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The Role of the Party Record in Elections for the House of Representatives, 1970-2008

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The Role of the Party Record in Elections for the House of Representatives, 1970-2008

A Dissertation Presented for
the Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Matthew Thomas Gross
August 2012

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Abstract

Much scholarly attention has been devoted to the role of political parties in Congress. One of the major theories of party legislative organization is cartel theory. Cartel theory assumes that each legislative party possesses a party record or reputation, which influences the election prospects for all members of the party. It provides an electoral incentive to encourage cooperation among party members in a single chamber of Congress.

Congressional scholars have paid little attention to the party record. In the following chapters, I bring together the desultory scholarly research on the party record and examine the impact of the party record on aggregate challenger entry, aggregate retirements, and seat change for the United States House of Representatives from 1970-2008.

Two party record components, integrity and ideology, are taken from previous research on the party record. I develop and test a third measure, aggregate party-level negative integrity, based on television evening news coverage of each party's scandals in the House.

Using ordinary least squares regression, I find that two components of the party record, competence and integrity, influence aggregate challenger entry but not aggregate quality challenger entry. The party record does not impact aggregate retirements. However, in a logistic regression model of individual retirements of House members accused of scandal, I find that party leaders are successful at pressuring certain party members to resign or retire from the House. Moreover, in a negative binomial regression model of evening news stories attributable to each member's scandal, when party leaders are successful at forcing a member to quit, he or she generates less negative publicity for the party. Finally, using OLS regression, I find that the party record does not impact seat change in the House except in open seat races. In open seat

aces, the ideological component of the party record positively impacts seat change.

I conclude by describing the impact of these results on theories of legislative organization. I then describe the impact of these results on democratic theory as it relates to collective responsible via responsible parties.

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Abbreviations and Symbols

B	Benefits from Office
B₁	Benefits of action undertaken if reelection is not achieved
B_w	Benefits derived from holding office
CDSC	Contested Democratic Seat Change
CPG	Conditional Party Government
C	Costs of running for reelection.
c_i	Personal Characteristics (Chapter 1 only)
DCR	Democratic Challenger Rate
DHA	Democratic Heterogeneity Advantage
Δ	Delta indicates variable has been differenced
DNI	Democratic Negative Integrity
DNIA	Democratic Negative Integrity Advantage
DQR	Democratic Quality Challenger Rate
DRR	Democratic Retirement Rate
DSC	Democratic Seat Change
LDV	Lagged Dependent Variable
MC	Member of Congress
n_i	National Tide (Chapter 1 only)
ODSR	Open Democratic Seat Rate
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares Regression
p_i	Party Characteristics (Chapter 1 only)

P	Probability of Winning Election to Office
RNI	Republican Negative Integrity
R	Risk in Running for Office
R_i	Probability of Reelection (Chapter 1 only)
RRR	Republican Retirement Rate
U	Utility of Office

Chapter 1: Introduction

“[T]he political parties created democracy and [...] modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of political parties” (Schattschneider 1942, 1).

For early party government theorists, such as E. E. Schattschneider, political parties were essential for the creation and operation of democracy. Theories of party government emphasize the importance of distinct political parties, parties which offer voters meaningful party programs. An essential element of responsible party government is collective responsibility (Ranney 1954). Collective responsibility through parties means that party members are held accountable for the actions of their political party. This concept seems to clash with modern conceptions of congressional behavior, which argue that members of Congress (MCs) act in their own self-interest rather than on behalf of the interests of Congress as an institution or their political party. They build individual reputations for constituent service, they court constituent interests, and they strengthen their incumbency advantage (Mayhew 1974a; Fenno 1978). It is their own electoral, institutional, and policy goals that are paramount, not those of Congress or their political party. In such a context, how can MCs be held collectively responsible? The party record provides a possible answer. The party record is a party's reputation in the electorate, a reputation that hurts or harms the electoral prospects of all party members.

This research seeks to determine if the party record provides the kind of collective responsibility advocated by responsible party government theorists. It also addresses the following questions: Does the party record influence election outcomes? Does it impact the behavior of party members? If these questions are answered in the affirmative, then the party record may provide the means through which to achieve collective responsibility.

In this dissertation, I will do the following. First, I will provide a thorough description of the party record and related concepts. Second, I devise and test a measure of integrity, a component of the party record. Third, I address recent developments in the party record literature regarding the intra-chamber nature of the party record and challenger versus incumbent party records while also distinguishing the party record from national tides. Fourth, I analyze the party record across three different election-related dependent variables—challenger entry, retirements, and election results. Finally, I will summarize the results of my research and describe the implications of my research for collective responsibility and responsible party government.

The rest of this chapter proceeds as follows. First, partisan theories of legislative organization are discussed. Reviewing this literature will put the concept of the party record in a larger context. Second, the concept of the party record is reviewed. Cox and McCubbins' (1993) initial formulation of the party record, as well as subsequent refinements, are summarized. Third, differences between the party record and national tides are discussed. Both the party record and national tides could act as mechanisms through which party members may be held collectively accountable. These two concepts, however, are quite different, and it is important to draw distinctions between them. Fourth, a chapter-by-chapter summary for evaluating the party record is given. Last, the importance of party record research for political science is discussed.

Party Government Theories of Legislative Organization

Positive party government theorists have produced two major theories of Congressional organization—conditional party government and cartel theory.

Conditional Party Government

Under conditional party government (CPG), party leaders are granted greater power by party members under two conditions—intraparty homogeneity and interparty heterogeneity of policy preferences. Intraparty homogeneity means that members of a political party in Congress have similar policy preferences. Interparty heterogeneity of preferences means that the members of the Democratic Party have policy preferences that are substantially different from members of the Republican Party. The obvious implication here is that the power of parties and their leaders varies depending on the policy preferences of those in Congress.

Prior to the late 1980s, scholars had largely dismissed parties as weak and irrelevant, leaving Fiorina (1980) to lament that there had been a decline in collective responsibility, ultimately leading to government inaction. CPG theorists, particularly Rohde (1991), might argue that Fiorina had witnessed a period during which parties were not powerful because the two conditions for CPG had not been met. This period, according to Rohde (1991), was characterized by intraparty heterogeneity. Southern Democrats often aligned themselves with Republicans to block the efforts of liberal Democrats to pass legislation. Furthermore, the Northeast saw its share of liberal Republicans, who crossed party lines to support Democratic legislation, decline. As the solidly Democratic South began to vote Republican, conservative Southern Democrats were replaced by conservative Republicans. As a result, parties became more ideologically homogenous. During this period of time, House and party caucus rules were changed to strengthen political parties and their leaders. These changes included the elimination of seniority as the sole basis for ascension to committee chairmanships, greater involvement of the leadership in committee assignments, and a strengthening of the Rules Committee, among

others (Rohde 1974; 1991; Cox and McCubbins 2005). With the change in policy preferences of members of both the Democratic Caucus and the Republican Conference, House and caucus rules were altered to strengthen political parties.

Cartel Theory

In contrast to CPG, cartel theory focuses on the electoral goal of legislators (Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005; Smith 2000). CPG touches on the electoral goal by tying legislators' preferences to constituency interests (Aldrich and Rohde 2001), but cartel theory places even greater emphasis on the electoral goal. The goals of political parties, according to cartel theory, include control of agenda powers, making good public policy, improving the party record, reelecting party members to the House, gaining or maintaining a majority, and reelecting party leaders to their positions (Cox and McCubbins 2005, 8). To achieve these goals, the majority party operates as a cartel, monopolizing House resources, such as committee assignments and chairmanships, staff, and the plenary schedule (Cox and McCubbins 1993). Moreover, party leaders are given additional powers to pursue their goals.

More recently, Cox and McCubbins (2005) have updated cartel theory to focus on negative agenda setting. Negative agenda setting refers to the ability of the majority party to keep unwanted legislation from passage. The majority party entrusts its party and committee leaders to use their powers to keep the majority party from being rolled by the minority. Committee and party leaders must ensure that legislation opposed by a majority of the majority party does not pass the House. Cox and McCubbins would probably respond differently than Rohde to Fiorina's observation about the weakening of political parties and a decline in

collective responsibility. They might argue that Fiorina is describing an era in which parties are still powerful. Parties utilize their negative agenda powers to keep from being rolled; however, Cox and McCubbins would probably concede that the positive agenda powers of the majority during this period are substantially less than in previous eras, while negative agenda powers are greater. Under CPG, parties are powerful when they meet the conditions of interparty heterogeneity and intraparty homogeneity. Under cartel theory, party strength is relatively constant, but some periods are dominated by negative agenda setting while others are known for positive agenda setting.

According to Cox and McCubbins (2005), cartel theory and CPG are compatible with one another. Indeed, both theories claim that the majority party attempts to steer policies away from the floor median and toward the median of the majority party. Cartel theory is focused on negative agenda setting while CPG focuses on positive agenda setting. Cartel theory places a greater emphasis on structure—how is the House structured to keep the majority from being rolled? Why are committees stacked with majority party members? CPG theorists, on the other hand, focus on how carrots and sticks from party leaders aid in the passage of legislation. Put another way, cartel theory offers an explanation of negative agenda setting while CPG focuses positive agenda setting.

The Party Record

A key component of cartel theory is the party record. Indeed, Cox and McCubbins (1993) state that cartel theory is impossible without the party record. The party record is the reputation of the party in the electorate. This reputation is earned by the actions of Congressional parties and their

members. Passing meaningful legislation, for example, should positively impact the record, while scandal should harm the party record. The party record ties together the electoral success or failure of party members. As Cox and McCubbins (1993, 112) put it, “substantial components of the party record affect all its members similarly: for example, all are hurt by scandal or helped by perceptions of competence, honesty, and integrity; all or nearly all are helped by the party's platform, when taken as a whole.” One of the key questions for normative responsible party government theorists is how to encourage party members to stay loyal to the party (Committee on Parties 1950). The party record, through its electoral consequences, provides an incentive for party members to work together.

Formally, Cox and McCubbins (1993, 110) express the probability of reelection as:

$$\mathbf{Function\ 1.1: } R_i = R_i(c_i; p_i)$$

where R_i = probability of reelection

c_i = personal characteristics

p_i = party characteristics

Thus, the probability of reelection is a function of both the personal characteristics of incumbents as well as their party's characteristics. Personal characteristics include personal qualities, incumbent reputations, and incumbency advantage more generally. Party characteristics include party beliefs, such as party identification, and the party record. The party record accounts for only a portion of the probability of reelection related to party characteristics. In characterizing the probability of reelection in this way, Cox and McCubbins (1993) have identified a mechanism which allows room for both collective responsibility (through the part of reelection probability attributed to the party record) as well as individual reelection prospects.

Previous Research

Evaluating the existence and impact of the party record has been difficult. Cox and McCubbins (1993) have examined interelection partisan swings to determine the existence of party records. They find that House elections tend to favor one party over the other. Also, average party swing is a strong predictor of the probability that an incumbent will win reelection. Jones and McDermott (2004) examine exit polling data from the 1990, 1994, and 1998 midterm elections and find that those who approve of the performance of Congress are more likely to vote for the majority party in the House and the Senate. From this finding, they conclude that legislative parties may be held responsible to the electorate apart from their relationship with the President. The vehicle which allows voters to make this distinction is the party record. Jones and McDermott's analysis falls short in several areas, however. First, the party record, as Cox and McCubbins define it, is an intra-chamber phenomenon. Approval of Congress is a reflection of both the House and Senate, so using it as proxy for the party record is problematic because it is an inter-chamber measure. Such a measure is especially difficult to use when there is a divided Congress with Democrats controlling one chamber while Republicans control the other. Second, Jones and McDermott (2004) only examine midterm elections, but the party record operates in all elections, even if presidential candidates are on the ballot. It is possible that the effect of the party record may be overwhelmed by other factors during some presidential contests, but there is still a party record during those elections. Third, their analysis fails to address minority party records. While Cox and McCubbins (1993) primarily discuss the role of the majority party in the House, minority parties also have party records, and these party records are not addressed by Jones and McDermott.

Taking a different approach, Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) offer a theory of strategic party government which blends elements of both CPG and cartel theory into one theoretical framework. In contrast to Jones and McDermott (2004), Lebo et al use a measure of the party record which is generated by a political party in one chamber of Congress. They find that Democratic legislative victories on the floor of the House increase the number of seats Democrats pick up each election cycle, offering additional evidence for the existence of the party record. Woon and Pope's (2008) examination of the party record finds that ideological labels help explain the election results of MCs. According to cartel theory, only incumbents should receive an electoral benefit from the activities of their parties; however, Woon and Pope find that ideological party labels also aid the election prospects of challengers. Finally, Lebo and O'Geen (2011) find that the success of the President at winning support from his party in the House (competence) seems to matter more for House reelection results than the actions of MCs.

Taken together, these four articles and one book chapter (to my knowledge, these five studies constitute the entire body of party record research) scratch the surface of the party record but leave several unanswered questions. These studies do not address a key component of the party record, integrity, mentioned in previous research (Cox and McCubbins 1993). They do not adequately examine the impact of these components on election results or other election-related phenomena. Specifically, they have not examined the combined impact of ideology, competence, and integrity on incumbent retirement decisions, challenger entry decisions, or election results. Finally, they do not explain in great detail how the party record differs from national tides. The research undertaken in the following chapters examines these deficits in the literature, each of which is discussed in more depth along the way.

National Tides and the Party Record

Before proceeding with the examination of the party record, key distinctions must be made between the party record and national tides. In their formal representation of reelection probability, Cox and McCubbins do not distinguish between the effect of the party record and national tides, but a distinction should be made. Formally, p (party characteristics) is comprised of the impact of national tides (n) and the party record (r), so $R_i = R_i(c_i; n_i, r_i)$. Models of both national tides and the party record predict that elections tend to favor one party over the other; however, the concept of the party record differs from national tides in several respects. First, national tides presumably affect offices beyond the House of Representatives and the Senate. A national tide may impact presidential elections, elections for Senate, and state and local elections. In contrast, the party record should primarily impact House and Senate elections. This difference is made apparent by the standard use of two independent variables in the analysis of national tides: presidential approval and economic conditions. Presidential approval is a standard measure for overall political conditions. Overall political conditions within the country are not related to just one chamber of Congress. Economic conditions also have consequences for a wide range of political offices. Factors that impact the party record, on the other hand, should mostly impact one legislative chamber. That is not to say that the party record does not have spillover effects that influence other races. The actions of parties in the House can have implications for national political conditions. For instance, passage of economic legislation should have some sort of effect on the economy, which should influence national tides. Also, it is possible that the party record influences party committee fundraising, which could bolster or hamper the turnout efforts of national and state party organizations. The impact on these

organizations and their activities could also be reflected in down ballot races. This research, though, is primarily interested in isolating the impact of the benefits and costs of the party record on its intended recipients, MCs. While the party record can have an impact beyond the chamber which generated it, party record research suggests that the main thrust of the party record, its primary effect, is reserved for the party members who are responsible for creating it.

The chamber-specific nature of the party record is not stated explicitly by Cox and McCubbins. They merely show that House elections tend to favor one party over another. Taken as a whole, however, Cox and McCubbins' work suggests that the party record is chamber specific. It is determined by the actions of political parties in each chamber of Congress and should primarily impact only those in the chamber who generated it. Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger's (2007) research also suggests that party records are chamber specific through their use of independent variables that are chamber specific in their analysis, such as Democratic win rate on the floor of the House. Recently, however, Lebo and O'Geen (2011) have challenged the notion that the party record is an intra-chamber phenomenon. Instead, they assert that the legislative success of the President actually plays a larger role in determining the electoral fate of his party in the House than does House legislative success. Their analysis is limited to just one component of the party record, competence, and needs further refinements.

Second, regarding the party record, political parties are, in part, able to determine their own electoral fates. Scandals and bills passed are two chamber specific factors that are influenced by the actions of parties and their leaders. In contrast to these party record variables, the two major independent variables included in the analysis of national tides are beyond the domain of just one chamber of Congress, suggesting that parties in Congress have little control

over national tides. Ultimately, Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger's analysis, taken together with the work of Cox and McCubbins, suggest that parties in the House may help determine the electoral fortunes of their members through the party record. In other words, the actions of parties and their members in the House actually matter for the election outcomes of all members.

Economic conditions and presidential approval do not meet this description. National tides, then, seem to be an inter-branch phenomenon whereas party records are primarily intra-chamber (although this proposition is thrown into doubt by Lebo and O'Geen (2011)).

Third, studies focused on the party record have interpreted it through the lens of the incumbent House member (Cox and McCubbins 1993; Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger 2007; Lebo and O'Geen 2011). National tides, on the other hand, take into account the actions of challengers as well as incumbents. For instance, Jacobson and Kernell's (1983) strategic politicians hypothesis states that quality challengers are more likely to run against an incumbent if national political conditions provide an advantage for their candidacy. Jacobson and Kernell (1983) and Jacobson (1989) focus heavily on the role of challengers; whereas, the party record has been characterized as an incumbent phenomenon. The studies reviewed here, save Woon and Pope (2008) suggest that the party record, as constructed by Cox and McCubbins, should only benefit incumbents, not challengers; whereas, national tides can help or hurt both challengers and incumbents.

Components of the Party Record: Competence, Integrity, and Ideology

Cox and McCubbins (1993) note that all party members are affected equally by party reputations for competence and integrity. With the exception of this blurb from Cox and McCubbins, party

record research has been largely silent on the different dimensions of the party record. Woon and Pope (2008) focused exclusively on ideological reputations while Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) tacitly focused on the competence component of the party record. This research draws attention to the two dimensions identified by Cox and McCubbins as affecting all party members in legislative chamber, *competence* and *integrity*, as well as a third component, *ideology*, identified by Woon and Pope.

Although the party record literature has not focused a great deal on these components, the literature on individual incumbent reputations has paid greater attention to competence and integrity. Previous work has found that incumbents attempt to build positive reputations to strengthen incumbency advantage. Mayhew (1974a, 49-50) suggests that House members engage in three basic activities to help their reelection prospects: advertising, credit claiming, and position taking. With advertising, members of Congress seek to build favorable images or brand names for themselves among their constituents. MCs emphasize certain positive qualities to foster positive reputations with their constituents. Fenno (1978, 55-58) discusses a similar activity, which he calls “presentation of self.” With presentation of self, House members try to manipulate the perceptions that constituents have of them. MCs seek to build the trust of constituents in order to win their votes. One way MCs may work towards that end is by touting their qualifications for holding office. There are two components of qualifications--competence and honesty. Competence refers to a MC's ability to perform the job. Legislators are assumed to be honest unless constituents are given reason to question their honesty. While Mayhew and Fenno use different terms to identify reputation building, both recognize its importance for reelection.

Later scholars have elaborated on the findings of Mayhew and Fenno. Mann and Wolfinger (1980, 622) find that incumbent legislators generally enjoy positive reputations among their constituents. In comparison to their assessments of challengers, constituents have high regard for their incumbent MC. Mann and Wolfinger (1980, 624) conclude that “[v]oters appear to judge candidates, and incumbents in particular, on the basis of their perceived character, experience, and ties to the local community.” Others have examined the quality of incumbents by looking at the reputations of legislators along two dimensions—competence and integrity--finding that integrity, or lack thereof, affects feeling thermometer scores, vote choice, and challenger contacts to voters (McCurley and Mondak 1995; Mondak 1995). Moreover, a poor reputation for integrity decreases vote margin in general elections and in primary elections and decreases the probability of running unopposed in primary elections.

Just as individual legislators attempt to build positive reputations for competence and integrity, party record theorists suggest that parties in Congress build party records designed to bolster the election prospects of their members.

Examining the Party Record

The next three chapters address four questions that remain unanswered by current party record research. First, how do national tides and the party record differ? How are they the same? Second, what is the impact of the integrity component of the party record? Third, is the party record an intra-chamber phenomenon? Finally, in what ways does the party record influence Congressional elections? These questions are answered at three different steps in Congressional elections--challenger entry, retirements, and general election results.

In Chapter 2, the differences and similarities between national tides and the party record are fleshed out in greater detail and assessed empirically. How similar or different are the party record and national tides? In contrast to previous research, three dimensions of the party record are used in the analysis of the party record: ideology, competence, and integrity. For integrity, scandals in the House are identified for each Congress from 1969-2008 and a measure of negative integrity is created by examining scandal-related evening news stories for both Democrats and Republicans. The second component is competence. Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) and Lebo and O'Geen (2011) use Democratic win rate on the floor as a reputational measure, and it is used as a measure of competence in this study. The third component of party record is ideology. Woon and Pope (2008) suggest that ideological reputations are important for each party's record. Ideological labels provide cues to voters about the types of policies that a particular party will pursue. The more ideologically homogenous the party is, the stronger the cue. Polarization between parties also makes ideological reputations clearer. A measure of polarization is also included in the models. Woon and Pope's (2008) model of ideological reputations and election results does not include a measure of competence (Democratic or Republican Win Rate), which may be correlated with ideological homogeneity. Under Conditional Party Government, intraparty ideological homogeneity leads to an increase in the powers of party leaders to pass legislation, so it is expected that ideological homogeneity and Democratic Win Rate are correlated, which may diminish some of the impact of Woon and Pope's ideological component of the party record.

National tide research suggests that national political conditions (presidential approval and the economy) influence challenger entry decisions. Party record research, on the other hand,

suggests that only incumbents receive benefits from the party record. Woon and Pope (2008), however, dispute this assertion; they find that challengers receive an electoral benefit from ideological party reputations. Chapter 2 seeks to add to this debate by evaluating aggregate challenger entry.

In Chapter 3, voluntary departures from the House of Representatives are examined. In the first part of the chapter, aggregate House retirements are examined. The three components of the party record described in Chapter 2 are used to test the impact of the party record on retirements. Previous research has not evaluated the impact of the party record on retirements. I hypothesize that aggregate retirements will increase when the party record is bad and will decrease when it is good. I also examine the individual retirements of members of the House accused of scandal. Party leaders may pressure members of their own party to resign or retire from the House if a scandal is particularly serious and may cause grave harm to the party record.

In Chapter 4, the electoral consequences of the party record are analyzed. Three dependent variables are used—seat change, open seat win rate, and contested seat win rate. An analysis of seat change shows the overall picture of how party records influence election results. An analysis of open seat win rate provides another opportunity to examine whether the each party's record influences the electoral fortunes of non-incumbents. A bad party record with low ideological homogeneity, low ideological polarization between parties, poor competence, and/or poor integrity, should be associated with a decrease in the probability of incumbent reelection and decrease in the percentage of the two-party vote won by that incumbent. Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) and Lebo and O'Geen (2011) examine the competence dimension of the party record on seat change (aggregate election results) while Woon and Pope analyze ideological

reputations, but integrity has not been included in previous research. If no effects are found for incumbent reelection, then it is possible that Cox and McCubbins' party record does not provide the kind of mechanism needed for responsible party government. Lebo and O'Geen (2011) argue that the actions of the President impact the party record, not the actions of Congress, but they have only investigated the competence component of the party record.

The impact of the party record on aggregate challenger entry, retirements, and seat change is conducted for 1970-2008 elections. Because data are unavailable for the integrity variable before 1969, I limit the analysis to this time period. To evaluate the impact of the party record on challenger entry, retirements, and seat change, I use Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) time-series regression. Additionally, I also examine the individual retirement decisions of House members accused of scandal from 1970-2008 using Logistic regression, and I employ Negative Binomial regression for the analysis of evening news stories attributed to each scandal.

In Chapter 5, I conclude by summarizing the results from quantitative analysis of the party record and discussing the implications of those findings for positive Congressional organization theory and responsible party government theories. For positive Congressional organization theory, I describe the empirical findings of this research in the broader context of the debate on Congressional organization. That is, do parties have a significant impact on Congressional organization? Or is a nonpartisan theory of Congressional organization a better fit for the results found in this research? Additionally, the conclusions reached here will be put in the context of normative responsible government theories. The major question to be addressed is, can the party record provide the mechanism called for in normative theory to provide collective responsibility through political parties? In answering this question, I

distinguish between two types of partisan collective responsibility, coalitional and institutional.

Contributions to Congressional Research

The research undertaken here makes several contributions to the literature on Congress. First, the party record is explained and examined thoroughly. Previous research on the party record has scratched the surface of this concept but has not delved as deeply as is required for a concept that is the cornerstone for a major theory of Congressional organization. Second, by delving more deeply into the party record, I distinguish it from national tides. While I was presenting at a panel for the Southern Political Science Association in Atlanta in 2010, the discussant for the panel found it difficult to distinguish between the party record and national tides. In this chapter, I have drawn distinctions between each concept, and in the following chapters, I find support for many of these distinctions. Third, I model three components of the party record in the same statistical models and examine one component, integrity, which has not been analyzed in previous research. Previous research has included models with either a competence or ideological component (Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger 2007; Lebo and O'Geen 2011; Woon and Pope 2008). Fourth, I test the intra-chamber assumption of the party record across all three components of the party record. Fifth, I devise and test measures of negative integrity together with party record measures found in previous research. Cox and McCubbins (1993) note the importance of integrity as a component of the party record, yet no measures have been created and tested. I address this void in the literature. Finally, I model the party record across a wide range of election-related phenomena from challenger quality to retirements, both of which have not been included in past party record research.

Conclusion

In the introduction to this dissertation, I have related a key component of normative party government theory, collective responsibility, to a component of positive party government theory, the party record. The party record should act as a mechanism through which collective responsibility can be achieved. Additionally, I have provided a thorough account of the party record, reviewed the previous literature on the subject, placed it in the larger context of positive party government theories, distinguished party records from national tides, discussed three key components of party record, and provided plans for empirically examining the party record.

Results from a thorough study of the party record may yield several important contributions to political science. First, if the analysis presented here finds that party elections affect congressional behavior and election outcomes, then it will provide empirical support for a critical component of cartel theory, adding to the ongoing debate about the role of political parties in legislative organization. On the other hand, if the analysis finds no support for the party record, then alternative nonpartisan theories of legislative organization may be bolstered. Second, further research on the party record could help democratic theorists better understand the mechanisms by which party members are held collectively responsible. Normative responsible government theory assumes that party members are held collectively responsible for the policies and actions of their political parties. The mechanism, through which this occurs, party labels, is implicit in the literature. Further research on party reputations could provide normative theorists with a more accurate description of how collective responsibility works. Third, further research on party records could answer an important, yet often neglected, question, does Congress control its own electoral fate? National tide research focuses on factors

beyond the exclusive control of members of Congress. Beyond the traditional activities undertaken to build incumbency advantage, the party record provides members of Congress with a way to partially control their own fates through their political parties.

Chapter 2: The Party Record and Challenger Entry

In September 2006, ABC News reported that Republican Representative Mark Foley (R-FL) had sent sexually suggestive e-mails to male teens working in the House of Representatives' page program. Over the next few weeks, more shocking allegations came to light regarding the Congressman's interactions with male pages. He sent sexually-charged instant messages to male pages and actually engaged in sexual activities with two former pages. The plot thickened when the public learned that the Republican leadership in the House knew about Foley's e-mail exchanges with a page from Louisiana and yet failed to act (Zeleny 2006a; 2006b). Shortly after the scandal came to light, Representative Foley resigned his seat in the House. The Foley-page scandal only added additional ammunition to charges made by Congressional Democrats that the Republicans were fostering a "culture of corruption" in both chambers of Congress. Several Democrats challenging vulnerable incumbent House Republicans attempted to make the case that their Republican opponents were tied to the Mark Foley scandal through their party (Hulse and Zeleny 2006). Democratic challengers had pounced on the opportunity to link Republican incumbents to the ethics' woes of their party.

Democratic incumbents have also received their share of attacks from Republican challengers based on the actions of a Democratic colleague. Representative Charlie Rangel (D-NY) ascended to the chairmanship of the House Ways and Means Committee in 2007. Shortly into his term as chairman, allegations of unethical behavior surfaced. In 2008, Rangel was accused of using House letterhead to solicit donations from corporations for the Charles Rangel Center for Public Service at City College of New York. More serious accusations of wrongdoing surfaced in 2008, Rangel was accused of paying rent below market value for several apartments,

receiving free parking, and failing to report assets as taxable income. In 2009, the National Legal Policy Center filed a complaint against Rangel for taking junkets to the Caribbean paid for by a nonprofit in violation of House rules. Rangel's ethics troubles led him to resign his post as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and more recently, he was censured by the House. Republican challengers jumped at the chance to link Democratic incumbents to Rangel's ethics' troubles. In upstate New York, for example, Republican challenger Richard Hanna attacked incumbent Rep. Mark Arcuri for his ties to Rangel. Eventually, Arcuri gave to charity \$23,000 in campaign contributions that he had received from Rangel. Arcuri later urged Rangel to resign from the House (Scott 2010).

In both of these cases, challengers used party links to attack their opponents. Challengers play an important role in electoral politics. They can point out flaws in incumbents that may not receive attention otherwise. They can also call greater attention to the actions of an incumbent's political party, as illustrated by the cases of Foley and Rangel. In both of these cases, challengers believed that incumbents were vulnerable because of their political parties' ties to unethical individuals. These individuals gave challengers campaign ammunition to fire at their incumbent opponents. The only real tie between some incumbents and these ethically-challenged individuals was through their political party. Each of these scandals seem to hurt the Democrats' (Rangel) or Republicans' (Foley) reputations.

This chapter discusses challenger entry as it relates to the party record, a party's reputation in the electorate. The party record is nested within a larger theoretical framework that seeks to explain how chambers in Congress organize themselves, a framework known as cartel theory. According to Cox and McCubbins (1993), without the party record, cartel theory cannot

exist. The party record provides an electoral incentive for members of the same political party to work together to solve collective action problems and organize themselves in such a way as to foster a positive party record to aid the reelection of its members. In this chapter, I study the relationship between aggregate challenger entry and the party record. Also, I propose and test a measure of the integrity component of the party record. Finally, I investigate discrepancies in the party record literature concerning the impact of party records on challenger entry

Challenger Entry

Two broad sets of factors influence the decision of potential challengers to run for the House or not—the incumbency advantage and district effects and national political conditions.

Incumbents seek to exert influence over potential and actual challengers. They engage in a variety of activities to discourage challenger entry (Fenno 1978; Mayhew 1974a), especially the entry of quality challengers. In general, incumbents seek to strengthen their electoral advantage over challengers to discourage serious candidates from running against them in the next election. Put another way, they try to grow the size of their incumbency advantage. There are many resources available to incumbents that give them an electoral advantage. Incumbent activities which help incumbents discourage potential challengers include raising exorbitant sums of money for their campaign coffers (Epstein and Zemsky 1995; though see Goodliffe 2001), spending money in less competitive elections (Goldstein et al. 1986; though see Krasno and Greene 1988), aligning their issue positions with those of their district, securing pork barrel spending projects for their districts, using the franking privilege to send mail to constituents (Mayhew 1974b), and taking care of the needs of their district's citizens through case work

(Fiorina 1977; King 1991; Mayhew 1974b). As a result of these activities, incumbents typically enjoy higher name recognition than challengers and are generally well-liked by their constituents (Mann and Wolfinger 1980). While many constituents may dislike Congress as an institution, they usually have high regard for their incumbent House member (Fenno 1975).

When incumbents are weak (they may not have sufficiently engaged in the aforementioned activities regarding fundraising and carefully taking positions on issues that are in line with their constituency), challenges in the next election become more likely. In Mondak's (1995) study of incumbent quality, he finds that lower quality incumbents are more likely to face a challenger in the next election. He examines quality across two dimensions--competence and integrity (two of the same dimensions examined at the party level in this paper). He also finds that challengers spend more against low quality level incumbents. The geographical location of a district also appears to be an important explanatory variable; incumbents in the one-party South are less likely to face challengers than other regions of the country (Goodliffe 2001). Because potential challengers from the other party viewed the seat as unwinnable, they generally opted not to run against the incumbent. The perception that an incumbent is weak or vulnerable may increase the probability that he or she will face a challenger in the next election because potential challengers may think that they can beat him or her in the general election. Research indicates that the most important factor that influences the decision to run is whether the potential challenger thinks that he or she can win the general election (Maisel and Stone 1997).

In addition to individual and district-level characteristics that influence challenger entry, when national political conditions go against the incumbent's political party, he or she may be more likely to face a challenger in the next general election (Jacobson and Kernell 1983).

National tides also influence the perception that a potential challenger can beat an incumbent. When national political conditions and the economy favor the challenger's party, he or she is more likely to run against the incumbent. Bianco (1984) finds that Watergate increased the propensity of Democrats to challenge Republican incumbents.

Not all challengers are the same--some are of a higher quality than others. Usually political scientists classify challengers who have held an elected office previously as being higher quality (Jacobson 1989). These candidates have experience with raising money, campaigning, and in general being in the public eye. Others have advanced different measures of quality, taking into account characteristics such as celebrity status and occupation (Krasno and Green 1988). Jacobson finds that national political conditions influence the entry decisions of potential quality challengers. In 2006, for instance, President George W. Bush was plagued by low approval ratings as a result of the war in Iraq. House Democrats were able to field a decent number of high quality challengers to capitalize on political conditions that worked against incumbent Republicans (Jacobson 2007). Similarly, in 2008, Bush's low approval rating, this time stemming from poor economic conditions, helped House Democrats field many high quality challengers against incumbent Republicans (Jacobson 2009).

Political scientists focus on challenger quality because higher quality challengers tend to be more successful than lower quality challengers in Congressional elections. Most analyses of challenger quality distinguish between higher and lower quality challengers based on whether or not the challenger has held elected office previously (Jacobson 1989). Those who have held elected office are considered higher quality challengers than those who have not. They are better able to raise money, wage effective attacks against incumbents, and run a campaign. High

quality challengers have the skill and resources to point out the shortcomings of incumbents (Jacobson 1990). Under the strategic politician model, quality challengers will enter a race when they have a chance to win. Usually, this means that the incumbent is weak or national political conditions favor the potential challenger's party or both (Jacobson and Kernell 1983). A national political environment in which the President enjoys high approval ratings and the economy is in relatively good health may dissuade potential quality challengers who do not share the President's party label from running against an incumbent. When national conditions do not favor one party over another, then potential quality challengers are likely to sit the election out. During the 1998 election season, for example, President Bill Clinton faced impeachment charges and uncertain potential Democratic challengers decided to forego the election. Likewise, potential Republican challengers were uncertain about the impact of impeachment on the election, especially given strong economic growth and Clinton's extraordinarily high 66% approval rating (Jacobson 1999).

Incumbents do not wish to face quality challengers. Quality challengers are more successful at unseating incumbents than less experienced, amateur candidates. Jacobson and Kernell (1990) point to the low number of high quality Democratic challengers as one reason why House Republicans lost few seats in the 1986 midterm election, an election in which President Reagan's party was expected to suffer losses as part of the quadrennial midterm loss. In the 2002 midterm elections in which House Republicans defied the midterm loss, Jacobson (2003) notes that the quality of Democratic challengers was the weakest it had been since 1990. President Bush's extraordinarily high, post-September 11 approval ratings played a role in discouraging high quality Democratic challengers from going up against House Republican

incumbents. Bianco (1984) tests Jacobson and Kernell's strategic politician hypothesis at the district-level and finds that economic conditions, incumbent performance in the last election, and district partisanship impact quality challenger decisions.

Bianco's analysis as well as most other analyses of challenger entry decisions, especially those related to challenger quality, assume that all office holders are progressively ambitious (Black 1972; Rohde 1979). Stone and Maisel (1997) find that potential challengers who currently hold office are more likely to think about running for the House than those who are not office holders. Maestas et al (2006) model challenger entry decisions separately from progressive ambition. Examining state legislator decisions to run for the US House, they model progressive ambition as preceding the decision to run for Congress or not. The decision to run for higher office is conditional on having progressive ambition. Factors such as age, sex, family, and the institution in which the officeholder currently serves impact progressive ambition, while at the second stage of the model, factors related to the current election year and the probability of winning a House seat influence the decision to run for the House, provided that the state legislator possesses progressive ambition.

It should be noted that potential candidates decide to run or not to run for a variety of reasons, not just whether or not they can win. Major life changes, political efficacy, and family all influence the decision to run for political office or sit on the sidelines (Fox and Lawless 2011) although whether a candidate can win seems to be the most important determinant of challenger entry decisions (Maisel and Stone 1997). Research on nascent political ambition has demonstrated the importance of factors which lie outside the traditional rational choice strategic politician model. While the approach taken in this chapter is rooted in the traditional, strategic

model, it is important to mention the limitations of such an approach.

The Party Record, Its Components, and Challengers

The party record is a party's reputation in the electorate. It is determined by the actions of political parties in Congress (Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005). Party records exist for both parties in both chambers of Congress. A good party record helps party members win reelection, whereas, a poor party record can hurt the reelection prospects of its members. Parties are interested in securing the reelection of their members in order to gain or maintain majority status, and party leaders are entrusted with fostering a positive party record, one that helps rather than hurts the party's members win reelection (Cox and McCubbins 2005). The party record contains three major components--ideology, competence, and integrity. Parties that are able to pass legislation and deal with the policy problems facing the country are viewed as competent. A poor reputation for competence should also be associated with a decrease in the probability that party members will be reelected. For instance, President Harry Truman described the 80th Congress as a "do-nothing Congress." The Republicans held majorities in both chambers of Congress and opposed many of the legislative proposals offered by Truman. Subsequently, the Republicans lost control of both chambers of Congress in the 1948 election. In 2006, Democrats in the House leveled similar criticisms against the Republican-controlled 109th Congress. They claimed that, despite having control of both chambers of Congress and the Presidency, the Republicans failed to pass important legislation to deal with the problems facing the country. Much like the 1948 election, Democrats picked up enough seats in both the House and Senate to take control of each chamber. Parties whose members engage in scandalous behavior will have poor reputations for

integrity. For instance, several Democratic House members were implicated in ABSCAM, a sting operation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in which an undercover agent offered money to officeholders in exchange for help with immigration matters. This primarily Democratic scandal should hurt the Democratic Party's record and make it more difficult for its members to be reelected to office. .

In addition to competence and integrity, the ideological reputation of each party is an important component of the party record. Recent Congressional scholarship has addressed the importance of ideological extremity in congressional elections. Pertaining to both ideological extremity and partisanship, members of Congress pay great attention to the preferences of their constituents when making roll call decisions (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Bartels 1991; Canes-Wrone and Cogan 2002). Scholars have found that support for one's party or party unity also matters (Canes-Wrone, Brady, Cogan 2002). Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) have examined the relationship between party unity and seat change at the aggregate level, finding that increases in Democratic party unity decrease the number of seats held by Democrats in the House. Carson et al (2010) examine both party unity and ideological extremity at the district level and find that only party unity has a negative impact on reelection results, *ceteris paribus*. Much of the research in this area has focused on ideological extremity, finding that ideologically extreme or out-of-step candidates are less likely to be reelected (Erickson 1971). Woon and Pope (2008) have found that party ideological labels provide an important informational shortcut to voters in Congressional elections when parties are more ideologically homogenous and more polarized. Their efforts are different from previous attempts to examine ideological shortcuts because they claim that there is an institutional foundation to these reputational shortcuts.

Additionally, they do not include variables for ideological extremity, per se. Rather their polarization variable measures the ideological differences between each party, which they have found to increase the electoral fortunes of both parties.

While not emphasized by Woon and Pope, both ideological variables used in their analysis correspond to the two conditions needed for conditional party government (CPG) described in Chapter 1. As interparty ideological heterogeneity (polarization) and intraparty homogeneity increase, party members will strengthen positive agenda powers of their party in order to pursue collective goals, such as passing legislation (Rodhe 1991; Aldrich 1995). It seems that the two conditions of CPG may also provide an electoral benefit for parties.

Little research has been conducted on the role of the party record as it relates to challengers. Woon and Pope (2008), who authored the singular article to even tangentially address this topic, argue that only incumbents should benefit from the party record in elections, and there should be no impact on challengers. Ultimately, they find that the party record has only a negative electoral impact on incumbents while it has a positive effect on challengers. Woon and Pope (2008), however, did not examine challenger entry. Instead, they proceeded to examine election results without first looking at whether incumbents were challenged.

I hypothesize that when the incumbent's party record is good, fewer challengers will enter races against incumbents of that party. When the record is bad, more challengers will enter in races against incumbents. This hypothesis departs slightly from the work of Jacobson and Kernell (1983, 24-5). They posit that parties have little control over challenger entry because of the weak state of political parties in the US. In contrast to this view, I assert that political parties, through their actions in Congress and the reputations built by each party therein, influence the

decision of potential challengers to run or not. Jacobson and Kernell penned their seminal book on strategic politicians when most political scientists viewed parties as weak versions of their former selves. Parties had decreased in strength across all three components—parties in government, parties in the electorate, and parties as organizations—leading Fiorina (1980) to lament the decline of collective responsibility in American politics via political parties. Congressional elections were viewed as candidate-centered with political parties playing virtually no role in the average House campaign. Voters disliked Congress but tended to cast their ballots each election year for their incumbent whom they liked (Fenno 1975; Mann and Wolfinger 1980).

In the 1970s, some scholars began to challenge the prevailing view that political parties were weak and irrelevant. During this time period, institutional changes in the House of Representatives strengthened the Democratic Caucus and weakened the power of committee chairmen (Rohde 1974; 1991). Moreover, earlier changes in the composition of the Rules Committee made it easier for the majority party to report a bill to the floor with a favorable rule, which would increase the likelihood of passage. Through caucus and House rules changes, party leaders were given increased power to pursue the goals of the caucus, which included passing legislation, reelecting party members, gaining or maintaining majority status, and safeguarding the party record. Party leaders should work to improve the party record in order to provide an electoral benefit to party members. A good incumbent party record provides a benefit to incumbents while a bad incumbent party record is an electoral burden. In this way, changes in the strength of parties in government have altered the nature of Congressional elections. Elections are not merely candidate-centered affairs, but political parties also influence, and have

an interest in, the outcome of each election.

Potential challengers, then, are not just challenging an incumbent House member who largely controls his/her own electoral fate. Rather, they are also challenging the incumbent's party record. It is possible that an incumbent MC may have a good individual reputation but his/her party's record may be bad, which could hamper his ability to win reelection. The reverse may also be true--an incumbent may have a poor individual reputation, but his/her party's record strengthens his prospects for reelection.

As stated previously, Jacobson (1989) operationalizes a quality challenger as one who has held an elected position previously. Quality challengers should pay more attention to the political climate, which includes the party record and national tides. Quality challengers are or have been heavily involved in politics. Moreover, potential quality challengers currently holding positions may have to give them up in order to run for Congress, so they must be relatively certain that they can legitimately contend for a seat in the House of Representatives or the Senate before giving up their position and the concomitant benefits of that position.

Jacobson and Kernell (1983, 22) present the following model of challenger entry:

$$\textbf{Function 2.1: } U = (PB) - R$$

where

U= utility of target office

P = probability of winning election to office

B = value of office

R = risk

Using this simple utility function, there are two terms that are relevant to the discussion. As

stated previously, potential quality challengers who currently hold an office must consider the costs of running for Congress or what Jacobson and Kernell call risks (R in Function 2.1), costs which may include leaving their current position. Challengers must pay close attention to the probability of winning the election (P in Function 2.1), which is influenced by the party record. In a survey of potential House challengers, Maisel and Stone (1997) found that the most important determinant of whether a potential challenger decides to enter a race or not is the probability that he or she can actually win.¹ This probability may be affected by the party record. When the incumbent's party has a negative party record, then the probability of winning reelection should increase and the potential challenger should be more likely to run. When the opposite is true (the incumbent's party has a positive party record), then the potential challenger should be less likely to run for Congress.

National Tides and Party Records

One of the goals of the research conducted here is to draw distinctions between national tides and the party record. In Jacobson's (2007) analysis of the determinants of the 2006 midterm election results, he attributes the Democrats' success to a national tide produced by the Iraq War and a Republican "culture of corruption." While the former is a component of a national tide, the latter is actually a component of the party record. In this section, I discuss the difference between party records and national tides. The two have similarities, but they are distinct concepts with

¹Calculating the probability of winning the election is more difficult than just examining general election prospects—the probability of getting through the primary should be taken into account as well (Stone and Maisel 2003). For the purposes of this research, because I am interested in an examination of the party record, the interplay between the two major political parties, and its effects on general election results, I focus exclusively on general election results, but it is important to remember that potential candidates must also pass the hurdle of winning the primary election.

important differences. Table 2.1 provides a summary of these differences and similarities. Both national tides and the party record influence the challenger entry calculus in a similar way. The probability of winning reelection P is influenced by national tides and the party record. National tides either increase or decrease P depending on if the potential challenger is affiliated with the party that is favored in the election. The party record is more complex and it is the interplay between two party records, which influence election results, one record for the challenger's party and one record for the incumbent's party. The traditional view of the party record is that only the incumbent is helped or hurt by the party record, but this view has been challenged by Woon and Pope (2008), who find that ideological reputations can help challengers. It is possible then that both the incumbent and challenger party records influence challenger entry through P . National tides help or hurt candidates, regardless of whether the candidate is an incumbent or challenger. According to most studies of the party record, it is produced by one party in one chamber of Congress (Cox and McCubbins 1993; Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger 2007; Woon and Pope 2008). Party records are largely determined by political parties and their members. The party record can be helped or hurt by just a single member of a legislative party, or it can be helped or hurt by a collection of members. For instance, in 2008, Vito Fossella (R-NY) was arrested for driving while under the influence (Hernandez 2008). Later that Congress, it was revealed that Fossella had a secret family, a mistress and a child whom he had been hiding from his wife (Barron 2008). Fossella's unethical behavior may have hurt the Republican Party record in the House of Representatives. House Democrats have also been plagued by a number of scandals during the period from 1970-2008. During the 94th Congress, for example, the Democratic Party record was damaged by a number of scandals, the most salacious of them involved sex for pay.

Table 2.1: Key Differences and Similarities Between National Tides and Party Records		
National Tides	Party Record	Revised Party Record
Influence P in challenger entry calculus and retirement calculus	Influence P in challenger entry calculus and retirement calculus	Influence P in challenger entry calculus and retirement calculus
Impact both challengers and Incumbents	Impact incumbents only	Impact both challengers and Incumbents (Woon and Pope 2008)
Produced by actions of multiple institutions	Produced by actions of party in one chamber of Congress	Produced by actions of President and Congress, at least for competence (Lebo and O'Geen 2011) Produced by House and Senate (Jones and McDermott 2004)
Potentially affects elections at all levels of government	Primarily affects elections for one chamber of Congress	Primarily affects elections for one chamber of Congress Affects elections for House and Senate (Jones and McDermott 2004)

In 1975, a House Administration Committee staffer Elizabeth Ray alleged that she was only hired because she had an affair with Committee Chairman Rep. Wayne Hays (D-OH). She was unqualified for the position, but because of her relationship with the Chairman, she was given the job (Salpukas 1976). Hays initially denied the allegations and then admitted to the affair on the floor of the House. Subsequently, he was stripped of his chairmanship (Lyons 1976). In another case of sex for pay, Rep. Allan T. Howe (D-UT) was arrested for attempting to purchase sex from two undercover female police officers in Salt Lake City's red light district. Howe was ultimately found guilty of a misdemeanor solicitation charge. These are just two cases out of a collection of Democratic scandals which damaged the House Democrat's party record during the 94th Congress. Each of these examples is an illustration of the intra-chamber nature of the party record. The party record is produced by the actions of a party or its members in one chamber of

Congress.

The intra-chamber nature of the party record has been implicitly questioned by two studies. First, Jones and McDermott (2004) use approval for Congress as a proxy for the party record. Congressional Approval, however, is a measure of the approval for both the House and the Senate. This is, of course, problematic when control of Congress is divided between the two parties with one controlling the House while the other controls the Senate. Different parties cannot share the same party record, so the use of Congressional Approval as a proxy for the party record under these circumstances makes little sense. Second, Lebo and O'Geen (2011) find that when the President wins legislative votes (that is, the House takes the President's position on a bill via roll calls), his party in the House benefits. They claim that this may be part of the party record.

In contrast to the intra-chamber nature of the party record, national tides are often produced by one or more branches of government. In the 1994 midterm elections, House Republicans were able to nationalize House races. Republican challengers were able to tie House Democratic incumbents to President Bill Clinton's health care policy faux pas and blame them for legislative gridlock (Jacobson 1996). The nationalization of the 1994 election helped Republicans win majority control of the House for the first time in 40 years. The results of the 1994 midterm election serve as an example of a national tide in which national issues help determine the outcome of an election. Many use presidential approval and an economic indicator as independent variables associated with national tides. Presidential approval is used as a way to capture general political conditions within the United States. Economic conditions are determined by both the economic and political systems. Economic policies and the conditions

that follow from them are a result of the actions of the President, Congress, and the bureaucracy, among others. In their analysis of the midterm election of 1986, Jacobson and Kernell (1990) conclude that both high presidential approval and relatively good economic conditions helped the Republican Party lose very few seats in the House (during midterm elections the President's party usually suffers significant losses, a phenomenon I discuss later in Chapter 4). Often national tides are produced by salient political issues that are beyond the control of one chamber of Congress. For instance, according to Abramowitz (2001), President Bill Clinton's impeachment produced the second midterm gain for the President's party since the Civil War. A voter-backlash against the impeachment proceeding produced a three seat gain for House Democrats. The events of September 11, 2001 in which terrorists hijacked planes and crashed them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon produced a rally around the flag effect, a very high approval rating for President Bush's handling of terrorism and national security issues, and general approval of President Bush afterwards that helped Republicans escape the tradition of the President's party's midterm loss (Jacobson 2003). Events that are historically more distant may also be characterized by national tides. Carson et al (2001) describe the impact of Civil War casualties on the midterm Congressional elections of 1862. The authors found that the number of war casualties in each district hurt Republican candidates. The Civil War was the most salient political issue of the time, and voters tended to blame the Republican Party for these casualties. As a result, they suffered at the polls. War policy and success or failure on the battlefield was the result of the actions of many actors within the Union government. In the special case of war, the actions of the opposing force are also important. War policy success for the Confederacy means war policy failure for the Union. In sum, the national tide described by Carson et al (2001) was

the result of the actions taken by the President, Congress, the army and its generals, and the opposing government, the Confederate States of America, and its military. In general, public policy and its outcomes are beyond the control of a single chamber of Congress and often beyond a single branch of government for that matter. This differs from the party record which is determined by the actions of a party within a single chamber of Congress.

While the party record and national tides are generated by different components of government, the scope of their electoral impact is different as well. The effect of the party record is likely to be smaller than that of national tides. The party record should mostly hurt or benefit the electoral prospects of party members in one chamber of Congress. Parties have given broad powers to party leaders in order to safeguard or improve the party record (Cox and McCubbins 1993). These party leaders will act to help their own members win reelection. They are selected by, and responsible to, their party (to the extent they serve as faithful principals to the party (Sinclair 1999)). Essentially, members of their party in the House act as another set of constituents to whom they must attend. In order to hold on to their positions, they must perform in a way that helps these ‘constituents.’ The Democratic leadership in the House, for example, manipulates their party record in order to provide an electoral benefit for House Democratic members. They are less concerned with Democratic members of the Senate because they are selected by, and responsible to, Democratic House members. House Democratic leaders then will act in a way that primarily benefits House Democrats. This view of the party record was implicitly questioned by Jones and McDermott (2004) when they used approval for Congress as a proxy for the party record to evaluate both House and Senate elections.

The electoral effect of national tides is broader in scope. A national tide can affect

elections from President to Congress to state and local races. National tides, as stated previously, are usually produced by the actions of those within several branches of government and sometimes those outside of government. For instance, in 1980, Republicans won both the White House and control of the Senate for the first time since Dwight Eisenhower was President. Economic performance under President Carter and Congressional Democrats had been poor. Coupled with the Iranian Hostage situation, the 1980 election saw a national tide that favored Republicans in both elected branches of the federal government. It is possible that one branch of government can create a national tide, but the branch of government that seems to create such tides is the President, not Congress. For instance, President Richard Nixon's involvement in the Watergate cover-up produced a national tide which favored Democrats in the 1974 midterm elections. Watergate increased the propensity for potential Democratic challengers to run against Republicans (Bianco 1984). As a result, Democrats picked up seats in both the House and Senate. National tides seem to stem from Presidential action, not Congress, when they originate from merely one branch of government

Party Record Models of Challenger Entry

In this section, I propose six distinct models of the party record and challenger entry. Multiple models are presented for two reasons. First, there is a controversy in the party record literature regarding the impact of the party record on challengers. The classic view of the party record suggests that only incumbents should be affected by the party record (Cox and McCubbins 1993). For challenger entry, this means that only the incumbent party record should influence challenger entry decisions. Woon and Pope (2008)—vis-à-vis the classic view--find that

challengers benefit from party reputations. For challenger entry, this means that the potential challenger's party record influences challenger entry decisions. In order to explore this discrepancy in the literature, I present several models that vary the impact of the incumbent and challenger party records on challenger entry. Second, there is reason to suspect that quality challengers are less likely to respond to changes in the party record than nonquality challengers because it can be more costly for them to run. I vary challenger quality across models in order to account for such a relationship. Each model variant presented has distinct implications for challenger entry and the party record.

Model Variant A: All Challengers with the Incumbent Party Record Only

In model A, only the incumbent's party record influences challenger entry decisions. The incumbent's party record influences P , the probability of winning the reelection. A 'good' incumbent's party record will help dissuade potential challengers from running against him or her. A 'bad' party record will increase P for the potential challenger and the probability that she will run against the incumbent will increase. This is the classical view of the party record, one in which only the incumbent benefits from the party record. In this model, all challengers are equally likely to run against an incumbent. Quality or nonquality challengers behave similarly to changes in P , *ceteris paribus*.

Model Variant B: All Challengers with Challenger Party Record Only

In model B, only the challenger's party record influences challenger entry decisions. The party record does not provide an electoral benefit to incumbent members of the political party;

rather, a benefit is provided to challengers. Party leaders safeguard or improve the party record in order to attract challengers to take on incumbents in the rival party. The party record may serve as a kind of recruitment tool whereby party leaders attract challengers to try to gain majority status or increase the number of seats held by the party. A good potential challenger party record increases P and the concomitant probability of challenger entry. A bad potential challenger party record has the opposite effect. In this model, all challenger entry decisions are equally impacted by the potential challenger's party record.

Model Variant C: All Challengers with Incumbent Party Record and Challenger Party Record

In model C, both the incumbent's and challenger's party records influence challenger entry decisions. The party record is generated in order to provide an electoral benefit to the incumbent; however, it is also used as a tool to recruit potential challengers to run against incumbents from the rival party. Party leaders are interested in reelecting their incumbents while also expanding the number of seats they hold, making it easier to gain or maintain majority status. Both the challenger and incumbent party records influence P . A good incumbent party record will decrease P while a good challenger party record will increase P . This model does not distinguish between potential quality and nonquality challengers. Each type of challenger will respond similarly to changes in the party record.

Model Variant D: Challenger Quality with Incumbent Party Record Only

Like model A, in model D, House elections are referenda on the incumbent and his or her party, and the characteristics of challengers and their parties matter very little for voters. Unlike

model A, potential challengers can be distinguished by their quality. A potential quality challenger is one who is familiar with the electoral process, can raise money, has some name recognition, and generally offers greater competition for the incumbent. Many potential quality challengers are office holders when they make the decision to run for the House or not. In many cases, the potential quality challenger would need to give up his other office in order to run for the House, either because of legal limitations or because he cannot successfully run for two offices at once. In other words, there is an additional cost for potential quality challengers to run for the House, a cost not born by nonquality challengers. The R in Function 2.1 represents this cost. The cost is generally greater for potential quality challengers than it is for nonquality challengers. This means that potential nonquality challengers are more likely to respond to changes in the party record and are more likely to enter a race against an incumbent. By contrast, potential quality challengers will only respond to major changes in the incumbent's party record because they need a higher P to offset the higher R associated with giving up a currently held elected position.

Model Variant E: Challenger Quality with Challenger Party Record Only

In model E, only the challenger's party record influences voter decisions. Party leaders manipulate the party record in order to help recruit challengers to run against rival incumbents. Nonquality challengers are more likely to respond to these overtures via the party record from parties and their leaders and run against an incumbent. Quality challengers require a stronger challenger party record than nonquality challengers to offset the costs associated with running for office and giving up an elected position.

Model Variant F: Challenger Quality with Incumbent and Challenger Party Records

In model F, both the incumbent's and challenger's party records influence challenger entry decisions. Knowing that both party records influence P , potential challengers will enter or not based in part on these party records. Not all challengers will respond similarly to changes in the party record via P . Potential quality challengers are less likely to run against an incumbent and require a higher P than nonquality challengers to offset the higher costs (risk) that are often associated with being a potential quality challenger. In other words, nonquality challengers are more likely to respond to changes in the party record because they do not have to contend with the cost of giving up a currently held elected position.

Rationality, Timing, and a Critique of the Models

These model variants assume that both quality and nonquality challengers are rational. They are self-interested, utility maximizers who seek the benefits of elected office. This assumption seems reasonable enough for quality challengers who are seemingly more familiar with the political and electoral process. They have greater experience and information, which allows them to more accurately gauge P than nonquality challengers. Potential nonquality challengers, on the other hand, have less experience and may have a less accurate view of their chances of winning than quality challengers. In contrast to the descriptions of nonquality challenger entry decisions discussed in models D,E, and F, nonquality challengers may not respond to changes in either the incumbent or challenger party records because they have an inaccurate view of P , lacking the experience and expertise to precisely gauge their reelection prospects. Other nonquality challengers may not fit the challenger entry calculus at all because they are not interested in

actually winning the election and assuming the benefits of office. Nonquality challengers may run for a variety of reasons other than winning the election and taking a seat in the House. For instance, while working for one long shot, nonquality challenger's campaign for the House, he told me that he decided to run against a safe incumbent because he thought that the voters of that district deserved a choice in the general election. The incumbent had run unopposed in the previous election, and my employer did not wish for that to happen again. He did not necessarily expect to win. Other candidates may run to draw attention to a particular issue or set of issues, not necessarily to win and gain the benefits of office.

In addition to the concerns raised about the rationality of nonquality challengers, the timing of challenger entry decisions for both nonquality and especially quality challengers may make it difficult to demonstrate a relationship between the party record and challenger entry. Potential challengers, for a variety of reasons, usually make the decision to run for the House or not during the first session of Congress or early into the second session.² As I explain later, the integrity component of the party record is operationalized as a negative integrity measure based on each party's scandals in the House for each Congress. Because many scandals are not known until the second session of Congress, challengers may not take these scandals (and thus negative integrity for the full Congress) into account when they make their decisions to run for Congress or not. Timing may play a role in determining if the party record, as I later operationalize it, actually influences challenger entry decisions.

² For instance, some state or county governments require candidates to file the paperwork and in some cases collect enough signatures to appear on the ballot for the primary early in the second session of Congress. Moreover, challengers need to identify supporters and campaign donors early so that they have the funds to run a competitive race against an incumbent.

Constructing Negative Integrity

A negative integrity measure is created for the integrity component of the party record. This measure is developed by examining scandals in the House of Representatives. In order to calculate a measure for negative integrity, all accusations of scandals for each Congress were identified using *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs*, Herrick (2003), and Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (2004). Scandal is defined as any behavior that breaks federal or state law or violates House Ethics rules. Past scandal research has relied exclusively on Ethics Committee investigations (Peters and Welch 1980; Welch and Hibbing 1998) or Ethics Committee investigations coupled with *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs*. Regarding an Ethics Committee only approach, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct launched few investigations in its first few years, and after Rep. Newt Gingrich's departure from the House due to ethics concerns, an informal truce between Democrats and Republicans, lasting for seven years, slowed down Ethics Committee investigations (Babington and Morgan 2004). In addition to these 'slow' investigative periods, only including members investigated by the Ethics Committee is inadequate because not all serious accusations are investigated by the Ethics Committee. Often, an ethically-challenged House member will resign to avoid an investigation by the Ethics Committee. The Committee does not investigate former members, so one way to head off an investigation is to quit. *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs* list all the members investigated by the House and they even include some allegations of wrongdoing not investigated by the Committee, but they still do not include *all* members who face a scandal. Using newspaper reports and Herrick (2003) to supplement *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs* provides a more thorough list of scandals in the

House.

After identifying a scandal, I then count the number of news stories that mention a scandal shown during ABC, CBS, and NBC evening news programs. News stories are identified using Vanderbilt's Television News Archive.³ I search the news abstracts using the accused members first and last name; first name, middle initial, and last name; and finally, nickname and last name. I then summed all the news stories for each party's scandals during a particular Congress to get an aggregate measure of negative integrity for each party. News stories that featured more than one party member accused of scandal were not double-counted; however, a news story that featured members of both parties accused of scandal was counted towards the negative integrity measures for each party.

Many scandals continue to generate news stories past the initial Congress in which the scandal broke. As a result, there is what I call a 'scandal hangover.' Scandal hangover refers to the news stories generated after the Congress during which the scandal was first reported. I find that the scandal hangover is substantial for Democrats. A measure of negative integrity that only counted new stories generated by scandals that were generated during the Congress that the scandal broke substantially underestimates *Democratic Negative Integrity*. The impact on *Republican Negative Integrity (RNI)* is much less. For instance, during the 96th Congress (the 1980 election), *Democratic Negative Integrity (DNI)* would consist of 84 stories if only stories attributed to scandals that broke during the 96th were included; however, several trials and ethics proceedings related to Koreagate (which was initially reported during the 95th Congress)

³ Dancy (2010) develops a nonpartisan measure of aggregate scandal publicity using evening news stories from ABC, CBS, and NBC evening news stories. The measure developed here is partisan and uses a different search procedure than Dancy uses to construct his measure. He searches for general scandal terms, whereas I search using the names of those accused of scandal.

occurred during the 96th. 57 stories related to scandals that broke during the previous Congress were reported on the evening news during the 96th Congress. Not including these 57 stories substantially underestimates *DNI* for the 96th Congress. I, therefore, count news stories attributed to scandals from the previous Congress in *DNI* and *RNI* scores for each Congress.

Using television news stories as a measure of negative integrity poses both advantages and disadvantages for the research undertaken in this study. Evening news programs are constrained in their coverage of important events by limited air time of one half-hour per day. This means that more serious scandals should be covered by television media, leaving out less serious but still potentially important scandals. Also news coverage from a scandal can proceed for more than two Congresses (although this is rare), and the measure I have constructed does not account for news coverage that lasts for more than two Congresses. On the flip side, millions of viewers get their news from evening news programs, and since the negative integrity measure is meant to reflect changes in the reputation of a Congressional political party, then a medium which reaches and potentially influences the opinions and attitudes of millions may serve as a particularly good measure of negative integrity.

Television news stories are one means by which a measure of negative integrity could be constructed. Alternatively, one could use newspaper articles in a similar way, but Puglisi and Snyder (2011) have shown that papers with liberal editorial pages tend to overreport Republican scandals while those with conservative editorial pages overreport Democratic scandals. No such findings exist for evening news programs. Moreover, newspaper coverage may have a regional bias, over reporting some scandals while underreporting others (Brown 2001). This does not appear to be the case with evening news programs. Another potential alternative to this measure

is the creation of one or more factors through factor analysis. Unfortunately, the number of time points under study is too few for factor analysis to be conducted. Factor analysis methodologists offer various recommendations about the number of observations required for factor analysis. Most, however, seem to agree that at least 100 observations are necessary (Kline 1993).

Table 2.2 shows summary statistics for Democratic and Republican Negative Integrity while Figure 2.1 shows both Democratic and Republican Negative Integrity over time. Overall, Republicans, until recently, maintained lower levels of *Negative Integrity* than Democrats. Comparing the two medians, Republicans had a median of 5.5 stories per Congress while Democrats had a median of 31 per Congress. For the 1970s through the very early 1980s, Republicans had relatively low levels of *Negative Integrity* while Democrats had much higher levels. This period featured two major scandals, Koreagate and ABSCAM, which primarily affected Democrats. Not coincidentally, this is also the period when the House passed a code of ethics in response to the many scandals involving its members. *RNI* was largest during the 109th Congress (the 2006 election), a period with a large number of scandals, but two in particular, the Mark Foley page scandal and the many ethics problems faced by Tom Delay contributed most to *RNI*. Because *Negative Integrity* is a count, the standard deviation for both *DNI* and *RNI* is rather high, 41.6 for *DNI* and 35.0 for *RNI*. For most of the time period under study, Negative Integrity for each party behaves largely as expected, increasing as the number and seriousness of scandals increases, save for the 1992 election (102nd Congress). The *DNI* score is a mere 21 for this period. There are two reasons for the discrepancy between actual *DNI* and the expectation of a large *DNI* for this period. First, I only counted stories regarding the 20 most prolific check kites identified by the Associated Press. The rest of the 280+ members were excluded from my

	Democrat	Republican
Median	31	5.5
Mean	46.6	20.9
Standard Deviation	41.6	35.0
Minimum	0	0
Maximum	143	148
N	20	20

search. Second, TV news did not spend a great deal of time covering the House Bank Scandal. It seems that political science researchers have devoted more time to this scandal than the evening news did.

Assessing Content and Convergent Validation

Adock and Collier (2001) identify three types of measurement validation: content, convergent, and construct validation. Content validation means that the measurement developed “captures the full content of the systematized concept” (538). In the context of integrity, do *DNI* and *RNI* adequately represent the concept of the integrity dimension of the party record? Convergent validation means that there is a relationship between the measure developed and other indicators thought to measure similar concepts (540). Construct validation requires hypothesis testing with dependent variables that should co-vary with the measure. Tests for construct validation are conducted on challenger entry later in this chapter along with retirements and election results in subsequent chapters.

Content Validation

DNI and *RNI* tap only potential negative changes in the way voters perceive each political party in the House. There may be actions taken by each party that influence the integrity

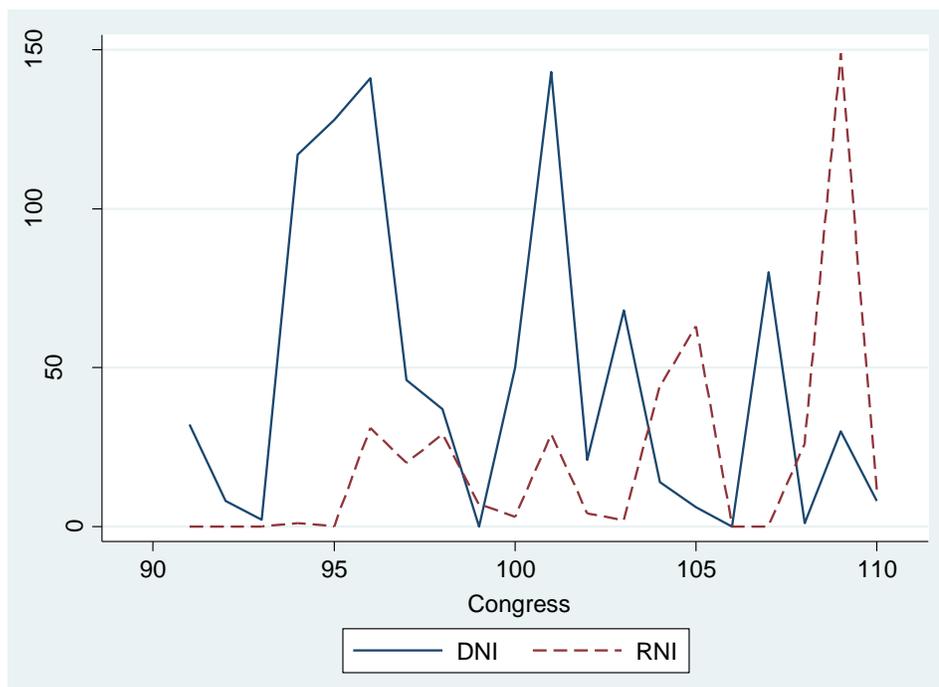


Figure 2.1: Democratic and Republican Negative Integrity, 91st-110th Congress

component of the party record in a positive way. Perhaps the passage of ethics legislation or voting to decline pay raises increases a party's reputation for integrity. The inability to incorporate positive change in the integrity component of the party record is one shortcoming of a strictly negative integrity measure.

Another problem worth noting is that scandals may continue to generate news stories for several Congresses beyond the initial Congress in which allegations were made. If *DNI* and *RNI* included only news stories from the initial Congress during which allegations of impropriety were made, then these measures may underestimate negative integrity. For instance, accusations of impropriety against Speaker Jim Wright (D-TX) surfaced during the 100th Congress, but much of the media coverage surrounding the scandal occurred during the 101st Congress. The Wright

news stories generated during the 101st are not included in DNI because only stories aired during the Congress during which the scandal broke are included. In an effort to account for this effect, I performed a second search for each member of Congress accused of scandal for the next Congress (scandal hangover). A count of these stories is added to the relevant Congress. In some cases, however, scandals may continue to increase negative integrity past two Congresses, but this is rare.

Convergent Validation

How do *DNI* and *RNI* relate to other measures of negative integrity? No other aggregate measures of negative integrity are found in the literature; however, I have calculated the scandal rate (number of MCs accused of scandal divided by party caucus size), guilty rate (number of MCs found guilty of a crime or misdemeanor divided by caucus size), and punish rate (number of MCs punished by House divided by caucus size) for each party-Congress. I compare Republican and Democratic news stories from the Congress during which the scandal broke are included. This is not the same as comparing *DNI* and *RNI* to these other indicators because *DNI* and *RNI* include scandal hangover; however, the correlations that follow give a rough indication of how *DNI* and *RNI* compare with other potential measures. Democratic news stories are most closely correlated with punish rate with a correlation of 0.64, followed by guilty rate with a correlation of 0.43 and scandal rate with a correlation of 0.26. The correlation between Republican news stories and scandal rate is 0.75, punish rate is 0.70, and guilty rate is 0.28. Democratic stories seem to be a better reflection of the severity of the accusations while Republican stories are an indicator of both the breadth of scandal cases as well as punishment by

Congress. The differences between the correlations of these various indicators with Democratic and Republican news stories stem from a higher average number of TV stories per scandal for Republicans at the individual level while at the same time historically Republicans have had lower caucus sizes. Republican scandals generate a higher number of stories than Democratic scandals; however, this difference is not significant.⁴

Variables

The dependent variables are *Democrat Challenger Rate (DCR)* and *Democrat Quality Challenger Rate (DQR)*. *DCR* is calculated by counting the number of Democratic challengers for each election and dividing by the number of Republican incumbents who chose to run for reelection. I then take the first difference of the variable. To calculate *DQR*, I count the number of Democratic quality challengers for each election and divide by the number of Republican incumbents who chose to run for reelection.⁵ Quality challengers are those challengers who have previously held elected office. Table 2.3 lists the independent variables and their hypothesized impact on aggregate challenger entry.

Some alterations to *DNI* and *RNI* are required for dealing with challenger entry. I have recalculated *DNI* and *RNI* in order to take into account the timing of challenger decision making. As stated previously, challengers typically make their decisions at the beginning of an election year or even the year before. To account for this timing issue, *DNI* and *RNI* include only scandal stories reported during the first session of each Congress. Using these altered measures of *DNI*

⁴ I estimated a negative binomial regression model with the count of an individual ethically-challenged MC's scandal stories as the dependent variable and for independent variables: a dummy for party, a dummy for punished or not, a dummy for guilty or not, and a dummy for a moral scandal. Party was not significant while all other variables attained significance.

⁵ The data used to calculate the dependent variables were provided by Dr. Gary C. Jacobson.

Table 2.3 Independent Variables and Hypothesized Relationships with DCR and DQR	
Presidential Approval	+
Income	+
Democrat President	-
Polarization	-
DHA	-
Democratic Win Rate	+
DNIA	-

and *RNI*, I subtract *RNI* from *DNI* to create the measure, *Democratic Negative Integrity Advantage (DNIA)*. I expect that both challenger and incumbent party records influence challenger entry and that it is the difference between these two reputations that will ultimately influence challenger decisions.

The ideology party record component is comprised of two parts.⁶ First, the ideological polarization of each party is calculated. First dimension DW-NOMINATE scores are used to find the median voter of each party for each Congress. I then subtract the Republican median from the Democratic median to calculate *Polarization*.

Second, the homogeneity of each party acts as a measure of ideological signal strength to the electorate. Ideological homogeneity is calculated by taking the standard deviation of each party's DW-NOMINATE scores for a given Congress (Woon and Pope 2008). DW-NOMINATE scores are the standard ideological measure used in Congressional research (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). I subtract Republican heterogeneity from Democratic heterogeneity to calculate *Democratic Heterogeneity Advantage (DHA)*. Since the ideological reputation of each party should be relatively consistent from the beginning to the end of a Congress, no amendments should be needed to deal with the timing of challenger entry decisions.

⁶ Woon and Pope (2008) do not include a measure of ideological extremity in their models. Following their example, I also do not include such a variable in the models.

For competence, I use *Democratic Win Rate*.⁷ *Democratic Win Rate* is the proportion of votes won by Democrats in the House for each Congress. This measure gauges the interaction between two parties, both the challenger's and the incumbent's. Lebo and O'Geen (2011) lag *Democratic Win Rate* by one Congress, and I follow this convention for challenger entry.

In addition to measures for the party record, two national tide variables are included. *Presidential Approval* is the percentage of the public that approves of the President in December of every odd numbered year. This measure is taken from the Gallup Survey. Because of the timing of challenger decisions, I have chosen the last Gallup Survey before each election year to gauge *Presidential Approval*. For all years when the Republicans control the presidency, *Presidential Approval* is multiplied by -1. Additionally, *Democratic President* is a dummy variable, coded 1 for Democratic presidents and 0 otherwise (Jacobson 1989). *Income* is included as an indicator of economic performance. For challenger entry, *Income* is the natural log of US per capita income in 2008 dollars in the year preceding the election to account for the timing of challenger entry decisions.

Democratic Challenger Entry

Figure 2.2 shows *DCR* and *DQR* from 1970-2008. Since *DCR* contains all challengers, including quality challengers, there are likely to be similarities. For both *DCR* and *DQR*, the maximum value is reached during the 1974 election, the first election that occurred post-Watergate. The minimum values, however, are reached at different points in time. For *DCR*, the minimum occurs during the 1998 midterm election while *DQR* reaches its minimum during the 1990 midterm election. Interestingly, the rate of Democratic Quality Challengers in the 2006

⁷ This measure was provided by Dr. Matthew Lebo.

midterm election and 2008 Presidential election was below the mean of 0.21 in both cases, but *DCR* was above the average of 0.88 in both cases.

Table 2.4 shows the results of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression of *Democratic Challenger Rate*. The results show that neither of the two national tide variables is significant. First differences were taken on variables that had unit roots, indicated by the results of Dickey-Fuller tests.⁸ It seems that, at least in Model I, national tide variables do not significantly predict *DCR* when party record variables are included in the same model.

Party record variables performed better. *DHA* is significant but in the opposite direction from what was expected. It seems that as the difference between Democratic heterogeneity and Republican heterogeneity increases, then *DCR* increases. It could be that as Democrats have a

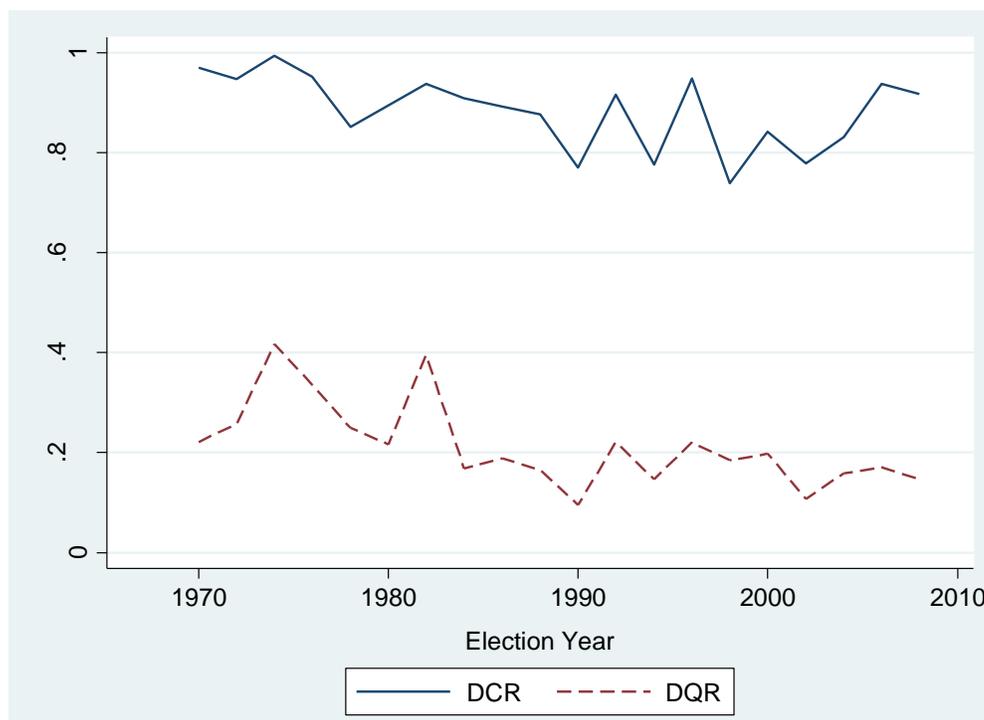


Figure 2.2: Democratic Challenger and Democratic Quality Challenger Rate, 1970-2008

⁸ Kwiatkowski-Phillips-Schmidt-Shin (KPSS) tests for stationarity were also performed and corroborated the results of Dickey-Fuller.

	Model I	Model II
Democratic President	-0.2815*	-0.3579*
	(0.1153)	(0.1158)
Presidential Approval	0.0018	0.0022*
	(0.0010)	(0.001)
$\Delta \ln(\text{Income})$	0.3663	0.5326*
	(0.2317)	(0.2357)
$\Delta \text{Democratic Win Rate}_{t-1}$	0.1342*	0.1464*
	(0.0593)	(0.0554)
Democratic President Win Rate _{t-1}		0.0004
		(0.0002)
$\Delta \text{Polarization}$	-0.9681	-0.6685
	(0.5460)	(0.5354)
DHA	2.5275**	2.4820**
	(0.6926)	(0.6427)
DNIA	-0.0010*	-0.0010*
	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Intercept	0.9565**	1.0027**
	(0.0539)	(0.0567)
N	20	20
Adjusted R ²	0.659	0.707
Breusch-Godfrey LM	$\chi^2=0.359, p>0.549$	$\chi^2=0.267, p>0.605$
Durbin-Watson d	2.07	1.65
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root	$z(t)=-4.74, p>0.0001$	$z(t)=-4.12, p>0.0009$

Note: $p<0.05^*$, $p<0.01^{**}$, standard errors in parentheses

more heterogeneous caucus compared to Republicans, they appeal to a greater number of potential challengers. *DNIA* is significant at the 0.05 level. For each additional scandal news story that Democrats have over the Republican scandal story total, *Democratic Challenger Rate* decreases by 0.1 percentage points. In most years, *DNIA* does not have a substantial impact, but in some years, such as the 1990 election in which a scandal involving Speaker Jim Wright pushed the difference between negative integrity rates to a high of 102 news stories, then *DNIA* depressed *DCR* by 10.2 percentage points. The competence component of the party record attains significance at the 0.01 level. For each additional point in $\Delta \text{Democratic Win Rate}_{t-1}$, *DCR* increases by 14.5 percentage points. An Adjusted R² of 0.659 indicates that the model explains a substantial amount of the variation in ΔDCR , given the parameters estimated. The results of

Dickey-Fuller test performed on the residuals of the model indicate that I can reject the null hypothesis that there is a unit root. The Breusch-Godfrey LM statistic indicates that I cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no serial correlation. The Shapiro-Wilk W test for normality conducted on the residuals indicates that I cannot reject the null hypothesis that the residuals are normally distributed.

In Model II, I estimate a similar model, but I also include *Democratic President Win Rate*_{*t-1*}. Lebo and O'Geen (2011) claim that when House Democrats support the President of their own party, the party record may improve and boost their prospects for reelection. This measure is calculated by finding the proportion of votes in which House Democrats supported a Democratic President's position on a given roll call. For *DCR*, *Democratic President Win Rate* is not significant, but with this variable in the model, *Income* and *Presidential Approval* attain significance while party record variables maintain significance. Standard tests show that autocorrelation is not problematic in Model II nor is there a unit root.

The results for *DNIA* and Δ *Democratic Win Rate*_{*t-1*} provide support for the contention that both party records influence aggregate challenger entry. Each of these variables is the result of the interplay between the two parties. An alternative model of *DCR* which includes *DNI* and *RNI* as separate variables shows that neither is significant (although *DNI* is significant in a two-tailed test). It is the advantage of one party's record over the other that is important for aggregate challenger entry. The statistical significance of *DNIA* provides evidence that the negative integrity measure created for the integrity component of the party record is valid. Specifically, construct validation requires using the measure in hypothesis testing on a dependent variable for which it should help predict changes. The results here provide leverage for construct validation

of negative integrity.

The results of the regression of *DQR* for Model I presented in Table 2.5 reveal that quality challengers, at least in the aggregate, do not respond to party record variables or national tide variables. As explained earlier in the discussion of the individual level model of challenger entry, quality challengers may require a higher *P* (probability of winning the election) than nonquality challengers before deciding to challenge an incumbent. The impact of both national tide and party record variables on *P* may not be large enough to influence aggregate quality challenger entry. Breusch-Godfrey LM test indicates no significant autocorrelation. The Dickey-Fuller test performed on the residuals indicates no unit root, and results from the Shapiro-Wilk W test for normality indicate that I cannot reject the null hypothesis that the residuals are normally distributed.

In Model II in Table 2.5, I include *Democratic Presidential Win Rate*_{*t-1*}. In contrast to the models which included all challengers, quality challengers, at least in the aggregate, appear to respond to *Democratic Presidential Win Rate*_{*t-1*}. For each percentage point increase in *Democratic Presidential Win Rate*, *DQR* increases by an average of 0.1 percent points. Both *Presidential Approval* and *DHA* also achieve significance, but *DHA* is in the opposite direction from what was expected. For each additional percentage point increase in *Presidential Approval*, *DQR* increases by an average of 0.34 percentage points. *DHA* is significant but in the opposite direction from what is expected. Perhaps quality challengers are drawn to more ideologically diverse parties.

It is possible that the party record influences quality challenger entry in some elections and not others. Perhaps the strength of the party record is dependent on the level of partisanship

in the House. I ran models of *DCR* and *DQR* which included the interaction term, *DNIA*Democratic Unity_{t-1}*. These interaction terms were not significant. I also included this term in models of aggregate retirements and seat change in Chapters 3 and 4 and also found no effect. It seems that the party record does not interact with partisanship to produce effects in some elections and not others.

The analysis of aggregate quality challenger entry presented in this section has numerous implications for the discussion of the party record. First, and perhaps the most significant finding in this chapter, the statistical significance of party record variables shows that all challengers, at least in the aggregate, take the integrity and competence components of the party record into account when making entry decisions.

	Model I	Model II
Democratic President	-0.2600 (0.1997)	-0.4505* (0.1692)
Presidential Approval	0.0023 (0.0018)	0.0034* (0.0015)
$\Delta \ln(\text{Income})$	-0.0289 (0.4012)	0.3855 (0.3443)
$\Delta \text{Democratic Win Rate}_{t-1}$	0.0407 (0.1027)	0.0713 (0.081)
Democratic Presidential Win Rate _{t-1}		0.0010* (0.0003)
$\Delta \text{Polarization}$	0.2845 (0.9453)	1.031 (0.7822)
DHA	2.4038 (1.1991)	2.2904* (0.939)
DNIA	-0.0006 (0.0007)	-0.0008 (0.0006)
Intercept	0.3222** (0.0932)	0.4373** (0.0828)
N	20	20
Adjusted R ²	0.236	0.532
Breusch-Godfrey LM	$\chi^2=0.124, p>0.7244$	$\chi^2=0.098, p>0.7547$
Durbin-Watson d	1.966	1.739
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root	$z(t)=-4.07, p>0.0011$	$z(t)=-3.54, p>0.0071$

Note: $p<0.05^*$, $p<0.01^{**}$, standard errors in parentheses

Second, the results show that both the incumbent and challenger party records seem to influence aggregate challenger entry. Each of the party record variables is operationalized in such a way that each variable is a reflection of the interaction between the two parties and requires both party records. These results demonstrate that Woon and Pope's assertion about election results also extends to challenger entry.

Third, the analysis provides support for negative integrity's construct validation. In the DCR models, negative integrity attained significance.

Fourth, national tide variables performed poorly in each of the models when party record variables were included, except in the models that featured *Democratic President Win Rate*. Surprisingly, *Presidential Approval* failed to attain significance in the models (again except when *Democratic President Win Rate*_{*t-1*} was included). Party record variables, on the other hand, attained significance in the model of *DCR* but not *DQR*, save *Democratic President Win Rate*. While I do not show the results here, I re-estimated two models of *DCR* with one that only included national tide variables and another with only party record variables. Just like in the full model of *DCR*, in the party record model, both the integrity and competence components attained significance while *DHA* attained significance but in the opposite direction from that which I expected. In the model of only national tide variables, both income and presidential approval attain significance, something that they could not do in the full model of *DCR*.

Fifth, the failure of most of the party record variables to predict *DQR* is probably related to the higher *P* (probability of winning the election) threshold required for quality challengers to challenge incumbents. In many cases, quality challengers must give up an elected position to run for Congress, increasing *R* (the risk of running for Congress) in their calculi.

Finally, taken together, the results show that Model Variant F best represents aggregate challenger entry. Model Variant F states that both incumbent and challenger entry decisions affect challenger entry and quality challengers do not respond to changes in the party record because these changes do not provide a large enough impact on P (probability of winning reelection) to offset their higher R value.

Conclusion

Both party record variables and national tide variables influence aggregate challenger entry. In the analysis conducted in this chapter, I found support for Woon and Pope's contention that both the challenger's and incumbent's party records may be important. I have also found support for the validation of the negative integrity measure used in this chapter. Additionally, while not necessarily central to the analysis of the party record, I have found that all challengers seem to fit Jacobson and Kernell's challenger entry calculus while quality challengers require a higher P (probability of winning reelection) value than non-quality challengers.

Looking ahead to Chapter 3, voluntary departures from the House of Representatives are examined. Many of the same questions related to the party record that were addressed in this chapter are further examined in the next chapter on a different election-related dependent variable.

Chapter 3: The Party Record and Retirements from the House of Representatives

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, in his efforts to wrest control of the House away from Democrats, Representative Newt Gingrich (R-GA) made ethics a cornerstone of his attack strategy. For nearly 40 years, Democrats had maintained control of the House. During that time, Gingrich argued, the Democrats had become entrenched, corrupt, and unethical. Scandals in the late 1980s only further supported Gingrich's argument. Mario Biaggi (D-NY) was nearly expelled for bribery, Barney Frank (D-MA) hired a male escort as a housekeeper who then ran a prostitution ring out of Frank's home, Speaker Jim Wright (D-TX) was also implicated in wrongdoing. The largest scandal was the House Bank scandal in which hundreds of members, both Democratic and Republican, wrote bad checks from their House Bank accounts. The worst offenders generally came from the Democratic Party, which served to support Gingrich's narrative of an out-of-control, unaccountable, and corrupt Democratic Party. The House Bank scandal drew the ire of voters and weakened the election prospects of several candidates, leading to a substantial number of Democratic retirements. To add to the election woes of the Democratic leadership in the House, 1992 was also the last year that many House members could pocket excess campaign cash for their own personal use upon retirement, and many House members, especially Democrats, decided to take the money and not run (Groseclose and Krehbiel 1994). Democrats were left with a high number of open seats to defend, and Republicans were able to capitalize on the Democrats' misfortune. Republicans would not win back the House in '92, but they made significant gains, aided by Democratic scandal. The argument presented in this chapter is that strategic retirements are influenced by the reputations

of Congressional parties. In the case of the 102nd Congress House Democrats, the House Bank scandal hurt the election prospects of more than just those members who actually bounced checks, it hurt all members of the Democratic Party. I argue that House Democrats as a whole were more likely to retire in 1992 because of their poor party record. Put another way, the House Bank scandal did not just increase the propensity of Democratic check kites to retire, but it increased the propensity of all Democrats to retire, even those not involved in scandal.

Rep. Tom Delay (R-TX) was part of that successful revolution to overthrow what Gingrich and other House Republicans in 1992 and 1994 termed, an arrogant, entrenched, and corrupt Democratic majority. The Republicans successfully made ethics a cornerstone of their bid to take back the House in 1992 and 1994. In 2005, however, the tide had turned: Delay stepped down from his post amid accusations of ethical missteps and announced his retirement later that Congress, a Congress that witnessed a plethora of Republican scandals. Rep. Duke Cunningham (R-CA) resigned from the House of Representatives rather than account for the poorly hidden bribes he accepted from a defense contractor. Bob Ney (R-OH) resigned from the House amid serious accusations of accepting bribes in connection with the Jack Abramoff-Indian imbroglio. Later during the 109th Congress, Representative Mark Foley's (R-FL) incessant sexual advances towards under-age, male congressional pages were reported by the media, and it was later disclosed that Republican House leaders were aware of some of Foley's inappropriate behavior. The Democratic minority pounced on the emerging scandals, calling the ethical environment created by the Republicans a “culture of corruption.”

Democrats running for reelection were not the only ones paying attention to the GOP's ethics' troubles. It appears that the public too recognized the ethical problems of the Republican

Party. A *Washington Post-ABC News* poll taken in April 2006 found that 52% of the public trusted the Democrats to handle corruption in Washington while only 26% trusted Republicans to do the same (Edsall and Cillizza 2006). The public appears to have correctly associated most of the scandals that hit Washington in the 109th Congress with the Republican Party. Furthermore, the House GOP's reputation for scandal was not lost on Democratic candidates. Indeed, as noted in Chapter 2, several Democratic challengers tied the Republican incumbents they were running against to the Mark Foley scandal through their affiliation with the Republican Party (Hulse and Zeleny 2006). Being distinguished among the two parties as the party of scandal may have hampered Democratic efforts to hold onto the House in '92 and '94, and it may have hurt Republican efforts to hold onto majority status in the House 12 years later in 2006. Just like the Democratic majority in 1992, the Republican Party brand had been tainted by scandal, and that brand became an electoral burden, rather than a benefit, for its candidates.

In my preceding discussion of the 1992 and 2006 House elections, I assume that parties in Congress develop a reputation in the electorate. Moreover, a candidate's party label has a reputation attached to it, tying him and his electoral (mis)fortunes to the party. The notion that party labels influence election outcomes is not a new concept. As I discussed in Chapter 2, national tides have long been part of the Congressional research repertoire. Jacobson and Kernell (1983) and Jacobson (1989) found that national tides, favoring one party or the other, influence campaign contributions, challenger entry, congressional retirements, and ultimately, election results. Carson et al (2001) examine House elections during the Civil War, finding evidence of a national tide that worked against Republicans in the 1862-63 midterm election. Similarly, McGhee (2008) finds evidence for national tides in House election results from 1976

to 2006. These studies tend to focus on variables such as presidential approval or economic indicators, which lie beyond the control of just one chamber of Congress, ignoring those variables that lie directly under the purview of the House of Representatives, like scandal. In this chapter, I argue that the party record, through its impact on the electoral fortunes of Representatives, influence the decision to retire or run for reelection in the aggregate. For Republican incumbents in 2006, this means that all members, not just those actually accused of scandal, are more likely to retire because of a poor record for integrity. For Democratic incumbents in 1992, all members, not just those involved in the House Bank scandal or caught up in other ethical misdeeds, saw their electoral prospects grow slightly dimmer due to a poor record for integrity. In this chapter, I provide a party record related theory of individual retirements for House members accused of scandal.

Cartel Theory and the Party Record

Cox and McCubbins (1993; 2005) further elaborate on the relationship between party reputations and election outcomes in their cartel theory of legislative organization, providing a bridge to explanatory variables more easily controlled by the House. Under cartel theory, the majority party organizes the House to provide it with substantial advantages over the minority—eg stacking committees, possessing all committee and subcommittee chairmanships, choosing the Speaker, and picking the rules for each Congress. These advantages allow the majority party to keep from being rolled by the minority. Furthermore, parties empower their leaders to solve collective action dilemmas such as maintaining or gaining a majority of seats, passing legislation, and improving the party record. The latter concept is the one most applicable to this

study. The party record is a party's reputation in the electorate. The party record may affect the electoral prospects of each party's candidates running for election or reelection. Party leaders are expected to improve the party record and safeguard it from harm. A positive party record may prove beneficial on Election Day while a negative party record may hurt the reelection prospects of individual party members and the odds of the party gaining or maintaining majority status. Reputations for integrity and competence in governing are essential components of the party record. As Cox and McCubbins put it, "substantial components of the party record affect all its members similarly: for example, all are hurt by scandal or helped by perceptions of competence, honesty and integrity" (1993; 122).

Previous studies focusing on the party record look solely at election results. Cox and McCubbins (1993) find that election results in the House move in swings, favoring one party or the other, and they cite this finding as evidence of a party record. Jones and McDermott (2004) find that approval of Congress increases the likelihood of voting for the majority party in both the House and the Senate, findings which they believe support the existence of the party record. Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) find that the passage of legislation improves the party record and helps the majority party pick up seats. Finally, Woon and Pope (2008) examine House election results and conclude that party labels can also have an impact on challenger success.

Missing from these studies is an examination of legislative career decisions. Understanding why members voluntarily exit an exclusive institution such as the House for private life is compelling and beneficial to the study of Congress. Indeed, many scholars have recognized the importance of studying retirement decisions (Cooper and West 1981; Hibbing 1982a). Protected by incumbency advantage, retirement has become the way in which the

majority of House members leave the institution. Moreover, membership change is one of the chief means by which public policy is changed (Brady and Sinclair 1984), so the study of retirements could shed additional light on the process of policy change. Ultimately, uncovering the reasons for voluntary exits from the House, then, becomes vital for a fuller understanding of American politics.

I intend to offer a theory of retirements from the House that revolves around the party record. I expect that the party record should impact career decisions. Put simply, a negative party record should lead to more retirements for a political party while a positive record should lead to fewer retirements. Before delving further into the party record, the literature on Congressional retirements is reviewed.

Retirements: Where does the Party Record Fit In?

Previous studies of Congressional retirements focus on three broad explanations—institutional changes, personal factors, and electoral vulnerability.

A dramatic increase in retirements in the 1970s led congressional researchers to suggest that serving in Congress was no longer any fun (Cooper and West 1981). Changes in House and caucus rules may have contributed to this feeling of dissatisfaction (Hibbing 1982b). The Subcommittee Bill of Rights enacted in 1971 weakened committee chairmen, decentralized the committee structure in the House, and strengthened political parties (Rohde 1974). These changes may not have sat well for some House members, especially those who had amassed a great deal of seniority (Hibbing 1982b). After the passage of the Subcommittee Bill of Rights, many House members soon realized that holding a committee chairmanship was no longer as

lucrative. Moreover, seniority no longer automatically ensured a chairmanship. Rohde (1991) notes that several majority party members with seniority were denied committee chairmanships. Hibbing (1982a) finds that seniority increases the propensity to retire in the 1970s; however, Wolak (2007), using aggregate data over a much longer time period, finds that violations of seniority are not a significant cause of retirements. In addition to the changes in House and caucus rules, political campaigns have changed. Members of Congress have to spend more time campaigning and raising money to hold on to their seats, a prospect that may be undesirable to some incumbents. Hibbing (1982b) notes that the increase in campaign spending means that incumbents have to raise more campaign funds than ever, an activity that few candidates enjoy. Later studies testing the “no longer fun” argument fail to find evidence that this continues to be a major source of retirements, Moore and Hibbing (1992) and Livingston and Friedman (1993) posit that the 1970s were an aberration in the history of Congressional retirements. Using data from the 1980s, neither study finds evidence tying dissatisfaction to retirements.

In addition to institutional changes and their concomitant dissatisfaction, personal factors impact Congressional retirements. Most studies of House retirements find that age increases the propensity that a member of Congress will retire (Brace 1985; Hibbing 1982a; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993; Livingston and Friedman 1993; Moore and Hibbing 1992; 1998). This relationship, however, does not seem to hold for aggregate retirements (Wolak 2007). As a member ages, he or she is less able, theoretically at least, to perform such a demanding job. Looking beyond age, 1992 presented an unusual situation for many House members, which spurred an increase in retirements. It was the last year in which some members of the House could pocket campaign funds when they retired. Several members did indeed take advantage of this loophole in election

law and retired (Clarke et al. 1999; Groseclose and Krehbiel 1994). Furthermore, changes in the pension benefits led to an increase in retirements (Hall and Van Houwelling 1995).

Moore and Hibbing (1998) offer a theory of situational dissatisfaction to account for House retirements. Situational dissatisfaction refers to the inability of a member to pursue his or her trio of goals—reelection, internal advancement, and making good public policy (Fenno 1978), which leads to a greater propensity to retirement. Making good public policy and internal advancement are both difficult to pursue when in the minority party. Since members of the minority are not able to hold chairmanships or pursue policy goals, they are more likely to retire (Ansolabehere and Gerber 1997; Brace 1985; Gilmour and Rothstein 1993; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993; Livingston and Friedman 1993; Moore and Hibbing 1998). However, if minority party members have a realistic shot of winning a majority of seats, they are less likely to retire (Wolak 2007). The benefits of majority status seem to keep majority party members around. Additionally, those in positions of power (committee or party) seem less apt to retire.

The last major explanation for Congressional retirements corresponds to the reelection goal. Electoral vulnerability increases the odds of retirement from the House. Incumbents who see their reelection prospects as dim will be less likely to assume the costs—time, money, etc.--of running for reelection. Previous vote share or margin of victory is negatively associated with the propensity to retire (Brace 1985; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993). Furthermore, redistricting can also increase retirements (Brace 1985; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993) although not in the aggregate (Wolak 2007). When a member's district is eliminated after redistricting, he or she can either retire or run for election in another district, often against an incumbent. Also, the boundaries of their districts may change in a way that significantly disadvantages them in the next election,

putting more Republican voters in a district held by a Democrat or more Democratic voters in a district currently held by a Republican. Rather than face a tough reelection battle, they may simply choose to retire. In either case of redistricting, P is reduced (the reelection goal hindered), prompting some members of Congress to retire.

In addition to redistricting, national level phenomena may also affect election results and the decision to retire. National tides favoring one party or the other can hurt or help the electoral fortunes of incumbents (Carson et al 2001; Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Jacobson 1989; McGhee 2008). As one member of Congress put it when discussing electoral vulnerability, “I went from 69 percent to 51 percent in the space of two years. I knew that if my party had a bad year, it would be all over for me” (p. 64 quoted in Hibbing 1982b). National tide phenomena, like Presidential Approval or the performance of the economy, can have a marginal impact on retirement decisions (Jacobson and Kernell 1983; but see Livingston and Friedman 1993).

The Party Record: Competence, Integrity, and Ideology

Using the foundation laid by Moore and Hibbing (1998), I argue that changes in the party record have an effect on the goals of Representatives. The party record, like national tides, influences the most important of legislator goals identified by Fenno (1978), the goal of reelection. The party record can help or hurt the reelection goal, altering the probability of winning reelection. A party with a good reputation for competence, ethics, and ideology is likely to help its members' reelection bids; whereas, a party with a bad reputation is likely to damage its members' reelection prospects. In a party record model of retirements, Representatives pay attention to the records of their parties when making the decision to run for reelection or retire. A record of

accomplishment and few ethics problems will be met by fewer retirements while a poor record will give rise to a greater number of retirements.

The three components of the party record—competence, integrity, and ideology—discussed throughout this text are again used in this chapter to examine the party record as it relates to retirements. Both competence and integrity were mentioned by Cox and McCubbins (1993) as comprising a “substantial” part of the party record. Beyond this work, these two concepts have not been defined in the context of political parties. Instead, previous research focuses on reputations that incumbents have fostered with constituents for these two important attributes. Fenno (1978) notes that incumbents attempt to foster reputations of honesty and competence in the electorate in order to help reelection prospects. McCurley and Mondak (1995) show that voters respond to individual reputations for integrity, rewarding incumbents with their votes, while a reputation for competence produces lower challenger spending, which ultimately impacts the vote. Mondak (1995) extends this research to the congressional district level. He finds that competence seems to matter more than integrity for challenger spending, vote margin, and strategic retirements. These previous studies have not examined the impact of party reputations, but rather, have merely demonstrated that the important concepts of competence and integrity have a significant impact on voting behavior and congressional campaigns.

The previous studies describing individual congressional competence usually refer to the ability of a member of Congress to accomplish policy goals or perhaps pass legislation. The first component I examine is competence. I posit that a competent political party is one that wins legislative battles. It is able to pass legislation and solve policy problems. Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) find that as Democratic win rate (the percentage of votes won by Democrats in the

House) increases, the percentage of seats in the House picked up by the Democratic Party increases. Minority parties are quick to point out when a majority is caught in the legislative doldrums, unable or unwilling to do the work of the people. The 80th Congress was famously referred to as “the do nothing congress” for its unwillingness or inability to pass legislation. In 2006, the minority Democrats repeated this charge against Congressional Republicans, highlighting the 109th Congress's lack of a legislative record. Winning legislative battles demonstrates that a party is competent and can govern while intrachamber gridlock leads voters to question the ability of the party to govern. If a party is competent, its members will be less likely to retire because their party's record will boost their electoral prospects.

The second component examined is integrity. A party with integrity is one that has few ethical lapses. When discussing integrity, scandal, or a lack of integrity by political parties, is used. Scandal has a substantial impact on election results, causing incumbents accused of unethical behavior to lose several percentage points from their previous share of the two-party vote (Peters and Welch 1980; Alford et al. 1994; Welch and Hibbing 1997; Brown 2006), and the impact may be even more pronounced in primary challenges (Brown 2006). Additionally, scandal increases the likelihood that a member of Congress will retire (Carson 2005; Herrick 2000; 2003; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993). Political researchers have also tied the House Bank scandal to the deluge of retirements in 1992 (Clarke et al. 1999; Groseclose and Krehbiel 1994). Members of the House accused of scandal appear more electorally vulnerable and thus more likely to retire. Moreover, the impact of scandal taints the reputation of the individual and his political party. *Washington Post* columnist Mark Shields (1989) recognized this phenomenon when he wrote that Barney Frank's (D-MA) relationship with a male prostitute hurt the

Democratic Party. The research conducted in this chapter assumes that House members are aware of the reputations in the electorate fostered by their parties. When a party's reputation is bad, House members recognize the impact such a reputation can have on their electoral prospects and adjust their career calculus accordingly. I expect that a party record damaged by scandal will spur a greater number of retirements. Before examining aggregate retirements, I first discuss the special circumstances surrounding retirements by those who have been accused of scandal.

Scandal and Individual Retirements

Party leaders, in an effort to control the fallout from a major scandal, may pressure a member of Congress to leave the House. Party leaders pressure unethical members for two reasons. First, as discussed, party leaders have an incentive, the party record and its concomitant impact on election results, to encourage the retirement or resignation of ethically wayward party members in order to safeguard the party record from further damage due to scandal. MCs who leave the House generate less media attention and damage to the party record than those who stay (an assertion I revisit later in this chapter). Second, party leaders have another, nonpartisan, incentive to encourage retirement or resignation. Scandal may harm public trust in Congress as an institution. Public trust is essential for the maintenance of the American system of government. Without trust in the system and its institutions, participants in the system will become disenchanted and will seek an alternative (Easton 1965). Bowler and Karp (2004) find that public trust of the constituents of MCs involved in the House Bank scandal decreased as the number of bad checks written by the Representative increased. Party leaders may attempt to restore public trust by forcing the resignation or retirement of an accused MC. In this section, I

am not able to discern through quantitative means which explanation better fits the motivation for party leaders who compel a MC to leave the House. It is reasonable to suggest, however, that, because scandal only harms the public trust of the constituents in the Congressional district of the accused MC, at least according to Bowler and Karp (2004), party leaders would probably not exercise their power to influence the opinions of less than 600,000 people per case (the approximate population of a Congressional district in the 2000s). A party record explanation which focuses on preserving the reputation of the entire party, reducing damage to the party record, and helping the party's electoral fortunes is a better fit for such behavior since it directly impacts the goals of each political party and its members.

There are two ways in which party leaders may pressure members of Congress to leave the House—indirect pressure by increasing situational dissatisfaction and direct pressure by threatening expulsion. Indirectly, House and party caucus rules work together with the actions of party leaders to minimize damage from scandal by promoting retirement. Moore and Hibbing (1998) demonstrate that members of the House are more likely to retire when they are hindered from pursuing their goals of reelection, advancement within the House, and making good public policy. They call the inability to pursue these goals situational dissatisfaction. I maintain that House and caucus rules, together with actions taken by party leaders, are designed to increase situational dissatisfaction for members who are accused of unethical or illegal behaviors. Retirement or resignation separates the former member and his or her past behaviors from his or her political party in the House, protecting the party's reputation.

Indirect Pressure and Retirement Calculus

To better understand how situational dissatisfaction affects retirement decisions, I illustrate this relationship using Black's (1972) model of political ambition, which models the decision calculus for candidates running for city council. Moore and Hibbing (1998) apply this model to House retirement decisions. As stated above, they posit that members of the House are more likely to retire if they are having trouble pursuing their goals (situational dissatisfaction). The use of Black's model coupled with their theory of situational dissatisfaction is a helpful way to illustrate how House and caucus rules, together with the actions of party leaders, can impact the retirement decisions of members of Congress accused of scandal. The retirement calculus, taken from Moore and Hibbing (1998), is expressed below:

$$\textbf{Function 3.1: } U = P (B_w) + (1-P)(B_1) - C$$

U = utility of running for reelection

P = probability of winning reelection

B_w = benefits derived from holding office

B_1 = benefits of action undertaken if reelection is not achieved

C = costs of running for reelection.

House and caucus Rules, along with the actions of party leaders, may alter the probability of winning reelection (P) and the benefits derived from holding office (B_w). A description of ethics rules and actions taken against members accused of scandal will demonstrate how these items impact retirement decisions. Table 3.1 provides a summary of some of the sanctions waged on unethical House members and their impact on the retirement calculus. A check mark under the goal indicates that the corresponding punishment hinders the ability of a member of Congress

to achieve that goal. The following paragraphs provide a more thorough account of the punishments utilized and their relationship with retirement decisions. The benefits derived from holding office (B_w) are related to two major goals—making good public policy and advancement within the House. House Rule XXIII provides an automatic punishment for a member convicted of a felony for which he or she may receive a sentence of two or more years in prison. Members in this situation are stripped of their right to vote on legislation on the floor of the House or in committee. However, once the member is reelected, his or her voting rights are restored (Maskell 2006). While serving out his or her term, the convicted member will not be able to influence the crafting and adoption of public policies with his or her votes in committee or on the floor, hindering the member’s ability to pursue policy goals. Democratic Caucus rules and Republican Conference rules go a step further—they punish those who are merely indicted for felonies in which the penalty may include two or more years in prison. The Republican Conference's Rule XXVI calls on a member of the leadership to step down (at least temporarily) if he or she meets the criterion mentioned, and Democrats have a similar rule (Maskell 2006). These party rules provide an automatic punishment for members of the leadership seriously implicated in illegal activities. Party rules for both the Republican Conference and Democratic Caucus require a member convicted of a crime for which the penalty is at least two years in prison to vacate his or

Table 3.1: Punishments and Their Impact on Member Goals

Punishment	P	B_w	
	Reelection	Making Policy	Advancement
Reprimand	✓		
Censure	✓	✓	✓
Cannot Vote on Floor		✓	
Removal from Leadership		✓	✓
Removal of Committee Assignment		✓	✓

her leadership position. Such a punishment impairs the member's ability to hold onto power, advance within the House leadership hierarchy, and be involved in the policy process to the extent to which he or she was accustomed. It also prevents any potential battles within the caucus to remove the member from his or her position. In sum, House and party rules provide automatic punishments that decrease the benefits of continued service in the House while increasing situational dissatisfaction.

Additionally, party leaders may, on a case-by-case basis, increase situational dissatisfaction with punishment, which impairs the ability of the scandal-plagued member to remain in, or advance within the leadership and pursue his or her policy goals. The punishment usually doled out in these cases is removal from a chairmanship or a prestige committee assignment before an indictment is handed down. I present two cases from the 2006 election to illustrate. Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL), in anticipation of bribery charges being brought against Representative Bob Ney (R-OH) in connection with the Jack Abramoff imbroglio, pressured Ney to resign his post as Chairman of the House Administration Committee, which Ney did (Weisman 2006). Similarly, then-Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) secured the removal of Representative William Jefferson (D-LA) from his seat on the House Ways and Means Committee before Jefferson was officially charged with a crime (Murray and Langell 2006). While not a member of the leadership, he held a seat on one of the so-called power committees and would have drawn negative publicity to the Democratic Party at a time when the Democrats were accusing the Republicans of being the party of scandal. Both of these cases decreased the benefits of holding office for the MCs involved. Party leaders may also find more creative ways to punish members accused of scandal. Representative Richard Kelly (R-FL) was

the only Republican House member implicated in ABSCAM. He took \$25,000 from FBI agents and claimed he accepted the payment as part of his own investigation into the matter. The Republicans passed a resolution in closed conference which would expel Kelly from the Republican Conference if he did not resign from it. Kelly resigned in a tearful speech on the House floor (Lyons 1980). This method of punishment decreased the benefits derived from holding office (he lost his committee assignments), he lost campaign funding from the party's campaign committees, decreasing his chances of being reelected, and it distanced the Republican Conference from his unethical behavior.

Reprimand and censure are two other forms of punishment available in the House. Each has been described as a “public scolding” (Moore 1992, 25). Each form of punishment affects a member's probability of reelection (*P*), showing voters that the allegations of unethical behavior leveled at their member of Congress have merit. Both forms of discipline require two-thirds of the House to vote yes for passage. Censure is more serious and requires that the member stand in the well of the House floor and be admonished by the Speaker (Moore 1992, 41). Reprimand is a more recent phenomenon, beginning with the case of Representative Robert Sikes (D-FL). Both forms of punishment have been used sparingly by the House, and neither has been used in the previous decade, save the case of Charlie Rangel (D-NY), despite a plethora of cases in which either option could be employed. Instead, party leaders have taken to stripping away committee assignments and chairmanships, letting party and House rules automatically sanction members, or threatening expulsion.

Direct Pressure

Party leaders directly pressure their members to leave the House through the threat of expulsion. Expulsion has only been used in a handful of cases—three during the Civil War and two during the time period covered in the data set. Rep. Ozzie Myers (D-PA) was expelled in 1980 for his involvement in ABSCAM. Two decades later, Rep. James Traficant (D-OH) was expelled for bribery, racketeering, and numerous other charges. Expulsion requires a two-thirds majority vote, and, more often than not, these votes fail. In fact, out of 29 votes on expulsion since the beginning of the House, only five members have been expelled, a success rate of 17.2% (Herrick 2003). In the previous two cases, expulsion was used because the member refused to resign. More often, party leaders use the threat of expulsion as a means to force resignations rather than actually expelling the member. For instance, both Representatives Mario Biaggi (D-NY) and Raymond Lederer (D-PA) were threatened with expulsion if they did not resign, and both bowed to pressure and resigned (Hook 1988). Expulsion takes the career decision away from the unethical member and puts it in the hands of his colleagues in the House.

The Case of James A. Traficant

How may party leaders more directly and indirectly encourage a member of Congress to retire? The following description of Rep. James A. Traficant's (D-OH) expulsion sheds some light on this question. Traficant was one of the three members of the House in the dataset who was able to resist calls for resignation—that is, until he was expelled. Traficant's case, although different from the others in several respects, presents a good illustration of indirect and direct means at work.

James Traficant (D-OH) began the 107th Congress by voting for Representative Dennis Hastert (R-IL) for Speaker of the House of Representatives. Traficant explained that he voted for Hastert because of Hastert's help with legislation in a previous Congress (Cohn 2001); however, Traficant broke one of the cardinal rules of House caucus politics—he voted for the opposing party's candidate for Speaker (Cox and McCubbins 1994). Moreover, Traficant voted for the majority's rules' package; he was the only Democrat to do so. For his votes, Traficant was expelled from the Democratic Caucus, and he would spend the rest of his tenure in the House calling himself an 'Independent Democrat.' He would serve in the 107th Congress without any committee assignments because, as part of his expulsion from the caucus, Democrats took his assignments away. Additionally, he was excluded from caucus activities. For instance, he was not notified about a caucus election for Minority Whip (Foerstel 2001b).

Before the 107th began, Traficant was already known as a maverick, often bucking his party and voting with the Republicans. According to a report in *CQ Weekly*, he voted with the Republicans 78% of the time in the 106th Congress (Bettelheim 2001). He would continue to provide headaches for Democrats by voting for the Bush tax cuts and becoming the only Democrat to vote with Republicans on a procedural rule that would make it more difficult to pass campaign finance legislation (Foerstel 2001c).

Traficant was indicted on ten charges of corruption on May 4, 2001. He vehemently denied the charges, proclaiming that the indictment was retribution by the Department of Justice after Traficant beat RICO charges in the early 1980s. He elected to defend himself and entered a plea of not guilty by reason of insanity. Traficant's prospects for reelection seemed bleak. Democratic leaders promised to work against Traficant in his bid for reelection by fielding a

primary challenger while Republicans also promised to field a challenger for Traficant's seat (Foerstel 2001a). Ultimately, Democratic party leaders in the House gave their "blessing" for an Ohio redistricting plan by the state legislature, which eliminated Traficant's district, initially forcing him to run in a district defended by an incumbent (Giroux 2002).

At his criminal trial, Traficant was ultimately found guilty on all charges. Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO) publicly called on Traficant to resign from the House, a request Traficant refused (Patrick 2002), while Speaker Dennis Hastert recommended letting the ethics process take its course and having the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct launch an investigation. Meanwhile members of both parties introduced resolutions to expel Traficant from the House (Nather 2002). Frank Sensenbrenner (R-WI) introduced a resolution to expel Traficant shortly after he was found guilty. In his concomitant remarks in the Congressional Record, Sensenbrenner outlines his reasons for calling for Traficant's expulsion:

Mr. Speaker, I have introduced a resolution expelling the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Traficant) from the House of Representatives. Last week, a Federal court jury in Cleveland found the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Traficant) guilty on all 10 felony counts of a criminal indictment. Regretfully, this resolution is necessary because Mr Traficant foolishly rejected the call of the minority leader to resign. Felons belong in jail and not in Congress. He has broken the public trust by breaking the law; and if he will not voluntarily leave this House, our duty is to remove him.

Throughout my tenure in the House, I have consistently taken the position that Members who have been convicted of felonies should be expelled if they do not resign. In 1980, the House expelled Michael Meyers of Pennsylvania after he refused to resign following

conviction of Abscam-related felonies. In 1995, Walter Tucker of California was convicted, initially refused to resign, and changed his mind after I introduced an expulsion resolution.

Clearly, the expulsion resolutions were an effort to coerce Traficant to resign. Minority Leader Gephardt wanted Traficant gone and if he had been Speaker would probably have let one of the resolutions come to the floor for a vote. Speaker Hastert, however, wanted the Ethics Committee to investigate and wait for those results to come back and tabled the expulsion resolutions. Traficant's case raises an interesting question—Is the minority party less effective in pressuring members to retire? The majority has a wealth of agenda setting advantages over the minority contained in the Speakership and on committees that may allow it to more effectively pressure majority party members to retire. When minority party leaders and majority party leaders disagree, then the majority leaders will prevail, *ceteris paribus*. Traficant appears to exemplify just such a case. After finding Traficant guilty of nine out of ten ethics charges, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct unanimously recommended Traficant's expulsion from the House (Patrick 2002). The House then proceeded to expel him.

Traficant's case, while an aberration among the cases of scandal I have identified (because he was kicked out of the House Democratic Party yet still caucused with them prior to the breaking of his scandal), shows many of the tools available to party leaders to pressure a member of the House to retire or resign. Democratic leaders ran a primary challenger against Traficant and promoted a redistricting plan which eliminated his seat in Ohio. After his conviction, Traficant was forbidden from voting on the floor of the House. In most cases, a member of Congress threatened with expulsion would probably retire. In Traficant's case, he

was a particularly eccentric, hard-headed, and perhaps delusional individual.⁹ Moreover, he caucused with the minority party and a disagreement between the Speaker and the minority leader may have extended Traficant's tenure in the House by a few months. Traficant may not be the best choice for a model that uses utility maximization as a decision rule; however, his story provides a rare, public look at how party leaders may pressure an individual to retire or resign, even though those attempts were unsuccessful.

A Model of Individual Scandal Retirements

Do the direct and indirect methods available to party leaders actually increase the propensity to retire? I estimate a logistic model of individual retirements for the 155 members of the House accused of scandal between 1968 and 2008 to answer this question. Scandals include allegations of breaking the law or violating House ethics rules. As explained in Chapter 2, I use Herrick (2003), the *Washington Post*, and *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs* to identify scandals.

There are three independent variables of interest included in the model. The first variable is *Party Pressure*. This is a dummy variable, coded 1 if it is reported in the *Washington Post* that a member of Congress was directly pressured by party leaders to leave the House and 0 otherwise. It is possible that other members were directly pressured by the leadership to leave the House and that these occurrences were not reported in the *Washington Post*. This is the primary drawback to the approach taken here. Additionally, the majority party may be better able to directly pressure a member to leave the House, so I have included the interaction term *Party Pressure*Majority*. *Punish* is a dummy variable coded 1 if the MC was punished and 0

⁹ He was a famously eccentric House member who was known to wear denim suits and take on populist causes. The conclusion that he could be delusion is reached because he claimed that the Department of Justice was 'after him' for retribution for an earlier charge that he had beat in 1985.

otherwise. Punishments are actions taken by the House, party, or party leaders that impede the member's goals. Included in this list is censure, reprimand, removal from a committee, removal of a committee chairmanship, having to step down from a party position, and the inability to engage in committee work or vote on the House floor. *Punish* was constructed using information from Herrick (2003), Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (2004), *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs*, and the *Washington Post*. I hypothesize that each variable increases the propensity of ethically-challenged members of Congress to retire.

I include several personal variables from the literature on Congressional retirements. *Age* is associated with an increased propensity to retire (Brace 1985; Hibbing 1982; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993; Livingston and Friedman 1993; Moore and Hibbing 1992; 1998). I use the accused member's age at the beginning of the first session of the Congress in which the scandal occurred. *Electoral Vulnerability* is also associated with an increased probability of retirement (Brace 1985; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993). This measure is often based on prior electoral performance. The two-party vote in the previous election is used for this variable. *Redistrict* is a dummy variable, 1 if the district was redrawn since the previous election, 0 otherwise. I also include a dummy variable called *Guilty*, coded 1 for a conviction of a crime or misdemeanor and 0 otherwise. Brown (2006) finds that moral scandals are more damaging than money scandals, so I include a dummy variable called *Moral Scandal*--coded 1 if a moral scandal, 0 if a money scandal. Those in the majority should be less likely to retire. *Majority* is coded 1 if part of the majority party, 0 otherwise. Finally, Republicans are known to have higher retirement rates on average than Democrats. *Democrat* is dummy variable, coded 1 if a Democrat and 0 for Republicans. *Democrat* should be negatively associated with the probability of retirement.

Results from logistic regression of retirements are given in Table 3.2.¹⁰ The interaction term *Party Pressure*Majority* was dropped from the analysis because majority party members always retire when pressured by party leaders while minority party members never retire when pressured by party leaders. Only *Guilty* and *Party Pressure* attain significance. With all variables held at their means, the probability of retirement is 53% if the ethically-challenged MC is pressured by party leaders. The probability of retirement is 31% if found guilty of a felony or misdemeanor. If the member is both found guilty of a felony or misdemeanor and he or she is pressured to retire by party leaders, then ceteris paribus, there is a 72% probability that he or she will retire or resign.¹¹

Age	0.0053 (0.0235)
Party Pressure	1.9903* (0.8379)
Moral Scandal	0.3618 (0.5140)
Punish	-0.0282 (0.5095)
Majority	0.9097 (0.7341)
Democrat	-0.7558 (0.5409)
Electoral Vulnerability	-0.0111 (0.0164)
Guilty	1.1282* (0.5068)
Intercept	-1.7433 (1.4261)
N	155
Wald χ^2	22.74, $p > 0.0037$
Log Likelihood Ratio	-62.78

Note: $p < 0.05$ *, estimated with robust standard errors

¹⁰ I also estimated a model of retirements using Rare Events Logistic Regression (King and Zeng 2001). Since there are few retirements in comparison to the number of members running for reelection, it makes sense that retirements are treated as relatively rare events. Rare Events Logistic Regression corrects the coefficients to account for the discrepancy between retirements and running for reelection. Using this model, however, did not change the significance of any of the variables.

¹¹ Marginal probabilities were calculated using Clarify (King, Toms, and Wittenberg 2000).

While not significant, the sign for *Punish* indicates that punishments decrease the propensity to retire. While technically punishments imposed by the House should increase situational dissatisfaction, it does not lead to retirement. The desire to retain their seats in the House is strong, stronger than the detrimental impact that a punishment may have on their goals.

The results confirm that party pressure is a significant cause of retirement. But because of the discrepancy in the procedural powers of the majority and minority parties, only the majority party leaders are effective at pressuring members to retire or resign. Indirect pressure through situational dissatisfaction is not strong enough to compel a member to quit the House. The results show that party leaders take scandal and its potential damage on the party record and the institution of Congress seriously. They are willing to potentially sacrifice a seat or two in the next election to safeguard their party's reputation for integrity.

When party leaders are successful at compelling a member of Congress to leave the House, is damage to the party record reduced? In Chapter 2, I created a measure of aggregate negative integrity based on the evening news stories on ABC, CBS, and NBC generated by the scandals of each party. I estimate a negative binomial regression model in Table 3.3 of evening news stories attributed to each individual MC's scandals. *Moral Scandal* is a dichotomous variable indicating a moral versus a money scandal (Brown 2006). *Moral Scandal* should generate more evening news stories. *Guilty* is a dummy variable, 1 if guilty of a felony or misdemeanor and 0 otherwise. If a member is found guilty of a crime, he or she will have more news stories attributed to the scandal. *Retire* is a dummy variable, 1 if the member retired or resigned and 0 otherwise. *Party Pressure* is a dummy variable, 1 if the MC was pressured by party leaders to retire or resign and 0 otherwise. The independent variable of interest is the

interaction term *Party Pressure * Retire*. If a member is pressured and he retires, then he should generate fewer evening news stories.

The Likelihood Ratio test of alpha indicates that negative binomial is the preferred estimation technique over Poisson. All the variables, save *Retire*, are significant and in the expected direction. Importantly, the independent variable of interest, *Party Pressure*Retire* is significant at the 0.05 level. With all variables held at their means, when a member of Congress is pressured by party leaders to retire and he stays in the House, then the model predicts 41 news stories attributable to his scandal. If, however, he does bow to pressure and quits the House, then the model predicts only 3 news stories attributable to his or her scandal. While the dependent variable here is not identical to the aggregate variable used to measure negative integrity, it is used to create that variable, and a reduction in individual scandal stories would reduce the aggregate negative integrity measure. From the analysis above, I conclude that party leaders, if successful in their attempts at pressuring a party member to retire, can significantly decrease

Moral Scandal	0.7220*
	(0.3109)
Guilty	0.9013**
	(0.3329)
Punish	1.4192**
	(0.3041)
Retire	0.5875
	(0.3902)
Party Pressure	1.9028**
	(0.7268)
Party Pressure*Retire	-2.9162**
	(0.9654)
Intercept	0.8982
	(0.2684)
N	155
ln(α)	1.0213
	0.1461
α	2.777
	0.406
Likelihood Ratio test $\alpha=0$	$\chi^2 = 1500.72, p>0.000$

Note: $p<0.05$ *, $p<0.01$ ***, estimated with robust standard errors

potential damage to the party record. In the next section, I provide a direct test of the party record on aggregate retirements.

Model Variants of Aggregate Retirement

There are three distinct model variants of party record induced retirements. These three models, like those discussed in Chapter 2, are focused on the role of p in Function 3.1. While the results of Chapter 2 have revealed that Model Variant F, which showed that all challengers are affected by both challenger and incumbent party records, is the best way to characterize the relationship between the party record and challenger entry, the relationship between the party record and retirements still remains unexamined. Each model variant offers a different role for incumbent and potential challenger party records.

Model Variant A: Retirements with Incumbent's Party Record only

In this model, only the incumbent's party's record affects p . A good party record should increase p while a bad party record should decrease p . The incumbent is only examining what his party has done and is not concerned with the reputation of a potential challenger's party. Incumbents will be more apt to retire when the record is bad and less likely when it is good. This model variant follows the traditional view of the party record in which only incumbents receive an electoral benefit from their party.

In Model A, party leaders are focused on improving the party records for their incumbent members. Party leaders realize that the chances of retaining or gaining control of the House are affected by the retirement decisions of their members. Open seats are more difficult to defend

than seats held by an incumbent. With this view in mind, party leaders will attempt to provide an easier path to reelection for their members by generating a good party record.

Model Variant B: Retirements with Potential Challenger's Party Record only

In this model, incumbents are solely focused on the impact of a potential challenger's party record. Incumbents, evaluating their reelection chances, are more likely to retire when the challenger's party has a good record.

In Model B, party leaders still try to generate good party records. They do so, however, to provide a more difficult path to reelection for members of the opposing party. By doing so, they influence the p term in each representative's retirement calculus. An increase in the number of retirements from the opposing party creates more open seats which are easier to win than those guarded by an incumbent. This helps the party in its goal of gaining or maintaining majority status.

Model Variant C: Retirements with Incumbent's Party Record and Potential Challenger's Party Record

In this model, both the incumbent's party record and the potential challenger's party record affect the decision to retire. A poor party record from the incumbent's party coupled with a strong party record from potential challenger's party could hurt the chances that the incumbent will be reelected. As a result, when the potential challenger's party record is substantially "better" than the incumbent's party record, the incumbent will be more likely to retire. When the incumbent's party record is substantially "better" than the potential challenger's party record, he

will be less likely to retire.

In Model C, party leaders improve their parties' records for a number of reasons. First, they improve or safeguard the record in order to provide an electoral benefit for their incumbent members. By doing so, they decrease the likelihood that members of their party will retire. Retirements create open seats which are usually more difficult for a party to defend while seats held by incumbents are, *ceteris paribus*, easier to defend and help the party gain or maintain majority status. Second, by improving the party record, party leaders are making it more difficult for incumbents of the opposing party to win reelection. Incumbents of the opposing party are more likely to retire under these circumstances, creating more open seats which are easier to win than seats held by incumbents, *ceteris paribus*. Put more succinctly, gains in the party record help the incumbents' party by decreasing the probability of retirement while also hurting the opposing incumbents' party by increasing the probability of retirement.

Rationality and a Critique of the Models

The previous research on Congressional retirements assumes that House members are rational, utility-maximizers, concerned primarily with reelection and secondarily about advancement in the House and making good public policy. Political scientists treat explanations about "spending more time with family" with skepticism and perhaps cynicism. Politicians are not necessarily known for their candor, and political scientists are right to be skeptical about official explanations for retirements. Politicians are people, too (Jones 2009). In some cases, official explanations for retirements may contain at least a morceau of truth, and their retirements are not strategic, but they are instead based on personal reasons. The models presented here cannot

account for retirements that are based on family issues, illness, and most other matters that do not involve strategic calculation related to Congress. Not all behavior can be captured by rational choice models (Monroe 1991), and incumbent career decisions are by no means an exception to this rule.

Data and Methods

The dependent variable is the percentage of the Democratic caucus that resigns or retires each Congress called the *Democratic Retirement Rate (DRR)*. Retirements are voluntary departures where the incumbent serves out the remainder of his or her term. Resignations are departures where the incumbent immediately quits the House and does not serve out the remainder of his or her term. Some MCs retire in order to run for higher office—Governor or Senate—these retirements are not included in *DRR*.

Integrity is one key component of the party record. In Chapter 2, I created a measure of negative integrity based on television evening news coverage of each party's scandals. I also provided a critique of this measure and found support for the validation of negative integrity. In Chapter 2, I modified negative integrity in order to account for the timing of challenger entry decisions. While the decision to retire or resign can be made at any time during a Congress, I make the assumption that these decisions, by and large, are made within the first few months of the second session of each Congress. I, therefore, use only evening news stories shown during the first session of each Congress for negative integrity. Also, just like in Chapter 2, it is the difference between Democratic and Republican Negative Integrity that is used, called *Democratic Negative Integrity Advantage (DNIA)*.

In addition to integrity, competence is also examined. Competent parties are able to win legislative battles. *Democratic Party Win Rate* is the percentage of the time that Democrats win votes in the House. Following Lebo and O'Geen (2011), the variable is lagged by one Congress. *Democratic President Win Rate* is the percentage of votes in which House Democrats support a President of the same party. It is lagged by one Congress.

The two ideological variables identified by Woon and Pope (2008) are also included in the model of *DRR*. *Polarization* is the distance between the DW-NOMINATE scores of the two parties' median voters. *DHA* is *Democratic Heterogeneity Advantage* and is the difference between Democratic and Republican DW-NOMINATE score standard deviations for each Congress. More homogenous parties should be associated with an electoral advantage. As the heterogeneity advantage increases, *DRR* should also increase.

National tide variables include *Presidential Approval* and *Income* which is the natural log of income in the first year of each Congress. *Presidential Approval* is the president's approval rating in the Gallup Poll in December of each odd numbered year. *Presidential Approval* is multiplied by -1 when there is a Republican President.¹² *Presidential Approval* should negatively impact *DRR*. A dummy variable is also included for a *Democratic President*, coded 1 for a Democratic President and 0 otherwise. The natural log of income per capita in 2008 dollars from the first year of each Congress is used as an indicator of economic performance. When there is a Republican President, *Income* is multiplied by -1. As *Income* increases, *DRR* should decrease.

I also included two additional variables from the retirement literature. Age is the average age of the Democratic caucus at the start of each Congress. This measure is taken from analysis

¹² This practice is taken from Jacobson (1989).

by the *Wall Street Journal Online*.¹³ I have also included a dummy variable called *1992*. The abnormal circumstances concerning the 1992 election warrant the inclusion of such a variable. 1992 was the last year that some MCs could take advantage of a legislative loophole that allowed them to pocket money left over from their reelection campaign funds if they chose to retire. 1992 was also the year in which voters had the opportunity to penalize House members involved in check kiting using their House Bank accounts. It is expected that the dummy variable for 1992 will increase DRCC, *ceteris paribus*.

Figure 3.1 shows Democratic (*DRR*) and Republican (*RRR*) Retirement Rates from 1970-2008. The period of highest retirement for Democrats was the 1990s, a period during which the House Bank scandal occurred and Republicans took control of the House. There is also a spike in Democratic retirements in 1978, continuing into 1980, peaks that correspond to Koreagate and ABSCAM. Republican retirements peaked in advance of the 2008 election in which Democrats extended the size of their majority by an additional 21 seats. Democrats have an average retirement rate of 5.3% while Republicans have a slightly higher average rate of 6.2%, supporting Gilmour and Rothstein's (1993) observation that Republicans retire at a higher rate than Democrats.

Table 3.4 presents the results of Ordinary Least Squares regression on *Democratic Retirement Rate*.¹⁴ Dickey-Fuller tests indicate that I cannot reject the null hypothesis that *Democratic Retirement Rate* as well as *Age* are unit roots. I take first differences of each of these

¹³ Average age may be found at http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/info-CONGRESS_AGES_1009.html

¹⁴ Alternatively, I could have used the difference between Democratic and Republican Retirement Rates as a dependent variable (Wolak 2007). I estimated a model with the alternative dependent variable, but it did not change the significance of any of the variables included in the model of DRR.

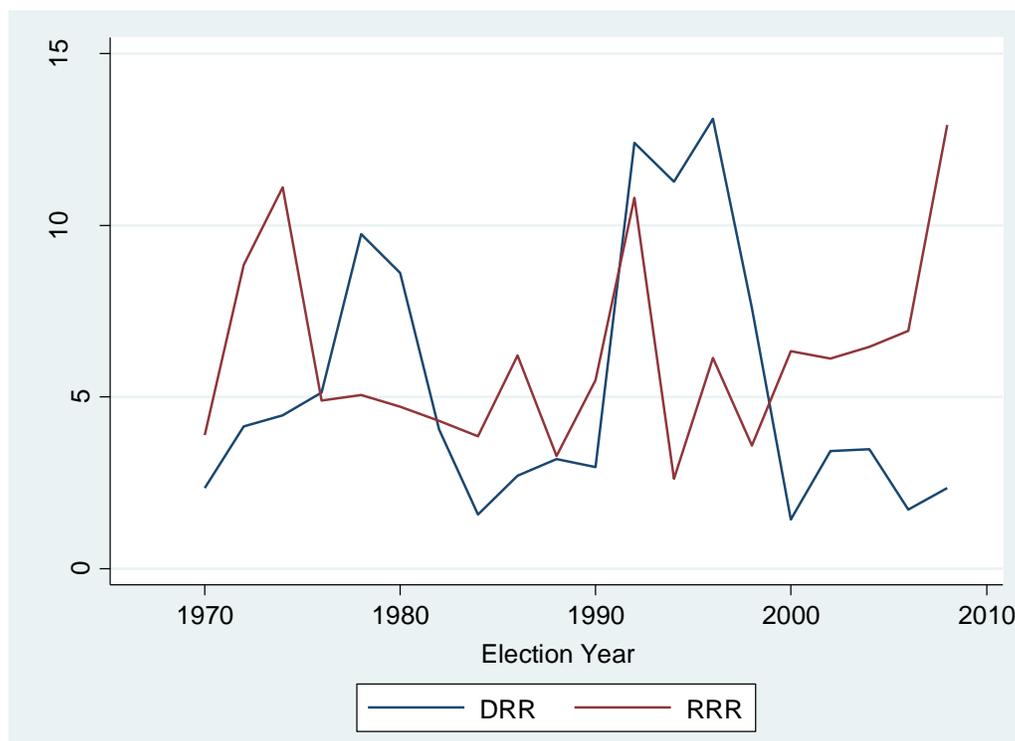


Figure 3.1: Democratic and Republican Retirement Rates, 1970-2008

two variables.¹⁵ The model shows that only 1992 is significant. The peculiar circumstances of the 1992 election are well-documented. 1992 was the last year that some MCs could take advantage of a legislative loophole that allowed them to pocket surplus campaign donations. It was also the election following the House Bank Scandal in which the press discovered that hundreds of members of each party had written bad checks using their House Bank accounts. The unique circumstances of 1992 increased the retirement rate by 13 percentage points. None of the model variants described earlier fit the results of OLS regression on *DRR*. Instead, party record variables do not have a statistically significant impact on retirements. Results from the Breusch-Godfrey Lagrange Multiplier test indicate that I cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no autocorrelation between the lags. The Dickey-Fuller test performed on the residual

¹⁵ Polarization, Democratic Party Win Rate, and $\ln(\text{Income})$ also required differencing, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Δ Age	-2.1180 (1.8419)
$\Delta \ln(\text{Income})$	32.5656 (23.4299)
Democratic President	4.9819 (8.6720)
Presidential Approval	-0.0698 (0.0851)
Δ Polarization	-23.2805 (40.4613)
DHA	-28.3583 (64.3990)
Δ Democratic Party Win Rate _{t-1}	7.0137 (4.2571)
DNIA	-0.0118 (0.0308)
1992	13.0521* (3.8691)
Intercept	-3.7922 (4.2376)
N	19
Adjusted R ²	0.31
Breusch-Godfrey LM	$\chi^2=0.043, p>0.8351$
Durbin-Watson d	1.947
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root	-4.173, $p>0.0007$

Note: $p<0.05^*$

indicates that I can reject the null hypothesis that there is a unit root. Finally, results from the Shapiro-Wilk W test show that the residuals are normally distributed.

Like in Chapter 2, I also estimated an alternative model with *Democrat President Win Rate*, but the inclusion of this variable did not change the findings presented here, so I do not present those results here.

The results in Table 3.3 are not all that surprising considering the findings from the Chapter 2 regarding quality challengers and the findings earlier this chapter regarding situational dissatisfaction. Put simply, the value of a House seat and its concomitant benefits are high for those who possess them. That is why punishments did not seem to affect the propensity to retire among those who are accused of scandal in the logistic regression model of individual scandal retirements estimated earlier in this chapter. Members of Congress will fight tooth and nail to

retain their seats once they have them. The perceived impact of the party record on reelection is not large enough to persuade members of Congress to vacate their seats. It was also not large enough to persuade quality challengers to challenge an incumbent. It is only when MCs think they will lose or will be expelled that they leave the House. The impact of the party record is simply too small to influence House retirement decisions.

Conclusion

The results of statistical analysis of retirements show that the party record's impact on the retirement calculus, if there is one, is too small to influence departures from Congress. The value of a House seat is simply too high to overcome the small loss in reelection probability that may be associated with a bad party record or the small gain in reelection probability associated with a good party record. The desire to stay or leave Congress is simply unaffected by the party record, at least in the aggregate.

I find that pressure from party leaders significantly increases the probability of retirement. Party leaders have two reasons for pressuring a member to leave Congress—scandal both decreases public trust in Congress as an institution and it harms the party record. I could not distinguish between these two reasons for party pressure in the model I estimated for scandal retirements; rather, I only showed that party pressure is a significant cause of “voluntary” departures from the House. The majority party, because of its advantages, seems more effective at pressuring party members to leave than the minority party does. An interaction term, however, could not be estimated in the logistic regression model because members of the majority who are pressured always leave the House, and members of the minority never leave the House. It seems

that being in the majority is a necessary, but not a sufficient cause, for those who are pressured to leave the House.

In sum, at the individual party leaders may pressure MCs to leave the House if they damage public trust and/or harm the party record, and that pressure is effective at compelling them to depart. The party record and national tides do not impact aggregate retirements. Most departures from the House occur due to retirement or resignation, so the study of retirements is an important research endeavor. A partisan model of voluntary departures does not do a very good job explaining why House members choose to vacate their seats. It may be that non-partisan models of retirements better explain aggregate departures from the House than a partisan approach.

Political parties may provide a vehicle through which collective responsibility may occur, but they are not able to achieve, through aggregate retirements, collective responsibility. It seems that the most important way in which members leave the House cannot be explained through partisan collective responsibility, but rather some other predictors must exist that explain these decisions.

Chapter 4: The Party Record in Elections

Representative Barney Frank hired a male escort to serve as his housekeeper, an escort whom Frank had previously paid for sex. The escort-turned-housekeeper did not give up prostitution. In fact, he began running a prostitution ring out of Representative Frank's home, unbeknownst to Frank. After discovering the illegal activities of his employee, Frank asked the House Ethics committee to look into the matter. Many House members within both the Democratic and Republican parties called on Frank to be censured, and some on the Republican side, called for him to be expelled. Instead, Frank was reprimanded, a rebuke from the House similar to censure except that Frank did not have to stand in the well of the House as the statement of chastisement was read. In the hullabaloo that followed, Barney Frank was able to weather the storm. Despite a great deal of negative news coverage and calls for his expulsion, Frank ran for reelection and won. The Frank incident prompted columnist Mark Shields (1989) to comment in his column that Barney Frank had hurt his political party.

Shields' column suggests that the impact of the Frank scandal had effects that reverberated beyond the legislative career of Barney Frank. This scandal had harmed the Democratic Party and its members. Put another way, Frank's actions hurt not only his individual reputation but the reputation of the entire House Democratic Party. Shield suggests that the American people associate the actions of an individual with a political party. If American voters take the reputation of political parties into account when they cast their ballots, then political parties offer a way for voters to hold members of Congress collectively responsible through the party system.

The idea of collective responsibility for the actions of several or even one member of

Congress, like Barney Frank, through political parties is not unique to Shields' column. Indeed, Fiorina (1980) believes collective responsibility through political parties is critical to a democratic form of government. As described in previous chapters, many political scientists, have posited that Congressional parties have collective reputations that may aid in the achievement of collective responsibility. Perhaps the best exposition of this idea comes from Cox and McCubbins (1993; 2005) and their notion of the party record, an image of the party that can be improved or hurt by parties, their members, and the actions of party leaders.

Although the notion of a collective party image is not new, the party record that Cox and McCubbins discuss has received scant attention by political scientists with the exceptions of Lebo and O'Geen (2011), Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007), and Woon and Pope (2008). Previous literature has not thoroughly examined the impact of the party record on election outcomes. In this chapter, I attempt to correct this deficit by examining how changes in the party record affect Congressional elections.

Party Government and the Party Record

Perhaps the biggest debate in contemporary Congressional organization literature centers on political parties, particularly the role of parties in the House of Representatives. Congressional researchers have published several studies demonstrating support for the notion that political parties play a large role in determining policy outcomes, largely through agenda setting (Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005; Rohde 1991; Aldrich 1995). Krehbiel (1991; 1998) has led the charge for alternatives, positing informational and pivotal politics theories, to challenge the partisan models that have largely dominated theories of Congressional organization for the past twenty

years. A critical component of one of these models of the cartel theory of party government is the party record. Results from empirical analysis that suggest that the party record contributes to the electoral success or losses of a party's candidates can provide additional support for a key notion in a major theory of parties in Congress while a null finding may suggest that cartel theory may need to be revised.

Cox and McCubbins (1993; 2005) assert that the majority party in the House of Representatives operates as a cartel, monopolizing the agenda, and acting to solve collective action dilemmas, such as passing legislation and reelecting its members. Political parties have six goals— control of agenda powers, making good public policy, improving the party record, reelecting party members to the House, gaining or maintaining a majority, and reelecting party leaders into their positions (2005; 8). The majority party, in pursuit of these goals, structures the House to keep from being rolled on the floor of the House of Representatives. This is the notion of negative agenda power in which majority party veto players block bills that are opposed by the majority of the majority party from reaching the floor of the House. As Cox and McCubbins point out, their theory is compatible with another party government theory, Conditional Party Government. Under Conditional Party Government (CPG), party leaders are given greater powers to pursue a positive agenda under two conditions—when the caucus is relatively homogeneous in ideological preferences and the parties are polarized in their preferences (Rohde 1991; Aldrich 1995; Aldrich and Rohde 1998; 2000). CPG is a theory of party behavior that explains arm twisting on the floor of the House and positive agenda setting. Cartel theory, on the other hand, focuses on the efforts of parties before a bill reaches the floor for final passage and negative agenda powers.

Cartel theory and CPG differ in the goals maximized. CPG focuses exclusively on the policy goals parties and their caucus members pursue while parties, according to the cartel model, act to get their members reelected as well as make good public policy (Smith 2000). Cox and McCubbins explicitly discuss the public records of political parties and assert that these records matter for electoral politics. In fact, they point out that cartel theory “depends crucially on the premise that the party record has at least a noticeable impact on the reelection probabilities of [party] members” (1993, 120). This chapter asks the following question: Do the actions of congressional parties and the reputations they develop affect election outcomes?

Cox and McCubbins (1993) demonstrate that the congressional vote does move in swings that favor members of one party over the other, providing evidence of a collective vote relationship between party members. Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007) make further strides toward evaluating and explaining the concept of the party record. Their Strategic Party Government (SPG) model emphasizes the electoral effects of party unity voting. In their paper, they find that increased partisanship negatively impacts Democratic seat share in the House, and a higher majority party win rate on the floor of the House, when the Democrats are in the majority, leads to better election returns for Democrats. Woon and Pope (2008), in contrast to these other two studies, find that party labels matter more for challengers than incumbents, challenging the view put forth by Cox and McCubbins that the actions of Congressional parties can positively affect the reelection prospects of their members.

While Cox and McCubbins (1993), Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007), and Woon and Pope (2008) have partially evaluated the collective electoral relationship that exists between members of Congress who share a political affiliation, more work is needed. In particular, these

studies have not examined integrity as a component of the party record, nor have they examined more than one component in the same study.

Determinants of Individual Election Results

Political scientists have identified a number of factors that contribute to the success or failure of the reelection efforts of House incumbents. Incumbent quality can help or hurt a House member's prospects for reelection. McCurley and Mondak (1995) and Mondak (1995) use the Congressional biographies in the *Almanac of American Politics* to come up with incumbent quality scores, measuring quality across two dimensions--competence and integrity. Using data from the National Election Studies, McCurley and Mondak (1995) find that both competence and integrity influence individual vote choice. Incumbents with low levels of competence and integrity have a decreased probability of voting for the incumbent. Mondak (1995) finds that incumbents with reputations for low levels of integrity but high levels of competence are more likely to be reelected. Put another way, a highly competent but morally questionable incumbent is more likely to be reelected than his peers who have higher levels of integrity. It seems that bending or breaking the rules may be helpful in a reelection campaign if an incumbent possesses the ability to not get caught.

While McCurley and Mondak are concerned with two dimensions of candidate quality, another thread of research focuses exclusively on integrity. Accusations of unethical behavior or scandal are associated with a 5 to 11 percentage point decline in the percentage of the two-party vote garnered by an incumbent in his or her bid for reelection (Brown 2006; Peters and Welch 1980; Welch and Hibbing 1997). In 1992, allegations surfaced that the majority of House

members wrote bad checks using their House Bank accounts. As a result, some of the worst check kitters failed to win their bids for reelection (Alford et al. 1994). Moreover, those accused of scandal are less likely to survive the next two election cycles. They are either expelled, retire, or fail to win reelection (Herrick 2000).

In addition to incumbent quality, an incumbent's responsiveness to his or her constituency is also an important factor for a successful reelection bid. Paying attention to the needs of one's constituency can be vital for an incumbent. Both pork barrel spending and case work are key elements in the incumbency advantage and ultimately reelection (Fiorina 1977; King 1991; Mayhew 1974b). Successfully helping constituents navigate through the labyrinthine maze of federal agencies can help win over voters for the next election. In his exhaustive biography of Lyndon Johnson's years in the House, Caro (1990) describes the enormous emphasis Johnson placed on constituent service. His staff had to answer all incoming constituent mail the day that it came into the office. Moreover, Johnson, himself, spent a great deal of time learning the ins and outs of the federal bureaucracy, making contacts within each agency, in order to secure favorable resolutions to constituent problems. With no offense to the efforts of Lyndon Johnson, Mann and Wolfinger (1980), through their analysis of NES data, find that a good reputation for handling case work is more important for constituent evaluations of their incumbent MC than the case work itself.

Of course, case work alone cannot win elections. Incumbents also attempt to bring home the bacon. In the most recent Congress (112th Congress), efforts have been made to curb the inclusion of pork barrel projects in legislation, but for decades members of Congress and their constituents have relied on pork barrel spending projects to boost their incumbency advantage

(Mayhew 1974b). While the recent efforts to halt pork barrel spending originate with the Republican-controlled House, both parties have used pork as a way to help win over or reward key constituencies and pursue policy goals, though each party may pursue different forms of pork to accomplish these ends (Bickers and Stein 2000). Not only are individual House members concerned with pork, but parties within Congress utilize the distribution of pork to help vulnerable members win reelection and to compensate them for an uncomfortable vote in which they supported the party's position when it may hurt them electorally (Carroll and Kim 2010).

Along with the more direct distributional benefits from pork and case work, House incumbents are also mindful of the partisan and policy preferences of their constituents. House incumbents are individuals with their own policy preferences (Jones 2009; Rothernberg and Sanders 2000); however, they may shift their roll call behavior to approximate the policy positions of their constituents (Miller and Stokes 1963). The median voter theorem predicts that candidates for elected office will attempt to align their positions with the voters who elect them in order to win their votes in the next election (Downs 1957). For example, examining the Reagan defense build-up in the early 1980s, Bartels (1991) finds that members whose constituents favored increased spending were more likely to vote for more spending in fiscal years 1981 and 1982. Box-Steffensmeier, Arnold, and Zorn (1997) provide another example with their examination of the timing of position taking regarding ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). They find that both district unionization rates and campaign contributions from unions increased the speed with which members of Congress took a public position on NAFTA. Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001), on the other hand, find little evidence that House candidates alter their positions to fit the preferences of their

constituents. Only in competitive districts does candidate behavior match the expectations of the median voter theorem.

Members of Congress respond to policy preferences of their constituents because they fear the electoral consequences of ignoring those preferences. Indeed, analysis of patterns of roll call behavior by political scientists shows that there is good reason for their fear. Members of Congress who vote out of sync with their constituents' preferences may find themselves out of a job after the next election (Ansolabehere and Jones 2010). In his seminal analysis of the relationship between roll calls and incumbent reelection, Erickson (1971) finds that House Republicans with extreme voting records get fewer votes; however, this relationship does not hold true for Democrats. Both Erickson (1971) and Canes-Wrone et al (2002) show that ideological extremity is associated with electoral loss. While these scholars claim that ideological extremity hurts an incumbent's reelection prospects, others claim that voting with one's party can also be problematic for incumbents. Carson et al (2010) maintain that ideological extremity is not the culprit responsible when scholars examine roll call patterns and electoral loss; instead, a pattern of supporting one's party is to blame for electoral loss. Using fixed-effects panel data models that incorporate both ideology and party unity, Carson et al. find that party unity, not ideological extremity is associated with electoral loss.

The determinants of electoral outcomes discussed to this point deal primarily with factors that are under the control of the incumbent. Of course, not all factors are under the control of the incumbent. As discussed in Chapter 2, challengers make the decision to enter a House race or not, and the quality of the challengers can mean the difference between losing and winning a race (Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Jacobson 1989). Quality challengers better understand how to

campaign and how to win an election. Part of the process of campaigning involves raising and spending significant sums of campaign cash. Examining the 1984 and 1986 House elections, Abramowitz (1991) finds a strong negative relationship between challenger spending and incumbent's margin of victory over the challenger.

Determinants of Aggregate Election Results

While there is a multitude of individual and district level factors that influence election results, such as challenger quality and spending, scholars have also concluded that several aggregate level variables influence election results as well. Analysis of these variables has been conducted using aggregate level dependent variables such as the normal vote (Tuftes 1975) or seat change (Oppenheimer et al 1986).

Successful presidential candidates often help down ballot candidates win. Presidential coattails help bring friendly partisans to the House with whom the newly elected President can work on legislation. The coattail effect accounts for a substantial amount of the variation in aggregate election results during presidential election years (Campbell 1986). Moreover, coattails have been described as a surge and decline phenomenon with the President's party gaining seats during Presidential elections and losing seats during midterm elections (Campbell 1960, but see Campbell 1987 for an update).

Almost without fail, the President's party loses seats each midterm election (Campbell 1960; Tuftes 1975; Campbell 1986; Erickson 1988). Recently, however, the near perfect negative relationship between seat loss and belonging to the president's party has been less consistent. The president's party actually gained seats in both the 1998 and 2002 midterm elections. These

elections are likely due to extreme political circumstances, the Clinton impeachment (Abramowitz 2001) and the attacks of September 11th and the subsequent War on Terror (Jacobson 2003). Historically, though, being part of the President's party in midterm elections is a strong predictor of seat loss, and recent midterms have shown a return to this pattern of seat loss with Democrats picking up 31 seats from 2004 to 2006 and Republicans picking up 61 seats from 2008 to 2010.

The nationalization of House elections can produce large changes in the number of seats held by each party. As mentioned previously, salient national political issues, such as the War on Terrorism and the impeachment of President Clinton, can help determine a party's electoral success or failure in the next election (Abramowitz 2001; Jacobson 2003). In the case of the Clinton impeachment, voters punished Republicans for overreaching and going after Clinton. The backlash against impeachment was the most important determinant of the Republican failure to pick up seats in 1998 (Abramowitz 2001). In the 1994 midterm election, House Republicans intentionally nationalized the election, tying House Democrats to the political mishaps of the Clinton Administration and blaming them for legislative gridlock. They also produced a positive policy program alternative, their *Contract with America*, but its impact on the election was probably minimal (Jacobson 1996). House Republicans, through their nationalization of the election, won a majority of seats in 1994 for the first time in 40 years.

Many Congressional election scholars explain the nationalization of House elections as a referendum on the President, Congress, and each political party (Kernell and Jacobson 1983; Tufte 1975; 1978). In 2006, House Democrats were successfully able to tie majority House Republicans to an unpopular President and criticize them for their lack of legislative

productivity. House Democrats won a majority of seats for the first time in 12 years (Jacobson 2007). The aggregate referendum model has been described as similar to Fiorina's individual model of retrospective voting (Marra and Ostrom 1989). Throughout this text, I have referred to aggregate referendum models as national tide models. The referendum scholars have found that presidential approval impacts seat change. A popular president can help the electoral fortunes of his party while an unpopular president can hurt his party's candidates. Several scholars have demonstrated that strong presidential approval can boost a party's prospects during the election (Tuftes 1975; Newman and Ostrom 2002). For instance, high approval of President Ronald Reagan and good economic growth helped House Republicans only lose five seats in the 1986 midterm elections (Jacobson and Kernell 1990). In contrast to 1986, President George W. Bush's low approval ratings during the 2006 midterm elections, largely due to disapproval over his handling of the war in Iraq, helped Democrats take control of the House (Jacobson 2007). Likewise, President Bill Clinton's high approval ratings helped House Democrats break the trend and gain seats during the 1998 midterm elections (Jacobson 1999). Put simply, popular presidents can provide a boon to their parties' electoral fortunes, but an unpopular president can sink the election hopes of his party.

Scholars have also investigated the impact of economic conditions on aggregate election outcomes with mixed results (Erickson 1990; Newman and Ostrom 2002). This is probably due to the strong correlation between economic performance and presidential approval. In Jacobson's (1999) discussion of the electoral impact of the Monica Lewinski scandal, he states that Bill Clinton's approval remained high because of strong economic performance, and voters cared more about Clinton's handling of the economy than they did about his zipper problem.

The number of seats in the House held by a party is also a strong predictor of the number of seats that a party gains or loses in the next election. With more seats to defend, especially in districts in which the other party typically prevails, a party is overexposed. Campbell (1986) includes the average number of seats held by the Democratic Party in the last two elections as a “base” variable. As the base increases, the number of seats that the Democrats can pick up diminishes. Marra and Ostrom (1989) refer to a historical average number of seats for each party. Rising above this average means that more party members are at risk to lose reelection. Oppenheimer, Stimson, and Waterman (1986) expand on this concept with the exposure thesis. The exposure thesis states that each party has an equilibrium number of seats, and when a party's number of seats deviates from the equilibrium, then the party will gain or lose seats in the next election to return to the equilibrium level. Exposure is measured as actual number of seats less the long-term equilibrium level of seats (calculated as the average number of seats from the last few decades). When the number of seats rises above the equilibrium, then the party should lose seats because the level of exposure is higher. When the number of seats falls below the equilibrium, then the party should gain seats. President Bill Clinton's reelection in 1996 came with very short coattails for House Democrats, so in 1998, the Democrats exposure rate was very low. As a result, the Democrats were able to break the mold and gain seats during a midterm year (Jacobson 2001). President George Bush's coattails in 2000 were also very short, and as a result, House Republican exposure in 2002 was low. House Republicans were also able to break the trend and gain seats during a midterm election year. The chief problem with the exposure thesis is that calculating the equilibrium can become difficult. Oppenheimer et al. calculated the average number of Democratic seats from 1954 (when the Democrats took control over the

House) to 1984. Questions abound. Now that majority control has flip flopped several times, from what Congress does one start in order to calculate the equilibrium? Oppenheimer and his colleagues are unclear on this point, which makes the use of their method of exposure calculation in future research difficult.

A theory of surge and decline and a referendum theory of Congressional elections are compatible with one another. Marra and Ostrom (1989) and Newman and Ostrom (2002) test combined models of seat change with variables for each model and find evidence for both theories. Newman and Ostrom's model is fairly exhaustive in its inclusion of variables from the literature, but they warn of over-fitting. Some of the variables included in their models are highly correlated with others, and they recommend excluding those particular variables when exploring seat change or aggregate election results.

Where Does the Party Record Fit In?

The components of the party record are aggregate level variables and could be included in a model of seat change. They tie each individual election contest to the reputation of the incumbent's (and possibly the challenger's) party. As in studies of national tides, a party record model of elections predicts that one party will be favored over the other party and should gain seats as a result. Also, as national tide or aggregate referendum models of elections suggest, Congressional elections are referenda on political parties. Unlike national tide studies, the variables used in the analysis of a party record model of elections are generated directly by the party and its members. The party record is something that can be manipulated to provide a benefit to party members. The party record provides a means by which parties can influence

their own electoral fate.

Party Record Models of Elections

In chapters 2 and 3, several model variants were explored to determine which one model best explained the relationship between the party record and challenger entry and retirements.

Models A-C describe the possible relationships between party records and election results in races where an incumbent faces a challenger in the general election while models D-F describe the possible relationships between party records and elections results in districts with open seats.

Contested Seats

Model Variant A: Incumbent Party Record only

In Model A, only the incumbent's party record influences general election results. This is the traditional view of the party record in which only the incumbent's party influences election results. Party leaders attempt to improve or safeguard the party record from damage in order to give their members an electoral benefit against potential challengers. In this model, voters cast their ballots based on the characteristics of the incumbent and his or her party. They pay little attention to the challenger. Just like the aggregate referendum models described above, voters make their decisions based on the past performance of those actors who are currently in office.

Model Variant B: Challenger Party Record only

In Model B, only the challenger's party record influences general election results. In contrast to Model A, party leaders attempt to improve or safeguard the party record in order to

provide a benefit for challengers. The party record does not help incumbent party members, but it helps challengers against incumbents of the opposing party.

Model Variant C: Both Incumbent and Challenger Party Records

In Model C, both the incumbent and challenger's party records influence general election results. Party leaders attempt to improve or safeguard the party record to provide an electoral benefit to their incumbent party members and challengers who share their party label.

Model Variant D: No Impact

In Model D, the party record has no significant effect on election results (this is a very real possibility considering the results from Chapter 3). Party leaders may attempt to influence the party record, but ultimately, their efforts do not systematically affect election results. There may be several reasons for a null finding. A party record model of elections may assume a level of voter sophistication that is inaccurate. On average, voters may not pay very much attention to the actions of the House of Representatives. Perhaps, any reputation produced by a political party may only exist among elites. While some have argued that voters take cues from elites regarding intricate political knowledge, it is possible that voters actually do not take cues from elites. Another explanation is that elites may not provide cues to the less sophisticated electorate regarding the party record.

Open Seats

Open seats are treated differently than seats with an incumbent. Neither candidate in an open seat race is a member of the House of Representatives. It is, on average, easier for a challenging

party to win an open seat than one held by an incumbent. Does the party record influence open seat election results? Or is the party record's effect on elections reserved for races which feature an incumbent? Four model variants for open seat races are presented here. These models describe the impact of party record in open seat races only.

Model Variant E: Traditional View of Party Record and Open Seats

In Model E, the party record has no impact on open seat election results. Under the traditional view of the party record, only incumbents receive an electoral benefit from the party record. Party leaders attempt to improve or safeguard the party record in order to provide a benefit for their incumbent party members. Since neither candidate is an incumbent, neither candidate receives an electoral benefit from the party record.

Model Variant E: Revised Model of Party Record and Open Seats

In Model F, there is no incumbent party record. Both candidates' party records influence voters' decisions at the ballot box. The party record may or may not aid incumbents or challengers in contested elections. It does, however, provide an electoral benefit to candidates running for open seats.

This model does not yield predictions about the behavior of party leaders and the party record regarding challengers and incumbents. In this model, party leaders, at least in part, improve or safeguard the party record in order to help candidates of their own party win in open seat races. Winning open seat races improves the chances that the party will gain or maintain a majority of seats in the next Congress. Moreover, by adding seats with members who are closer

to the party in ideological space, party members may improve their chances of rolling the other party (winning legislative battles).

Variables

Three dependent variables are analyzed. *Democratic Seat Change (DSC)* is the change in the percent of House seats held by Democrats from one Congress to the next. In other words, it is the change in the percentage of House seats won by the Democratic Party in each election.

Contested Democratic Seat Change (CDSC) is the change in the percentage of contested seats won by Democrats in each election. Contested seats refer to those seats where an incumbent faces a general election challenger. Finally, *Open Democratic Seat Percentage (ODSP)* is the percentage of open seats won by Democrats each election.

The party record variables are those that have been used in the past two chapters; however, the amendments made to these variables to account for the timing of challenger entry and retirement decisions are no longer needed. Elections occur late in the second session of each Congress. *Democratic Negative Integrity Advantage (DNIA)* is a count of the number of evening news stories on broadcast television stations, ABC, CBS, and NBC, attributable to each party's scandals for a given Congress. *DNIA* should decrease the percentage of seats won in House elections. *Democratic Heterogeneity Advantage (DHA)* is part of the ideological reputation of each political party. It is the difference between the standard deviations of each party's first dimension DW-NOMINATE scores during a given Congress. As *DHA* increases, the percentage of seats won in the House should decrease. *Polarization* is the ideological distance using first dimension DW-NOMINATE scores between each party's median voters. As *Polarization*

increases, the percentage of seats won in the House by Democrats should also increase.

Democratic Party Win Rate is the percentage of votes won by the Democratic caucus in a given Congress. This measure is lagged by one Congress. Finally, Lebo and O'Geen (2011) find that it is not necessarily *Democratic Party Win Rate* that influences election results but support for the President (if he happens to share their party label). I test models using *Democratic President Win Rate*, which is the percentage of the time that House Democrats vote with the President's position.

National tide variables include *Presidential Approval* and *Income*. *Presidential Approval* is measured as the last Gallup Poll taken before each election (usually this occurs during the last few weeks of October). For Republican presidents, *Presidential Approval* is multiplied by -1. *Income* is measured as per capita income in each even numbered (election) year. A dummy variable is included for Democratic Presidents. This variable is expected to decrease *Democratic Seat Change* percentage. *Income* is the natural log of per capita income in 2008 dollars as a measure of economic performance.

There are two other variables included from the literature on seat change. First, the President's party consistently loses seats each midterm election. The dummy variable *Midterm* is interacted with the dummy variable for a Democratic President to create the variable *Midterm Loss*. *Midterm Loss* should be negatively associated with *Democratic Seat Change*. Also, I have included lagged dependent variables for *Democratic Seat Change* and *Contested Democratic Seat Change*. I use the lagged dependent variable as a measure of exposure. As the percentage of seats won in the previous election increases, the percentage of seats won in the current election decreases. In contrast to the models of *Democratic Seat Change* and *Contested*

Democratic Seat Change, *Open Democratic Seat Change* does not include a lagged dependent variable. Open seats cannot contain overexposed incumbents because they do not have incumbents, so there is no theoretical justification for including a lagged dependent variable in models of *Open Democratic Seat Change*.

The inclusion of lagged dependent variables in these models warrants special attention. Lagged dependent variable (LDV) models can produce biased coefficients. Kelly and Keele (2007) find that the bias is usually small and suggest LDV's should be included if there is a theoretical justification for their inclusion. If LDV's are excluded when they should be included, the models, they argue, may contain omitted variable bias.

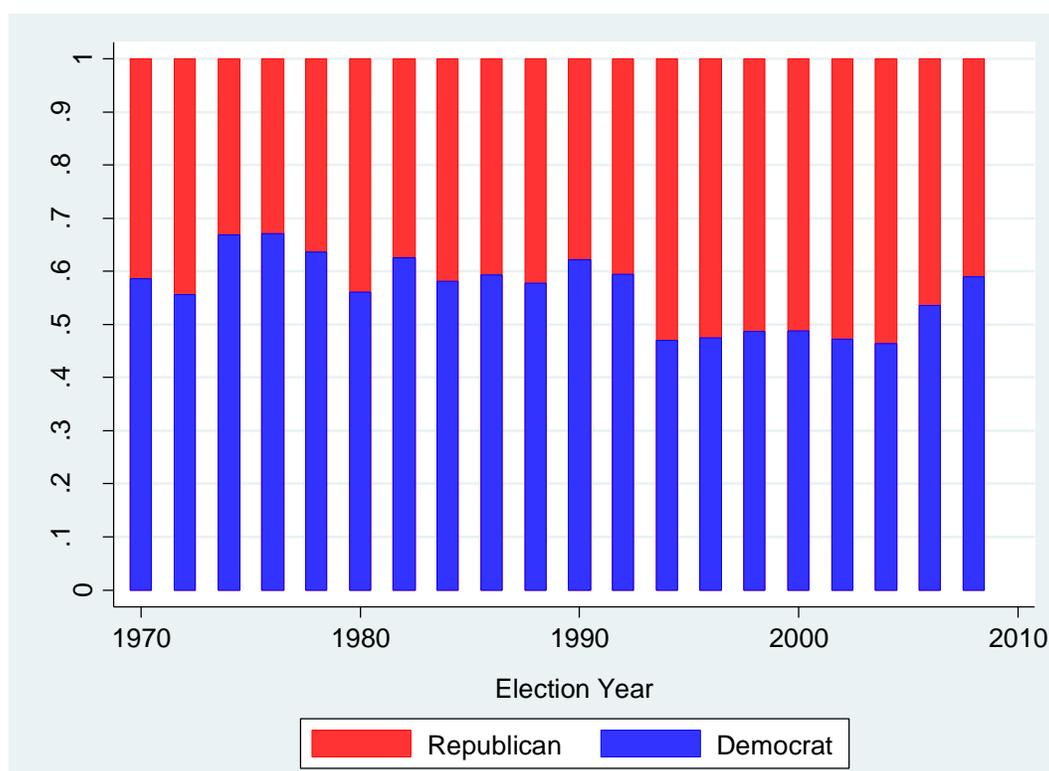


Figure 4.1: Seat Change in the House of Representatives, 1970-2008

Figure 4.1 shows seat change from 1970-2008. For 14 of the elections, Democrats won a majority of seats. Democrats won their highest proportion of seats in 1974, the election immediately following Watergate. In 1994, Republicans won a majority of seats for the first time since the 1954 midterm election. Republicans held on to the majority for the next five elections before Democrats took back the majority during the 2006 midterm election and increased the size of their majority in 2008.

The results of OLS regression on *Democratic Seat Change* are shown in Table 4.1. In Model I, the results show that some seat change variables and national tide variables are significant while party record variables do not attain significance. The lagged dependent variable, which served as an exposure-like or base variable, was not significant. The interaction term *Midterm Loss* was significant and in the expected direction. When House Democrats are up for reelection in a midterm election with a Democratic President, they can expect a 12.7 percentage point decline in *DSC*. *Presidential Approval* was significant and in the expected direction. For each additional point in *Presidential Approval*, House Democrats can expect a 0.31 percent point increase in *DSC*. Results from the Breush-Godfrey Lagrange Multiplier test indicate that I cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no autocorrelation. Results from the Dickey-Fuller test for unit performed on the residuals indicate that I can reject the null hypothesis that there is a unit root. Also, the Shapiro-Wilk W test performed on the residuals indicates that I cannot reject the null hypothesis that the residuals are normally distributed. An alternative model was also estimated without the LDV. It did not change the results of the model. In Model II in Table 4.1, I estimate a model of *DSC* with lagged *Democratic President Win Rate*.

I drop *Democratic Win Rate* and the LDV from the analysis (the exclusion of these variables does not affect the significance of the independent variables of interest). *Democratic President Win Rate* fails to attain significance while both *Midterm Loss* and *Presidential Approval* both attain significance. Conventional tests show that the residuals do not contain autocorrelation. While I do not report the results in the following tables, I also estimated models of *Open Democratic Seat Rate* and *Contested Democratic Seat Change* which include *Democratic President Win Rate*, but the variable fails to attain significance in each of those models as well.

Table 4.2 shows the results of OLS regression on *Contested Democratic Seat Change*.

No party record variables are significant in the model. *Presidential Approval*, a national

Table 4.1: OLS Regression of Democratic Seat Change, 1970-2008		
	Model I	Model II
DSC _{t-1}	-0.2952 (0.3089)	
Democratic President	-0.3104* (0.1243)	-0.2558 (0.1152)
Presidential Approval	0.0031* (0.0012)	0.0027* (0.0011)
Δln(Income)	0.2035 (0.3107)	0.1099 (0.2826)
Midterm Loss	-0.1267* (0.0541)	-0.1226* (0.0446)
Midterm	0.0576 (0.0298)	0.0713** (0.0199)
ΔDemocratic Party Win Rate _{t-1}	-0.0533 (0.0611)	
ΔDemocratic President Win Rate _{t-1}		0.00004 (0.0001)
DHA	-0.1788 (0.6515)	-0.0425 (0.5851)
ΔPolarization	0.8012 (0.6592)	0.5354 (0.5061)
DNIA	0.0000 (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0002)
Intercept	0.1564* (0.0537)	0.1252* (0.0451)
N	20	20
Adjusted R ²	0.60	0.60
Breusch-Godfrey LM	$\chi^2=1.304, p>0.253$	$\chi^2=1.265, p>0.261$
Durbin-Watson d	2.166	2.267

Note: $p<0.05^*$, $p<0.01^{**}$

tide variable, attains significance at the 0.05 level. A one-percent increase in *Presidential Approval* increases the percentage of contested seats won by Democrats by 0.31 percent points. A Democratic President, however, decreases the percentage of contested seats won by Democrats by 33 percentage points. The model was also estimated without the LDV, the exclusion of which did not change the results. There is no evidence of autocorrelation or a unit root in the model. Results from the Shapiro-Wilk W test show that the residuals are normally distributed.

Table 4.3 contains the results of OLS Regression on *Open Democratic Seat Rate*. Once again, *Presidential Approval* is significant and in the expected direction. For every additional percent point increase in *Presidential Approval*, *ODSR* increases by 0.96 percent points. When there is a Democratic President during a midterm election, House Democrats' share of open seat

Contested Democratic Seat Change _{t-1}	-0.2194 (0.347)
Democratic President	-0.3302* (0.1185)
Δln(Income)	0.3912 (0.2952)
Presidential Approval	0.0031* (0.0011)
Midterm	0.0263 (0.0226)
Midterm Loss	-0.0739 (0.045)
DNIA	0.0004 (0.0003)
ΔDemocratic Party Win Rate _{t-1}	-0.0428 (0.0533)
DHA	-0.4478 (0.5777)
ΔPolarization	0.5756 (0.6222)
Intercept	0.1562** (0.0444)
N	20
Adjusted R ²	0.382
Breush-Godfrey LM	$\chi^2=2.111$, p<0.146
Durbin-Watson d	2.073

Note: p<0.05*

victories decreases by 47.06 percent points. Unlike the previous models of election results, the model of open seats finds that one of the variables representing the ideological component of the party record is significant and in the expected direction, $\Delta Polarization$. The coefficient for $\Delta Polarization$ is not all that helpful for determining its impact on $ODSR$. A one unit increase in the difference of polarization is unlikely to occur. The largest change in $\Delta Polarization$ in the dataset is a decrease of 0.093. An increase of 0.01 in the change of the ideological distance between the two median voters of each party increases the percentage of open seats won by House Democrats by 0.05 percentage points. The results for standard tests for autocorrelation do not indicate a significant presence of autocorrelation, nor is there a unit root. The residuals are normally distributed. Taken together, the results of the models presented in this chapter show that, by and large, party

Democratic President	-0.6413
	0.3455
Presidential Approval	0.0096*
	0.0033
$\Delta \ln(\text{Income})$	0.5785
	0.8695
Midterm	0.1482*
	0.0577
Midterm Loss	-0.4706**
	0.1305
DNIA	0.0001
	0.0008
$\Delta \text{Democratic Win Rate}_{t-1}$	0.1235
	0.1563
DHA	-0.647
	1.7129
$\Delta Polarization$	5.4008**
	1.482
Intercept	1.0225**
	0.1329
N	20
Adjusted R^2	0.636
Breusch-Godfrey LM	$\chi^2=2.016, p>0.156$
Durbin Watson d	2.35

Note: $p < 0.05^*$, 0.01^{**}

record variables, save *Polarization*, do not influence seat change. One variable of the ideological component of the party record does attain significance and is signed in the expected direction.

Polarization increases the percentage of the seats Democrats win in open seat elections.

Intuitively, this result is not surprising. Candidates for open seats often do not have a roll call record on national issues by which constituents may judge their future roll call actions. When the parties are polarized, it is easier to discern the ideological position of each party in comparison to one another, and this may help voters making a ballot decision in open seat races to better determine how a candidate is likely to vote once he or she is actually in office.

Presidential Approval and the *Midterm Loss* do a much better job at predicting seat change in all types of races than the party record. Given the lack of significance of party record variables, these results indicate that the effect of the party record may be too small to influence Congressional elections. Only ideology seems to impact elections and even then only in open seat races.

Conclusion

Party record variables seem to have little impact on seat change while Presidential Approval and Midterm Loss Attain significance. Does this mean that the party record does not provide the type of collective electoral incentive envisioned by Cox and McCubbins? The results here do not necessarily refute the existence of a party record. In the next chapter, I provide possible explanations for why the results obtained in Chapter 4 do not match those found in previous literature on the party record. I then discuss the results from Chapters 2-4 further, placing them in the broader context of the great party debate in the literature on Congress.

Finally, I address Fiorina's (1980) assertion that there has been a decline in collective responsibility.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In the preceding chapters, I analyzed the party record's impact on challenger entry, retirements, and election results. Does the party record influence elections and election-related phenomena? The answer to this question based on the previous chapters is "it depends." In this concluding chapter, I first summarize the results of previous chapters. Second, I describe what these results mean for the party record. Third, I discuss possible explanations for why the results in the previous chapters differ from those obtained in other studies. Fourth, I describe what these results mean for party government theories of Congressional organization. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of responsible party government theory and collective responsibility.

The analysis of challenger entry revealed that potential challengers are influenced by both the competence and integrity components of the party record. The significant results show that chamber-generated party reputations have an influence on challenger entry. Quality challengers, in contrast, are more likely to enter against incumbents when the President of their party enjoys higher levels of legislative support from his party in the House (a measure of competence that is generated by the behavior of more than just one chamber of Congress) but not integrity or ideology (at least not in the direction expected). Quality challengers also respond to national tides (when *Democratic President Win Rate* is included in the model). It is expected that potential quality challengers require larger increases in the probability of winning election to offset the higher cost of having to give up an already held elected position in order to run for the House. The party record, on average, does not provide a large enough boost to the probability of winning reelection for these potential challengers.

Democratic incumbents are not influenced by the components of the party record when

making career decisions, nor do they take into account national tide variables. In fact, only a dummy variable for the 1992 election achieved statistical significance in the analysis of aggregate retirements. National tide variables were also not statistically significant. At the individual level, however, party leaders will seek to pressure their own party members to leave the House in order to reduce damage to the party record. Pressure from party leaders is a significant cause of the retirement of House members accused of scandal. Moreover, given the increased power of majority party leaders, they appear to enjoy an advantage when it comes to compelling an ethically-challenged party member to retire or resign from the House. Does the strategy by party leaders actually reduce harm to the party record? In a model of evening news stories, I find that those pressured to leave the House who actually do retire or resign generate fewer stories on the evening news. It appears that this strategy by party leaders may, in fact, accomplish the ends for which it is employed, protecting the party record.

The competence and integrity components of the party record do not seem to influence election results. The polarization variable, which is part of the ideological component of the party record, was significant in the examination of election results but only in open seat elections. National tide variables were significant in all models of election results.

Party Record Versus National Tides Revisited

One of my key objectives was to draw a clear distinction between national tides and the party record. Based on the descriptions of each in previous research, I presented similarities and differences between these two concepts in Chapter 2. Not all similarities and differences were examined in this work, but several key features were analyzed. From the quantitative results

given in Chapters 2 through 4, several conclusions regarding the comparison between the party record and national tides may be drawn. Table 5.1 is a revised version of Table 2.1 which includes the findings from the previous chapters as they relate to the differences and similarities between the party record and national tides given in Table 2.1. As shown in Table 5.1, challenger entry decisions are influenced by both the party record and national tides. This may occur because they influence the probability of winning reelection (although party record variables did not significantly affect aggregate election results in Chapter 4), but they do not have an impact on quality challenger entry decisions. Neither influenced retirement decisions. As stated previously, the value of a Congressional seat is just too high for most legislators to give it up without a fight.

National Tides	Party Record	Revised Party Record	Findings from Chapters 2-4
Influence P in challenger entry calculus and retirement calculus	Influence P in challenger entry calculus and retirement calculus	Influence P in challenger entry calculus and retirement calculus	Party Record Influences P in challenger entry (Ch. 2) but does not have a statistically significant impact on retirements (Ch. 3). National tides influence challenger entry (Ch.2) but not retirements (Ch. 3).
Impact both challengers and Incumbents	Impact incumbents only	Impact both challengers and Incumbents (Woon and Pope 2008)	Both challenger and incumbent party records influence challenger entry (Ch. 2).
Produced by actions of multiple institutions	Produced by actions of party in one chamber of Congress	Produced by actions of President and Congress, at least for competence (Lebo and O'Geen 2011) Produced by House and Senate (Jones and McDermott 2004)	The integrity and ideological components of the party record are produced by one chamber of Congress (Ch.2 and 4). The competence component is generated by the either the House or the House and President together (Ch. 2)
Potentially affects elections at all levels of government	Primarily affects elections for one chamber of Congress	Primarily affects elections for one chamber of Congress. Affects elections for House and Senate (Jones and McDermott 2004).	Only the ideological component influenced elections and only in open seat races (Ch. 4). National tide variables influenced elections in all models (Ch. 4).

The party record, as originally formulated by Cox and McCubbins (1993), was thought to only influence incumbents and not challengers. Woon and Pope (2008) disputed this assumption with their findings regarding the ideological component of the party record. My results confirm the findings of Woon and Pope. Each party record variable was operationalized in such a way that each variable was the advantage of one party over the other. In this way, both the party record of the challenger's party and the incumbent's party influence an election-related phenomenon, challenger entry.

The party record and national tides are produced by different actors. The party record is generated primarily by the actions of one chamber of Congress. The results in Chapter 2 confirm that, at least regarding integrity and ideology, the party record is an intra-chamber phenomenon. The reputation for competence is different. In one model of aggregate challenger entry, winning legislative battles in the House was a significant predictor of challenger entry while in another model legislative support for the President was a significant predictor of quality challenger entry. Because competence was operationalized as a bill-passing measure, it makes sense that more than just one chamber of Congress may contribute to the generation of the competence component of the party record since multiple institutions are required to ultimately pass legislation. With the results from Chapter 2, I conclude that the intra-chamber nature of the party record is dependent on the component under analysis; integrity and ideology fit the traditional mold of the party record while the competence component may or may not be generated by just one chamber of Congress

Finally, the findings presented in Chapter 4 suggest that the competence and integrity components of the party record do not influence aggregate election results, while the ideological

component does influence results but only in open seat races. I did not analyze the effect of party record components on election results for other branches of government or the Senate. Such an analysis is beyond the scope of this work. I do not draw any conclusions about the impact of the party record or national tides on election results for elected officials outside of the House of Representatives.

Previous Work on the Party Record

My findings presented in this work differ from Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger (2007), Lebo and O'Geen (2011), and Woon and Pope (2008). All three studies found that the party record influences election results. There are several possible reasons why there are discrepancies between the work presented here and those presented in previous research. First, the sample size, 20 time points, was smaller than that used in any of the previous research. It is possible that more time points could have led to different results. If I examined only the ideological component of the party record (DW-NOMINATE scores are available from the first Congress to the present Congress), I may have come up with different results. If I examined only the competence component of the party record, Lebo and O'Geen (2011) have data from 1958 to 2006, adding four additional time points (after lagging by one Congress), I may have come up with different results. Because data for the integrity component restricted the time period under study (the Vanderbilt Television News Archive only has news story abstracts since 1969), I could not extend the analysis further into the past than the 1970 election. Some analyses of Congressional scandal, however, start from the 1968 election because during the 90th Congress the House created the Ethics Committee, so in comparison to many works on scandal, the

analysis undertaken in these chapters only excludes scandals in one Congress.

Second, the statistical models used in Chapter 4 are specified differently from those used by Lebo and O'Geen (2011) or Woon and Pope (2008). I included both national tide variables and three components of the party record in each model. This differs from models estimated in previous party record research because three components, instead of one, are included. There are other specification differences as well. Lebo and O'Geen use *Presidential Approval* lagged by one Congress in their model of election results. The use of *Presidential Approval* taken one Congress before the election is odd and against standard practice in the literature (Jacobson 1989). Since *Presidential Approval* can fluctuate greatly in the span of two years, it makes little sense to use a measure of *Presidential Approval* that is two years old.

Parties in Congress

Perhaps the biggest questions in the study of Congress over the last two decades concern the role of political parties in the organization of Congress. Do political parties matter for Congressional organization? Do they influence policy outcomes? Are parties powerful? While the answers to these questions largely lie outside the scope of research conducted here, a discussion of the party record and the results from previous chapters are tangential to these topics. In Chapter 1, the two major theories of party government described in Congressional research were discussed, cartel theory and conditional party government (CPG). Under cartel theory, parties organize the House (or the Senate) in order to prevent legislation that is opposed by the majority party from passing the chamber; this is known as negative agenda setting (Gailmard and Jenkins 2007). Under CPG, party leaders and the tools of the party are strengthened when two conditions are

met—intraparty ideological homogeneity and interparty ideological heterogeneity. These conditions are met when members of the same party have similar policy preferences but have very different policy preferences from those in the other party. CPG is primarily a theory that describes positive agenda setting with party leaders using carrots and sticks provide incentives for party members to support the party's legislation on the floor of the House or Senate.

Cox and McCubbins (1993) state that cartel theory could not exist in its current form if the party record did not also exist. The party record provides an important electoral incentive for members of Congress to work together to solve collective action problems. The evidence for the party record presented in the previous three chapters is mixed. The three components of the party record influence elections and election-related phenomena in different ways. Competence and integrity affect aggregate challenger entry. Party leaders take action to remove from the House those who may hurt the party's reputation for integrity. Finally, the ideological component of the party record influences election results in open seat races. It is clear that all three components have an effect on election-related phenomena, but only the ideological component directly impacts election results and even then only in open seat races. The lack of statistical significance for party record variables in models of seat change is surprising and hampers the contention that the party record provides a collective electoral incentive, which fosters cooperation among party members.

It is unclear if the party record, as conceptualized and operationalized in this dissertation, provides the type of electoral incentive for party member cooperation that Cox and McCubbins originally envisioned. There are undoubtedly effects on election-related phenomena, but those effects are not very large, not large enough to influence aggregate retirements or seat change.

The electoral incentive produced by the party record provides a modest benefit for party members to work together. It seems that the electoral benefit from national tides is larger and may provide an incentive to reach across institutions and work with other branches of government and chambers of Congress.

In addition to the party government theories discussed here, there are two other major sets of theories which describe Congressional organization--distributive and informational theories (Shepsle and Weingast 1994). In distributive theories, the House and Senate are organized to help members of each chamber increase gains from trade (logrolling) (Shepsle and Weingast 1994). Each chamber utilizes a strategy of universalism whereby every member or almost every member of the House or Senate joins the winning coalition to receive benefits in the form of pork for each district. The benefits (pork) do not necessarily need to exceed costs in the form of tax revenues extracted from the district. Rather, benefits need only be concentrated to a member's reelection coalition (Weingast 1979).

With Krehbiel's (1991) informational theory of organization, the House and Senate are organized in order to address the information deficits faced by MCs, so they may better engage in rational decision making. The committee system allows MCs to specialize in different areas of public policies and become experts. Other members of Congress who have similar policy preferences to one of these experts will rely on him or her for guidance regarding roll calls for the expert's policy area. In effect, a legislative signaling game is played in which the expert signals to those with similar preferences how they should vote on a particular bill. Krehbiel lists two postulates that constitute the foundation of his theory. The majoritarian postulate states that "objects of legislative choice in both the procedural and policy domains must be chosen by a

majority of the legislature” (16). The uncertainty postulate states that “legislators are often uncertain about the relationship between policies and their outcomes” (20). Under the majoritarian postulate, the chamber median is the pivotal actor in the House. He is the principal actor involved in structuring the House (Shepsle and Weingast 1994). It could be argued that the median legislator on an informative committee is the pivotal actor in the informational model because closed rules will leave the committee's bill largely intact. The committee median, however, is largely reflective of the floor median, and the majoritarian postulate seems to indicate that the floor median is in fact the pivotal actor in the informational model. Under the uncertainty postulate, information is required to aid legislators in making policy, and specialization allows them to help alleviate some of the uncertainty regarding legislation.

The electoral implications of distributive theories are clear. By delivering policy benefits, which often include pork-barrel spending projects, members of Congress are bolstering their prospects for reelection. In contrast to cartel theory and distributive theories, the electoral implications of Krehbiel's informational theory are not explicitly stated in his work. Much of Krehbiel's research agenda is aimed at critiquing the two other major theories of Congressional organization (1987; 1993; 2007). In particular, Krehbiel has criticized cartel theory in order to bolster the two non-partisan theories (the other is the pivotal politics model) he has advanced to explain Congressional organization and policy making (1991; 1998).

Each of the two major alternative theories of Congressional organization assumes that political parties play a very small role in the organization of the House of Representatives and resulting policy outcomes. If there is an electoral benefit produced for members of the House under these circumstances, it is likely bipartisan and should impact all incumbents running for

the House. If this argument is advanced by non-party government theorists, there is strong support for a bipartisan election benefit. Each election year, incumbents enjoy a very high reelection rate, and there is a voluminous literature on incumbency advantage (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2000; Fiorina 1977; King 1991; Mann and Wolfinger 1980; Mayhew 1974b; Prior 2006). As stated in Chapter 3, most turnover in the House of Representatives is produced by retirements and resignations, not reelection loss. It is possible that the actions of House members working within the institution may help contribute to this bipartisan electoral benefit; however, this bipartisan benefit would also exist side-by-side with the party record. The results of the analysis conducted here, in conjunction with previous research on the party record, suggest that the party record influences election results and election related phenomena. The results from analysis in the previous three chapters provide mixed support for the party record's impact on elections while results from others (Lebo, McGlynn, and Koger 2007; Lebo and O'Geen 2011; Woon and Pope 2008) provide clear support for a party record election effect. Taken together, these findings suggest that the actions of parties and their members in the House do have an impact on election-related phenomena. The impact produced by the party record provides a benefit to one party over the other. It also provides an incentive for party members to work together to improve the record by minimizing scandal and winning legislative battles. The benefit produced by the party record has profound effects on the American two-party system and ultimately American democracy, which is discussed in detail in the next section.

Responsible Party Government

Before discussing collective responsibility as it relates to political parties, I review the literature on responsible party government in order to put this notion of collective responsibility and the party record in a broader context, using APSA's Report from the Committee on Political Parties as a point of reference for this discussion.

Political scientists have expressed mixed views on the impact of political parties on democracy. Sloane (1912), for example, describes parties in the House and Senate as undemocratic, hindering deliberation in both the House and Senate. His critique of political parties is especially strong for parties in the House, where he describes party leaders as autocratic with individual members rather helpless to stand up to the leadership for fear of retribution.

In contrast to the views of Sloane, the report from the American Political Science Association's Committee on Political Parties (1950) prescribes a strengthening of political parties in order to increase political participation and better address the problems confronting the country. The Report is one of the most oft read statements regarding political parties (Kirkpatrick 1971; White 1992). The Report, which is really a call to action to reform the two-party system, is a mix of normative and empirical elements. It has been criticized for failing to explicitly draw distinctions between what is normative and what is empirical, for failing to fully flesh out the implications of its normative propositions, making incorrect observations about the party system for which it is suggesting the US emulate (Britain's), and making incorrect statements and assumptions about the origins and nature of the American party system (Kirkpatrick 1971; Ranney 1951). Despite these criticisms, the Report is an important work in political science because it is so widely read, and it is important for the issues it raises regarding

democracy in the US.

In short, the Report calls for strengthening the two-party system. Its recommendations include a greater role for political parties in the creation of policy proposals through the generation and adoption of party programs, which elected party officials should be bound to pursue; a greater variety of proposals from each party (in particular, the Report recommends distinct proposals from each party); greater coordination among state, local, and federal political parties as well as a balance of power between those parties that favors party organizations at the national level; increased power for majority parties in Congress (for example, requiring a simple majority vote for cloture in the Senate); increased coordination between members of the same party in the House, Senate, and presidency. If its recommendations are followed, the Report claimed it would create more responsible parties.

Collective responsibility through parties has received substantial attention from political scientists, often using the Report as a frame of reference. There are two types of responsibility referred to in the Report. The first is responsibility of party leaders to party members through primaries, caucuses, etc. The second type, and the type for which I am concerned with in this paper, is responsibility of each party to the general public through elections, especially for the policies they pass as well as for the implementation of those policies (22). Pennock (1952, 707) offers a definition of responsibility that differs slightly from those found in the Report: "A person is responsible to another for his actions when he can be held to account for them by another. A government is responsible when its tenure of office is subject to control, within limits, by the electorate." Pennock recognizes responsibility requires control by the electorate, but his description of responsibility throughout the rest of his work suggests that it is difficult to hold

parties responsible for particular policies due to the sheer number of important issues policymakers must confront. It is unlikely that voters will agree with the entire program of a party. Voters, however, only have two choices, and may end up supporting a party upon which they disagree with several policy positions. In such an instance, it is difficult to hold parties responsible. While Pennock makes an excellent point, he fails adequately to take into account issue salience as a way in which voters and parties may be able to partially cope with this problem. White (1992) suggests that the Report equates responsibility with accountability, and neither can occur unless parties formulate distinct policies and can pass those policies. If this cannot occur, then “elections become devoid of meaning” (White 1992, 11). Fiorina (1980, 12) offers the following definition of responsibility:

To say that some person or group is responsible for a state of affairs is to assert that he/they have the ability to take legitimate actions that have a major impact on that state of affairs. More colloquially, when someone is responsible we know whom to blame (12).

Like Pennock (1952) and White (1992), Fiorina is concerned with second type of responsibility identified in the Report. Also, like White, he seems to equate responsibility with accountability, evident by his statement “we know whom to blame.” For policymaking in the US, Fiorina’s definition of responsibility requires that an individual can only be held responsible to the extent that he or she can have a major impact on making policy. Given the legislative process, it rarely occurs that an individual member of Congress could be held individually responsible, using Fiorina’s definition. Instead, collective responsibility is required. Regarding collective responsibility, Fiorina states, “[t]he only way collective responsibility has ever existed and can

exist, given American institutional arrangements, is through the agency of the political party” (13). He goes on to describe collective responsibility through parties as having occurred through national tides in the past, but this has declined (13). He also uses the term party record to describe the reputation of the party across institutions (national tides), which is different from Cox and McCubbins use of the term, which describes the reputation of a party in a single chamber of Congress.

Achieving collective responsibility through the American two-party system is problematic. First, separation of powers means that different parties may control different branches of government. It becomes much more difficult to hold one party responsible for the policies of government if it does not actually have the power to pass its program. Second, candidate-centered elections for Congress and the incumbency advantage may also hinder collective responsibility through political parties. People tend to dislike the institution of Congress but have high regard for their individual House member (Fenno 1975). Despite scandals and other wrong-doing, Americans tend to reelect their incumbent MC year after year (Mann and Wolfinger 1980). Achieving collective responsibility through political parties is difficult to imagine in a system in which voters tend to cast their ballots for the incumbent despite all his or her faults. Collective responsibility through parties requires that at least some voters, some of the time, vote against their incumbent, based not on his or her actions and characteristics, but on those of his or her political party. Voters hold the group, the collective, responsible for its actions in government. It may be that perceptions of dishonesty or scandal on the part of a political party have little or nothing to do with their incumbent member of Congress, and yet, he or she is still tied to the Democratic or Republican Party through the concomitant

reputation of that party

Fiorina notes that there is a decline in collective responsibility because parties as organizations, parties in the electorate, and parties in government have declined, which suggests that the two-party system has moved away from the party ideal presented in the Report. Since the publication of the Report, however, political parties have strengthened, and in several areas, have come closer to meeting the goals of the Committee on Political Parties (Epstein 2002; Pomper 1971; White 1992). Party identification from the 1960s through the 1980s waned (Abramson 1976; Fiorina 1980); however, this trend began to change course in the 1990s, as more people again began to identify with one of the two major political parties (Bartels 2000). Also, party identification is still the primary determinant of vote choice (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2007; Bartels 2000; Campbell et al. 1960). Parties in Congress have more homogenous memberships and are further away from each other ideologically than at the middle of the twentieth-century (Han and Brady 2007; Rohde 1991). Moreover, rule changes in the House have strengthened majority party leadership and increased the positive agenda setting ability of the majority (Aldrich and Rohde 2000; Binder 1996; Owens 1997; Rohde 1974; 1991), helping party leaders to pass legislation favored by their members (Bianco and Sened 2005). Finally, party organizations have continued to reach voters, attempting to increase turnout among party members and increase electoral participation, even in the absence of big city machine politics (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1992; Wielhouwer and Lockbie 1994).

Cox and McCubbins (2005, chapter 1) redefine responsible parties to incorporate their theory of negative agenda setting. The traditional view of responsible parties as envisioned in the Report and by Ranney (1954) holds that parties propose and pass distinct policies when they

are in control of government. This requires ideologically cohesive parties whose leaders exert enough influence to enforce party discipline and corral enough votes for the passage of policy proposals. While they believe that this may be a part of responsible parties, there is more to the story. Cox and McCubbins assert that responsible parties keep legislation unwanted by a majority of the majority party from passing the House. Their reconceptualization of party responsibility does not explicitly discuss responsibility as accountability through elections, which is my aim here.

Because of the separation of powers written into the Constitution, it is difficult to achieve a British-style party system where it is easy to hold all members of a political party responsible for the state of the country. Jones (2002) describes the American party system as a “government of parties” rather than as party government. It is because the American system is so fragmented due to federalism and separation of powers that more than one type of collective responsibility must exist to ensure that there is cooperation within these separate parties as well as collaboration across parties to pass legislation. This argument is also made by Jones and McDermott (2004) in their analysis of responsible party government in House and Senate elections. They find that there appear to be two different forms of party responsibility, one which occurs across branches of government and another that occurs within each branch government.

Coalitional collective responsibility refers to holding those who are part of a ruling coalition accountable for their conduct while they are in power. A coalition of actors from different branches of government is necessary to pass legislation and address public problems. National tides are a mechanism through which voters can hold members of a political party responsible for their actions. The impact of national tides is broad; party members from the

presidency to the House to the Senate and even state and local levels may win or lose elections based on coalitional collective responsibility. Coalition collective responsibility provides an incentive for actors of the same party in different institutions in government to work together to pursue policies that address public problems for which constituents demand action. Fiorina (1980) recognized this type of collective responsibility in his seminal article; however, he did not recognize the second type of collective responsibility.

Institutional collective responsibility is more precise vis-à-vis coalitional collective responsibility. The party record is the mechanism through which voters may hold House (or Senate) Democrats or Republicans accountable for their actions. While national tides and the achievement of coalitional collective responsibility are approximate (party members across institutions are held to account), party records and the achievement of institutional collective responsibility is more precise because the party members of one institution are not penalized and do not benefit from the actions of members of a political party that are located outside of that institution. Put another way, with institutional collective responsibility, members of a political party in a single institution determine their own electoral fate through the actions and the reputation that those actions generate. The party record, then, provides an electoral incentive for party members within an institution to cooperate with one another to pass legislation and prevent scandal.

The results from the preceding chapters show that both types of collective responsibility are at work simultaneously. Members of the House are held collectively responsible through both national tides and the party record, with each concept corresponding to a different form of collective responsibility. National tides and the party record provide electoral incentives for

members of the same political party to cooperate within an institution (the party record) and across institutions (national tides). These electoral incentives provide motivation for party members, both within and across institutions, to work together to pass legislation that addresses important public policy problems; work to prevent, or at a minimum, reduce the fallout from political scandal; and provide clear ideological signals to voters about the types of policies each party would pursue if they gained control of government. The two types of collective responsibility that I described in the preceding paragraphs differ from those identified by Jones and McDermott (2004). Because Congress can be divided, it is also difficult to ensure collective responsibility with each party controlling one chamber of Congress. It is, therefore, necessary to seek an intra-chamber approach to institutional collective responsibility.

In response to Fiorina's (1980) lamentation that there has been a decline in collective responsibility in American politics, the results of the preceding chapters find support for two types of collective responsibility for the 38 year period under study.

Not mentioned in the responsible party government literature or by Fiorina (1980) is a description of how parties may be held accountable for their reputations for integrity, or put another way, for the scandals of their members. The Report and Fiorina were primarily concerned with collective responsibility in the context of public policy, not scandal. The findings here suggest that it is primarily through the party record and its impact on challenger entry that collective responsibility for unethical behavior in Congress occurs; however, when scandal occurs in the executive branch, members of the President's party in Congress may be held responsible in addition to the President as results from the 1974 midterm election suggest.

In short, Fiorina is mistaken about a decline of collective responsibility in American

politics. Approximately twenty years after penning his seminal article about the decline of parties and responsibility, Fiorina reviewed the changes in American party politics and still maintained that there is a decline in political parties. With the evidence presented here, I disagree with Fiorina's assertion. While the American party system may not be as responsible as the members of the Committee on Political Parties may have hoped it would become when they wrote the Report, parties, at least in Congress, have moved closer to their ideal, not further. The party record and national tides are two important parts of an American responsible party system. National tides allow voters to hold party members across institutions accountable for their actions. The party record allows voters to hold party members accountable within an institution. In a system of government in which separation of powers is a defining characteristic, the party record allows voters to hold officeholders of the same party accountable, even during periods of divided government. These two very different parts of collective responsibility in American government are vital elements of our democracy, allowing voters to hold their elected officials accountable, and bring the country closer to a responsible party system.

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Vita

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