

ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЕ ПРОЕКТИРОВАНИЕ
В ПРОСТРАНСТВЕ
СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ КОММУНИКАЦИЙ

Материалы

X Международной научной конференции
Москва, 31 октября - 1 ноября 2013 г.

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**Коммуникативные практики и технологии
политического проектирования**

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**Innovations in Information Technology in American Party Politics
Since 1960**

By definition, the English word, "innovation," means change—a new way of doing something. It also connotes improvement—that the change is beneficial. The term "technology" by itself connotes "improvement to something already existing."¹ Hence, the English phrase, "innovations in information technology in party politics," implies that the changes result in *progress*. Progress is customarily defined as a positive advance toward some higher goal or standard. Deciding whether technological innovations in party politics results in progress, however, depends on the values of the observer.

Most political observers in the United States have concluded that innovations in information technology constitute progress, almost unqualified progress, toward democracy and good government. Consider computer communications over the Internet. Political scientist Matthew Hindman's 2009 book, *The Myth of Digital Democracy*, reviewed the prevailing optimistic arguments:²

Those arguing that the Internet is transforming politics come from the upper echelons of politics, journalism, public policy, and law. [The 2004 Democratic presidential hopeful] Howard Dean campaign manager Joe Trippi effuses that "the Internet is the most democratizing innovation we've ever seen, more so even than the printing press."³ The Internet's increasing importance may be the only thing that Trippi and [President George W.] Bush-Cheney campaign manager Ken Mehlman agree on. The key lesson of the 2004 campaign, according to Mehlman, is that "technology has broken the monopoly of three [television] networks, " and instead of having one place where everyone gets information, there are thousands of places."⁴

¹ See the definition at:
<http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Technological+innovation>.

² Matthew Hindman, *The Myth of Digital Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, Press, 2009), p. 2.

³ Joe Trippi, *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Democracy, the Internet, and the Overthrow of Everything*. (New York: Regan Books, 2005), p. 235.

⁴ Quoted in R. Crowe, "Bush, Kerry Aides Reflect on '04 Campaign," *Houston Chronicle* (January 27, 2005), p. A11.

Hindman cited similar comments over two more pages before concluding, "It may be comforting to believe that the Internet is making U.S. politics more democratic. In a few important ways, though, beliefs that the Internet is democratizing politics are simply wrong."¹

Writing in 1997, over a decade before Hindman's book, physicist-turned-political scientist Gene Rochlin voiced similar concerns in *Trapped in the Net: Unanticipated Consequences of Computerization*.² According to Rochlin, "The enduring myth is that extensive computerization and networking will distribute power as well as information and technical capacity more evenly through industry, offices, bureaus, and the society at large."³ More generally, Rochlin reminds us that unanticipated and undesirable consequences lurk among the promises of technological innovations.

In contrast to Hindman's concern with the Internet's impact on democracy and Rochlin's with computerization's effects on society, my essay is decidedly limited. It chronicles the evolution of technological innovations in party politics in the United States. What were the noteworthy innovations in how information is collected, analyzed, and utilized? How have the American political parties, founded more than 150 years ago, adapted to these innovations since the use of mainframe computers in the 1960 campaign for president? While not an exhaustive report on the evolution of technology in American party politics since, this paper—in its trip through time—provides a fairly comprehensive survey of developments over the last half-century.

Technological innovations alter relationships among individuals and groups in all societies. The development of automobiles took jobs away from blacksmiths and carriage makers. Television ended what was called the "golden age" of radio in the United States. U.S. newspaper sales fell with the rise of the Internet. Thus too, technological innovations in politics have altered the relationships between party organizations and candidates. Initially, American national party organizations gained power because they could afford expensive computer facilities while candidates could not. As the cost and complexity of computing lessened, however, candidates surged past party organizations in applying the technology to their election campaigns. In recent years, as politicians realized the importance of high-quality political data and the difficulty in obtaining such data, central party organizations recovered some of their power. At least our national party organizations have become more important concerning presidential campaigns in general elections. Concerning primary election cam-

¹ Ibid, p. 3.

² Gene I Rochlin, *Trapped in the Net: Unanticipated Consequences of Computerization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

³ Ibid., p. xiii.

paigns—which are largely peculiar to the United States, aspiring candidates still campaign independently of party organizations.

The essay concludes by judging in broad terms the effects on party politics of innovations in information technology. Note its focus on party politics rather than on election campaigns. As the historical review will demonstrate, most innovations originated not within the parties but outside of them. They came from candidates operating independently of the party organization. At least in the American political system, new techniques for collecting and processing information have served to underscore—if not to accentuate—the long-standing decentralization of power in American party organizations.

In places, this survey draws heavily from my other writings on computer technology and from personal experiences dealing with both parties.¹ I footnote text extracted from sources for which I own the copyright. I do not set that text off as quoted material, but I do show quotation marks when the material comes from copyrighted sources held by others. Although focusing on information technology in American party politics, this survey begins by describing how today's information technology first appeared in American government. The technology appeared much earlier than many people think.

Data Processing Before the Dawn of Computers. In the late 19th century, long before electronic computers came along, information technology exploited electro-mechanical manipulation of holes punched in paper forms called punchcards. In 1885 the U.S. Census Bureau was still compiling data collected in the Census of 1880. "It was obvious," writes Herbert Hyman, "that if the country's rate of growth continued, the time would not be far off before a new census would have to be undertaken before the previous one had been published."² The punchcard was invented by Dr. Herman Hollerith of the U.S. Census Bureau to cope with anticipated problems of compiling information on large numbers of cases for the 1890 census.³

In Hollerith's invention, metal brushes made electronic contact with metal rollers through holes punched into paper cards. As the cards—which acted as insulators—passed between the brushes and the rollers, electronic impulses tripped electro-magnetic counters, converting holes into numbers depending

¹ The primary sources are Kenneth Janda, *Data Processing: Applications to Political Research*, 2nd ed. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1969); Kenneth Janda, *Information Retrieval: Applications to Political Science* (Indianapolis: Bobb-Merrill Company, 1968); Kenneth Janda, Jeffrey Berry, and Jerry Goldman, *The Challenge of Democracy*, 1st through 9th editions (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987-2008); and Kenneth Janda, Jeffrey Berry, and Jerry Goldman, *The Challenge of Democracy*, 10th through 12th editions (Boston: Wadsworth, 2009-2014).

² Herbert Hyman, *Survey Design and Analysis* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955), p. 19.

³ Janda, 1969, p. 8.

on the timing of the impulses when contact was made.¹ The cards could also be sorted into piles according to specific holes punched in specific locations. Hollerith built the card readers for the 1890 U.S. Census, and in 1896 founded the Tabulating Machine Company. It merged with others in 1911 to form the Computing Tabulating Recording Company (CRT)—whose name changed in 1924 to the International Business Machines Corporation, inspired by the name of CRT's Canadian operation.²

In addition to the company that became IBM, various firms (e.g., Remington Rand) developed equipment to count and sort punchcards. As these devices appeared at American colleges and universities in the 1930s, students of politics employed the technology.³ As early as 1931, Charles Samenow began recording information on punchcards in a study that eventually involved more than 35,000 court cases.⁴ Not long afterwards, Charles Hyneman published his classic comparative studies of 7,500 legislators serving in thirteen states during all legislative sessions from 1922 to 1935.⁵ In the late 1930s, IBM introduced a sorting machine that, with some modifications, was widely used over the next five decades to the end of the punchcard era.⁶ So scholars employed mechanical forms of information technology prior to the advent of computers.

More importantly for the history of technology in party politics, counting-sorters were the mainstay of the new industry of public opinion research. In the 1930s, George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and other polling pioneers began taking national surveys of public opinion using sample surveys involving a thousand

¹ For further explanation, see Janda, 1969, pp. 15-19.

² This is the account in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_IBM#1880s.E2.80.931924:_The_origin_of_IBM.

³ Curiously, the literature of the 1930's reveals more on data processing methodology than the contemporary literature. For example, see Mona Fletcher, "The Use of Mechanical Equipment in Legislative Research," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 195 (January, 1938), 1-8; and "Bicameralism as Illustrated by the Ninetieth General Assembly of Ohio: A Technique for Studying the Legislative Process," *American Political Science Review*, 32 (February, 1938), 80-85. See also, Charles S. Hyneman, "Tenure and Turnover of Legislative Personnel," *American Academy of Political and Social Science Annals*, 195 (January, 1938), 21-31. A variety of punchcard applications to social science research in general is reviewed in G. V. Baehne (ed.), *Practical Applications of the Punched Card Method in Colleges and Universities* (New York: Columbia, 1935).

⁴ Charles U. Samenow, "Judicial Statistics in General," in Baehne, op. cit., pp. 319-26.

⁵ Charles S. Hyneman, loc. cit. and "Who Makes Our Laws?" in John C. Wahlke and Heinz Eulau (eds.), *Legislative Behavior* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1959), pp. 254-65. Reprinted from *Political Science Quarterly*, 55 (1940), 556-81.

⁶ For explanation of how a counting-sorter worked, see Janda, 1969, pp. 53-57.

respondents. Interview responses were coded into numbers, recorded on punchcards, and tabulated by running the cards through a counting-sorter. Polling companies often stored their punchcards to keep as historical records and to re-analyze them if needed. In 1947, Elmo Roper founded the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research to collect, archive, and redistribute punchcard collections of opinion survey data from various survey organizations.¹ Polls stored at the Roper Center were used in the first major use of computing technology in political campaigns.

Early versions of computers were built in Britain in 1948 at the University of Manchester and the next year at Cambridge University.² Soviet scientists also built the BESM (БЭСМ) series in the early 1950s.³ In the United States, the first commercial computer, UNIVAC I, was marketed in 1951. The next year, IBM built its first commercial "high-speed" computer, the 701. The University of Illinois appears to have been the first university in the United States to make a computer (ILLIAC I) available for general research purposes.⁴ The IBM 650—said to be the first mass-produced computer—was marketed in 1953 and soon appeared on university campuses. Indiana University had its 650 (about the size of an SUV) in the basement of the astronomy building when I began graduate study in 1957 as a research assistant to Charles Hyneman, who told me to learn how to use it. The 650 generated punchcard output from punchcard input, had very limited memory (2k), and had few programs suitable for political research, but it was a thrill to turn it on, sit at the controls, and operate it alone in the basement.

The 1960s: The First Light of Dawn. The U.S. Democratic Party was the beneficiary of an ambitious, pioneering application of computer technology to electioneering in the 1960 presidential election. Technologically out-flanked in that election, the Republican Party recovered and surged ahead of the Democrats for the 1964 election.

Democratic Party. Although it may not have been the first application of computer technology to party politics, the attempt to simulate the outcome of the 1960 presidential election was the most fascinating. The story of the Simulmatics Project is told in *Candidates, Issues, and Strategies: A Computer Simulation of the 1960 Presidential Election*, by Ithiel de Sola Pool, Robert P.

¹ For history of the Roper Center, see http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/center/roper_history.html.

² For a brief review of computer history, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer>.

³ The abbreviation stands for "Bolshaya Elektronno-Schyotnaya Mashina" ("Большая Электронно-Счетная Машина"), literally "Large Electronic Computing Machine." Soviet computing equipment is reviewed at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_computer_hardware_in_Soviet Bloc_countries.

⁴ Janda, 1969, p. 95.

Abelson, and Samuel L. Popkin, its creators.¹ Their idea to simulate the 1960 election was hatched in early 1959 and proposed in May to leaders of the Democratic Party, including Paul Butler, Chairman of the National Committee.² It envisioned analyzing 50 polls prior to the 1952, 1954, 1956, and 1958 elections on 100,000 respondents that were stored on punchcards in the Roper Public Opinion Research Center.³ (Another 15 polls prior to the 1960 election representing 30,000 citizens were added later.) A group at the Democratic National Committee (DNC) agreed to support the effort, pending further review.

The principals organized themselves as The Simulmatics Corporation and began to prepare the data for analysis. As described by Pool, Abelson, and Popkin:

In essence, the data available to us were reduced to a 480x52 matrix. The number 480 represented types of voters, each one being defined by socio-economic characteristics. One voter-type might be "Eastern, Metropolitan, lower-income, white, Catholic, female Democrats." Another might be "Southern, rural, upper-income, white Protestant, male Independents." Certain types with small numbers of respondents were reconsolidated, yielding the total of 480 types actually used.

The number 52 represented what we called in our private jargon "issue-clusters." Most of these were political issues, such as foreign aid, attitudes toward the United Nations, and McCarthyism...

One can picture the 480x52 matrix as containing four numbers in each cell. The first number stated the total number of persons within a voter-type who had been interrogated on that particular item of information. The other three numbers trichotomized those respondents into the percentages pro, anti, and undecided or confused on the issue.⁴

The 480 voter types inspired the political scientist and successful novelist, Eugene Burdick, to write a fictional book, *The 480*, about a computer simulation of the 1964 campaign.⁵ In his Preface, Burdick acknowledged having access to reports from the Simulmatics Corporation but said that his novel "is entirely a projection by the author."⁶

¹ Ithiel de Sola Pool, Robert P. Abelson, and Samuel L. Popkin, *Candidates, Issues, and Strategies: A Computer Simulation of the 1960 Presidential Election*, (Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1964).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

³ At that time, the Roper Center's archive of punchcard poll data was located at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. The Roper Center has since moved to the University of Connecticut at Storrs.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

⁵ Eugene Burdick, *The 480* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964). Burdick also authored *The Ugly American* (1958) and *Fail-Safe* (1962).

⁶ Burdick, *The 480*, p. x.

From the beginning, The Simulmatics Corporation decided not to try to predict the outcome of the 1960 election—described as "the number one question at the Democratic National Committee." Its goal instead was to estimate "the relative gain or loss to be obtained from adopting one strategic alternative or another."¹ In June 1960, Simulmatics delivered "a report on the Negro vote in the North" based on the data collection.²

After the Democratic National Convention nominated John F. Kennedy for president in July, 1960, Kennedy's campaign committee (not the DNC) asked Simulmatics for three more reports: "on the image of Kennedy, the image of Nixon, and foreign policy as a campaign issue."³ The reports were requested on August 11 and delivered on August 25. However, the most pressing issue for the Kennedy campaign that August was how to handle the religious issue of Kennedy's Catholicism. Simulmatics addressed the specific question, "What would happen if it became the dominant issue of the campaign, which it easily could if prejudice continued to rise, as indeed it seemed to be doing, and if the candidate also responded in the open forum?"⁴

Candidates, Issues, and Strategies devotes 19 pages describing the formulas and statistical analysis employed in simulating public opinion concerning Kennedy's stance on the religious question. The authors concede that their simulation was deterministic, not stochastic. It did not produce different outcomes after each run, to reflecting the effects of chance factors in the mode. It was more like "running the numbers" in a complex spreadsheet using different assumptions. Simulmatics' report to the Democratic National Committee was limited to 32 Northern states ranked from where Kennedy would do best to where worst.⁵ The researchers recommended "frankness and directness rather than avoidance" in confronting the religious issue, advice that coincided with what Kennedy got from contemporary polling. "But certainly when Kennedy decided to confront the bigots head on, he himself could not say what part in his decision was played by any one piece of evidence."⁶

The 1960 Simulmatics simulation of the presidential election not only sparked a popular novel, it drew considerable attention within the social science community. A Google Scholar search of "Simulmatics" in April 2013 turned up 280 references, about one-third appearing in the 1960s. Although the company demonstrated that computer technology could play a positive role in the 1960 presidential election, the DNC failed to embrace computer technology in preparing for the 1964 election. The Simulmatics team did simulate the 1964 elec-

¹ Pool, Abelson, and Popkin, *Candidates, Issues, and Strategies* p. 43-44.

² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

tion, but they undertook the project “for scientific purposes” without sponsorship of the DNC, saying “the Democratic Party had virtually no systematic research program in 1964.”¹

Perhaps the DNC abandoned computer technology in 1964 because President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963 and because the new president, Democratic Lyndon Jonson, was expected to thump Republican challenger Barry Goldwater—as occurred. However, the reason was probably more deeply rooted in the relationship between the Democratic Party and its presidents. According to Daniel J. Galvin’s book, *Presidential Party Building*, Democratic presidents from Kennedy to Clinton “were not out to build a new majority but to make use of the one that they had.”² They tended to exploit, not build the national party organization. Regrettably, the Simulmatics project’s pioneering efforts to introduce computing technology into American party politics soon faded from memory. A comprehensive 1980 study of technology in party politics that began with the origin of the party system failed to mention the 1960 simulation of the presidential election.³

Republican Party. In *Presidential Party Building*, Galvin studied the relationships between presidents and their parties’ national organizations from Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 to George W. Bush in 2008. In contrast to Democratic presidents, Galvin credited Republicans for working “persistently to build their party into a strong and more durable political organization.”⁴ In 1950, the Republican Party—which had lost the previous five presidential elections—compensated by developing its organization, and the emphasis on organization continued for decades afterward. David Karpf describes this response as “the outparty motivational incentive.”⁵ Ben Cotton, General Counsel to the Republican National Committee (RNC) in 1981, stressed this point in a personal letter:

Republicans have historically, at the National Committee level, been far ahead of the Democrat [sic] National Committee in the technical aspects of training and campaigning. This derived more out of necessity than anything else. The Democrat Party [sic] has historically been able to rely upon the tre-

¹ Ithiel de Sola Pool, Robert P. Abelson and Samuel L. Popkin, “A Postscript on the 1964 Election,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 8 (May, 1965), pp. 39-44 at p. 43.

² Daniel J. Galvin, *Presidential Party Building: Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. ix-x.

³ Stephen E. Frantzich, *Political Parties in the Technological Age* (New York: Longman, 1980).

⁴ Galvin, *Presidential Party Building*, p. ix.

⁵ David Karpf, *The MoveOn Effect: The Unexpected Transformation of American Political Advocacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 126-127.

mendous resources of the labor movement. The Republicans, on the other hand, had to create a grass roots effort.¹

A study of the sizes of the paid staff of both national committees from 1952 to 1977 found that the RNC averaged 204 employees to the DNC’s 132.² Moreover, the RNC research division was also more active, publishing detailed analyses of election results since at least 1960.³ In the late 1960s, the Republican Party (and the Nixon white House) commissioned numerous public opinion surveys, many under the direction of political scientist David R. Derge. (Disclosure: David Derge supervised my 1961 PhD thesis at Indiana University.) Just the descriptive summary of the Derge Collection in the Richard Nixon Library, contains 50 references to computer printouts or statistics in its holdings.⁴

In 1964, the RNC undertook an ambitious attempt to apply information technology in a presidential campaign, in its way rivaling the Democrats’ Simulmatics project. *The New York Times* reported it on January 28, 1964: “The electronic device, manufactured by the Eastman Kodak Company, is being used in a political campaign for the first time. It is capable of finding in seconds microfilmed records of most of what Mr. Goldwater has said on most subjects for several years. The machine then flashes his words on a small screen and can be made to photocopy any page quickly.”⁵

The Republican’s Rair system (Recordak automated information retrieval) did not prevent Barry Goldwater from losing the presidential election that year in spectacular fashion to Lyndon Johnson. Nevertheless, the RNC persevered and upgraded its information retrieval technology to Eastman Kodak’s MIRAcod (Microfilm Information Retrieval Access code) system in 1967 for the 1968 presidential election.

Whereas Rair used punchcard data to locate microfilmed images of text, the MIRAcod system stored three-digit codes in binary format directly on microfilm cassettes containing about 1,000 pages each.⁶ Codes tagged to individual pages could be searched (using Boolean logic) at the rate of 100 pages per second. As stated in *A Manual for the Information Retrieval System at the Republican National Committee*: “The input process begins with the Republican National Committee’s Clipping Bureau which reads and clips an average of

¹ Ben Cotton’s letter to me dated February 6, 1981, written on RNC letterhead.

² Cornelius P. Cotter and John F. Bibby, “Institutional Development of Parties and the Thesis of Party Decline,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 95 (Spring, 1980), pp. 1-27.

³ Republican National Committee. *The 1960 Elections: A Summary Report with Supporting Tables*. (Washington, DC: Republican National Committee, 1961).

⁴ See http://nixon.archives.gov/forresearchers/find/textual/findingaids/findingaid_derge.pdf.

⁵ “Goldwater Inspects Device That Recalls All He’s Ever Said,” *New York Times* (January 28, 1964), p. 16.

⁶ Kenneth Janda, “Political Research with MIRAcod: A 16mm. Information Retrieval System,” *Social Science Information*, 6 (April-June, 1967), 169-181.

65 newspapers (including major dailies and a representative sampling of out-of-town sources) as well as a number of magazines. Each day a folder of approximately 200-250 clips is sent to the Research Division where it is sorted into our prime areas of concern: Democratic Administration -- Executive Officers including the President, Vice-President, Cabinet and White House officials as well as examples of government mismanagement, waste, etc. (until January, 1969); Democratic Opposition (the Democratic Party, the Democratic National Committee, key Democratic legislators and office holders); George Wallace; the war in Vietnam; and Ray C. Bliss. (In addition to the newsclips, numerous articles from periodicals, the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Congressional hearings and TV transcripts are routed to Research and either filmed in their entirety or reference-coded for Miracode.)"¹

Having purchased the MIRAcode system with NSF funds in 1967 for my cross-national study of political parties,² I was invited to inspect the RNC's operation in 1970 at its new building, the Eisenhower Republican Center. There, scores of staff members in business attire worked professionally in offices with printed titles outside their doors. The RNC also had a separate library, staffed by a librarian. During the same trip to Washington, I also visited the Democratic National Committee, which occupied a floor of the Airline Pilots' Association. The DNC's research center consisted of a large room whose walls were flanked by mismatched filing cabinets surrounding a large central table seating a few college-age interns in dungarees, shuffling through documents and newspaper clippings. Whereas the RNC's operation looked like a business firm, the DNC's looked like an academic department. The RNC used the latest information technology; the DNC did not. David Karpf attributes the RNC's acceptance of business equipment as the "ideological congruence" factor.³

The 1970s: The Mainframe Computer Era. Using state-of-the-art computers in the 1970s meant working with large, expensive equipment that demanded a crew of trained technicians, occupied a good deal of space, drew a lot of electricity, generated considerable heat, and required massive cooling capacity. Hence, computing was done in special areas (often separate buildings) called computing centers. Mainframe computers typically employed "time-sharing" systems that allowed multiple users to run programs concurrently. The users needed to have "accounts" on the system against which the cost of their runs could be charged to compensate for the millions of dollars required to op-

¹ Research Division, *A Manual for the Information Retrieval System at the Republican National Committee* (Washington, DC: Republican National Committee, February, 1969), p. 5.

² My project was sponsored by the National Science Foundation, Grant GS-1418 in 1966 and GS-2533 in 1969.

³ Karpf, *The MoveOn Effect*, pp. 126-127.

erate the computing center. Universities across the United States supported computing in teaching using institutional funds, while individual researchers were expected to ask for thousands of dollars in computing funds when making grant requests.

At the start of the decade, most data were entered into the computer by punchcards, but data were increasingly entered via keyboards at cathode ray terminals located in the computing center but occasionally over telephone lines from remote locations. The point is that computing in the 1970s was an expensive, highly centralized operation. The RNC acquired its own computer in 1977 and upgraded to a newer one in 1979, but the DNC did not get its own mainframe until the early 1980s. If they used computers at all, candidates and even most state political parties contracted for services from commercial computing centers. Computer applications in party politics were mainly for analyzing polling data and for maintaining mailing lists of sympathetic voters and likely contributors.

Nevertheless, our current international computing environment originated with mainframes. What we today call the Internet began in 1969 when, with support from the U.S. Defense Department's Advanced Research Projects Agency, mainframe computers at four universities were linked to form ARPANET, which connected thirty-seven universities by 1972.¹ Following the growth of other distinct computer networks (such as BITNET, designed for IBM mainframes), new communications standards worked out in 1983 allowed these networks to be interlinked, creating the Internet.²

The 1980s: Mainframes Yield to Mini and then Microcomputers. For most of the 1980s, the RNC and DNC relied on mainframe technology for their computing applications. The RNC had already been using its own computer in its own building. The DNC did not construct its own building in 1984,³ but it began using computers for similar types of purposes earlier. A 1984 report in the *National Journal* stated:

Only recently, the DNC instituted computerized media mailing lists. Reporters, columnists, broadcasters and other media people are coded according to criteria that allows the DNC to pull out "tailored" lists from its computer for media mailings.

DNC participants described the effort as "an effort to catch up technologically with the Republicans." Indeed, the same article said:

¹ Material in the next two paragraphs was extracted from Chapter 6 of *The Challenge of Democracy*, 5th ed.

² See <http://smithsonian.yahoo.com/Internethistory.html>.

³ David John Menefee-Libey, *The Politics of National Party Organization: The Democrats from 1968 to 1986* (Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, December 1989), Chapter 7, p. 270.

The RNC is far ahead of its Democratic counterpart in computer technology. The committee has had a sophisticated computer operation in force for several years. Thomas B. Hofeller, the committee's director of computer services, reported that the RNC uses a time-sharing system that can perform more than 80 jobs at one time. "Basically, the computer operation has four functions," he said. "It keeps our books, our accounts payable and our Federal Election Commission reports; it maintains various lists of names, including political contacts, media members and financial donors; it keeps us in contact with our large number of field operatives, who carry microprocessors and communicate back and forth with the RNC through computerized mail; and it contains lots of data entries, which helps in our demographic research."

Hofeller noted that using computers in campaigns requires a skilled technical staff. "It's important also to have the wherewithal to maintain and expand the operation," he added. His division is allotted a net budget of slightly more than \$1 million, less the fees he charges party affiliates for using the RNC's computer facilities. The state Republican parties, GOP candidates, the Reagan-Bush '84 Committee, the Republican National Convention officials and other divisions within the RNC all have access to his division's computers.¹

In her doctoral thesis, "The Presidential Campaign Organization of the 1970s and the 1980s: How It Has Adjusted to Political and Technological Changes," Teresa Smith singled out the CATI system (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews), saying: "CATI is expensive, costing about one half a million to install, and currently, its use for political polling has been rather restricted. In the 1984 elections, the Republicans used the CATI system, but the Democrats used it only in a limited way in the nominating period and none of the major Democratic polling firms have been able to justify installing it for their phone bank operations because of its costs to date."²

Teresa Smith also reported this telling quotation from David Broder, the distinguished political columnist for the *Washington Post*: "I was struck once more by the enormous gap between the resources the Republicans and Democrats bring to the presidential campaigns. It's not just money—although the GOP's advantage in that commodity is significant enough. At least as important is the inequality of political research, polling and political planning. Time after time, Republicans were stunned to hear from the Democratic operatives that questions they assumed had been matters of major discussion and careful polling by their opponents had been decided in the dark as it were..."

¹ "Strides in Technology Are Changing The Face of Political Campaigning [sic]," *National Journal*, (April 7, 1984).

² Teresa V. Smith, "The Presidential Campaign Organization of the 1970s and the 1980s: How It Has Adjusted to Political and Technological Changes," (Washington, DC: Georgetown University, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 1986), p. 264.

There is something in the Democrats that makes them resistant to the systematic application of survey research and the discipline of developing detailed strategic plans for targeting and winning the necessary 270 electoral votes. Deep-down they are more inclined to rely on their instincts—for better or worse."¹

As Mr. Hofeller made clear: running a mainframe in the RNC's computer center was an expensive operation. But in the mid-1980s, mainframes offered the only practical way to employ computers in party politics.

The terms—mainframe computers, minicomputers, and microcomputers—are not technologically precise.² Generally speaking, minicomputers rivaled mainframes in their computing capacity but—thanks to advances in electronics—were physically much smaller, cheaper, cooler, and easier to operate and maintain. Although the Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) introduced its first VAX minicomputer in 1977, the popular line of VAX minicomputers did not seriously challenge mainframe computers until the 1980s.³ At universities across the nation, professors in the physical and medical sciences opted out of central computing, concluding that it was cheaper to request funds to install their own minicomputers in their own labs.

The rise of microcomputers accelerated the trend away from centralized computing. Although three microcomputers were commercially available the U.S. in 1977—the Apple 2, the Radio Shack TRS-80, and the Commodore PET 2001—the industry did not take off until IBM introduced its "Personal Computer" in 1981.⁴ Soon other companies were making IBM-compatible PCs. In 1982, the Kaypro Corporation marketed a portable computer, the Kaypro II, which ran an operating system that was incompatible with IBM. In 1984, Apple launched its own non-compatible personal computer, the Macintosh.

The history of centralized computing at Northwestern University, my university, exemplifies its history at other American universities. Vogelback Computing Center, which opened in 1965, was a new building specifically designed to house a large mainframe computer. During its first 15 years, students streamed through it round-the-clock, feeding data into a large Control Data Corporation Cyber computer and picking up their output, which was typically spread over multiple 11" by 14" pages. When I served briefly as Vogelback's Acting Director in 1984, IBM, Kaypro, and Macintosh computers competed with the Cyber within the very walls of the computing center. Meanwhile, computing labs with microcomputers spread across campus. Vogelback itself

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

² For a discussion of the classification, see www.komecomputers.com/classification-of-computers.html.

³ See the brief history of VAX computers at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VAX#History>.

⁴ For a concise history of microcomputers see <http://microcomputerhistorymuseum.com>.

was razed in 1999, about the time that university computing centers closed across the country.

People favored microcomputers because they could enter data and programs directly into equipment that they personally operated. As users purchased their own computers, even the need for computing labs decreased. As coaxial cable replaced telephone lines, users exploited online connections to the Internet. Widespread use of microcomputers expanded its use in business, scholarly research, and party politics. Microcomputers not only distributed computing away from brick-and-mortar computing centers, they also distributed computing away from the national party organizations to party candidates.

The 1990s: The Early Years of the Internet. In its early years, the Internet was used mainly to transmit messages, known as electronic mail or "e-mail," among researchers. In 1991, a group of European physicists devised a standardized system for encoding and transmitting a wide range of materials, including graphics and photographs, over the Internet, and the World Wide Web (WWW) was born. In January 1993 there were only fifty websites in existence.¹ In early 2013, over 2 billion Web users could read text, view images, and download data from over 600 million sites worldwide.²

The Internet debuted in statewide U.S. election campaigns in 1992, when Democratic senatorial candidate Jerry Brown, former governor of California, sent e-mail messages to supporters.³ Later in 1992, some Reform Party members voted for their presidential candidate over the Internet. On August 18, the party convened at Valley Forge, Virginia, where Ross Perot was declared the winner with 65 percent of the primary vote to Dick Lamm's 35 percent. Most of the 49,266 votes were cast by mail (88 percent), with relatively few phoned to an 800 number or submitted over the Internet (8 and 4 percent respectively).⁴

The first official White House web site was launched on October 20, 1994, during President Bill Clinton's administration.⁵ The first major candidate web site appears to be that of Democratic senator Dianne Feinstein running for reelection from California in 1994. The same year, the nonpartisan Minnesota E-Democracy held the first online U.S. Senate and gubernatorial candidate de-

¹ John December, Neil Randall, and Wes Tatters, *Discover the World Wide Web with Your Sportster* (Indianapolis, IN: Sams.net Publishing, 1995), pp. 11-12.

² "January 2013 Web Server Survey", <http://news.netcraft.com/archives/2013/01/07/january-2013-web-server-survey-2.html>.

³ The information on early campaign web sites comes from Jill Zuckerman, "Candidates Spin Web of Support on Cybertrail," *Chicago Tribune*, 3 December 2003, p. 13.

⁴ Rogers Worthington, "Reform Party Selects Perot in Low Turnout," *Chicago Tribune*, 18 August 1996, p. 14.

⁵ The date for the first White House web site and some other "firsts" in this paragraph came from <http://techpresident.com/news/23313/politics-and-internet-timeline-updates>.

bates. In 1995, the Democratic National Committee created the first web site for a major party. By 1995, there was enough material to fill a 375-page book, *Politics on the Net*.¹ It classified the political information on the Internet as real news reported by professionals, opinions and debates expressed by and involving citizens, publications by governments at all levels, and statements from political parties and other political organizations.

By 1996, the Internet was the hottest new media in political campaigning. Not only did both major parties and some minor parties put up their own home pages, so did presidential candidates—including several seeking the Republican nomination. There were "official" sites (endorsed by the candidates) and "unofficial" ones, sometimes created by supporters and sometimes by opponents. Parody pages early in the nomination campaign, for example, targeted both [Republicans] Pat Buchanan and Bob Dole.² During the drafting of the 1996 Republican platform on abortion, the pro-life forces mounted an e-mail campaign to hang tough going into the convention.³ On August 12-15 during their convention, the Republicans created a website for online "chats" with party supporters and such officials as Senator Bob Dole and House Speaker Newt Gingrich.⁴

Inevitably, the Internet was proposed as a systematic means for registering citizens' opinions or votes. However, only 21 percent of respondents in a 1996 national survey said that they "ever" used a computer "at work, school, or home" to connect with other computers on the Internet, and only 3 percent ever obtained information on the presidential campaign.⁵ At the start of the 1998 election year, the number of Americans connected to online information sources was estimated to be 50 million (28 percent of the population).⁶ Some experts felt that the Internet could have a major impact on the congressional elections and that it might be "used by people as the primary source of information about political campaigns."⁷ Ted Mondale, Democratic candidate for governor of Minnesota, bought the first online banner ad. In 1998, two other

¹ Bill Mann, *Politics on the Net* (Indianapolis, IN: Que Corporation, 1995).

² Edmund 1. Andrews, "The '96 Race on the Internet: Surfer Beware," *New York Times*, 23 October 1995, p. 1.

³ James Coates, "Internet Is the Latest Player in Campaign Politics," *Chicago Tribune*, 18 August 1996, Section 4, p. 5.

⁴ Cited in <http://techpresident.com/news/23313/politics-and-internet-timeline-updates>.

⁵ Pew Research Center for The People & The Press, "TV News Viewership Declines," News Release, 13 May 1996. National survey of 1,751 adults during April 19-25, 1996.

⁶ Pew Research Center, "Campaign '96 Gets Lower Grades from Voters," News Release, 15 November 1996, p. 32.

⁷ Rachel Van Dongen, "Wired for Votes: Is the Internet Finally Fulfilling Its Campaign Promise?" Roll Call Online, posted on the Campaigns and Elections list server (CAMPEL-L), 12 February 1998.

major Democratic candidates made Internet firsts: Ed Garvey, running for governor of Wisconsin, posted his contributor information online; and Senator Barbara Boxer, running for reelection in California, sold campaign items online.

Also in 1998, a reporter wrote an article titled "Wired for Votes: Is the Internet finally Fulfilling Its Campaign Promise?" Appropriately distributed via email, it stated: "While 1998 may be remembered as the election year in which the Internet finally became a force in American politics, this year's cybercampaigns are also revealing many of the rough edges associated with more traditional methods of campaigning—including dirty tricks, shameless profiteering, and jousting between office-seekers.... With an estimated 50 million Americans now online, the Internet has the potential to have a major impact on an election cycle for the first time, according to the growing number of cyberpoliticos and campaign consultants."¹

Despite the flurry of Internet activity in 1998 congressional races, campaign consultants were mainly experimenting with the medium in preparation for full-scale usage in the 2000 presidential campaign.² In 1999, former Senator Bill Bradley, who sought the Democratic nomination for president, petitioned the Federal Election Commission to approve matching funds for Internet credit card contributions and then raised over a million dollars during the last half of the year.³

2000: *Internet "Firsts" in Party Politics.* The Internet became even hotter in the 2000 election cycle.⁴ The major and minor parties and presidential candidates seeking their party's nomination all had home pages. There were "official" sites (endorsed by the candidates) and "unofficial" ones, sometimes created by supporters and sometimes by opponents. There were so many more false sites for candidates that Yahoo! created its own Web page listing candidate "parody pages."⁵ Regardless of the political fun people had on the Internet, net, only 11 percent of the public said that they got most of their campaign news from that source—even when respondents were allowed two answers for

¹ The article by Rachel Van Dongen, "Wired for Votes: Is the Internet Finally Fulfilling Its Campaign Promise?" appeared February 12, 1998 on the SErtelt@aol.com listserve, CAMPEL-L: Campaign 98 on the Web.

² David L. Haase, "Candidates (maybe) and friends stake out their domain for the 2000 campaign," Chicago Tribune, 23 February 1998, Section 4, p. 7.

³ Bill Bradley's Internet fund raising is outlined at <http://techpresident.com/news/23313/politics-and-internet-timeline-updates>.

⁴ The next two paragraphs came mostly from Chapter 9 of *The Challenge of Democracy*, 7th Ed. (2002).

⁵ The URL on 15 January 2001 was http://dir.yahoo.com/Government/U_S_Government/Politics/Humor/1996_Presidential_Election/Candidate_Parodies

"most." The public ranked the Internet far below television as their major source of campaign news (70 percent), below newspapers (39 percent), and even below radio (15 percent).¹ Concerning the 2000 election campaign, the Internet did not qualify as a medium for reaching the masses, but it was a superb medium for communicating among politically active groups.

Candidates liked the Internet because it was fast, easy to use, and free—saving mailing costs and phone calls. Apart from candidates, party organizations also used the Internet to establish identity and cultivate supporters. Blessed with substantial financial resources, the two major parties maintained the most stable and resourceful websites.² Ever since the advent of computers in the 1950s, the national Republican Party led the Democratic Party in adoption of new information technology. That may be due to Republicans' link with business, or to its greater money—probably both. In 2000, the Republican National Committee had fifteen people working with Internet technology compared with only three at the Democratic National Committee.³ Despite some impressive applications in the 2000 campaign, politicians were only learning how to use the Internet, and Internet buffs were only learning how to approach politics. Internet coverage of the Republican and Democratic nominating conventions, for example, fell short of expectations, and visits to political websites covering the conventions actually fell during the coverage.⁴

The Internet allowed campaigns to communicate continually with activists on substantive issues, campaign appearances, requests for help, and requests for money. In 2000, Senator McCain conducted the first Republican presidential campaign fundraiser entirely on the Internet, collecting more than \$1 million within forty-eight hours.⁵ Also in 2000, the Arizona Democratic Party held the first binding online primary election; and the Republican Party scored its own Internet first: registering 1 million activists online. Two years later, Claude "Buddy" Leach via the first live Internet broadcast announced candidacy to be governor of Louisiana. Despite these Internet "firsts" in party politics, the new technology did not have that much impact on the 2000 presidential campaign between Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al

¹ Pew Research Center, "Despite Uncertain Outcome, Campaign 2000 Highly Rated," News Release, November 16, 2000, p. 18.

² Bob Kolasky, "Both Parties Use the Net to Revive Their Relevance," *Inter@active Week*, 3 July 2000, pp. 34-36.

³ Neil Munro, "The New Wired Politics," *National Journal*, 22 April 2000, p. 1260-1263.

⁴ Leslie Wayne, "Online Coverage Fell Short of the Hype," *New York Times*, 19 August 2000, p. A10.

⁵ Frank James, "E-Campaigns Grow Up," *Chicago Tribune*, 11 February 2000, p. 3. See also Tina Kelley, "Candidate on the Stump Is Surely on the Web," *New York Times*, 19 October 1999, p. 1.

Gore—who was the first candidate to send a video campaign message by e-mail.¹

While politicians' early use of the Internet brought them publicity, it did not often produce winning results. Jerry Brown was not elected to the Senate from California in 1992 despite his pioneering use of e-mail. Ted Mondale did not win the Minnesota Senate seat in 1998 despite his first online banner ad, nor did Ed Garvey become governor of Wisconsin after posting his contributor information online. Being the first candidate to raise a million dollars online, Bill Bradley failed to win the Democratic nomination in 2000. Senator McCain did not capture the Republican presidential nomination; "Buddy" Leach did not become governor of Louisiana; and Al Gore did not win the presidency (although he did win the popular vote). The effects of the Internet were more significant in the 2004 campaign, when ten Democratic hopefuls sought to succeed President Bush.

2004: Internet Usage Affects Party Politics. In 2004, the first prominent Democrat to declare his candidacy for president was Howard Dean.² As former governor of a small state (New Hampshire) and with little national visibility, Dean was favored by only 3 percent of respondents in a January 2003 poll.³ Quickly building his campaign around the Internet, Dean raised over \$1 million online by spring 2003, eclipsing Bill Bradley's fund-raising rate for his 2000 presidential campaign.⁴ By the end of the year, Dean had raised almost \$14 million, said to be a one-year record for Democratic presidential fundraising.⁵ The same poll that placed Dean at 3 percent in January had him at upwards of 25 percent in December and leading all Democratic aspirants.

Although Dean lost the Iowa caucuses and failed to win the Democratic presidential nomination, he demonstrated the power of the Internet, not just for raising unprecedented amounts of funds but also for mobilizing his supporters. The architect of Dean's Internet campaign, Joe Trippi, also backed the creation of the first presidential campaign "web log" or *blog*, a frequently updated site for posting campaign developments and comments, and even short essays, on election politics.⁶ Blogs proved effective in involving potential supporters,

¹ For a list of twelve Internet firsts in politics, see page 14 at <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/38521469/ElectionMall-Technologies-Inc>.

² Information in this paragraph and the next was extracted from Chapter 9, *The Challenge of Democracy*, 8th Ed. (2005).

³ NBC News/Wall Street Journal, January, 2003.

⁴ Robert J. Klotz, *The Politics of Internet Communication* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), pp. 77-78.

⁵ Glen Justice, "Dean Raises \$14 million and Sets Record, Aides Say," *New York Times*, December 30, 2003, p. A17.

⁶ Jeanne Cummings, "Behind Dean Surge: A Gang of Bloggers and Webmasters," *Wall Street Journal*, 14 October 2003, pp. A1, A14.

and by the midst of the 2004 primary season, virtually every presidential web site was connected to a blog.¹ Beginning with the 2004 election, presidential and congressional candidates relied heavily on the Internet to raise campaign funds and mobilize supporters.²

The Internet's most demonstrable effect on party politics was to hasten the breakdown of the national legislation to limit spending in presidential campaigns by inducing candidates to accept public funding.³ The 1971 Federal Election Campaign Act was amended in 1974 to provide \$10 million in matching funds to presidential aspirants during the primary season and \$20 outright to major party nominees for the general election. Both sums were indexed for inflation so the amounts grew over time. All major candidates for president from 1976 through 1992 accepted public funding of their primary election campaigns and thus adhered to the limitations on raising and spending campaign funds. But in 1996, wealthy publisher Steve Forbes declined public funds in the primary season, and did so again in 2000 accompanied by Texas governor George Bush. Competing for the Republican nomination, both candidates raised and spent much more than otherwise possible. For the most part, Forbes and Bush raised their funds from people via traditional methods and did not rely on the Internet.

Like Forbes and Bush in 2000, Democrats Howard Dean and John Kerry, and President Bush (who had no meaningful opposition), in 2004 declined public funds in the primaries so that they could spend more than the \$37.3 million (adjusted for inflation) allowed by accepting public funds. Dean's decision in particular was based on knowing that he could raise millions over the Internet. In keeping with his "ideological congruence" explanation that had supported Republicans' use of mainframes, David Karpf implies that Democrats (like Dean) changed their view of information technology as it shifted from mainframes to microcomputers linked to the Internet. Karpf said, "According to this perspective, the Internet's 'bottom-up' nature is simply better suited to anti-hierarchical progressive ideology."⁴

Despite opposition from some Democratic leaders, Howard Dean was elected Chairman of the Democratic National Committee in 2005 over several other candidates. Observers expected him to utilize information technology in fundraising and campaigning, and they were not disappointed. Daniel Kreiss

¹ Lee Gomes, "Blogs Have Become Part of Media Machine That Shapes Politics," *Wall Street Journal*, 23 February 2004, p. B1; Christopher Conkey, "Checking Out Candidates' Sites," *Wall Street Journal*, 16 March 2004, p. D3.

² Adam Nagourney, "Internet Injects Sweeping Change into U.S. Politics," *New York Times*, 2 April 2006, pp. 1 and 17.

³ The information in this paragraph was extracted from Chapter 9, *The Challenge of Democracy*, 8th Ed. (2005).

⁴ Karpf, *The MoveOn Effect*, pp. 126-127.

details Dean's technological innovations in *Taking Our Country Back: The Crafting of Networked Politics from Howard Dean to Barack Obama*.¹ Kreiss says that Dean hired two staff members from his 2004 campaign—Ben Self and Joe Rospers—who helped create the firm, Blue State Digital (BSD). They were to assess the state of technology and to improve it. Kreiss describes the sad picture at the DNC in 2005:

Rospers and Self's findings made it clear that the national party's voter file was in complete disarray. The data was of extremely low quality and; despite the considerable investment of former chairman Terry McAuliffe in a national Voter database, the party's basic technology was lacking. The national party had few means of compiling and storing data on the electorate or even its supporters.²

Candidates often repeat the aphorism that "all politics is local." For much of the twentieth century and well into the first decade of the twenty-first, the saying was true for the Democratic Party's voter data. Unlike the Republican Party, which had a strong centralized party organization and corresponding national voter file that grew out of pioneering direct mail efforts, the Democratic Party had a more decentralized structure, with strong state party organizations. The Voter files of the state parties reflected this. Each state maintained its own record of its electorate, chose the information it collected and the systems it used to house data, set its own "rules of access, and determined the data's format. Across states, there was little in the way of standard categories of information collected or practices for updating voter records. The Iowa Democratic Party, for instance, kept detailed caucus records dating back over a decade, while other states lacked anything more than a list of registered voters.³

Self and Rospers began their work. As the technology director for the party, Self led the effort to create a national voter file. This proved to be a deeply challenging undertaking that involved both rebuilding the technical infrastructure of the party and negotiating data-sharing agreements with all the state parties. Building this national voter file was a priority for Dean, given widespread failures in state voter files and database technologies during the 2004 general election. Looking ahead to 2008, Dean and Self worked out a deal in which the national party assumed the costs of improving and maintaining the state voter files and building a new database to house them in exchange for permission to aggregate and access them. Self commissioned the firm Voters Activation Network (VAN) to customize its online interface so that party and campaign staffers could continually access and update the voter file database.

¹ Daniel Kreiss, *Taking Our Country Back: The Crafting of Networked Politics from Howard Dean to Barack Obama* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

² *Ibid.*, p. 99.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

The system that resulted is called "VoteBuilder," which the national party provides free of charge to the states. "VoteBuilder" refers to the Democratic Party's data (the state voter files as well as commercial data) and the VAN interface system around it. As a key piece of infrastructure for Democratic campaigning, VoteBuilder extended the ability of the party and its candidates to contest elections and to target the electorate. It enabled Democratic candidates for offices from staff senate to president to share data across campaigns and election cycles while ensuring that the voter file was continuously uploaded with quality data. All of the major Democratic presidential candidates' field campaigns used VoteBuilder in 2008.

As Self worked on the voter file project, Rospers, as the head-of a newly reconstituted Internet Department, implemented Blue State Digital's campaign platform for the party.¹

Ironically, the DNC's technological ascension was fed not by acquiring innovative hardware or writing innovative software but by accumulating lots of good quality data. That old-fashioned practice recalled the 1960 Simulmatics project, which analyzed hundreds of thousands of interviews with voters in previous elections to simulate voters' responses to John Kennedy's Catholicism. Those data were carefully collected over time, cataloged, and archived at the Roper Center, a central organization founded in 1947.

Data collection, cleaning, and processing for computer analysis is a time-consuming effort best entrusted to a professional staff of permanent employees. Kreiss alludes to the technological and political nature of the process of incorporating the state data into an integrated database for analysis: "As such, the national party offered to clean and supplement the data of the state parties, as well as provide the databases to house and fund an online interface to access this data. This came to be an approximately \$6 million undertaking, requiring both technological development and hiring staff and outside vendors. The national party proposed funding all of this in exchange for the state parties sharing their data. While state parties would still retain formal ownership, they had to provide their data to the national party. The state parties, meanwhile, would set their own rules to determine which candidates could use the voter files and what functionality and types of data they would have access to. States would also be able to charge campaigns for access to their voter files, provided that it was a fixed price. These voter files, meanwhile, would be continually updated through canvassing conducted by campaigns during election cycles."²

The Party also engaged in a massive data-cleaning effort to make its information on the electorate as accurate as possible, hiring firms to provide such things as correct phone numbers. Staffers also hired vendors to provide

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

² *Ibid.*, p. 108.

better data on voters, particularly in states that the national party and presidential candidates had long ignored but that were newly relevant under Dean's 50-state approach.¹

In building a new national database from state files in preparation for the 2008 presidential election, the DNC was finally developing what the RNC had created years earlier. In a sense, the DNC's product leapfrogged over the RNC's. Like an underdeveloped country that creates a telephone system using cell phones instead of land lines, the DNC developed a better database by building by acquiring more accurate data and using newer technology. Kreiss said, "The Republicans had nationalized their voter file much earlier and had built modifications to their database system on an older technology base."

Given that [Republicans] had superior, voter files, databases, and turn-out operations, in addition to enjoying the presidency for much of the 2000s, there was little incentive to develop new systems. As a result, the Republican Party had fallen behind the Democrats in its knowledge of the electorate by the 2008 presidential campaign.²

Neither national party organization, however, plays any significant role in presidential campaigns until party conventions choose the nominee at their summer conventions prior to the general election in November. At the crucial state of winning the party nomination, presidential hopefuls must operate on their own, relying on their own campaign staff and organization to win the nomination.

2008: Internet Usage Changes Party Politics. According to adjustments for inflation under 1974 Federal Finance Campaign Act, presidential primary candidates in 2008 could qualify for \$21 million in public matching funds, allowing them to spend \$42 million during the primary campaign season if they accepted public funding. Of the leading candidates, only John Edwards accepted public funds, meaning he could spend no more than \$42 million. All other leading candidates in both parties financed their primary campaigns from private sources. In just January 2008, the month Barack Obama won contests in Iowa and South Carolina, he raised \$32 million from 170,000 new contributors, mostly online.³ By July 2008, Obama had raised over \$400 million.⁴

Candidates need not win stunning victories to raise large sums on the Internet. Republican Ron Paul, who trailed in the polls, raised \$4 million online

¹ Ibid., p. 109.

² Ibid., p. 101.

³ Leslie Wayne and Jeff Zeleny, "Enlisting New Donors, Obama Reaped \$32 Million in January," *New York Times*, 1 February 2008, pp. A1 and A14.

⁴ Obama's fund-raising in 2008 comes from www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/money/index.html.

in a single day.¹ Nor was a specific candidate required at all. A Democratic political action committee, (www.ActBlue.com), set up web pages for all Democrats who filed for elections. It promised to raise \$100 million for them in the 2007-08 election cycle.² Nor did one have to be in the United States to contribute. Through the first six months of 2007 and mostly through the Internet, candidates raised over \$500,000 from American citizens living abroad.³

Buoyed by his success in raising funds over the Internet for his primary campaign, Obama made the unprecedented decision to forego public funding for the 2008 general election. Previously, from 1976 to 2004, every major party nominee for president had accepted public funds (and spending limits) for the general election. John McCain, his Republican opponent and coauthor of a law limiting campaign finance, agreed to accept public funds and limit his spending for the general election to the inflation-adjusted \$84.1 million. Unencumbered by the law, Obama raised and spent more than twice as much during that period.⁴

Also in 2008, presidential candidates (mainly Democrats) advertised on political blogs and were also into social-networking sites—both commercial (Facebook, MySpace) and their own (for example, Obama's MyBO and McCain's McCainSpace). Samuel Popkin, a co-author of the book on the 1960 Simulmatics project, described the Obama campaign's use of the new media.⁵ Popkin wrote that David Plouffe and David Axelrod, Obama's campaign gurus, "changed the organization of the campaign to take advantage of the Internet to use peer-to-peer communication for persuasion, Get out the Vote (GOTV), and fund raising."

Still, the Internet was not very productive, for relatively few people went online for political information or activity. A national survey in late December 2007 asked respondents to name two sources for "most of" their news about the presidential campaign. Most people (71 percent) named television, nearly one-third (30 percent) cited newspapers, and one-quarter (26 percent) said the Internet⁶. When asked about specific ways in which they "regularly"

¹ Katharine Q. Seelye and Leslie Wayne, "The Web Finds Its Man, and Takes Him for a Ride," *New York Times*, 11 November 2007, p. 22.

² Leslie Wayne, "A Fund-Raising Rainmaker Arises Online," *New York Times*, 29 November 2008, p. A22.

³ Russ Buettner and Marc Santora, "In '08, Campaign, Money Chase Circles the Globe," *New York Times*, 22 September 2007, pp. 1 and 12.

⁴ It is difficult to pin down the general election expenditures for Obama and McCain, for one account, see <http://www.opensecrets.org/pres08/>

⁵ Samuel L. Popkin, *The Candidae* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 95-97.

⁶ Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Internet's Broader role in Campaign 2008," News Release, 11 January 2008.

learn about the presidential campaign, Young people of ages 18-29 were far more likely to name the Internet (42 percent) while those over 50 cited the nightly network news.

Using data from national surveys in 2004, 2006, and 2008, Thad Hall and Betsy Sinclair profiled "The American Internet Voter."¹ They wrote: "We find that Internet users are not divided by a partisan difference; Democrats are not more likely than Republicans (or other party registrants) to be active Web users or to use the Internet for Political purpose. We see no systematic evidence that the Internet users in 2008 are substantially different than the Internet users in 2004, although we highlight a few small differences in our empirical analysis. We do see indications that individuals who use the Internet to confirm their existing political preferences are increasingly likely to participate and additionally that users with access to the Internet are increasingly likely to donate to political campaigns".²

In addition, they found "that older individuals use the Internet significantly less, that better-educated individuals access the Internet more, and that individuals who are employed access the Internet more."³ They note that these findings, which confirm the presence of a "digital divide" noted by other authors,⁴ contradict the "democratizing" effect claimed for the Internet.

Despite the increased reliance on the Internet by citizens for information and by candidates for fund-raising, Internet advertising got only "small slice of campaign spending in 2008," according to a company that tracks advertising. Because Internet users seek out what they want to view, the best way to reach average voters was still through local broadcast television.⁵ And campaign funds raised via the Internet were usually siphoned off my television advertising.

2012: Mobile Devices Open Avenues to the Internet. A wireless handheld device (the Blackberry) was introduced in 1999, but it did not sell millions of units until the mid-2000s, reaching 14 million subscribers in 2008.⁶ In addition to making telephone calls, a BlackBerry could provide online functions such as web browsing and emailing and could take photos and play music.

¹ Thad E. Hall and Betsy Sinclair, "The American Internet Voter," in Costas Panagopoulos (ed.), *Strategy, Money and Technology in the 2008 Presidential Election* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 151-172.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

⁴ See, for example, Pippa Norris, *Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide* (New York: Cambridge, 2001).

⁵ Emily Steel, "Why Web Campaign Spending Trails TV," *Wall Street Journal*, 14 December 2008, p. B4.

⁶ BlackBerry sales figures come from <http://mobilemoo.com/blackberry/blackberry-guides/the-history-of-the-blackberry/>.

BlackBerrys were popular communication devices among politicians, and Barack Obama relied on his during his 2008 presidential campaign. Marketed as a "smart" phone, the first Apple iPhone appeared in 2007 and by 2008 had sold about 13 million units—similar to BlackBerry then.¹ The first Android smart phone was not marketed until 2008, but Android phones sold quickly and often. By 2011, Android sales had surpassed sales of iPhones, with BlackBerry far below.² In 2012, over 1 billion people worldwide used some type of smart phone, including 35 percent of people in the United States.³

The family of mobile devices was augmented by the announcement of Apple's iPad in January 2010. Within a year, Apple had sold 14 million iPads, and over 80 million were sold prior to the 2012 presidential election.⁴ Using their smart phones and their iPads or other tablet devices, millions of potential voters could access—and respond to—political messages online without sitting before a desktop computer or even toting a laptop. One unanticipated consequence of this technological innovation was to end existing limits on presidential campaign spending. Loads of money could be made so easily over the Internet, that candidates simply refused to accept the piddling millions offered by public funding under the 1974 legislation and thus be bound by spending limits.

Having refused public funds for the primary season in 2008 in preference to raising and spending far more than he otherwise would have been allowed, President Barack Obama again refused public funds during the 2012 primary season en route to his renomination. So did all major Republican presidential hopefuls in 2012. Only Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson, Green Party candidate Jill Stein, and Buddy Roemer—who sought the nomination of the online organization, Americans Elect—had applied for and qualified for public matching funds.⁵ Neither Obama nor his Republican opponent, Mitt Romney, accepted the \$91.2 million in public funds that were available for the general election in 2012. Unencumbered by spending limits in either the primary or general election periods, Obama spend over \$700 million and Romney almost \$450 million.⁶ Thanks in part to the ease of raising huge amounts of political money over the Internet, Congress failed in its 1974 attempt to limit presidential campaign spending by offering modest amounts of public funds.

¹ Early Apple sales figures come from www.zdnet.com/blog/hardware/iphone-and-ipod-sales-to-date/2819.

² Comparative smart phone sales data come from www.zanura.com/blog/reviews/iphone-review/android-versus-iphone-market-share-2/.

³ Smartphone usage comes from <http://ansonalex.com/infographics/smartphone-usage-statistics-2012-infographic/>.

⁴ Apple iPad sales come from <http://ipod.about.com/od/ipadmodelsandterms/i/ipad-sales-to-date.htm>.

⁵ See the FEC website at <http://www.fec.gov/press/bkgn/fund.shtml>.

⁶ Presidential campaign spending for 2012 came from www.opensecrets.org/pres12/.

The 2012 presidential campaign developed a relatively new attempt at using the Internet: “microtargeting” voters, sending specific messages to computer screens of selected viewers.¹ As in online marketing, visits to campaign websites generate information for providers who slip digital markers or “cookies” into the users’ computers.² That information is matched with other user information—e.g., make of car—stored in a huge database. Campaign consultants then match those data with voting records, turnout, and party registration (but not voting choice, which is protected). Then they can frame ads targeted at visitors to conservative (or liberal) websites who shop for expensive Lexus (or cheaper Ford) cars, who are registered Republicans (or Democrats), and who are frequent voters. Consultants can produce targeted Internet ads cheaply, transmit them with little expense, and—very importantly—send them quickly in reaction to breaking news.

Wayne Steger provides an extensive account of marketing and candidate messaging in the 2012 presidential election.³ He credits President Obama’s campaign for out-performing the campaign of his Republican challenger Mitt Romney:

The Romney campaign’s research appears to have had critical flaws in assessing voter preferences and turnout. The Romney campaign failed to integrate its databases with its “get out the vote”(GOTV) operations and experienced systemic failures and delays on election day.⁴

In contrast to the highly accurate information used to guide Obama’s campaign strategy, messaging, and communications, the Romney campaign operated with less extensive and sometimes inaccurate information about the electorate... Romney’s database operation began later than the Obama campaign’s operation, was not as well funded, and did not catch up, particularly with respect to attitudinal data gained through polling, mining of online data, and feedback from field staff.⁵

Steger notes that it was more difficult to document the Romney campaign’s usage of technology, “because most of this work was contracted to consulting and marketing firms. These firms maintain proprietary rights on their

¹ Tanzina Vega, “Online Data Helping Campaigns Customize Ads,” *New York Times*, 21 February 2012, pp. 1–13.

² Information in this paragraph is extracted from *The Challenge of Democracy*, 12th Ed. (2014).

³ Wayne P. Steger, “A Transformational Political Campaign: Marketing and Candidate Messaging in the 2012 Election,” in William J. Crotty (ed.), *Winning the Presidency 2012* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publisher, 2013), pp. 74–89.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

activities and have been less than forthcoming about what they did during the campaign.”¹

Concerning the campaigns’ use of social media, Stephen E. Frantzich surveyed the usage in 2012.² Both Obama and Romney, of course, had the inevitable candidate web sites, and both required visitors to register with e-mail addresses and zip codes “allowing the campaigns to capture e-mail addresses for future communication.”³ Both also used Facebook (an online social networking service) and Twitter (another online networking service limited to 140 characters). Although relatively “old” in computer technology (Facebook was founded in 2004 and Twitter in 2006), 2012 marked their first extensive use in a presidential campaign.⁴ Frantzich reports data showing that “Obama won hands down in terms of the number of Facebook friends and Twitter followers.”⁵ However, as he notes, “Twitter and Facebook are still relatively limited sources of campaign news, with only about 12 percent of the online public turning to Facebook to follow the campaign and 4 percent relying on Twitter.”⁶

Some Caveats about Information Technology and American Party Politics. Despite politicians’ demonstrated success in using the Internet to raise money, their efforts to produce votes are harder to establish. Even in 2012, relatively few people got campaign news via the Internet. Surveyed early in the 2012 primary season, 72 percent of respondents reported hearing or seeing campaign television commercials, whereas only 16 percent received e-mails, 15 percent visited a candidate’s website, and only 6 percent followed the candidate on Twitter or Facebook. Two months after the election, a national survey in January 2012 asked respondents whether they “learned something” about the presidential campaign or candidates from various news sources. Most people

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

² Stephen E. Frantzich, “‘Are We Halfway There Yet?’ New Technology and the 2012 Election,” in William J. Crotty (ed.), *Winning the Presidency 2012* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publisher, 2013), pp. 90102.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁴ For the use of Facebook in the 2010 congressional campaign, see Alan Steinberg, “Facebook and the Midterm Elections: Cyber-participation and Turnout,” Paper Prepared for the 2013 Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. For the use of Twitter in the 2011 Gubernatorial Elections, see Marija Anna Bekafigo and Allan McBride, “Who Tweets about Politics? Political Participation of Twitter Users during the 2011 Gubernatorial Elections,” Paper Prepared for the 2013 Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.92.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

named some form of television (cable news, 36 percent; local TV news, 32 percent; network news, 26 percent), and only 25 percent named the Internet.¹

However, evidence suggests that those who do rely on electronic technology are politically astute and involved. Scholars estimated that as many as half of American voters in 2004 sought political information online during the presidential election campaign.² Moreover, they found these "Online Political Citizens" to be disproportionately "politically influential": "They are seven times more likely than the general public to have attended a political rally, speech or protest in the last two to three months. They are nearly five times more likely to have contacted a politician, three times more likely to have written a letter to the editor, and three times more likely to belong to groups trying to influence public policy."³

When compared with influentials in the general public, however, online influentials have weaker ties to their local community and to long-term obligations, perhaps reflecting the relative youth of online enthusiasts.⁴ Online participants also tend to associate with like-minded partisans—except when they encounter occasional "trolls" of opposite persuasion who seek to disrupt a candidate's blog. Some observers see a dark side to the pattern of intense online debate among like-minded people, called "cyberbalkanization."⁵ As one asked, "If Political Fragmentation Is the Problem, Is the Internet the Solution?"⁶

Finally, one must note the inaccuracy of the phrase, "information technology and American party politics," as applied to scholarly literature. Most authors really write about how *candidates* use the technology, not *parties*. The indexes to books on information technology prior to 2012 seldom cite either the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. For example, the index to the informative collection of studies, *Politicking online: The Transformation of Election Campaign Communications*, contains no entry for political parties, no entry for the Democratic Party, no entry for the Republican Party, but a sole entry

¹ "Cable Leads the Pack as Campaign News Source," The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 7 February 2012, at <http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/2012%20Communicating%20Release.pdf>.

² Joseph Graf, *Political Influentials Online in the 2004 Presidential Campaign* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Politics, Democracy and the Internet, George Washington University, 5 February 2004), p. 34.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵ Amy Harmon, "Politics of the Web: Meet, Greet, Segregate, Meet Again," *New York Times*, 25 January 2004, Sec. 4, p. 16.

⁶ William A. Galston, "If Political Fragmentation Is the Problem, Is the Internet the Solution?" in *The Civic Web: Online Politics and Democratic Values*, ed. David M. Anderson and Michael Cornfield (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), pp. 35–44.

for the Republican National Convention.¹ With the exception noted in the next paragraph, all of the other sixteen chapters mention parties but usually as an attribute of a candidate or as an entity that does not require much discussion. For example, the study on candidate web sites states that links to a political party are risky "because the campaign has no control over the information presented there and it may not be entirely consistent with the candidate's message."²

The exception was a study of the 2005 German Bundestag Election, which found almost as many party organization bloggers (76) as candidates (83).³ Studies of online election campaigns in Australia and other countries by Rachel Gibson and others suggest that "well-resourced parties ran better designed multi-functional sites that delivered more information and greater opportunities for participation and financial donations."⁴ Parties in other countries, which have a more central role in government, may be more directly engaged in information technology than parties in the United States. Scholars have long described American parties as being highly institutionalized but also exceptionally decentralized. Their nature is in keeping with our decentralization of government and—importantly—our system of choosing party candidates for office through primary elections generally open to all voters.

Summary and Conclusions. At the risk of slighting important signposts along the evolutionary time-trail, I offer five summary observations about innovations in information technology in party politics since the 1960s.

1. From the 1960s through the 1980s, the national committees of the two major parties played a more important role in applying information technology to electoral campaigns than they did during the next two decades, certainly during the period from 1990 to 2004.

In 1960, the DNC supported a computer simulation of the 1960 presidential election, and in 1964 and 1968 the RNC developed a system to store

¹ Costas Panagopoulos (ed.), *Politicking online: The Transformation of Election Campaign Communications*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009).

² James N. Druckman, Martin J. Kifer, and Michael Parkin, "The Technological Development of Candidate Web Sites: How and Why Candidates Use Web Innovations," in Costas Panagopoulos (ed.), *Politicking online: The Transformation of Election Campaign Communications*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009), pp. 21–47 at p. 25.

³ Stiffen Albrechet, Maren L. Übcke, and Rasco-Hartig-Perschke, "Under Construction": Weblog Campaigning in the German Bundestag Election 2005," in Costas Panagopoulos (ed.), *Politicking online: The Transformation of Election Campaign Communications*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009), pp. 179–199, at p. 186.

⁴ See Rachel K. Gibson, "Normalizing or Equalizing Party Competition? Assessing the Impact of the Web on Election Campaigning," *Political Studies*, forthcoming; Rachel K. Gibson and Ian McAllister (2011): *Do Online Election Campaigns Win Votes? The 2007 Australian "YouTube" Election*, *Political Communication*, 28 (No. 2), 227–244.

and retrieve the speeches of presidential candidates. The national committees had to assume these roles—if they were to be assumed at all—because the equipment was expensive and very few people had the skills to operate the equipment.

2. From the 1960s through the 1980s, the RNC devoted more resources to information technology than the DNC, and achieved more impressive results, especially in raising funds from small contributors.

Although the DNC supported the pioneering simulation of the 1960 election, it neglected to support the follow-up simulation of the 1964 election, which it regarded as “in the bag.” Two factors favored the RNC’s persistence: (1) Staffed by business-types, the RNC was more accustomed to handling and processing information with “IBM” machines than the Democrats, staffed by academic-types; and (2) Having fewer self-identified party members, Republicans felt the need to overcome their numerical disadvantage with technological superiority.

3. During the decade and a half from 1990 to 2004, party candidates—not party organizations—led in introducing technological innovations in electoral campaigns.

With the emergence of the Internet, the manufacture of increasingly powerful microcomputers, and the spread of computing skills across the population, individuals (and young ones at that) applied information technology creatively to election campaigns. More often than not, this technological creativity failed to result in election victories, for two reasons: (1) underdogs, more often than top dogs, experimented with the new technology; and (2) relatively few voters were using the Internet during that period.

4. Beginning with the 2004 presidential election, computer-based technological innovations significantly affected party politics.

When Howard Dean raised millions in campaign funds online, politicians across the country realized that the Internet was no longer a novelty of marginal value but an essential component of electoral campaigns. The prospects of raising millions of dollars online induced all the leading presidential candidates in 2008 to decline accepting public funds for their primary campaigns, which freed them from spending limits. Candidate Barack Obama also declined public funding for his campaign in the 2008 general election. In 2012, all major candidates in both parties declined public funds for the primary season, and both major party candidates—Democrat President Obama and his Republican challenger Mitt Romney—declined public funding for their general election campaigns. So one unanticipated consequence of online politics was to help nullify the congressional attempt to limit campaign spending in presidential elections under the 1974 Federal Election Campaign Act.

5. Three factors in the evolution of information technology—declining costs, increased capabilities, and swift pace of innovation—have favored party

candidates over party organizations in applying information technology to electoral politics.

Today, virtually everyone planning to run for public office can afford a computer that can fit in a brief case. The computer will operate faster, draw less electricity, and have more storage capacity than computers housed in the national party committees in the 1960s through the 1980s. Tomorrow, computers will be even smaller, faster, cooler, and have more capacity. Tomorrow, people will develop computer applications to electoral campaigns that are unknown today. Those people will be young people. They will not be employed in regular jobs by party organizations but by candidates operating outside the party organization. Generally speaking, innovations in information technology favor candidates over parties.

6. However, one critical factor for successful application of information technology in election campaigns favors party organizations—the collection of useful data on populous electorates.

Data on millions of citizens is costly to collect, costly to render useful, and costly to maintain over time. For these critical tasks, organizations have advantages over individuals. In recent elections, both the RNC and the DNC—particularly the DNC—toiled to collect such data. Consequently, the national party organizations have recently reasserted their roles in applying information technology to party politics, at least in the general election campaigns for U.S. president. Decentralization still reigns during the season of American presidential primaries, when candidates fight among themselves outside of the national party organization to win their party’s nomination.

7. Although the trajectory of technological innovations in party politics in the United States may have parallels in other countries, my observations apply strictly to the American party system.

Nevertheless, the “Americanization” of electoral campaigns abroad suggests that the American experience will be reflected in some extent in other countries. In her study of party communications across nations, Pippa Norris contends that structural contrasts elsewhere will preclude “following a single ‘American’ model.”¹ Although new technologies have changed campaigning for election, they did so “mainly by supplementing rather than replacing older channels.” However, she also noted, “with new technologies, central campaign headquarters can now much more tightly control local activity.”² One can expect local party leaders to oppose the centralization of power that comes from innovations in information technology.

¹ Pippa Norris, “Developments in Party Communications,” in *Pollitical Parties and Democracy in Theoretical and Practical Perspectives* (Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, 2005), p. 21

² *Ibid.*

To illustrate how local party leaders can frustrate technological innovation, I relate my own failed story of trying to computerize the Democratic Party in Cook County, Illinois. From 1955 to 1976, the City of Chicago—contained within Cook County—was second only to New York in population. Richard J. Daley served as mayor of the city and chairman of the Democratic Party throughout that time, until his death in 1976. His Cook County Democratic Party was regarded as the most powerful party organization in the nation, and stories abounded of how precisely Daley could predict, and then deliver, the Democratic vote in general elections.

On Daley's death, different people filled the positions of city major and county chairman. In 1982, the sitting mayor, Jane Byrne, helped elect a controversial alderman, Edward Vrdolyak, to be chairman of the 80-member Cook County Democratic Party Committee. The same year, my Northwestern colleague, Michael Bakalis invited me to meet with Chairman Vrdolyak to talk about computerizing the committee's files. (Bakalis had been elected to statewide offices in the 1970s as a Democrat and enjoyed close connections with the Party.)

In 1982, I met with Chairman Vrdolyak and some committeemen on several occasions, discussing what would be required to adapt the central committee's files to computer processing. It soon became clear that there was almost *no* paper information at the party headquarters in the Bismarck Hotel. (If Chairman Daley really knew precisely how country citizens would vote in elections, he did not draw his information from information in party files.) The 50 city committee members and the 30 township committee members outside the city *did* have information on voters, but these 80 committeemen were not willing to provide the Chairman Vrdolyak with that information to be put in a central database. My written proposal to develop a database for the Cook County Democratic Party never got to a vote, as far as I can tell. The committeemen were not ready for innovative information technology, if it meant surrendering their control of information.

This essay began by quoting from the opening pages of Matthew Hindman's, *The Myth of Digital Democracy*. In his conclusion, Hindman reviews the state of American democracy and the abilities of online politics to improve its politics: "The central criticisms have been remarkably consistent over the past half century—namely, that U.S. democracy fails to provide adequate representation across lines of race and class, and that it fails to bridge the gap between polity elites and the mass public... In the areas where the evidence is the clearest, the Internet seems like the answer to a problem that U.S. politics did not have."¹

¹ Hindman, *The Myth of Digital Democracy*, p. 141.

Ultimately, then, the Internet seems to be both good news and bad news for the political voice of the average citizen. The Internet has made campaigning financing more inclusive, and allowed broad, diffuse interests to organize more easily. For motivated citizens, vast quantities of political information are only click away. Internet politics is not just politics as usual; online interests are hardly a perfect reflection of the on-line political landscape.¹

Concerning party organizations, the impact of information technology has changed over time. When computers were large, expensive, and difficult to operate, only well-funded party organizations could afford them, so technology had a centralizing effect on party politics. As computers became small, inexpensive, and easy to use, candidates used them to run their campaigns independently of party organizations, so technological innovations had a decentralizing effect. As the quality of the information being processed becomes increasingly important, institutional size and organizational resources matter once again. Only well-funded party institutions with professional staffs will be able to acquire, prepare, and maintain the data that lead to victories in general elections in populous countries. Does this amount to progress? It depends on the values of the observer.

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О принципах языкового проектирования, или дифференциация понятий и концептов в российском политическом дискурсе

Политический дискурс (далее – ПД) представляет мир глазами политического актора. Пользуясь языком (или его политическим вариантом) как (семиотическим) кодом, политик конструирует определенную модель мира, навязывая свою систему ценностей (и понятий, выражающих эти ценности) адресату и тем самым воздействуя на него. В отличие от *проектирования* (определяемого как процесс создания уникального, принципиально нового интеллектуального продукта) любое моделирование (и языковое в том числе)² есть процесс, «представляющий что-то одно в виде чего-либо другого»² в целях упрощения этого «что-то». Языковое моделирование нередко приравнивает ПД к определенной идеологии и, наоборот, сама идеология нередко приравнивается к ПД. Именно идеология диктует авторам ПД, как он будет смоделирован. При этом значимые изменения в идеологии (а тем более ее смена) приводят к созданию ново-

¹ Ibid., p. 142.

² Клюканов И.Э. Коммуникативный универсум. М., 2010. С. 57.