Center for American Political Studies Fellow at Harvard University. Last year, I served as a Visiting Professor at Wellesley College. I specialize in the field of American Politics, focusing particularly on political parties, interest groups, and American Political Development. In October, my article “First to the Party: the Group Origins of the Partisan Transformation on Civil Rights” will appear in *Studies in American Political Development*, the flagship publication of American Political Development scholars. I have spoken to the American Political Science Association, New England Political Science Association, World Radio Switzerland, and the Business Leadership Council of Wellesley College about the role of interest groups and campaigns in American Politics.

I completed my Ph.D. in political science at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), my M.A. in history at Brown University, and my B.A. in history and philosophy at Muhlenberg College. At UCLA, I worked as a research assistant for renowned public opinion scholar John Zaller and an editorial assistant for *Studies in American Political Development*. I also completed two years of graduate work in political science at Boston College as a Tip O’Neill Fellow. Prior to enrolling at UCLA, I had taught college courses in history and politics at Suffolk University, Cambridge College, and Quincy College.