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

The United States has scores of potential issues but only two major political parties. How they respond to competing demands for their attention is therefore a central problem in the study of American democracy. The central argument of this book 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 nominees 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 culturally conservative 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 challenges several standard notions of how democracy works. In the classic work of Joseph Schumpeter (1942), 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 addresses how parties remain politically competitive while standing up for the interests of unpopular groups. As Kenneth Arrow showed in his theoretical analysis of voting coalitions, many competitive 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 and thereby alienating the white South. Similarly, the Republican Party in the 1980s could have been competitive in general elections by combining economic conservatism and cultural moderation. 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 and group 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 groups 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 well-documented turnaround on civil rights is best understood as an instance of an ambitious politician responding to the nominating constituency on which his ambition depended; the conversions of Ronald Reagan and the two presidents Bush on cultural issues before their presidential nominations are another good illustration (Karol 2009). 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 book’s central arguments apply to contemporary as well as historical cases of party position change. A leading issue for Tea Party activists is a reduction of the size of government, including popular programs like social security and Medicare; a leading issue on the left 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 unusually broad mix of evidence. I have examined every archival source of papers, diaries and personal notes that I could find on the actions, attitudes, and motives of the key players in the realignment on civil rights in the 1940s and 1950s. Altogether, I sifted through tens of thousands of documents from a dozen different archives in ten states. For the realignment on cultural issues, I have examined available archives and in addition, conducted interviews of an hour or more with 50 individuals from 30 different organizations. 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.

**Intended Audience**

This manuscript dovetails with a growing literature examining the role of activists and parties 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* brings telling new evidence to this controversy in showing how labor and civil rights groups were able to overcome a troubled history as key allies 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. Political junkies will take an interest in the presidential campaigns. 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 with a brief introduction outlining the contemporary political environment and previous findings unique to the case. The interesting difference is that civil rights activists invaded a party system based on national party nomination conventions and cultural conservatives invaded a party system based on open caucuses and primary elections. The common thread is that each group was doing what was necessary to gain control of party nominations and thereby party agendas.

**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. Downs’ (1957) seminal theory of politics holds that parties compete for the median voter by becoming more centrist. More recent accounts of political parties are candidate-centered, emphasizing the entrepreneurial skills of office-holders in building campaign organizations and making well-calculated appeals to median voters (e.g., Patterson 1980; Carmines and Stimson 1989; Aldrich 1995; and Hager and Mayer 2000). Among candidates’ key skills is the ability to discover issues they can use to win the allegiance of potential supporters.

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.

Chapter One explains how the book will close these gaps with a close 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 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 solved this problem by fighting to become core party players themselves. 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 responded by mobilizing voters in primary elections to support candidates committed to their cause. For both issues, then, groups rather than politicians drove the process, creating transformed parties that would stand up for rather than straddle the issues the groups cared about.

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, 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 expand its focus from civil rights alone to a broadly partisan and liberal agenda 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.

The NAACP’s tenacious pursuit of a labor alliance was exceptionally far-sighted. 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.

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 roughly the same time as black interest groups. Furthermore, they endorsed Republican presidential candidates well after black voters had supported Democratic presidential candidates.

Forging a working alliance between a black civil rights organization and a mostly white labor movement created major leadership challenges. Black leaders needed to persuade their followers to overlook and sometimes even support some openly racist union locals. Union leaders needed to press for more racial equality than some members wanted. But in the end, the two groups achieved an effective partnership.

*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 1940s. 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. Like many other ambitious politicians, Truman wanted 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 marked the transformation of racial equality from political taboo to a litmus test. In the years after 1948, labor unions and their liberal allies would not let nominees retreat from the positions taken that year. Reflecting the new balance of power within the party, 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 use archival evidence to show 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 forced 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.

The chapter considers an alternative explanation for the key civil rights fight at the 1948 convention: that ambitious politicians supported the 1948 plank only to deflect the third party challenge from Henry Wallace, not because they had experienced a change of heart on civil rights. Consistent with this view is the fact that party bosses voted for the plank, but played little role in introducing the proposal. However, 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. 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

Many southern white voters, alienated by the Democratic Party’s transformation on civil rights, were no longer firmly attached to it. But like the traditionally Republican African American voters who supported Roosevelt in the 1930s, southern whites were not yet firmly attached their new party. They were ripe for conversion, but not yet converted. A large mass of morally conservative voters, weakly attached to any party can be seen in retrospect to bode well for another major transformation of the party system. But only in retrospect. To leading political scientists of the 1970s, the party system of that period was poised not for invigoration by a new political force, but for dissolution.

Before the NAACP could ally with the union movement, it had to overcome its own past tradition of non-partisanship and some internal divisions. The diverse actors that were to coalesce as the Religious Right faced a similar situation in the early 1970s. Theological conservatives were fiercely anti-communist, which nudge them toward the Republican
Party, but their positions on other issues did not clearly align with one of the parties. In the South, some had supported New Deal economic policies. Many leading religious figures were even pro-choice on abortion. Additionally, schisms and jealousies within organized religion inhibited cooperation. The decentralized nature of American religion made it difficult for conservative sects to work en masse for political causes.

In a sign of the changing times, however, a conservative faction took over the largest single Protestant group, the Southern Baptist Convention in 1979. The rise of mega-churches and religious television also gave a boost to the growth of morally conservative voters within organized religion. Broad political themes were one way to capture a market niche and expand ones viewership. Ultimately, cultural political issues proved to be a somewhat effective way to unite conservative denominations in spite of their theological differences.

Chapter Eight: The First Wave of Cultural Conservative Politics

A culturally conservative movement, increasingly unified on issues like abortion, became politically visible in the 1970s. As this was happening, presidents Nixon and Carter made plays for the support of religiously conservative voters. But typical of electorally motivated politicians, these leaders did little to implement their promises.

Meanwhile, the foundations of a more politically connected religious right were being constructed. During the Carter administration, an informal group of conservative strategists dubbed by journalists as “The New Right” was working within the Republican Party to advance morally conservative positions, but 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. There is a sharp distinction between elected politicians, who wanted to satisfy existing factions in the party, and activists such as the New Right, who hoped that moderates would bolt the party. Searching for new conservative votes, they noted the increasing dissatisfaction of theological conservative voters traditionally affiliated with the Democratic Party and approached their leaders for support. The move bore fruit as broadcasters and pastors began to register voters and distribute political literature. Like the nascent alliance between the NAACP in the early 1940s, the religious right was beginning to play in party politics.

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 Reagan play in the party transformation? Although he welcomed the support of religious conservatives and served as a useful focal point, he did not build the organizational infrastructure necessary to mobilize them or effect long term change. 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. In some ways, Reagan avoided a close public association with the Christian Right. That being said, Reagan was responsive to the cultural conservative agenda in office. Given
divided government and the state of constitutional jurisprudence, Reagan’s policies accomplished what any president could reasonably be expected to achieve.

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

By the end of the Reagan administration, the Christian Right was only partly successful in creating a basis for its future influence in the Republican Party. Many of the political organizations created around the time of Reagan’s first election were on the verge of folding their tents. But even as the mass media was speculating on the end of a movement, Pentecostal religious broadcaster Pat Robertson’s unsuccessful bid for the Republican nomination galvanized many cultural conservatives missed by the first wave.

Robertson and many of his campaign supporters organized their followers with a view toward long term influence in the party, and not just the coming election. Ultimately, they helped start the Christian Coalition, which successfully infiltrated state and local Republican Party organizations, enabling them to wield influence in advising, vetting, recruiting, and endorsing candidates at all levels. Locally-trained operatives later provided a reservoir of activists to manage presidential campaigns and contend for higher office. The basis for prolonged influence was especially potent in Iowa, where intense cultural conservatives could provide a springboard for the right candidate early in the presidential nominating contest, and in South Carolina, where they could halt the advance of secular candidates before Super Tuesday. Grass-roots party influence proved to be an effective basis for political power in the age of presidential primaries.

Chapter Eleven: The Cultural Conservative Vector

By 1988, most of the leading contenders for the Republican nomination viewed religiously motivated voters as a potentially important source of support. As Karol (2009) has show, nearly all Republican presidential candidates have switched to a pro life position on abortion since then. This important development is a perfect analogue to the conversions of Lyndon Johnson and John F. Kennedy in favor of civil rights, showing that the Christian Right had acquired standing within the Republican Party.

But like civil rights leaders of the 1950s, religious leaders did not press for the nomination of the candidate most aligned with their issues, such as Pat Robertson in 1988, Pat Buchanan in 1996 and Gary Bauer in 2000. Many, though not all, strategically situated activists in Iowa and South Carolina realized they could not win an election for long-shot and no-shot candidates. Rather, they joined the bandwagon of the strongest conventional candidate before that candidate had actually sewed up the nomination. Furthermore, they were quick to threaten these candidates when they strayed too far, forcing them to fall back in line. By putting the strongest candidate over the top, they sought to incur a debt that would later be repaid in policies they cared about.

Cultural conservatives have often divided over the importance of principles, electability, and religious denomination. The two presidents Bush, who projected themselves as inevitable victors, employed sophisticated strategies to portray themselves as brothers-in-
arms of the Christian Right. In doing so, they satisfied both the activists’ desire to win and have an ally in office. Like Stevenson and Kennedy, they recruited movement activists with impeccable credentials to lend legitimacy to their campaigns. Later, the failure of Rudy Giuliani to win any primaries, or the inability of McCain to select Joe Lieberman as his running mate, show that even when cultural conservatives fail to unite behind one candidate, they effectively united against candidates who do not pass their litmus tests.

Chapter Twelve: Conclusion

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 party transformations 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.”

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. National Review, for example espoused an ideology of “fusionism” that valued both liberty and tradition, but this was controversial even among organizations founded by National Review. Even Francis Schaeffer’s ideas were only selectively incorporated by the Christian Right, just as socialism was only selectively used by labor groups in the 1940s. Group interest, rather than ideology, is the prime mover.

The conclusion 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 gay rights groups, and the similarities they bear to the case studies of the book. 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. 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 the end of the year. 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. My article “First to the Party: the Group Origins of the Partisan Transformation on Civil Rights” was published in the fall issue of *Studies in American Political Development*, the flagship publication of American Political Development. 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 taught college courses in history and politics at Suffolk University, Cambridge College, and Quincy College.