



## Presidential Primaries and Caucuses

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### Introduction

American presidential nominations hold a peculiar place in American politics. Their practical effects on policy are clear because new policy positions and priorities often originate from the nominee who enters the presidency. They also can be immensely important as a mechanism for changing the balance of power within each party or for redefining the dominant representation of the party to the mass public. Despite these consequences, our understanding of presidential nominations remains somewhat clouded and disparate by constant changes to the rules and features of party nomination contests. Nearly every cycle we find candidates, journalists, voters, and scholars readjusting their beliefs in how the process works. Moreover, the different types of rules and contexts specific to nomination contests also make them attractive to study for a variety of scholars whose primary interests are outside understanding the nomination process. Some scholars study presidential nominations for what they can teach us about how American parties operate, whereas others study them because they provide insights into voting behavior when party labels are absent or because they are interested in the differences in effects by party rules. Many of these works remain instructive and are discussed here but still produce uncertainties concerning how their findings integrate within the workings of a complete nomination system or with subsequent changes to the nomination system. Indeed, a common conclusion to the literature reviewed here is that the behavior of party insiders, candidates, and voters within nominations is often motivated and caused by the uncertain nature of the process or is a reaction to unintended consequences of past actions. The party reforms of the 1970s certainly accelerated a change in the nomination process to greater public influence from voters and the news media. But subsequent changes in rules, campaign finance laws, mass communication, and campaign technology have further modified this influence as well. Depending on the stage in the nomination process, party insiders, candidates, donors, the news media, and voters have varying levels of influence. But at each stage there is evidence of the lasting consequences of party reforms, where parties and candidates now have to act in response to, or anticipation of, the primary electorate's input before the convention.

### General Overviews and Theoretical Perspectives

McCormick 1982 provides a historical account of the features of and changes to presidential nominations prior to party reforms. Reiter 1985 considers alternative theories of what changed nominations, suggesting the move to primaries and caucuses was more so a reflection than a cause of a decline in local party organizations and power. Aldrich 1980 discusses the strategic aspects of the post-reform system from the viewpoint of the candidates. Cohen, et al. 2008 exclusively focuses on presidential nominations before and after reform to provide a new conception of American parties and to illustrate the influence that party insiders have over candidates. Norrander 1996 comments on the commonalities and inconsistencies in studies of post-reform nomination politics up to that point. Steger 2015 discusses the features of modern nomination politics, with an emphasis on intraparty coordination and competition, and Norrander 2015 reviews what we know about primary politics to clarify misconceptions and engage criticisms about the process.

**Aldrich, John H. *Before the Convention: Strategies and Choices in Presidential Nomination Campaigns*. Political Science. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.**

In this book, Aldrich presents one of the first arguments that nominations are best understood in dynamic terms. His focus on candidates and the features to how they decide to compete, depending on the types of rules and competition they face, remains applicable today.

**Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations before and after Reform*. Chicago Studies in American Politics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.**

Mainly proposes a theory of American political parties as organizations, but to date this is the most comprehensive theoretical treatment of presidential nominations before and after reform. It establishes endorsements, an indicator of party insider support, as an important component to the invisible primary predicting post-reform nomination success.

**McCormick, Richard P. *The Presidential Game: The Origins of American Presidential Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.**

A historical categorization and exploration of presidential nominations prior to reform. Provides a key account of the uncertainties surrounding nominations prior to the election of 1824, as well as a historical account and analysis of how party conventions and party primaries grew and developed.

**Norrander, Barbara. "Presidential Nomination Politics in the Post-reform Era." *Political Research Quarterly* 49.4 (1996): 875–915.**

A review article that is one of the first attempts to come to terms with the myriad of research findings published on the emergence of primaries and caucuses up to that point. Its framework for organizing, categorizing, and evaluating nominations research remains valuable today.

**Norrander, Barbara. *The Imperfect Primary: Oddities, Biases, and Strengths of U.S. Presidential Nomination Politics. Controversies in Electoral Democracy and Representation*. New York: Routledge, 2015.**

A lucid review and analysis of how modern nominations work and what that means for American politics. It is notable for its extensive discussion of the perceived problems with the system and how nomination politics connect to the general election.

**Reiter, Howard L. *Selecting the President: The Nominating Process in Transition*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.**

An in-depth analysis of nominations and conventions prior to and following reform. Its analysis of nomination patterns, delegates, and elections before and after reform suggests that reforms and subsequent rule changes were more so a reflection of declining local party power than a cause.

**Steger, Wayne P. *A Citizen's Guide to Presidential Nominations: The Competition for Leadership*. Citizen Guides to Politics and Public Affairs. New York: Routledge, 2015.**

Analyzes multiple features of early-21st-century nominations. Most notable for its focus on the role that party unity and candidate opportunism play in determining the level of campaign competition and the dynamics of the nomination campaign.

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## National and State Parties and Their Rules

The reforms that the Democratic Party put in place prior to 1972 ushered in our modern presidential nominating system. Polsby 1983 provides a valuable and somewhat critical framework for understanding how the effects of reform extend beyond the nomination. Paying attention to presidential nominations, Maisel and Bibby 2002 illustrates how subsequent Supreme Court rulings have helped keep the nomination process open but have also managed to strengthen state and national party organizations in the process. Cain and Mullin 2002 categorizes the various costs and incentives that state parties face when choosing how to select their state delegates to explain their changes. Mayer and Busch 2003 explains how these and other forces encourage states to produce frontloading in the nomination contest, as well as discussing the politics and possibilities of reforming rules. Walz and Comer 1999 finds that characteristics of state party strength are equally, if not more, responsible for the growing role of primaries in comparison to national party directives. Meinke, et al. 2006 illustrates that ideological forces also matter in choosing rules in cases where state parties have made their selection rules more open because they share greater ideological similarity with their state electorates. All these changes are discussed extensively in Kamarck 2015, whose documentation and analysis of subsequent changes to the nominating system illustrate the battles among state parties, candidates, and national parties in agreeing on a set of rules, as well as the role that frontrunner candidates can play in changing the rules to their advantage.

**Cain, Bruce E., and Megan Mullin. "Competing for Attention and Votes: The Role of State Parties in Setting Presidential Nomination Rules." In *The Parties Respond: Changes in American Parties and Campaigns*. 4th ed. Edited by L. Sandy Maisel, 99–120. *Transforming American Politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2002.**

Summarizes the various incentives and actors that influence state party choices of their nomination rules, including the competition between states, within states and between parties, between national and state parties, and between parties of other states.

**Kamarck, Elaine C. *Primary Politics: Everything You Need to Know about How America Nominates Its Presidential Candidates*. 2d ed. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2015.**

Kamarck contends that presidential frontrunner candidates have played a decisive role in shaping the national party nomination rules. She illustrates this by discussing the history and forces shaping the modern nominating system's choices in sequencing, proportional representation, and delegate allocation.

**Maisel, L. Sandy, and John F. Bibby. "Election Laws, Court Rulings, Party Rules and Practices: Steps toward and Away from a Stronger Party Role." In *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*. Edited by John C. Green and Paul S. Herrnson, 61–82. *Studies in Government and Public Policy*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002.**

Summarizes election laws and court rulings since the party reforms, with notable attention to presidential primaries and caucuses. Shows how court rulings have allowed for greater openness in the primary process while also establishing the rights of national and state parties to select their own process.

**Mayer, William G., and Andrew E. Busch. *The Front-Loading Problem in Presidential Nominations*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2003.**

Explores how frontloading in the presidential nomination process came about, and its likely effects. Analyzes a number of proposals for reform.

**Meinke, Scott R., Jeffrey K. Staton, and Steven T. Wuhs. "State Delegate Selection Rules for Presidential Nominations, 1972–2000." *Journal of Politics* 68.1 (2006): 180–193.**

Examines why state party elites opened delegate selection by holding primary elections rather than caucuses. Finds ideological convergence to be a strong predictor of Democratic state party choices to open process.

**Polsby, Nelson W. *Consequences of Party Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.**

Discusses why the cause for party reforms grew. Considers the consequences of party reforms that go beyond parties, including for governing and for citizen mobilization and accountability.

**Shafer, Byron E. *Quiet Revolution: The Struggle for the Democratic Party and the Shaping of Post-reform Politics*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1983.**

In-depth account and analysis of the forces responsible for the development and implementation of party reforms. Discusses reactions and adaptations of party elites at national and state levels.

**Walz, Jeffrey S., and John Comer. "State Responses to National Democratic Party Reform." *Political Research Quarterly* 52.1 (1999): 189–208.**

Considers the competing role that national directives and state party characteristics played in changing state party procedures for choosing delegates to the nominating convention. Event history analysis finds that growth of primaries was a reaction both to national party reforms and changing state party characteristics.

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## Participation and Representation in Nomination Contests

Two of the goals of the McGovern-Fraser reforms were to provide an open process with more-meaningful participation among the public and to encourage states to adopt systems that fairly represented the distribution of preferences among all its voters. These reforms did not offer clear rules of how to achieve this, however, and allowed for a lot of flexibility across states. Lengle 1981 provides a comprehensive statement of early findings and challenges to claims that Democratic Party reforms made their nomination process suitably representative. Both Geer 1988 and Norrander 1989 propose alternative means of comparisons and find that claims of presidential-primary electorates being unrepresentative or ideologically extreme are overstated. Hersh 2012 similarly finds that caucus goers show little differences from primary voters in terms of political attitudes and interest, just levels of community engagement. Kaufmann, et al. 2003 shows that the trend toward opening up primary participation rules from 1988 to 2000 has facilitated a more moderate and representative presidential-primary electorate. Ansolabehere and King 1990 illustrates how different nomination selection rules across past nominations compare to the proportional-representation standard and how they were biased against Jesse Jackson's candidacy in 1988. Jewitt 2014 provides a comprehensive examination of the effects that state and party contest rules and characteristics have had on voter participation. Patterson 2009 is an analysis and commentary of how frontloading and compression have limited opportunities for greater voter participation.

**Ansolabehere, Stephen, and Gary King. "Measuring the Consequences of Delegate Selection Rules in Presidential Nominations." *Journal of Politics* 52.2 (1990): 609–621.**

Proposes a new rationale for measuring bias and responsiveness in delegate selection rules. Compares the relative performance of caucuses and different types of primaries across previous years, and which candidates were hurt the most by the type of contest.

**Geer, John G. "Assessing the Representativeness of Electorates in Presidential Primaries." *American Journal of Political Science* 32.4 (1988): 929–945.**

Using exit poll data from the 1976 and 1980 presidential elections, Geer finds that primary electorates are not substantially different from the party followers if they are compared to voters for the party in the general election, instead of simply party identifiers.

**Hersh, Eitan. "Primary Voters versus Caucus Goers and the Peripheral Motivations of Political Participation." *Political Behavior* 34.4 (2012): 689–718.**

Compares caucus goers to primary voters by using two surveys from the 2008 presidential election. Caucus goers differ from primary voters mostly in terms of their attachment or integration into the community, not their political engagement or attitudes.

**Jewitt, Caitlin E. "Packed Primaries and Empty Caucuses: Voter Turnout in Presidential Nominations." *Public Choice* 160.3 (2014): 295–312.**

Accounts for the effects of rules and primary competition on voter turnout in state nomination contests from 1980 to 2012. Primaries, proportional allocation, and open contests are associated with higher turnout rates.

**Kaufmann, Karen M., James M. Gimpel, and Adam H. Hoffman. "A Promise Fulfilled? Open Primaries and Representation." *Journal of Politics* 65.2 (2003): 457–476.**

Uses state-level exit polling from 1988 through 2000 to compare the electorate in primary and general elections in terms of ideology, age, and income. Finds that the trend toward open primaries makes their electorates younger, more moderate, and ideologically similar to general

electorates.

**Lengle, James I.** *Representation and Presidential Primaries: The Democratic Party in the Post-reform Era. Contributions in Political Science 57.* Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981.

A comprehensive account of initial concerns with party rules, especially complaints that the reforms did not go far enough to make their nomination process suitably representative of all its party followers.

**Norrander, Barbara.** "Ideological Representativeness of Presidential Primary Voters." *American Journal of Political Science* 33.3 (1989): 570–587.

Uses validated turnout measures from the 1980 National Election Studies surveys to show that a party's primary electorate is slightly different from its general-election counterpart in terms of ideological sophistication and psychological identifications, but not extremism.

**Patterson, Thomas E.** "Voter Participation: Records Galore This Time, but What about Next Time?" In *Reforming the Nomination Process*. Edited by Steven S. Smith and Melanie J. Springer, 44–63. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2009.

Discusses the effects of frontloading and other trends in nomination campaigns on rates of voter participation in the nomination process, and in light of the record levels of turnout in 2008. Concludes with evaluating prospects for reform.

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## The Invisible Primary and Party Coordination

Prior to reforms there was a growing pattern of presidential candidates and party insiders meeting and coordinating with each other prior to the selection process in order to make nomination choices during the convention easier. This jockeying prior to the formal selection process has continued to grow in prominence and importance following reforms. Hadley 1976 describes this portion of the nomination campaign as the invisible primary and provides the first analysis and discussion of its features. Buell 1996 revisits the invisible primary to claim that it grew in importance as states began to frontload their contests, and finds such performance is predictive of nomination success, especially in regard to money. Cohen, et al. 2008 provides the strongest argument for the effects and role of the invisible primary within nominations. The authors reconceptualize it as a period for party insider influence and find that elite endorsements, an indicator of party coordination, are the predominant factor that drives other aspects of pre-primary performance across money, polls, and media coverage. Dowdle, et al. 2009 supports these claims by finding that national polling levels before the primaries are responsive to elite endorsements, as well as news media coverage and prior national support. However, retail politics and the early states still show an influence within the invisible primary. Christenson and Smidt 2012 finds that the national-level forces, particularly fundraising, media coverage, and polls, reflect support for candidates in New Hampshire and Iowa long before their primaries and caucuses. Moreover, understanding party insider coordination during the invisible primary may not be an easy task. Dowdle, et al. 2013 examines donors who give to multiple candidates to consider if parties can maintain cohesion even in the face of intense candidate competition. Both Anderson 2013 and Whitby 2014 propose a framework for understanding the act and timing of endorsements, and both find that party insiders differ in their proclivity to endorse candidates. Likewise, Cain 2015 finds that party-centric campaign consultants spur intraparty competition and can act as inhibitors to unification around a party frontrunner.

**Anderson, Christopher L.** "Which Party Elites Choose to Lead the Nomination Process?" *Political Research Quarterly* 66.1 (2013): 61–76.

A study of the endorsement behavior of members of the US House of Representatives prior to the Iowa caucuses. Finds that members with greater electoral security and greater levels of ambition or policy activity are more likely to endorse a presidential candidate.

**Buell, Emmett H., Jr. "The Invisible Primary." In *In Pursuit of the White House: How We Choose Our Presidential Nominees*. Edited by William G. Mayer, 1–43. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1996.**

Argues that increased frontloading among states has enhanced the importance of a candidate's standing prior to the election year. Finds candidate performance within different areas to predict primary outcomes accurately, with campaign cash being the most predictive.

**Cain, Sean A. "Leviathan's Reach? The Impact of Political Consultants on the Outcomes of the 2012 Republican Presidential Primaries and Caucuses." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 45.1 (2015): 132–156.**

Examines the behavior and impact of paid campaign consultant groups in the 2012 Republican presidential nomination. Shows that consultants provide services to multiple candidates, effectively encouraging greater competition within the primary.

**Christenson, Dino P., and Corwin D. Smidt. "Still Part of the Conversation: Iowa and New Hampshire's Say within the Invisible Primary." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 42.3 (2012): 597–621.**

Candidates and the news media focus early and disproportionately on Iowa and New Hampshire, which means that performances within these states influence the national factors of success long before the caucus and primary results are known.

**Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations before and after Reform*. Chicago Studies in American Politics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.**

In chapters 7 ("The Invisible Primary: Theory and Evidence," pp. 187–234) and 8 ("Anatomy of a Conversation," pp. 235–276), the authors define their measure of endorsements and evaluate its unique contribution to explaining success during the invisible primary. They show that endorsements are mostly independent drivers of success across polls, media coverage, and campaign contributions.

**Dowdle, Andrew J., Randall E. Adkins, and Wayne P. Steger. "The Viability Primary: Modeling Candidate Support before the Primaries." *Political Research Quarterly* 62.1 (2009): 77–91.**

Tests what factors explain national polling support for candidates before the primaries. Shows that it is largely explained by other features of the invisible primary, including news coverage and endorsements as well as prior support.

**Dowdle, Andrew J., Scott Limbocker, Song Yang, Karen Sebold, and Patrick A. Stewart. *The Invisible Hands of Political Parties in Presidential Elections: Party Activists and Political Aggregation from 2004 to 2012*. Palgrave Pivot. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.**

The authors consider donors to multiple candidates as a type of party activist, and perform network analysis of these donations. They find that the nominee is often the one who has the greatest share of multiple donors, and suggest that not all contested primaries are necessarily divisive.

**Hadley, Arthur T. *The Invisible Primary*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1976.**

Original statement that nominations are effectively decided before the first vote is cast, but in terms of a candidate's actions. Determining features include the staff that candidates hire, the funds they raise, and the policy positions they chose.

**Whitby, Kenny J. *Strategic Decision-Making in Presidential Nominations: When and Why Party Elites Decide to Support a Candidate*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014.**

A study of Democrat superdelegate endorsements prior to and during the nomination campaign. Proposes a model for understanding not only which elites endorse candidates but also when they might do so.

## Predictors of Candidate Success

As already mentioned, party elites and their endorsements during the invisible-primary period are one of the strongest predictors of nomination success. However, scholars have considered a number of other factors as well, including fundraising, polling status, cash reserves, and media coverage. William Mayer, first in Mayer 1996 and again in Mayer 2003, showed fundraising and national polling status immediately prior to the start of the primary to be largely predictive of nomination success. Much of the literature, as well as popular media, has focused on the effect of momentum derived from early-state victories. Several candidates who have not won Iowa or New Hampshire have gone on to win the nomination. But Busch 2008 finds minor effects on the eventual nomination from performances in Iowa, and Steger, et al. 2004 documents somewhat more consistent effects for New Hampshire. Norrander 1993 demonstrates that momentum voting is associated with second-place finishes, and that more ideologically extreme candidates do better in caucuses than primaries. Steger 2007 shows Democrats to be more responsive to momentum and offers further evidence that presidential-primary vote is affected by candidate success in New Hampshire, as well as by endorsements. Berggren 2007 argues that the impact of frontrunner status is different among Democrats and Republicans, with the latter preferring the early frontrunner, and the former preferring long shots who emerge as frontrunners late in the process. Adkins and Dowdle 2004 indicates that building a strong campaign organization and good fundraising early can help candidates weather early-state defeats.

**Adkins, Randall E., and Andrew J. Dowdle. "Bumps in the Road to the White House: How Influential Were Campaign Resources to Nominating George W. Bush?" *Journal of Political Marketing* 3.4 (2004): 1–27.**

Pre-primary campaign resources, including fundraising, cash reserves, state organization, paid staff, and expenses and fees, help frontrunners survive early-state defeats.

**Berggren, D. Jason. "Two Parties, Two Types of Nominees, Two Paths to Winning a Presidential Nomination, 1972–2004." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 37.2 (2007): 203–227.**

Democratic and Republican nomination campaigns favor different kinds of candidates, with the former choosing candidates who peak late and the latter choosing those who begin as frontrunners.

**Busch, Andrew E. "The Reemergence of the Iowa Caucuses: A New Trend, an Aberration, or a Useful Reminder?" In *The Making of the Presidential Candidates 2008*. Edited by William G. Mayer, 39–74. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008.**

A brief history of Iowa's caucuses, with evidence to reinforce arguments that it may have acted as a key factor of nomination success for particular candidates.

**Mayer, William G. "Forecasting Presidential Nominations." In *In Pursuit of the White House: How We Choose Our Presidential Nominees*. Edited by William G. Mayer, 44–71. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1996.**

Nomination success is primarily determined by fundraising and national polling status prior to the start of the primary season.

**Mayer, William G. "Forecasting Presidential Nominations or, My Model Worked Just Fine, Thank You." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 36.2 (2003): 153–157.**

Further evidence from 1996 and 2000 that nomination success is primarily determined by fundraising and national polling status prior to the start of the primary season.

**Norrander, Barbara. "Nomination Choices: Caucus and Primary Outcomes, 1976–88." *American Journal of Political Science* 37.2 (1993): 343–364.**

Looking at caucus and primary outcomes from 1976 to 1988, finds that momentum voting is associated with second-place finishes, and that more ideologically extreme candidates do better in caucuses than primaries and in western states than in midwestern and prairie states.

**Steger, Wayne P.** "Who Wins Nominations and Why? An Updated Forecast of the Presidential Primary Vote." *Political Research Quarterly* 60.1 (2007): 91–99.

The presidential-primary vote is affected by endorsements and candidate success in New Hampshire. Democrats are more responsive to momentum; Republicans, to factors in the invisible primary.

**Steger, Wayne P., Andrew J. Dowdle, and Randall E. Adkins.** "The New Hampshire Effect in Presidential Nominations." *Political Research Quarterly* 57.3 (2004): 375–390.

The New Hampshire primary vote and winner improve prediction of subsequent primary votes for Democrats, even when controlling for polls, cash reserves, receipts, and news coverage.

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## Money and Campaign Finance

Some work cited in other sections questions the popular view of money's importance in presidential nominations, since it may be more of an indicator than an actual cause of nomination success. But even if money does not win nomination campaigns, its absence certainly can lose it. Candidates need money to survive costly nomination campaigns and win votes. They spend a large amount of time trying to raise money early on, in what is termed the "money primary," and their lack of funds likely contributes to their demise. Goff 2004 presents an extensive case that the money primary is a key force that determines who wins the nomination. Haynes, et al. 1997 finds that candidates who spend more in a state receive a greater share of the vote. Adkins and Dowdle 2002 deciphers what factors are typically associated with raising more money the year before the election year. Hinckley and Green 1996 discusses and contrasts the campaign-driven and organization-driven models of fundraising, finding stronger support for the organization-driven model. In contrast, Damore 1997 shows how campaign funds during the nomination process respond to the interaction of media coverage and campaign dynamics. The importance of organizational factors is further illustrated in Brown, et al. 1995, which analyzes an extensive survey of donors to decipher how funds are raised and what type of people give. Smidt and Christenson 2012 finds that changes in campaign funds during the money primary are much more a reflection of candidate behavior and campaign spending than of changing electoral prospects. Corrado 2012 discusses how the campaign finance system has changed across nomination campaigns, including comments on what the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United* likely means for nomination campaigns.

**Adkins, Randall E., and Andrew J. Dowdle.** "The Money Primary: What Influences the Outcome of Pre-primary Presidential Nomination Fundraising?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 32.2 (2002): 256–275.

A look at the types of candidates who raise the most money prior to the presidential election year. The authors show that candidates who lead in the national polls and spend more on their campaign organization tend to win the money primary.

**Brown, Clifford W., Jr., Lynda W. Powell, and Clyde Wilcox.** *Serious Money: Fundraising and Contributing in Presidential Nomination Campaigns*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

A comprehensive study of donors to presidential candidates and the methods that candidates can use to encourage them to give. Much of the analysis is based on a survey of contributors to presidential campaigns. Differences between personal and direct-mail solicitations are explored.

**Corrado, Anthony.** "Financing Presidential Nominations in the Post-public Funding Era." In *The Making of the Presidential Candidates 2012*. Edited by William G. Mayer and Jonathan Bernstein, 23–58. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012.

One of the more recent discussions of how changes in technology and campaign finance law have changed the financial system for presidential candidates. Discusses the decline of public funding and considers the January 2010 Supreme Court decision that spurred the growth of Super PACs.

**Damore, David F.** "A Dynamic Model of Candidate Fundraising: The Case of Presidential Nomination Campaigns." *Political*



**Research Quarterly 50.2 (1997): 343–364.**

Contributions are responsive to candidate victories on the campaign trail. But the financial benefits of victories are conditional on the following levels of media coverage and whether the candidate is a frontrunner or a long shot.

**Goff, Michael J. *The Money Primary: The New Politics of the Early Presidential Nomination Process*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.**

Makes a case for the influence of money within presidential nominations. Examines which features of a candidate's precandidacy and early candidacy were consequential for candidate performance within the money primary and for early performance within presidential nominations of 1988 and 2000.

**Haynes, Audrey A., Paul-Henri Gurian, and Stephen M. Nichols. "The Role of Candidate Spending in Presidential Nomination Campaigns." *Journal of Politics* 59.1 (1997): 213–225.**

Studies spending patterns and vote outcomes during the 1980 and 1988 presidential nomination contests. The effects of spending are analyzed while also accounting for a candidate's momentum and viability; effects shrink as the number of candidates in the field shrinks as well.

**Hinckley, Katherine A., and John C. Green. "Fund-Raising in Presidential Nomination Campaigns: The Primary Lessons of 1988." *Political Research Quarterly* 49.4 (1996): 693–718.**

Outlines two competing perspectives of how nomination candidates raise funds within campaign-driven and organization-driven models of contribution performance. The authors show that campaign organization spending was a stronger determinant of raising funds than was campaign performance in the 1996 race.

**Smidt, Corwin D., and Dino P. Christenson. "More Bang for the Buck: Campaign Spending and Fundraising Success." *American Politics Research* 40.6 (2012): 949–975.**

Considers whether all candidates can spend to raise more money, by looking at the performance of each candidate's spending across the money primary before 2008. Finds that changes in funds are much more a function of candidate spending than a candidate's viability.

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## Early States

Regardless of whether Iowa, the first caucus state, and New Hampshire, the first primary state, serve as bellwethers of the nomination campaigns, candidates devote more attention to these states than to subsequent states. And these states traditionally exhibit outsized roles, as Mayer 1987 shows for New Hampshire, in terms of winnowing down the field of candidates. Both states are well known for their unparalleled presidential retail politics, party organization dynamics, and media coverage, as discussed in detail in Palmer 1997 for New Hampshire and in Winebrenner and Goldford 2010 for Iowa. Mayer 1996 examines the procedures in such caucuses as Iowa's, where voters frequently take a public stance or speak for a candidate and demographic representativeness. Squire 2008 dispels many of the myths surrounding how the caucuses came to be in Iowa and how they operate. Moore and Smith 2015 does likewise in its discussion of New Hampshire, engaging criticisms for the state's demographic makeup as well as its mixed primary system, in which unregistered voters can choose to vote in either party's primary. Scala 2003 argues that grassroots campaigning in New Hampshire has the potential to launch long shots into competition with frontrunners. Indeed, Vavreck, et al. 2002 demonstrates the importance of candidate contact in New Hampshire, since it increases information and favorability among voters.

**Mayer, William G.** "The New Hampshire Primary: A Historical Overview." In *Media and Momentum: The New Hampshire Primary and Nomination Politics*. Edited by Gary R. Orren and Nelson W. Polsby, 9–41. Chatham House Series on Change in American Politics. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1987.

A historical portrait of New Hampshire as the first test of candidate viability. Notes, however, that Iowa may have replaced it as the winner of the field of candidates, since the momentum developed in Iowa is predictive of New Hampshire's results.

**Mayer, William G.** "Caucuses: How They Work, What Differences They Make." In *In Pursuit of the White House: How We Choose Our Presidential Nominees*. Edited by William G. Mayer, 105–157. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1996.

A rich description of the unique characteristics of modern caucuses. Focuses on the caucuses in Iowa as providing the first cues on candidate viability.

**Moore, David W., and Andrew E. Smith.** *The First Primary: New Hampshire's Outsize Role in Presidential Nominations*. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2015.

Documents the importance and history of the New Hampshire primary and evaluates a number of myths about it. Particular attention is paid to the demographic makeup of the state and those who vote in its primaries.

**Palmer, Niall A.** *The New Hampshire Primary and the American Electoral Process*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997.

Examines the nature and history of the New Hampshire primary, with attention to retail politics, momentum, local media coverage, and the relationship between the state and national parties.

**Scala, Dante J.** *Stormy Weather: The New Hampshire Primary and Presidential Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Suggests that New Hampshire, by virtue of its first-in-the-nation status and intrastate party dynamics, has the potential to catapult long shots into competition with frontrunners through strong grassroots campaigning and appeals to key state demographics.

**Squire, Peverill.** "The Iowa Caucuses, 1972–2008: A Eulogy." *The Forum* 5.4 (2008): 1–9.

Dispels a number of myths about the Iowa caucuses. In particular, shows that the caucus results from 1976 to 2004 were frequently in line with the national polls and the eventual winner.

**Vavreck, Lynn, Constantine J. Spiliotes, and Linda L. Fowler.** "The Effects of Retail Politics in the New Hampshire Primary." *American Journal of Political Science* 46.3 (2002): 595–610.

Candidate contact increases favorability and information among voters, making it easier for voters to rate candidates, though discerning the causal direction here remains a challenge.

**Winebrenner, Hugh, and Dennis J. Goldford.** *The Iowa Precinct Caucuses: The Making of a Media Event*. 3d ed. Bur Oak Book. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010.

Provides a chapter-by-chapter discussion of each Iowa caucus from 1968 to 2008, with an emphasis on how the media interpret the Iowa caucuses.

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## Media

One of the central criticisms of general-election campaign media coverage is that it stresses the horse race aspects of the campaign over a

substantive discussion and comparison of the candidates on the bases of issues or policy priorities. Horse race coverage is a dominant feature of media coverage of nominations as well, but there are different features to its effects. Brady and Johnston 1987 provides some of the first evidence that viability is a much more prominent force in voting behavior in primaries because of the media's attention to the horse race aspects of the nomination following Iowa and New Hampshire. Buell 1987 details how local newspaper coverage in early states such as New Hampshire differs from the campaign coverage of national and regional newspapers, suggesting that early-state local media patterns and effects are different from subsequent national patterns and effects. Mutz 1995 shows that the effects of the media's horse race coverage extend beyond voting behavior, since coverage of who is winning and losing primary elections shapes the frequency of a campaign's contributions. Without any firm results to define the horse race, candidates seemingly have greater opportunities to discuss issues and to shape primary news coverage during the invisible primary. However, Haynes, et al. 2002 finds that candidate press releases play up the horse race as well by emphasizing competitive differences over substantive differences. Flowers, et al. 2003 provides clarity as to why, by showing that the national media were much more likely to report on press releases that focused on competitive differences over those that discussed substantive differences. Lawrence and Rose 2011 considers perhaps the most damaging form of the media's horse race emphasis: the pressure it can put on candidates to exit the race. Perhaps the greatest shift in the media landscape is the growing role of social media on the Internet. Christenson, et al. 2014 explores how candidates with a stronger presence on social and other web information sources are better at raising funds, financially capitalizing on victories and getting supporters to polls during the 2008 nomination.

**Brady, Henry E., and Richard Johnston. "What's the Primary Message: Horse Race or Issue Journalism?" In *Media and Momentum: The New Hampshire Primary and Nomination Politics*. Edited by Gary R. Orren and Nelson W. Polsby, 127–186. Chatham House Series on Change in American Politics. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1987.**

A study of media coverage and voter learning during the 1984 nomination campaign. Although the media do provide serious coverage of candidates, their emphasis on the horse race pushes citizens to learn and stress a candidate's viability as compared to other salient features.

**Buell, Emmett H., Jr. "'Locals' and 'Cosmopolitans': National, Regional, and State Newspaper Coverage of the New Hampshire Primary." In *Media and Momentum: The New Hampshire Primary and Nomination Politics*. Edited by Gary R. Orren and Nelson W. Polsby, 60–103. Chatham House Series on Change in American Politics. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1987.**

Compares local New Hampshire newspaper coverage of the 1984 nomination race to that found in regional and national newspapers. Finds that local newspapers were less likely to bias coverage in favor of frontrunners and more likely to provide in-depth coverage of each candidate.

**Christenson, Dino P., Corwin D. Smidt, and Costas Panagopoulos. "Deus ex Machina: Candidate Web Presence and the Presidential Nomination Campaign." *Political Research Quarterly* 67.1 (2014): 108–122.**

An analysis of the distinctiveness and effects of a candidate's web presence across various news and social-media sources on the Internet during the 2008 nomination campaign. Benefits are found to be unique from that of news coverage, especially in terms of funds raised.

**Flowers, Julianne F., Audrey A. Haynes, and Michael H. Crespin. "The Media, the Campaign, and the Message." *American Journal of Political Science* 47.2 (2003): 259–273.**

Examines press releases of Republican presidential candidates during the 1996 invisible primary, and what features of a candidate's press release generate subsequent stories in newspapers. Finds that national media organizations pay less attention to issue-oriented releases in comparison to releases on content more relevant to horse race coverage.

**Haynes, Audrey A., Julianne F. Flowers, and Paul-Henri Gurian. "Getting the Message Out: Candidate Communication Strategy during the Invisible Primary." *Political Research Quarterly* 55.3 (2002): 633–652.**

Shows that messaging choices in candidate press releases differ by candidate status. Even during the invisible primary, candidates stress their competitive advantages in apparent anticipation of the news media's horse race emphasis.

**Lawrence, Regina G., and Melody Rose. "Bringing Out the Hook: Exit Talk in Media Coverage of Hillary Clinton and Past Presidential Campaigns." *Political Research Quarterly* 64.4 (2011): 870–882.**

An examination of media pressures on candidates who are not in first place to exit from the race. Shows that the 2008 Clinton candidacy faced greater levels of exit talk from the media than past comparable candidacies, such as Reagan in 1976.

**Mutz, Diana C. "Effects of Horse-Race Coverage on Campaign Coeffers: Strategic Contributing in Presidential Primaries." *Journal of Politics* 57.4 (1995): 1015–1042.**

Campaign contributions react to how the news is portraying a campaign within its horse race coverage. Some contributors give to strongly favored candidates who are portrayed as struggling, but portrayals of greater support and viability increase contributions.

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## Voting Behavior in Nomination Contests

With sequential contests, multiple candidates, and less attention, voting behavior in presidential nomination contests is much more variable than in general elections. These features often interact to create the dynamics in candidate support observed during nominations. Bartels 1988 provides a complete statement on how voter uncertainty combines with the sequential nature of the nomination campaign and enables candidates to benefit from media coverage and momentum of early successes. Abramson, et al. 1992 shows how primary voters appear to vote sophisticatedly, choosing more-viable candidates on the basis of their performances in early primaries. And it is for that reason that both Morton and Williams 1999 and Redlawsk, et al. 2011 find that early states in sequential contests provide an important signal of candidate viability to help voters make better vote choices. Indeed, Abramowitz 1989 observes that nomination viability affects perceptions of candidate electability, which ultimately affects vote choice, while Collingwood, et al. 2012 demonstrates that seeing a candidate as more viable results in a positive change in preference for that candidate. Stone, et al. 1995 illustrates how voters can use viability to narrow the field of candidates so as to reduce the cognitive burden in calculating the expected utility of their vote choice. Kenney and Rice 1994 notes that contagion, viability, and sophisticated voting-model explanations each contributed to George H. W. Bush's momentum in 1988 by working among a subset of voters. And Aldrich and Alvarez 1994 reveals that issue priorities are another aspect of primary campaigns that allow voters to differentiate their preferred candidate.

**Abramowitz, Alan I. "Viability, Electability, and Candidate Choice in a Presidential Primary Election: A Test of Competing Models." *Journal of Politics* 51.4 (1989): 977–992.**

Path analysis of exit polls in the 1988 Super Tuesday shows that candidate choice in nomination campaigns for voters of both parties follows an expected utility model, wherein voters base their decisions both on candidate evaluations and concerns of electability.

**Abramson, Paul R., John H. Aldrich, Phil Paolino, and David W. Rohde. "'Sophisticated' Voting in the 1988 Presidential Primaries." *American Political Science Review* 86.1 (1992): 55–69.**

Primary voters of both parties act strategically in choosing candidates; that is, altering their choices on the basis of perceptions of viability following early primaries and caucuses.

**Aldrich, John H., and R. Michael Alvarez. "Issues and the Presidential Primary Voter." *Political Behavior* 16.3 (1994): 289–317.**

Presents the case of how issues can matter in presidential-primary voting. Shows that candidates differed in their issue emphasis in 1988 and that Super Tuesday voters were more likely to support those candidates who emphasized their policy priorities.

**Bartels, Larry M. *Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.**

Shows how campaign events and early-state performances can create momentum for candidates, and, in particular, how news coverage of the horse race affects prospective voting as well as knowledge and uncertainty of the candidates.

**Collingwood, Loren, Matt A. Barreto, and Todd Donovan. "Early Primaries, Viability and Changing Preferences for Presidential Candidates." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 42.2 (2012): 231–255.**

In a study of the 2008 Democratic nomination campaign, Barack Obama's viability is influenced by early-state performances. An increase in perceived viability changes candidate preference in favor of Obama.

**Kenney, Patrick J., and Tom W. Rice.** "The Psychology of Political Momentum." *Political Research Quarterly* 47.4 (1994): 923–938.

Analysis of 1988 panel data. Momentum is not explained by one model but comes about from subsets of people responding to different forces, such as positive information from early performances, changes in viability perceptions, or sophisticated voting.

**Morton, Rebecca B., and Kenneth C. Williams.** "Information Asymmetries and Simultaneous versus Sequential Voting." *American Political Science Review* 93.1 (1999): 51–67.

Experimental evidence that frontloading may not be harmful, since longer sequential campaigns allow voters to use information from earlier horse race results to make correct choices.

**Redlawsk, David P., Caroline J. Tolbert, and Todd Donovan.** *Why Iowa? How Caucuses and Sequential Elections Improve the Presidential Nominating Process*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

What happens in Iowa and New Hampshire is especially important because it provides signals to the rest of the country about candidate viability.

**Stone, Walter J., Ronald B. Rapoport, and Lonna Rae Atkeson.** "A Simulation Model of Presidential Nomination Choice." *American Journal of Political Science* 39.1 (1995): 135–161.

Both in caucus and primary states, voters try to reduce the cost of gathering information and thus employ a two-step process, whereby they first reduce the field of candidates on the basis of viability before choosing the candidate who maximizes their expected utility.

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## Campaign Strategy and Competition

One of the more stable features of presidential nominations is that the goal of candidates is to win delegates and the nomination. But, as journalists and political strategists discuss, there are often differences in candidates' paths to the nomination, which vary in what states or groups of voters they target. Nevertheless, these discussions often reveal that candidate strategies share similarities in their attributes, and Gurian 1986 finds that these similarities can be condensed to the two goals of maximizing their share of delegates and maintaining perceptions of momentum. Ridout, et al. 2009 demonstrates that candidate strategies also reflect a state's type of delegate allocation method and how they depend on whether a candidate is a long shot or frontrunner. Candidate strategies are not formed within a vacuum, and they have to adjust to the behavior of each other and the dynamics of the race. Gurian 1993 examines how these strategies are adjusted sequentially in reflection of results at each stage. Haynes and Rhine 1998 provides a framework for understanding when candidates attack each other, and applies it to a study of the 1992 nomination campaign. Christenson and Smidt 2014 indicates that the introduction of super PACs into nomination campaigns has further lessened the independence of a candidate's strategic behavior and changed how the Republicans' 2012 nomination contest played out. Moreover, a key determinant of candidate success and failure is the winnowing of other candidates from the contest. Norrander 2006 outlines how resource and performance factors can hasten or delay an unsuccessful candidate's withdrawal from the contest, and Damore, et al. 2010 reexamines these patterns of withdrawal by considering candidates' personal profiles and whether they have more to gain or lose from continuing on in the contest.

**Christenson, Dino P., and Corwin D. Smidt.** "Following the Money: Super PACs and the 2012 Presidential Nomination." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 44.3 (2014): 410–430.

Candidates' strategies to campaign in states are proposed to be reactive to the observed behavior of their supportive super PACs. Both candidates for the 2012 Republican nomination and their super PACs calibrate which states they campaign in and how much they spend, in response to each other's actions in the previous week.

**Damore, David F., Thomas G. Hansford, and A. J. Barghothi. "Explaining the Decision to Withdraw from a U.S. Presidential Nomination Campaign." *Political Behavior* 32.2 (2010): 157–180.**

Reconsiders costs and benefits of candidacy on the basis of personal profile. Lengths of candidacy are conditional on the candidates' potential to gain in notoriety, whether they hold office, and their proximity to the party, but not necessarily on cash on hand or media coverage.

**Gurian, Paul-Henri. "Resource Allocation Strategies in Presidential Nomination Campaigns." *American Journal of Political Science* 30.4 (1986): 802–821.**

A study of resource allocation during the 1976 and 1980 nomination campaigns. Variation in state spending is largely explained by candidates trying to maximize their perceived momentum and their share of delegates.

**Gurian, Paul-Henri. "Candidate Behavior in Presidential Nomination Campaigns: A Dynamic Model." *Journal of Politics* 55.1 (1993): 115–139.**

Proposes a dynamic sequential-optimization model of candidate behavior. Simulation model estimates based on the model perform as well as statistical estimates in predicting state spending allocations, especially when candidates are allowed to differ in how they weight their goals.

**Haynes, Audrey A., and Staci L. Rhine. "Attack Politics in Presidential Nomination Campaigns: An Examination of the Frequency and Determinants of Intermediated Negative Messages against Opponents." *Political Research Quarterly* 51.3 (1998): 691–721.**

Uses media accounts of candidates' attack activity from the 1992 Democratic nomination race to understand who attacks whom and when. Attacks target mostly those in the lead rather than the ideologically proximate, and they increasingly occur as the stakes in the race get higher.

**Norrander, Barbara. "The Attrition Game: Initial Resources, Initial Contests and the Exit of Candidates during the US Presidential Primary Season." *British Journal of Political Science* 36.3 (2006): 487–507.**

Examines rates of candidate attrition across the nomination contests of 1980 to 2004. Candidates are expected to leave early in the race if they start out with low levels of campaign funds and national support and do poorly in Iowa or New Hampshire. Frontloading accelerates withdrawals.

**Ridout, Travis N., Brandon Rottinghaus, and Nathan Hosey. "Following the Rules? Candidate Strategy in Presidential Primaries." *Social Science Quarterly* 90.4 (2009): 777–795.**

An analysis of how a state's delegate allocation method helps predict where candidates allocate their political advertising and campaign stops. The differences between frontrunner and long-shot candidates and the effects of a candidate's access to financial resources are also considered.

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