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Ten Lessons to Look for in Campaign Chronicles

James R. Bowers and Stephen Daniels

Given the fact that you're reading *Inside Political Campaigns,* there's a good chance that you're taking a college political science course on campaigns and elections and your professor has assigned this book as one of the required texts. You may be wondering why. More to the point, you may be asking yourself: "What lessons am I likely to learn from reading *Inside Political Campaigns*?" A great deal, we hope. There are many lessons to be learned from these campaign chronicles ranging from the serious to the absurd. We will discuss some of the specific lessons we want you to look for shortly, but first we want to tell you a bit more about the campaign chronicles that follow.

The campaign chronicles are our and our contributors' firsthand accounts of their own involvement and participation in election campaigns. All of us are political scientists much like your own professor, with the exception of two undergraduate political science students. When you read these chronicles, you will see various kinds of campaign functions through a participant's own eyes. You'll vicariously experience what it's like to be inside many different kinds of campaigns—from presidential to congressional, gubernatorial to mayoral, state legislative to city council, and even a local race for district attorney. The contributors show you how their respective campaigns handled (not always successfully) the kinds of challenges that all campaigns face (and traditional textbooks often discuss): the perils of challenging incumbents, the nuances of fund-raising in presidential campaigns, the effective use of free or earned media, the importance of opposition and candidate research, the nightmares of ballot access and campaigning for third-party candidates, the ways to motivate campaign volunteers (including when the candidate is your own father), the use of negative campaigning, and the importance of planning and strategy. Through these chronicles you will also come to appreciate the idea that despite the differences among the various kinds of elections, there are certain universal truths.

We want you to read these campaign chronicles closely and with an eye for detail. They are self-critical stories of defeat as well as victory. In fact, the authors write a lot about losing—the lessons learned from it, how to avoid it, and why you can still lose even when you run well. If you are a political science major or any student sitting in a course on campaigns and elections, you are there because first and foremost you are interested in politics, whether it's because you want to be directly involved in it or want to simply enjoy it as you would any other spectator sport. And don't let the discipline fool you. Politics and campaigns, although important, are sports and they are fun. We actually enjoy this stuff! We appreciate and want to encourage your interest. We understand that you're more inclined to be a political animal than a budding young political scientist. You want real action. You want something you can apply to the "real world"—and in its own way *Inside Political Campaigns* is about political action.

So again the question can be asked: What lessons will you learn by reading *Inside Political Campaigns*? No doubt you will draw some of your own lessons from the chronicles. We're pretty certain that your professor will also point out a number of lessons. Most likely those lessons relate to the larger body of political science or applied literature to which you've been exposed in class. They may also reflect your professor's own experiences if he or she has been active in campaigns. Between the lessons you uncover and those your professor points out, you will have a much better understanding of and appreciation for campaigns after reading *Inside Political Campaigns* than before.

Nevertheless, we'd be remiss in our duty if we didn't take time to preview some key lessons we believe you should look for while reading these campaign chronicles. We've picked ten. Although there is a rough order in these lessons and some are more conducive to a campaign's success than others, you shouldn't regard them as a model that will help predict outcomes or guarantee success. They are simply what they are—ten lessons to consider.

Our purpose in previewing these ten lessons is to help you see the campaign chronicles as more than just the good stories that they are. We want you to also appreciate the chronicles as a series of case studies done by participant observers—participants who are trained to look at campaigns and elections analytically and critically. They are political scientists, and even though they are writing in a distinctly nonacademic way, they do not leave their critical eye behind. Nor should you. Each story makes a useful point or set of points with regard to campaigns. With this in mind, we want you to look at these chronicles collectively and see what you can draw from their deep descriptions of campaigns. But don't go looking for some grand or "unified theory" of campaigns from them. We and our contributors are not sure such a theory can ever exist in a meaningful and useful form. Instead, we want you looking for important patterns, common contextual factors, and shared characteristics that together contribute to a fuller understanding of campaigns.

Lesson 1: *All* Campaigns Are Basically Local Affairs

Some ideas seem trite, a few so much so that we no longer take them seriously. Our first lesson may appear to be such a one, but it is deeply and fundamentally true. The late speaker of the US House of Representatives, Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, regularly proclaimed a lesson learned from his father: "All politics is local." The same can be said about campaigns and elections, and this lesson is evident in each of the campaign chronicles. Vladimir Gutman's "Funding Hillary's 2008 Presidential Campaign" (Chapter 4), for instance, drives this point home through its examination of the decentralized nature of fund-raising even in a presidential campaign. It shows the overwhelming importance of state fund-raising organizations for bringing in the dollars and how those organizations rely on even more decentralized and local networks and contacts. It doesn't get much more local than his description of the problems in getting a Chicago alderman to pay up for a block of tickets to a major Clinton fund-raiser the alderman bought for some of his constituents.

The chronicles about running for Congress by Tari Renner and Richard J. Hardy (Chapters 5 and 9, respectively) also underscore the importance of the local. The Renner campaign's allegation concerning the incumbent congressman's real place of residence reflects the importance of localism and how "of their districts" members of the House are expected to be. Similarly, Hardy's use of his former and current students in key campaign positions and as volunteers highlights another aspect of localism in congressional campaigns—in staffing. And Hardy's chronicle reflects still another aspect of localism for campaign staffing—that ties can be personal ones as well—in the death of Maria Bartlett, a volunteer, in a car accident as she was returning from a campaign errand. This tragic accident will underscore the idea that campaigns are local in terms of emotional space and the intimacy that develops among those involved in a campaign.

Bottom line: All politics is local. Ignore this old cliché at your own peril.

Lesson 2: The Rules and Procedures Under Which Campaigns Operate Matter

Almost everything of consequence in politics takes place within some institutional setting or set of rules—and they matter. There's an old saying in legislative politics that goes something like this: "If you let me control the procedures, I'll beat you on substance every time." Within reason, the same can be said about campaigns and elections. The rules and procedures under which they operate affect everything from ballot access to fund-raising to the number of terms an officeholder may serve and more. Michael Munger's chronicle of running for governor of North Carolina as the Libertarian Party candidate (Chapter 11) is a

perfect example. Munger reveals that North Carolina makes it almost impossible for third parties to get their candidates on the ballot. Add to this the rules for candidate debates that only invite "serious candidates," and you can see the effects procedures and rules have on third-party candidates.

Stephen Daniels's "Long-Term Strategy in Local Elections" (Chapter 3) gives another perspective on such "threshold rules"—the rules that govern access to a place on the ballot. Munger's challenge was to get over the high hurdles set in North Carolina to gain his place on the ballot. Similarly, you will read how Daniels's citizen group—the Community Advocates—used threshold rules to keep things off the ballot. Daniels notes that before the Advocates were formed, he successfully used the rule on the appropriate date for filing a referendum request to keep an issue off the ballot. The Advocates successfully used signature requirements to keep another referendum issue off the ballot but failed in a second attempt when that issue reappeared a year later; they and their allies did manage to defeat that issue at the polls. In addition, the Advocates used the rules on the form and wording of a referendum question to force the incumbent mayor to withdraw his "strong mayor" referendum.

In Chapter 12, Aaron Wicks's chronicle of multicandidate mayoral primaries shows that government rules are not the only ones that matter. Endorsements by the major political parties are essential for candidates and their campaigns, and each party—even at the local level—will have its own rules and procedures for determining who will be endorsed and receive the party's support. Wicks's story clarifies the importance of party rules. In Rochester, New York, where his story takes place, Democrats use a weighted vote rule at the county convention in determining who will be the party's designated candidate. It means that not all votes cast are equal. Consequently, a candidate receiving the largest raw vote total can actually lose the designation or nomination because his or her opponent had the greatest weighted vote total. This practice is similar to how the Electoral College operates in presidential elections. As Al Gore found out in the 2000 election, winning the popular vote doesn't win you the presidency. You have to win a clear majority of electoral votes, which are in effect weighted.

Gutman's "Funding Hillary 2008 Presidential Campaign" provides a different kind of example (see Chapter 4). He highlights how the federal campaign finance rules under which candidates for president operate, particularly the individual and corporate limits on contributions, structure fund-raising. Equally important, he explains the importance of loopholes, or what the rules don't say. Gutman's candid discussion of the widespread practice of "bundling"—a foreseeable, yet allowable, way around the federal campaign finance limits—provides a powerful example of the importance of loopholes and how they too can structure campaign fund-raising.

Bottom line: Rules and procedures matter—and they're not necessarily fair.

Lesson 3: Planning, Organization, and Strategy Matter

We selected Chapman Rackaway's and Stephen Daniels's chronicles as Chapters 2 and 3 because both superbly summarize most elements of the chronicles that follow them. Rackaway ties up in a nicely wrapped package how planning and organization are essential to any campaign's success. Planning and organization affect every element of a campaign, from developing walking lists to fund-raising to executing a media strategy. For excellent examples of their nitty-gritty importance, you will only need to look at Gutman's and Kevin Anderson's chapters. In Chapter 4, Gutman explains how the Hillary Clinton campaign organized donors in tiers and worked out the mechanics of phone calling for donations. But perhaps his best illustration of the importance of organization and planning for fund-raising is his description of how the campaign put together and executed a major fund-raising event in Chicago. In Chapter 6, Anderson explains the organization of Bill Clinton's research department in the 1992 presidential campaign. It was divided into two main parts: Opposition Research, which looked for information on the candidate's opponents, and the Arkansas Record, which looked for information to defend the candidate's record as governor. Anderson worked in the latter, and he describes not only how that part of the research department fit into the larger campaign but also how its daily work was organized.

Good planning and organizing can't guarantee a win, but the odds of losing are dramatically increased without them. On this note, we suggest a corollary to Lesson 3: Even well-planned and well-run campaigns lose. One thing you should notice in reading these memoirs is that the candidates involved lost as often as they won. In three chronicles—Hardy (Chapter 9), Renner (Chapter 5), and James R. Bowers (Chapter 10)—in which the candidates are all political scientists, each one loses. Nonetheless, all three campaigns were well planned, well organized, and well run. Why is this so? As Daniels shows in Chapter 3, campaigns play out in a given political context that almost always favors one candidate over another. Renner and Hardy were running against incumbents. Bowers had to contend with quasi-incumbency and race-based politics. All that good planning, organizing, and strategy can do is allow you to maximize the management of political circumstances to the best of your or your candidate's advantage. Daniels also reminds us that planning and organization will not suffice if the campaign lacks a strategy with a clear goal. Good strategy includes a well-communicated narrative that gives voters reasons to vote for candidate Smith rather than candidate Jones. Elections are about the politics of ideas, and the battle can extend beyond a single election. Contemporary grassroots conservatives understand this, as did their movement predecessors. In the 1990s, Newt Gingrich knew it as well. And the Community Advocates in Downers Grove, Illinois, applied this lesson on the

local level effectively between 2004 and 2009 to return good government to their town.

Bottom line: Plan well and have a good strategy too!

Lesson 4: Campaigns Are About Taking Advantage of Opportunities

Although it is true that planning, organization, and strategy matter, contingency is ever present. As the once ubiquitous bumper sticker said: "S&*% happens!" Planning, organization, and strategy help a campaign react successfully when the unforeseen event leaves what the bumper sticker refers to. But contingency works in the other direction as well in creating opportunities. Much of what goes on in a campaign involves taking advantage of the opportunities presented to you or that you create.

Several of the campaign chronicles in this book address opportunities surrounding candidates' decisions to run. At the beginning of Chapter 12, Wicks explains how a split within a party can make the party vulnerable to an insurgent candidate like the mayoral candidate for whom he worked. In his chronicle of volunteering in a state legislative campaign (Chapter 7), Michael Smith reveals his own political ambitions and how Missouri's term limits for state legislators served those ambitions. He knew well in advance that the seat he coveted would indeed become empty by a certain date and that he could plan accordingly. Jordan McNamara's chronicle of his father's campaign for district attorney (Chapter 8) presents a similar use of opportunities. McNamara's father became Oneida district attorney by taking advantage of the opportunity created by District Attorney Michael Arcuri's election to Congress and accepting the appointment to finish Arcuri's term. That allowed him to campaign as the incumbent.

In a slight variation on this theme, you will discover in Chapter 10 how Bowers's opponent, Lovely Warren, won a seat on city council when Democratic Party leaders and the mayor "created" an opportunity for her to do so by presenting the current council member from that district with an offer that was too good for him to refuse: Take a well-paying job in City Hall or be faced with a possible three-way primary. Likewise, the "Draft Hardy for Congress" movement discussed in Chapter 9 can be seen as a created opportunity that inclined Hardy to run.

Other chronicles point to other uses of opportunities. In Chapter 5, Renner reveals how a candidate can react when his or her opponent gets caught up in a scandal. There you will learn how the incumbent congressman's engagement to the daughter of a notorious Latin American dictator gave the Renner campaign opportunities to raise much-needed cash and to gain free media attention. Another example is Daniels's explanation of how the Advocates used the "mistakes" of the incumbent mayor to organize a viable opposition and eventually to help defeat him.

Bottom line: "Chance favors the prepared mind" (Louis Pasteur).

Lesson 5: Incumbency, Like Inertia, Is Hard to Overcome

Context matters, and some contextual factors *really* matter. Some might think of campaigns and elections as contests in which each candidate has an equal chance of winning. Although that is true in theory, reality is often quite different. As many of the campaign chronicles make clear, factors such as money or the partisan distribution of the electorate can affect a candidate's chances and may even tilt an election in favor of one candidate over another. Among such factors, incumbency is perhaps the most important in tilting the scales. This lesson squares with the political science literature on the incumbency advantage, and the chronicles provide unique insights into the various ways incumbency conveys advantage.

Incumbency is nearly impossible for challengers to overcome. Renner couldn't overcome his incumbent Republican opponent despite the controversy surrounding the latter's engagement to a notorious dictator's daughter (see Chapter 5). Hardy wasn't able to beat his incumbent Democratic opponent either (see Chapter 9). Yet the Hardy chronicle also suggests that a challenger can at least come close to beating an incumbent.

Bowers's situation was a bit different (see Chapter 10). As you will see, his opponent was a "quasi-incumbent," having been appointed to the City Council only a few months before the primary. Her appointment was intended to bestow the trappings of incumbency upon her. This status, added to other factors such as the role racial politics played in the campaign, increased the nearly insurmountable odds against Bowers winning. His plight underscores the importance of incumbency, even if it is only a quasi-incumbency. It is enough to convey advantage, which motivates politicians, political parties, and campaign strategists to use appointments to tilt the electoral scales. In Chapter 8, McNamara's story reinforces this lesson. As his chronicle makes clear, it didn't hurt his father's electoral chances that he was appointed to fill the office vacated by his predecessor's election to Congress.

Clearly, incumbency is difficult to overcome—at least in a single election. But with perseverance and a good strategy, it may be possible, as Daniels indicates in Chapter 3. Here you will read about the stunning defeat of Downers Grove's two-term and seemingly invincible mayor by a candidate backed by Daniels's citizen group, the Community Advocates.

Bottom line: Inertia describes much in politics, and incumbents are the embodiment of this fact of political life.

Lesson 6: Money Matters, and It Matters Most for Challengers

As Lesson 5 attests, it's very hard for challengers to beat incumbents. But why is it so hard? Money—or the lack of it—is a key part of the answer. To campaign

effectively, to be competitive, and to be taken seriously as a candidate by opinion makers, particularly the media, candidates for major office need money and effective fund-raising machines. For Hillary Clinton in 2008, this was particularly true given the fund-raising juggernaut the Obama campaign turned out to be (see Chapter 4). The Obama campaign raised more money than Clinton, and she was left loaning her own campaign millions of dollars as her own credibility as a candidate began to wane.

The lack of money also negatively affected both Hardy's and Renner's campaigns for Congress against their incumbent rivals. Renner was able to ride a short-lived fund-raising bonanza because of the scandal and controversy surrounding his opponent's engagement to the dictator's daughter (see Chapter 5). The bonanza, though, was never enough to overcome the incumbent's greater name recognition, fund-raising prowess, and the Republican-leaning nature of the congressional district in which he was running. Hardy came closer than Renner to defeating his opponent. But raising only one-third as much money as his opponent was one factor that kept him from crossing the finish line as a winner (see Chapter 9).

In Chapter 3, Daniels takes the same lesson down to the local level. The fund-raising skills of the incumbent mayor were significant enough to deter all challengers in his first reelection race: No one could afford to challenge him. More importantly, the mayor's strategy illustrates all too well why incumbency and money can work synergistically to stymie challengers. Incumbents can and do provide favors that benefit those willing and able to contribute to a campaign fund. As the story shows, the mayor's fund-raising apparatus systemically solicited money from businesses, including those that received some kind of benefit from the village government. Challengers can only promise what incumbents have already delivered.

Of course, it isn't the money itself that matters. It is what money buys—paid staff, political consultants, polling, media, and so on. "The Importance of Planning" (Chapter 2) is a good reminder of this. Rackaway points out that in his first campaign as a college intern, staff made many mistakes because the campaign had no resources and therefore could not effectively plan or run as the candidate may have wished. Renner's story in Chapter 5 will further highlight the problem for a campaign when it has insufficient funds to purchase media for the purpose of responding to a negative attack. The Renner camp had exhausted its campaign funds when the incumbent's campaign undertook a media blitz charging that Renner was soft on drugs and favored their legalization. Without the ability to respond with a media buy of its own, the Renner campaign was left employing a free media strategy at the last debate, centering on a "planned blow-up" by Renner to offset the damage of a negative attack.

Bottom line: "Money, money, money, money. It makes the world go round!" (*"Money,"* Cabaret). And the political world is no different.

Lesson 7: Campaigns Need Both Earned and Paid Media to Get Out Their Message

It is a truism that any campaign that hopes to be successful has to have a good paid media plan that defines its candidate positively and the opponent negatively. Again, a campaign needs to engage the battle of ideas with a clear, persuasive narrative, such as the Bowers campaign's extensive use of direct mail to define both its candidate and the opponent (see Chapter 10). The Bowers chronicle underscores the need for a structured message that (1) establishes the positives of the favored candidate, (2) undertakes an aggressive comparison of the candidate to the opponent defining the latter in negative terms, and (3) closes the media campaign with a restated positive on the campaign's candidate. Daniels (Chapter 3) shows that interest groups need such plans too.

A good paid media strategy alone, however, is insufficient. To get the message out, campaigns must also earn a certain level of free media. Few campaigns have enough money to buy all the media exposure they need. Free media can fill the gap and provide other benefits as well. Free media can sometimes be better than paid media because it does not come across as fake, self-serving, or simply purchased. It can help in putting the candidate in a positive light while showing the opponent in a negative light. It is much more powerful if a perceived neutral source delivers the message.

But free media cannot be controlled and shaped the way paid media can. The Renner chronicle about media, money, and mud illustrates both sides of free media (see Chapter 5). The media feeding frenzy centering on the incumbent Republican's engagement allowed Renner to have a short-term fund-raising bonanza of his own. It increased his profile and increased his challenger's negatives. The negative earned media for his opponent was, however, a mixed blessing for Renner. The scandal became the only topic most reporters wanted to talk about, thereby hindering Renner's effort to get out his own message.

Campaigns attract free media in other ways than spreading allegations about an opponent. There are, of course, the ubiquitous press releases, as well as events such as rallies; speeches; town hall meetings; and visits to schools, factories, and other places. Events are—or at least should be—carefully planned to convey the right message about the candidate in addition to simply getting exposure. In Chapter 4, Gutman's description of a major fund-raising event provides an excellent example of a planned event as a media opportunity. He describes in detail the planning of the fund-raiser that, among other things, required a room crowded with supporters. A crowded room says a candidate has a lot of energetic supporters, and that, in turn, could attract contributions. Without a crowded room, Gutman notes, a candidate like Clinton would look weak and unpopular, which would deter contributions. Because it was possible that the number of attendees might be less than expected, the staff used a room

that could be split into smaller rooms. In other words, if too few attendees appeared to ensure the right image, then the staff could shrink the room to create a more positive image.

Gutman's chronicle also demonstrates how intense the concern over the staging of an event can be because of the media coverage. Free media is useful only if it sends the right message. As Gutman illustrates, even something as seemingly straightforward as where to host a fund-raiser can send the wrong message if a campaign is not careful.

Bottom line: Invisible candidates lose, and media is the key to visibility.

Lesson 8: Minor Parties and Minor Candidates Get Minor Attention

There is another form of "incumbency" that is important in framing the context for campaigns—the incumbency of the two major parties. Just as the privileged position of an incumbent derives from the inertia of the political system, so does the privileged position of the two major parties. In fact, the latter is even more important because it basically defines that inertia. Members of the major parties occupy almost all key policymaking positions, and they make the rules for the political system. Not surprisingly, those who write the rules tend to write them in a way that protects their privileged position. This means that independents, party insurgents, and minor or third-party candidates are at a distinct disadvantage.

Two chronicles—by Munger (Chapter 11) and Wicks (Chapter 12)—illustrate this disadvantaged position. Munger ran as a third-party candidate, and Wicks was a second-tier candidate in a primary with two main competitors. Either way, the outcome is likely to be the same—the candidate gets minor attention and loses. Though Munger in his North Carolina gubernatorial campaign as the Libertarian Party candidate got more media and voter attention than many third-party candidates do, he still suffered in comparison to the Republican and Democratic candidates. For instance, you will read how his minor-party status meant that he wasn't invited to all the gubernatorial debates. In addition, given the structural barriers protecting two-party electoral domination and the low probability that a third-party candidate could win, Munger couldn't attract sufficient financial backing. As a result, he didn't have the resources to effectively increase his visibility. Ultimately, his campaign had no choice but to focus on the goal of drawing enough electoral attention to keep the Libertarian Party on the North Carolina ballot as a legally recognized political party—in other words, keeping the dream alive.

Wicks's chronicle presents a different dilemma: His candidate for mayor was virtually ignored by the media or treated as an afterthought. Even though Wicks's candidate had a strong resume, the two other candidates were seen as

the serious contenders by the media because they had more compelling narratives in the local political environment. Wicks's candidate was a twenty-year incumbent city councilman, a long-serving chair of the council's Finance Committee, and the first openly gay elected official in New York State. None of this, however, was a match for the drama unfolding between the other two mayoral contenders. As Wicks points out, one candidate—a black city council member—was the onetime heir apparent who eventually fell out of favor with the retiring mayor, the first African American mayor in Rochester, New York. This candidate also was a staff to and the protégé of a powerful New York state assemblyman, who was widely recognized as the real political boss of Rochester politics. The second candidate was a six-foot-six former police chief with an "aw-shucks" Huck Finn persona who came into the mayoral race after months of speculation he would run and a "staged draft" to convince him to do so. Widely popular and perceived to be more independent and reform-minded than the first candidate, you will read how this cop-turned-candidate rode into the race like Marshal Matt Dillon wearing Ronald Reagan's Teflon coating. As Wicks explains, with this narrative unfolding, his mayoral candidate never had a chance, despite being probably the most talented and qualified of the three. The narrative of the contest between the other two was just too strong, and Tim Mains became an "also-ran."

Bottom line: The two major parties and their candidates play in the major leagues; everyone else plays in the minors.

Lesson 9: Campaigning Is a Contact Sport, Sometimes Played Dirty

In Chapter 3, Daniels notes that civic pride and good citizenship don't move elections. Self-interest does—people will pursue their interests through a wide variety of rough-and-tumble means. Not all of them are openly discussed in polite company. Call it what you will—negative campaigning, aggressive campaigning, or comparative campaigning—all campaigns do it. Be prepared to respond to it and to do it. Campaigns, after all, are about winning.

The most obvious example of the rougher side of campaigns is, for lack of a better word, mudslinging. Sometimes mud is slung out in the open as part of a campaign's paid media strategy, as in Chapter 5, in which the incumbent's campaign accused Renner in campaign commercials of wanting to legalize drugs. Renner's own use of the incumbent's engagement to the dictator's daughter can also be seen as illustrating this lesson. Smith's description in his chronicle about using his candidate's opponent's check-kiting conviction against him (see Chapter 7) or Daniels's description of the use of the mayor's campaign fund-raising and spending record (see Chapter 3) provide additional examples. Or for another example (in Chapter 10), take any of the direct mail

pieces Bowers describes sending out against his opponent in his 2007 campaign for city council.

However, you will also learn that at times mud is slung below the radar (and below the belt), through the rumor mill, anonymous phone calls, and mailings. Increasingly, mud is now slung anonymously on blogs and websites. In Chapter 10, Bowers shows how supporters of his opponent spread unfounded rumors through African American churches and media blogs. In reading this account, you may even find yourself a bit taken aback at how these off-the-radar attacks portrayed him.

Whether out in the open or off the radar, mudslinging is used for one purpose and one purpose only: to push your campaign narrative and win the battle of ideas by driving up your opponent's negatives among voters. It's part of the contact sport of campaigning. Beyond the few restrictions imposed by the law—and they are few—there are no formal rules for this sport, but there are pragmatic judgments that may impose some limits. Like any contact sport, what kind of hit you make on your opponent matters. Is it a "clean hit" or a "dirty hit"? Does it involve "clean mud" or "dirty mud"? Dirty hits may backfire and hurt you rather than your opponent.

How does a campaign or a candidate distinguish between the two? Unscrupulous candidates, campaign managers, and campaign strategists probably won't. Nonetheless, there is a line that can be drawn. The late Republican strategist Lee Atwater, who orchestrated George H. W. Bush's 1988 election as president, had a simple rule: Is it a fact? If so, it is fair game and can be used. Clearly, it is not a perfect rule, and it is one with which some may not be comfortable. But it's a workable one that allows for the maximum use of information. Does the Atwater rule mean any negative fact can be used against your opponent? That is a matter of judgment, requiring you to balance the relevance of the fact for the campaign and the likely downside or collateral damage. Something may be factually true and in the public record and still backfire.

So mud is a part of campaigns—whether Atwater's rule is followed or not. Though it may be best left unsaid in polite company or in a room full of naïve campaign reformers who want us to follow the advice of the "better angels" in us, mudslinging is a part of the fun of campaigns. It's done because, if it is done well, it works. That's why almost every campaign today tries to employ some kind of rapid-response team. Anderson's chronicle in Chapter 6 about his time on the 1992 Clinton presidential campaign research staff provides a wonderful example. During that campaign, Anderson worked in the Arkansas Record section of the research department. As noted earlier, this part of the campaign was responsible for knowing not only Governor Clinton's government record in Little Rock but also the skeletons in his closet.

Bottom line: It's not about how you play the game—winning really is the only thing.

Lesson 10: Being Prepared to Lose Is Easier Than Being Prepared to Win

This lesson isn't directly addressed in the chronicles you're about to read, but all involved in campaigns in any capacity, especially candidates, need to learn it. The basic lesson here is that despite the emotional turmoil losing can inflict on candidates and their supporters, it is always easier than winning, at least for a candidate running for office for the first time. "No, winning is what counts. It hurts more to lose," you may counter. But think about it. Losing, for first-time candidates, leaves them in no worse position than they were before. They're still who they were before the election began. Yes, there's a letdown, even an anxiousness as they go through the adrenaline withdrawal that comes with the end of the campaign. But most get over it and go back to being professors, accountants, nurses, husbands, mothers, or whatever they were before the campaign began. In short, their lives go back to normal. And they learn a lot along the way, lessons that can be applied in their next campaign.

Now look at winning. Sure, winning is great. It's exhilarating. There's a big election night party and victory speeches. Supporters cheer and cry tears of joy. Candidates hug and are hugged by everyone in sight and are told this win is the start of a great future in politics. But the next day, maybe even late on election night, the hangover kicks in—and that hangover is called governing. At some point shortly after their victory, exuberant candidates are hit and hit hard with a new reality. They now have to govern, and governing and campaigning aren't the same things (despite contemporary politicians trying to make them seem so). Many victorious candidates end up feeling like Robert Redford's character in the classic campaign movie *The Candidate*. His character was recruited to run for a US Senate seat because he was young, idealistic, and photogenic. His handlers felt they could manage and direct him. He wasn't supposed to win. But then his campaign catches on, and he beats the incumbent senator. At the end of the movie, Redford's character is seen sitting in a hotel room with a loud and happy crowd of supporters around him. Over the crowd's noise, he yells out to his campaign manager: "Marvin . . . What do we do now?"

As the movie's ending suggests, it's harder to be prepared for winning. Whether they are willing to admit it or not, candidates elected for the first time to office are generally ignorant about the position they have just won and are not really prepared to govern. Why? Part of the answer is that first-time candidates for any office don't really know the institution to which they have just been elected. Every elected office, be it the executive, legislative, or judicial branch, has its own culture, its own rhythm, its own rituals that need to be learned and internalized in order to be effective. Ideally, "newbies" should learn these things beforehand. But campaigns aren't conducted to learn about the office for which candidates are running. They're organized to win. Any learning about governing

is likely to come after winning. The best that can be expected from those newly elected to an office is that they come to their position with a willingness to learn and, hopefully, some parallel experiences that facilitate learning.

A certain degree of ignorance about governing might explain why so many first-time candidates are willing to take the plunge and actually run. They simply don't know what they're in for if they win. It may also help explain, in part, why an officeholder who has left a particular office rarely seeks to run for it again at some later time. Admittedly, a professional politician never wants to look back. Progressive ambition points toward the next bigger and better prize, not that which has already been won. It's the politician's version of "been there, done that." But amateur or citizen politicians also seldom go back to an office they have left. Why? Having served in an office and left it, they know the perils of governing from it. For them, firsthand knowledge of the office may keep them from actually being prepared to win.

Finally, Daniels's story in Chapter 3 provides a related yet sobering message about governing. He explains that the mayor the Community Advocates help to defeat initially won his office and then ran unopposed in his first reelection campaign because of a superior, long-term political strategy. Despite his campaign successes, the mayor proved to be utterly incapable of governing. The mayor's shortcomings were substantial enough to more than cancel out the benefits of his political strategy and eventually led to his stunning defeat at the polls in his second reelection race. This is a reminder that campaigns are indeed about winning elections and not about governing. Success with one does not guarantee success with the other.

Bottom line: "Marvin . . . What do *we do now?"*

Marvin, the campaign manager, never answered this question for the candidate and then senator-elect. However, we can give you an answer as to what we want you to do now: Read, learn, and try to have some fun along the way. Look for and learn the lessons we have noted here, but also look for other lessons as well—lessons the authors of the chronicles suggest and lessons you find on your own.

PART 1
Planning and Strategy