

**Moving from Red to Blue:
The 2008 New Mexico Presidential, Senate, and First Congressional District Races**

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As one of only a handful of battleground states in the 2008 presidential election, New Mexico naturally saw presidential politics take center stage. Nevertheless, the state’s electoral season effectively began on October 4, 2007, when six-term Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) announced his retirement after 36 years in the United States Senate. The retirement of “Saint Pete” initiated an earthquake in New Mexico politics. All three of the state’s sitting U.S. House members ran for Senator Domenici’s seat, not only opening their congressional seats to new blood, but also the seats of the local and state officials looking to move into the U.S. House, and so on down the ticket—a statewide avalanche of progressive ambition.¹

In a typical election year, the political, social, and economic heterogeneity of New Mexico, coupled with the presence of quality candidates in the presidential and congressional races, would have likely resulted in competitive elections. But 2008 proved quite different. For the first time in the history of New Mexico, the Democrats swept the state’s federal contests. And perhaps most surprising turned normally competitive elections into landslides. This chapter examines how and why the Democrats were able to win so handily in New Mexico. We review three of the state’s five federal races: the Senate race between Representatives Tom Udall and Steve Pearce; the First Congressional District race between City Councilman Martin Heinrich

¹ See Paul R. Abramson, John H. Aldrich, and David W. Rohde, “Progressive Ambition Among United States Senators, 1972–1988,” *Journal of Politics* 49 (1987): 3–35; Cherie Maestas, “The Incentive to Listen: Progressive Ambition, Resources, and Opinion Monitoring among State Legislators,” *Journal of Politics* 65 (2003): 439–56; David W. Rohde, “Risk-Bearing and Progressive Ambition: The Case of Members of the United States House of Representatives,” *American Journal of Political Science* 23 (1979): 1–26.

and Sheriff Darren White; and New Mexico's part in the presidential race between Senators Barack Obama and John McCain.

The New Mexico Backdrop

Besides its role as a presidential battleground, New Mexico is important for other reasons. Historically it is a bellwether state, swinging back and forth with the nation's winning party.² Additionally, New Mexico's congressional delegation had long been split between members of both parties. Heading into the 2008 election cycle, the delegation was comprised of one GOP and one Democratic senator and one Democratic and two GOP House members. By contrast, there is a predominance of Democrats in the state legislature, a strong Democratic hold on down-ballot statewide offices, and a majority of registered Democratic voters. New Mexico's 2008 registration numbers show that 50 percent of voters identified themselves as Democrats, 31 percent as Republicans, and 15 percent declined to state to their party.³ Thus, New Mexico represents a state torn between its generally conservative ideology and a tradition of Democratic dominance at the state level.

New Mexico is also interesting because of its colonization history that reaches not to the United Kingdom, but to Spain. As a result, Hispanics have always been a rich and important part of the socio-cultural and political fabric of New Mexico. As such New Mexico is a majority-minority state with about equal percentages (43 percent) of Hispanics and whites, and a politically important minority of Native Americans (10 percent). Of the Hispanic voters,

² There have been exceptions: In the very close election of 1976, New Mexico failed to predict Jimmy Carter's win, and in 2000 vice president Al Gore received 300 more votes than did his competitor, George W. Bush.

³ New Mexico Secretary of State, "New Mexico Voter Registration Statistics by District," <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/pdf/CONG1103.pdf> (accessed January 15, 2009).

approximately 66 percent are registered Democratic.⁴ This is consistent with national trends that suggest that Hispanics tend to affiliate with the Democratic Party. However, unlike the Hispanic populations of other states, which comprise many first-generation immigrant families, the Hispanic population of New Mexico, in the words of one political activist, is well established and “pretty anomalous”—“not the same kind of booming immigrant-driven population” that might be easier to target with ads.⁵

Given the state’s importance in past presidential and congressional elections, New Mexico was identified early in 2007 as an electoral battleground. This status, along with the fact that all of the other federal races in the state were open contests, resulted in an aggressive campaign by the candidates, parties, and interest groups. New Mexicans were subject to intense mobilization efforts, many television ads, endless personal and telephone contacts, mail pieces, robo-calls, and candidate visits. In fact, spending in New Mexico for the 2008 general election was the highest in the state’s history, with media market experts claiming that spending from the presidential race was well over \$8 million just in the Albuquerque metro area; spending statewide for all races may have topped \$30 million.⁶ In the end, the state turned a deep blue, with the Democrats sweeping all the races in the state with surprisingly comfortable margins.

The Senate Race

The candidates vying to succeed Pete Domenici were Representatives Heather Wilson (R-NM 1), Steve Pearce (R-NM 2), and an initially reluctant Tom Udall (D-NM 3).

⁴ This is based upon an examination of the voter file using Hispanic surnames to identify Hispanic voters by Lonna Atkeson. See David L. Word and R. Colby Perkins Jr., *Building a Spanish Surname List for the 1990s—A New Approach to an Old Problem* (Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 1996), <http://www.census.gov/genealogy/www/spanname.html> (accessed June 2, 2009).

⁵ Mike Podhorzer, AFL-CIO deputy political director, interview by David Magleby, January 23, 2009.

⁶ Frank Montoya, general sales manager, KRQE-TV (Albuquerque), personal discussion with Lisa A. Bryant, December 12, 2008.

Republican Primary

Representative Heather Wilson announced her candidacy first, on October 4, 2007, the day after Senator Domenici announced his retirement. First elected by special election in 1998, she served New Mexico's First Congressional District for ten years, in which she had one of the most moderate voting records in the House. Her moderate voting record reflects the ideological heterogeneity and predominantly Democratic nature of the district she represented. With the First District's status as one of the most competitive in the nation, Wilson consistently faced tough reelection battles.⁷ Since 2000 she averaged a winning margin of only 6 percentage points, significantly lower than the 40-point incumbent national average over the same time period.⁸

Pearce announced his candidacy for Senator Domenici's seat on October 16, 2007. He served New Mexico's Second Congressional District for six years, establishing a voting record more conservative than 78 percent of the House.⁹ His conservatism is no surprise given the rural make-up of the Second District. It covers the southern part of the state and is ideologically

⁷ See Lonna Rae Atkeson and Nancy Carrillo, "De Ja Vu 2002: The New Mexico 1st Congressional District," in *Dancing Without Partners: How Candidates, Parties and Interest Groups Interact in the New Campaign Environment*, ed. David B. Magleby and J. Quin Monson (Provo, UT: Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2005); Lonna Rae Atkeson, Nancy Carrillo, and Margaret C. Toulouse, "The New Mexico 1st and 2nd Congressional District," in *The Last Hurrah? Soft Money and Issue Advocacy in the 2002 Congressional Elections*, ed. David B. Magleby and J. Quin Monson (Provo, UT: Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2003).

⁸ The 2006 First District election was one of the closest in the nation and one of the last to be resolved. Representative Wilson defeated state attorney general Patricia Madrid by only 861 votes. Lonna Rae Atkeson and Lorraine Tafoya, "Close but Not Close Enough: Democrats Lose Again by the Slimmest Margin in New Mexico's First Congressional District," in *The Battle for Congress: Iraq, Scandals, and Campaign Finance in the 2006 Election*, ed. David B. Magleby and Kelly D. Patterson (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2007).

⁹ Based on composite vote ratings from 2002 to 2008 by the *National Journal*. The composite ratings can be found either directly through *National Journal* (www.nationaljournal.com) or can be calculated from legislators' foreign, domestic and economic ratings as noted in the *Almanac of American Politics*.

conservative but with a Democratic heritage.¹⁰ Until the 2008 contest, when Democrat Harry Teague won the seat, Republicans had held the district for 28 consecutive years (and 30 of the 40 years since it was created in 1968). Its conservative nature is due to its rural character with many oil and gas interests as well as agriculture, ranching, and mining. The Second District gave majorities to George Bush in 2000 (54 percent-43 percent) and 2004 (58 percent-41 percent), but swung to Obama in 2008 (52 percent-47 percent). Pearce won by an average of 17 percentage points over his career. Even in his first race (in 2002) Pearce competed well—especially for a newcomer—beating his conservative Democratic opponent by 12 points (56 percent to 44 percent).¹¹

Although Wilson was better known than Pearce, a Survey USA poll in October 2007 showed Pearce having a net favorability rating of -1 versus Wilson's -14.¹² Her four consecutive campaigns between 1998 and 2006 were heated, aggressive, and expensive, making her well known, but not too well liked. Pearce, on the other hand, with quiet and relatively easy wins throughout his tenure, was neither known nor well liked. He was unfamiliar to a plurality (33 percent) of state voters, and was equally favorable (21 percent) and unfavorable (22 percent) to those who knew him.

Pearce's additional advantage was that he could credibly tout himself as more conservative than Wilson. Political observers have long found that primaries reward more extreme candidates.¹³ Naturally, the candidates' voting records were the centerpieces of the 2008

¹⁰ Fully half (50 percent) of Second District voters are registered Democrats and only about one-third (32 percent) are registered Republican; see New Mexico Secretary of State, "New Mexico Voter Registration Statistics by District," <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/pdf/CONG1103.pdf> (accessed January 15, 2009).

¹¹ See Atkeson, Carrillo, and Toulouse, "New Mexico 1st and 2nd Congressional District."

¹² "Results of SurveyUSA Election Poll #12737,"

<http://www.surveyusa.com/client/PollReport.aspx?g=0c284bce-cac2-4c56-88c23f35c6b617bf> (accessed January 21, 2009).

¹³ David W. Brady, Hahrie Han, and Jeremy C. Pope, "Primary Elections and Candidate Ideology: Out of

Republican primary as both candidates sought to paint the other as outside New Mexico's mainstream. Wilson repeatedly called her opponent too conservative and thus "unelectable," while she was the "commonsense conservative who can win in November." She called Pearce "wrong" on "important issues" such as funding for border security and protecting New Mexico military bases and federal labs. Pearce, on the other hand, used his TV ads to call Wilson too "liberal" for New Mexico, with her "liberal values" and "liberal votes" on hot-button issues such as stem cell research, taxes, and immigration. The divisive nature of the campaign is reflected in the final vote margin. In the end, Pearce defeated Wilson 51 percent to 49 percent, with both candidates spending over \$2 million.

In retrospect, Brian Wolff of the DCCC said that Pearce's victory in the primary helped the Democrats. Wolff opined that during the general election Democratic candidate Tom Udall "had it really easy" with Pearce as his opponent: by comparison, "Heather Wilson would have been a lot harder to muddy. . . . He would have a much harder time beating her up."¹⁴

The Democratic Candidate

Tom Udall entered the Senate race later than his GOP counterparts. According to campaign manager Amanda Cooper, his initial desire was to continue representing the Third Congressional District.¹⁵ A grassroots "Draft Udall" movement as well as subsequent pressure from the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) and Governor Bill Richardson

Step with the Primary Electorate?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32 (2007): 79–105; Barbara Norrander, "Ideological Representativeness of Presidential Primary Voters," *American Journal of Political Science* 33 (1989): 570–87; Nelson Polsby and Aaron Wildavsky, *Presidential Elections: Strategies and Structures of American Politics* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004); Walter J. Stone and Ronald B. Rapoport, "Candidate Perception Among Nomination Activists: A New Look at the Moderation Hypothesis," *The Journal of Politics* 56 (1994): 1034–52.

¹⁴ Brian Wolff, DCCC executive director, interview by David Magleby, December 2, 2008.

¹⁵ Amanda Cooper, Udall for Senate campaign manager, personal communication with Lonna Atkeson, November 18, 2008.

ultimately changed his mind. On November 9, 2007, he threw his hat into the ring as a candidate and, at about the same time, other Democratic hopefuls, especially Mayor Martin Chavez of Albuquerque who had aggressively started his campaign, backed out, leaving the field clear for an easy nomination. Mayor Chavez indicated his withdrawal was due to internal polling that showed Udall had a very strong advantage in the both the primary and general election.¹⁶

Representative Udall's congressional district (CD 3) covers most of the northern part of the state. It contains most of New Mexico's historic Spanish-speaking and Indian areas, as well as the state's capital, Santa Fe. Udall's voting record reflected the solidly Democratic and generally liberal leanings of the district. According to the *National Journal*, Udall voted more conservative than only 17 percent of the House, placing him in the top 20 percent of the most liberal members of Congress.¹⁷ Over the course of his House career, he won by an average of 46 percentage points over his nearest challengers and he ran unopposed in 2002.

Udall had one tremendous asset from the get-go: his family's good name and long political history in the west. Called the "Kennedys of the West," the Udall family has provided more than a dozen politicians, including federal officers, through six generations in five Western states—mostly Democratic conservationists. And Udall had built his own political resume. Between 1978 and 1981 he was assistant United States attorney for the District of New Mexico. His first two tries for elected office ended in defeats. In 1982 he ran for Congress in the newly created Third District, losing to Bill Richardson in the Democratic primary. In 1989 Udall narrowly lost a race for the First District seat to District Attorney Steven Schiff. His fortunes

¹⁶ Jeff Jones, "Chavez Gives Up Senate Bid: Mayor Says He'll Back Udall Nomination," *Albuquerque Journal*, December 8, 2007, A1.

¹⁷ Based on composite vote ratings from 1998 to 2008 by *National Journal*. Again, the composite ratings can be found either directly through *National Journal* (www.nationaljournal.com) or can be calculated from legislators' foreign, domestic, and economic ratings as noted in the *Almanac of American Politics*.

changed in 1991 when he was elected state attorney general, and again in 1998, when he defeated first-term Republican incumbent Bill Redmond for New Mexico's Third District seat.

According to a February Rasmussen Reports three-in-five (59 percent) responded favorably and not quite one-third (31 percent) responded unfavorably and just under one-in-ten (9 percent) respondents were unsure about Udall. These relatively strong numbers came despite any real campaigning by Udall for the Senate seat. (His first TV ad was not released for another three months.) Thus, Udall entered the race in a much stronger position with New Mexico's public than either of his potential competitors.

So, while Pearce and Wilson were engaged in an expensive and negative primary battle, their eventual opponent ran unopposed on the Democratic side. This meant Udall could stay above the in-party fighting that was visibly damaging both GOP opponents and begin his own campaign without distraction. He aired his first general election ad on May 21, during the primary season, as a means to define himself to the state electorate.¹⁸ A 60-second biographical sketch called "What's Right," the ad highlighted his New Mexico heritage and his public service to the state as an appointed and elected official. By emphasizing his background in law enforcement, the early ads drew attention away from his liberal congressional voting record.

Meanwhile, liberal environmental groups watched the race eagerly. In February, Mark Longabaugh of the Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund predicted, "New Mexico is going to be huge [for environmental groups]. We have two enemies in the environment [Wilson and Pearce], and you have a huge champion [Udall]. . . . The defenders are going to play there big."¹⁹

The General Election: Money, Parties, and Strategy

¹⁸ Cooper, personal communication.

¹⁹ Mark Longabaugh, Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund political director, interview by David Magleby, February 12, 2008.

The final reports to the Federal Elections Commission show Udall outspending Pearce by nearly \$3 million, \$7,841,887 to \$4,626,706 (see table 9-1). Three-fourths of both campaigns' fundraising came from individual contributions, where Udall out-raised Pearce \$5,539,268 to \$3,224,350. Prior to his House seat, Pearce had spent years in the oil and gas service industry, and his contributions reflect that background. Udall collected more than Pearce from lawyers, lobbyists and labor; Pearce collected more from the energy and natural resources sector.

Party Support

Both candidates received negligible support from their respective party committees. This became a much publicized issue for the Pearce campaign in early September. As Politico.com reported on September 4, and the *Santa Fe New Mexican* on September 6, the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) canceled a \$2.3 million television ad buy for Pearce.²⁰ This proved to be a public relations blow to the campaign just as Pearce began making his September climb in the polls. As committee funding is often a good measure of a party's chances, the NRSC's move appeared to some as a signal they were giving up on the Pearce campaign. While NRSC chairman Senator John Ensign (R-NY) called the cancellation a "readjustment" and reassured voters that New Mexico remained a "top priority" for them, Udall spokesperson Marissa Padilla was naturally pleased by the move stating that "it's great that the NRSC recognizes that people in New Mexico are ready for Tom Udall to become our next senator."²¹ Later, Scott Bensing of the NRSC admitted that Pearce "just wasn't able to put

²⁰ Reid Wilson, "NRSC Cancels Ads in New Mexico," *Politico*, <http://www.politico.com/blogs/scorecard/0908/>

NRSC_Cancels_Ads_In_New_Mexico (accessed December 19, 2008); S. Terrell, "GOP Group Pulls Pearce TV Ads," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 6, 2008, A1.

²¹ Steve Terrell, "GOP Group Pulls Pearce TV Ads," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 6, 2008, A1.

together the kind of money needed” after he “had such a difficult primary in June and came out of that broke. . . . The race never got close enough for us to invest in.”²²

At the state level, both parties sent more unique mailers than did their respective candidates as shown in table 9-3, which was collected from the New Mexico Reconnaissance Network. Throughout the state, the Democratic Party of New Mexico’s (DPNM) coordinated campaign was largely funded by Udall.²³ The coordinated campaign cost about \$1.7 million dollars, which was \$1 million dollars more than they spent in 2006, and largely focused on infrequent voters—those who voted in 2004, but not in 2006.²⁴

The DPNM sent out approximately 24 unique mailers, which generally consisted of three types: (1) negative ads portraying Pearce as best friends with big oil, “wealthy CEOs,” and President Bush; (2) get-out-the-vote ads encouraging early voting; and (3) piggyback ads supporting Udall and expressing Udall’s support for the local Democratic congressional candidate. Clearly, these were attempts by the DPNM to capitalize on Udall’s popularity; he consistently outperformed each of the Democratic congressional candidates and the Democratic presidential party nominee in polls leading up to Election Day. Even Obama’s campaign adopted the strategy of citing Udall’s support of Obama.

The Republican Party of New Mexico (GOPNM), on the other hand, limited their involvement to a large number of “Vote Republican” mailers but, incredibly, none specifically mentioned Pearce or any other candidate. All 27 mailings identified in table 9-8 encouraged voting early or on Election Day; their themes ranged from national security and the economy to

²² Scott Bensing, NRSC executive director, interview by David Magleby, November 11, 2008.

²³ Josh Geise, Democratic Party of New Mexico executive director, personal communication with Lonna Atkeson, November 15, 2008.

²⁴ Ibid.

conservative values—especially views against abortion and gay marriage, but none of them supported Pearce or directly attacked Udall.

Much of the campaigns' spending went to television ads. Pearce released fifteen unique ads during the general election, nine of which were positive, two of which were negative, and seven of which combined both negative and positive messages (see table 9-3). His total media buy amounted to \$1,418,738, as shown in table 9-2. Udall released thirteen unique ads, seven of which were positive, three of which were negative, and an additional three which were both positive and negative. His total Albuquerque media ad buy, at \$1,786,103, was about \$370,000 more than Pearce's. In the aggregate, party and interest group television advertising was at near parity in this race. The Republican Party and interest groups purchased \$322,880 in advertising for Pearce compared to allied interest groups' spending \$313,150 for Udall.

After the Republican primary in early June, Udall immediately went on the air with three new positive ads. In contrast, due to his lag in fundraising and to the nomination fight that left him "broke,"²⁵ Pearce's campaign did not start their general election ad game on television until the beginning of August. Perhaps the most notable ads from the Pearce campaign came in the form of five 15-second messages released in early September. Each ad ended with the same question: "How did you vote, Tom?" These ads usually came at least two to a commercial break and were meant to help set the policy agenda for voters, raising questions about Udall's record across multiple issues quickly and at a lower cost.²⁶

Unfortunately for Pearce, the economic crisis in late September sapped whatever momentum he gained in late summer and early fall. His poll numbers in September, on average,

²⁵ Bensing, interview.

²⁶ "Bailout Has Steve & Tom in Lip Lock, but Wannabe Congressmen Play it Low-Key; Plus: U.S. Attorney Scandal Explodes Anew; Indictments: And Job for Bill," New Mexico Politics with Joe Monahan blog, <http://joemonahansnewmexico.blogspot.com> (accessed January 12, 2009).

showed him 12 points down, and in one instance only 7 points behind Udall.²⁷ On average, October polls showed Pearce trailing by 17 percentage points.²⁸ Udall's increased advantage had little to do with the candidates' positions on the bailout, as both Pearce and Udall voted against the House measure. Pearce was the first to release an ad following the bailout. Titled "Risky," it characterizes Udall's economic plan as "higher taxes on families," which would "send our economy into a tailspin" and "shatter dreams." Udall then released a negative ad entitled "Two Views," which compared his voting record to that of Pearce. Among other things, the ad states that Udall wants to "get rid of George Bush's failed economic policies" while Pearce "supports George Bush's economic policies" and "wants more tax breaks for the wealthy and special interests like big oil."

Pearce and Udall also strategically targeted New Mexico's heavily Democratic Hispanic population. According to Amanda Cooper, Udall's campaign manager, Spanish-language ads should focus on specific subgroup populations within the Hispanic community for special message targeting. Because of the narrow targeting, these groups are best reached with radio as opposed to Spanish language TV advertising. Using Spanish radio may make the most sense as the message itself can be tailored to reach the Hispanic consumer in the most culturally relevant way and it allows the advertiser to reach a carefully targeted audience at low cost.²⁹ The

²⁷ "New Mexico Senate: Udall's Lead Continues to Fall," Rasmussen Reports, September 10, 2008, http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/election_20082/2008_senate_elections/new_mexico/new_mexico_senate_udall_s_lead_continues_to_fall (accessed May 1, 2009).

²⁸ "New Mexico Senate: Udall Opens 20 Point Lead," Rasmussen Reports, June 23, 2008, http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/election_20082/2008_senate_elections/new_mexico/new_mexico_senate_udall_opens_20_point_lead (accessed January 15, 2009).

²⁹ "Tuned in and Turned On: A Special Report on the Spanish Language Radio Industry," *Hispanic Market Weekly*, November 3, 2008, <http://www.hispanicmarketweekly.com/article.cms?id=10278> (accessed March 12, 2009).

campaign also did extensive English and Navajo ads on the local radio. The campaign did only one ad on Spanish TV and it was subtitled, not dubbed.³⁰

Pearce released two TV ads in Spanish, one on October 14 and one on October 17. Both were positive ads. The first touted Pearce's commitment to improving the economy, lowering gas prices, and making health insurance accessible to everyone. The second emphasized Pearce's New Mexican roots, military service, and conservative ideals. In both cases, Pearce approved the message in his own voice, speaking in Spanish.

Organizationally the Udall campaign had the resources to run an extensive statewide campaign. They had eleven offices, including one in Roswell, which is a heavily Republican area. They also ran TV commercials outside the Albuquerque media market in both Amarillo and El Paso, Texas, which border New Mexico. These ads focused on local and constituency service issues.³¹

Interest Group Electioneering

Interest groups were involved for both sides. Five organizations, mostly 501(c)(4)s, engaged in independent expenditure campaigns against Udall. Their ads painted Udall as anti-nuclear, anti-energy independence, and as an extreme environmentalist. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce ran a \$283,779 TV ad in Albuquerque and El Paso that attacked Udall for his congressional votes against expanding domestic energy exploration and refinery capacity.³² The

³⁰ "And the Winners Are..." *National Journal*, <http://adspotlight.nationaljournal.com/2008/11/best-ads.php#more> (accessed January 15, 2009); Chris Cillizza, "The Best Senate Ads," *Washington Post*, http://voices.washingtonpost.com/thefix/2008/11/the_best_senate_ads.html (accessed January 15, 2009). Titled "Humble," the ad featured a thank-you message from a disabled veteran; its English-language version was named one of the year's best ads by the *National Journal* and *Washington Post*.

³¹ Cooper, personal communication.

³² This total is based upon ad buy data collected directly from Albuquerque stations and does not include additional resources used to purchase time in El Paso.

Chamber also produced a pro-Pearce mail piece that focused on health care and Pearce's positions on health care legislation.

Club for Growth, an anti-tax group, endorsed Pearce over Wilson during the primary campaign, spending approximately \$11,500, and continued their support for Pearce into the general election. Strictly anti-Udall, their \$157,205 general election ad discussed offshore oil drilling, private property and eminent domain, and the "death tax." Another conservative, "free market" group,³³ American Future Fund, did a very small ad buy (\$1,332) on cable, lasting about seven days in late August and focusing on gas prices.

Two additional independent anti-Udall expenditures were radio ads that focused on energy issues. The American Energy Alliance produced a single ad that ran across the states from late July to September 1, costing \$108,420. Finally, Freedom's Watch spent \$10,960 on a small buy, lasting about fourteen days in early and mid-August.

A few groups engaged in campaigning on behalf of Pearce. For example, the National Pro-Life Alliance sent out a letter to its supporters detailing Pearce's pro-life record and attacking Udall's record on abortion, and they aired a television ad attacking Udall and Obama for their stance on abortion. Although, the Susan B. Anthony List focused most of its mail campaign on attacking Obama, they did send out one mailer attacking both Obama and Udall, and encouraged people to "Vote for a team that values Life." Finally, the NRA sent a pro-Pearce and anti-Obama message on Election Day, printing their ad on the plastic wrapper that covers the *Albuquerque Journal*.

³³ See American Future Fund, "About the American Future Fund," <http://americanfuturefund.com/aboutaff/> (accessed January 15, 2009).

On the Democratic side, progressive interest groups are organized within the America Votes Coalition with the goal of increasing the registration and turnout of progressive voters.³⁴ A part of New Mexico politics since 2004, America Votes has grown under the leadership of executive director Jennifer Ford. America Votes provides a shared voter file to partners who coordinate activities so that mobilization efforts are not duplicated and so that voters receive the contact from the group most likely to persuade and mobilize the voter.³⁵

Martin Frost of America Votes spoke of the coordination strategy: “We did something very interesting: Post-convention we started directing a lot of contributions from some of our donors into individual states. We decided to completely fund four small states [including New Mexico] first.”³⁶ Several members of America Votes engaged in television and mail campaigns on behalf of Udall. The Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund, mentioned earlier, became the lead environmental group working against Pearce and for Udall.³⁷ According to FEC records, Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund spent just over \$280,000 in independent expenditures against Pearce during the general election.³⁸ In order to not duplicate efforts, their participation in the race was coordinated with the League of Conservation Voters, who played a relatively minor role in the Udall race, producing only two mailers—one that supported Udall and Obama, and another attacking McCain and Pearce.³⁹ The Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund produced two television ads during the primary campaign attacking both Pearce and Wilson as “two bad for

³⁴ See America Votes, “About,” <http://www.americavotes.org/site/content/about/> (accessed January 15, 2009).

³⁵ Jennifer Ford, America Votes executive director, personal communication with Lonna Atkeson, December 18, 2009.

³⁶ Martin Frost, America Votes president, interview by David Magleby, November 11, 2008.

³⁷ Longabaugh, interview; Ed Yoon, e NM/CO Campaign Manager, Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund, telephone interview by Lonna Atkeson, January 28, 2009.

³⁸ See Center for Responsive Politics, “Independent Expenditures: 2008 Race New Mexico Senate,” <http://www.opensecrets.org/races/index.php?cycle=2008&id=NMS2> (accessed May 17, 2009).

³⁹ Ed Yoon, executive director of New Mexico Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund, personal communication with Lonna Atkeson, January 29, 2009.

New Mexico”, a 30-second ad in June following the Primary that called Pearce “wrong for New Mexico” as well as another 30-second ad in July questioning Pearce’s commitment to clean energy, and finally a 60-second ad in September that attacked Pearce for questionable practices regarding the sale of his oil company. According to Ed Yoon, NM/CO Campaign Manager for the Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund, about half of the over \$600,000 they spent in the Senate race was against both Steve Pearce and Heather Wilson, mostly in ads but also including a voter contact program that knocked on over 50,000 doors for the Senate race alone. Yoon noted that “While Udall was popular, we wanted to make sure that whoever came out of the GOP primary – Pearce or Wilson – would be heavily damaged with swing and independent voters. At the end of the day, our strategy was to help Udall maintain a strong, steady and early lead going into the general election against a bruised opponent.”⁴⁰

The Patriot Majority West (PMW) PAC produced a TV ad attacking Pearce that was released in late July. In this ad, PMW criticized Pearce and Bush for opposing “American-made renewable energy” and for giving “oil companies billions in special tax breaks.” The American Society of Anesthesiologists supported Udall with a \$75,000 independent expenditure, some of which went to their radio ad buy. Their message focused primarily on Udall’s support for health care reform and improved access to health coverage.

In the end, Udall’s many advantages figured into a 61 percent-to-39 percent victory over Pearce. It is worth noting that Udall outperformed Democratic presidential nominee Obama by 4 points in New Mexico (61 percent to 57 percent), while Pearce underperformed GOP presidential nominee McCain by 3 points (42 percent to 39 percent). Since Udall outperformed Obama, and McCain outperformed Pearce, it is safe to assume that some voters split their ticket, casting their vote for Udall on the one hand and McCain on the other.

⁴⁰ Yoon, personal communication.

The Presidential Race

The General Election: Money, Interest Groups, and Strategy

With presidential elections hinging on the outcomes of only a few competitive states, New Mexico's five electoral votes have been an important strategic consideration over the last several federal elections. The New Mexico 2008 presidential campaign began on March 28, 2008, when the presumptive GOP nominee John McCain aired his first ad in the state. It was a positive ad that depicted McCain as a brave man willing to continue and win the war in Iraq. In the summer, however, high gas prices, hovering somewhere around \$4.00 per gallon in New Mexico, prompted John McCain's campaign to advertise his support for domestic oil drilling and blame Obama and the Democrats for high fuel costs.

Obama began his general election ad campaign in New Mexico much later than McCain, running his first television ad in New Mexico and other competitive states on June 20, 2008. He also visited New Mexico in June. Throughout the campaign Obama ran 45 different television ads, compared to McCain's 36. Obama began with an ad that talked about his work ethic and strong "American" values, his single mother, taking care of others and his love of country. Obama appeared in the ad sans tie, in soft lighting, as a real down-to-earth fellow—clearly in contrast to the power-tie-wearing politician in McCain's ads, backed with patriotic music and themes of strength.

Throughout the summer, Obama's ads continued to carry positive messages of hope and the American Dream; but as McCain began to run attack ads, primarily based on the economy, taxes, and high energy costs, Obama's campaign responded with negative ads of their own. For example, after vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin started referring to herself and McCain as "mavericks," Obama's ads portrayed McCain's voting record as highly supportive of George W.

Bush's policies and the Republican Party in general. With Bush's support being extremely low, even among Republicans,⁴¹ these ties between McCain and Bush most likely hurt the campaign.

By the end of the general election cycle, Obama had spent over \$3.3 million dollars in New Mexico media, outspending McCain by almost a half-million dollars. Although Obama ran his own campaign, McCain had assistance from the GOPNM and the RNC. Combined, the party entities spent \$408,000 in support of McCain. An example of this spending is the large number of unique mail pieces sent by Republican Party committees to support McCain. The GOP sent 77 unique mailers, compared to 71 by Democratic Party committees on behalf of Obama (see table 9-4).

One area where McCain exceeded Obama in media spending in New Mexico was in interest group support. Interest groups spent approximately \$1.1 million dollars in New Mexico on TV and radio advertisements supporting McCain, while Democratic supporters spent only about \$915,000. Freedom's Watch alone spent \$889,000 on TV ads for McCain. There were, however, a wider array of groups supporting Obama, and these groups were more active in sending mail on Obama's behalf than were the groups supporting McCain.

Obama's campaign clearly excelled in mobilization efforts in one area the McCain campaign didn't even touch: reaching out to young, educated voters through email and text messages. Using cell numbers provided on BarackObama.com, the campaign sent messages almost daily throughout the summer, recruiting people to volunteer, notifying voters of rallies, giving updates on poll numbers and, of course, soliciting donations. On Election Day, the Obama campaign sent hourly updates about hours left to vote, encouraging supporters to take a friend to the polls, and providing election results as the polls closed across the country. In this arena

⁴¹ Jeffrey Jones, "Bush Approval Rating Down to 60 percent Among Republicans," *Gallup Poll*, May 8, 2008, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/107128/Bush-Approval-RatingDown-60-Among-Republicans.aspx> (accessed March 31, 2009).

McCain's campaign was non-existent, clearly a sign of a divide between the traditional tactics of the Republican Party and the new campaign style of the Democratic Party.

Both Obama and McCain were hoping to do well among New Mexico's Hispanics. Some in the state suggested that racial tensions between Hispanics and blacks might push some Hispanic voters away from Obama. This possibility received an enormous amount of media attention after Bernalillo GOP County Chair Fernando C de Baca told a reporter, "The truth is that Hispanics came here as conquerors. African Americans came here as slaves. Hispanics consider themselves above blacks. They won't vote for a black president."⁴² Ultimately, C de Baca resigned for his remarks.

Because many Hispanics in New Mexico are Catholic and pro-life, abortion can be an important issue for Democratic candidates. For example, in 2004 in many predominantly Hispanic and Democratic precincts there appeared a relatively large under-vote for the presidential contest; that is, voters submitted ballots without indicating their choice for either George Bush or John Kerry. National election observers attributed the under-vote to vote technology problems in minority precincts, but local folks attributed the high under-voting to the many Catholic priests in these communities who actively came out against Kerry, also a Catholic, for his pro-choice position.

One group that was quite active in bringing the pro-life issue to the forefront in New Mexico was the Susan B. Anthony Foundation. They focused their message on registered Republicans through mailings and telephone calls, but ran some advertisements through the

⁴² See Jon Kelly, "Latin Class," *BBC News*, September 19, 2008, http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/talkingamerica/2008/09/the_sound_of_ranchera_and.html (accessed March 10, 2009). The audio of a follow-up interview can be found at <http://stream.publicbroadcasting.net/production/mp3/ksfr/localksfr-763883.mp3> (accessed March 10, 2009).

media as well.⁴³ With messages more anti-Obama than pro-McCain,⁴⁴ the National Right to Life PAC, Priests for Life, Born Alive Truth, and the National Pro-Life Alliance ran television ads, radio ads, and made robo-calls in New Mexico, as well. One unknown group, handed out prayer cards at mass in central new Mexico just before Election Day with a picture of “Our Lady of Guadalupe” behind John McCain and on the other side a prayer for John McCain in both English and Spanish. And, during early voting, a truck with a large poster hanging from it that said, “Obama Healthcare” featured an aborted fetus and the words “your taxes at work.” By comparison, traditional issue interest groups made a very limited effort in New Mexico. The National Rifle Association, for example, ran only two radio advertisements, sent out one mailer, and made one phone call during the general election.

It was against this backdrop that Obama made efforts to reach out to the local Hispanic community and visited several key Hispanic communities, including Las Cruces in Doña Ana County, which is 65 percent Hispanic.⁴⁵ (See table 9-7 for an overview of candidate visits to the state.) Interestingly, McCain also made visits to Doña Ana County. In 2004, Bush campaigned heavily here, narrowing substantially the gap between the Democratic and Republican vote. Some of the 2004 vote had to come from rural and more ideologically conservative Hispanics, and McCain’s visits were no doubt trying to tap into that community.

Allied groups assisted McCain in this mobilization effort through independent expenditure campaigns. One group called McCain Hispanic Support spent over \$126,480 on Spanish-language radio ads in mostly the top two rated Spanish language radio stations in

⁴³ One mass mailing by the Susan B. Anthony Foundation sought to increase support for McCain by indicating that because of Democrats, teenagers do not need to receive parental permission to get an abortion. The ad showed a tattooed teenager with the message that teens have to have parental permission to get tattoos, but not abortions.

⁴⁴ About 40 percent of pro-life communications had an anti-Obama message.

⁴⁵ Obama also visited Las Vegas in San Miguel County (77 percent Hispanic) and Española in Rio Arriba County (72 percent Hispanic).

Albuquerque (as listed in table 9-5)—the highest amount of money spent on radio by any group supporting McCain, and even more than the campaign itself spent on radio. An interest group called Mexicans and Americans Thinking Together (MATT.org) also supported McCain on television, spending \$20,000 on Spanish language ads targeting Mexican Americans. McCain also ran several commercials on Spanish television. Many focused on trade agreements with Mexico and South America, “creating jobs for our neighbors down South,” and attacking Obama’s stance on immigration reform.

Obama, on the other hand, ran very few radio ads and only two Spanish-language TV commercials in New Mexico, primarily emphasizing how McCain was out of touch with what “hard-working” Americans were going through in the tough economic times. In terms of media spending and mobilizing through advertising, McCain was much more organized when it came to reaching Hispanics in New Mexico. However, Obama’s ground game may ultimately have been more productive. Brian Wolff of the DCCC commented on the result of the “Hispanic leaders [who] got out there in a big way” and the “Hispanic surrogates” used by the Obama campaign (and by the DCCC in the First District) to contact voters: “About four weeks from the election, you saw that the Hispanic community really just [stood] lockstep with Barak Obama. . . . they just came out in huge numbers.”⁴⁶

Organizationally, both McCain and Obama were very active in the state. McCain had at least ten offices throughout New Mexico, a new record for the GOP, but Obama managed to have 38—many more than Kerry had in 2004.⁴⁷ These offices allowed Obama’s campaign access to supporters and the ability to enlist large numbers of paid and volunteer workers in voter registration and voter mobilization drives. Indeed, the two main vehicles in the state for voter

⁴⁶ Wolff, interview.

⁴⁷ Matthew Reichbach, “Mapping the NM Vote,” *The New Mexico Independent*, November 10, 2008, <http://newmexicoindependent.com/9382/mapping-the-vote> (accessed March 10, 2009).

registration were likely the American Community Organization for Reform Now (ACORN) and the Obama for Change campaign. According to DPNM executive director Josh Geise, the party was not active in voter registration.⁴⁸

This was unlike 2004, when the state saw tremendous voter registration drives by progressive groups, the parties, and the candidates. The gains at that time in voter registration numbers were huge, with the state voter roll surging by 17 percent, or an additional 163,000 voters.⁴⁹ In 2008 this process continued; however, the overall gains were much smaller. The statewide gain was only 7 percent, or about 78,000 new voters (see table 9-9).

These new voters were largely in areas where Democratic registration was generally high. If we look at changes over time, we find that 2008 was a bad year for the GOP, with a 1 percent decrease in overall statewide party registration. Democrats managed to maintain their status of having 50 percent of identifiers statewide. An increase in independents suggests one reason why New Mexico continues to oscillate between red and blue and hints that continued voter volatility will be the norm in New Mexico.

Beyond registering voters, Obama's organization was strong in mobilizing them. The Obama for Change campaign invested heavily in the statewide voter file, scoring each voter's probability of voting for Obama. This information allowed Obama to create a persuasive message, focusing on turnout of infrequent voters and new registrants. His strategy was "community or neighborhood based, more than constituency based," according to DPNM executive director Josh Geise.⁵⁰ This fit well with his Obama's background in community

⁴⁸ Geise, personal communication.

⁴⁹ See Lonna Rae Atkeson, Nancy Carrillo, and Mekoce Walker, "New Mexico Presidential Race 2004: The Battle for Five Electoral Votes," in *Dancing Without Partners: How Candidates, Parites, and Interest Groups Interact in the Presidential Campaign*, ed. David B. Magleby, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).

⁵⁰ Geise, personal communication.

organizing and, in conjunction with large numbers of field offices and paid and unpaid workers, was very effective.

The DPNM also worked hard on identifying potential voters and getting out the vote statewide. Overall, the party spent \$1.7 million on GOTV efforts, focusing on infrequent voters. Their canvass began in early spring and was very productive at identifying targets and beginning the push for absentee voting and, later, early voting.⁵¹ The party coordinated expenditures funded thousands of robo-calls from Democratic leaders such as Governor Richardson and former President Bill Clinton, and supported 10 phone banks in Albuquerque, which made tens of thousands of personal phone contacts. Following the national strategy as developed by DNC Chairman Howard Dean, DPNM provided a voter file, Catalist, to candidates for a fee, which was then used to finance party activities. This provided a powerful tool to contact voters and provided needed information to state and local candidates about voters.

Interest groups also played an important role in the mobilization campaign, although on the Democratic side these groups focused more heavily on other ballot contests, given the large resources available to the Obama for Change campaign. Left-leaning interest groups, organized within the America Votes Coalition, followed a general plan of reaching voters in persuadable precincts and getting these voters to either return their absentee ballots or vote early. According to their own database, America Votes partners made a minimum of over 3 million voter contacts. These included 896,078 door knocks, 1,025,215 phone calls and 1,380,227 mail pieces.

One initial problem America Votes and its partners had was that the Obama campaign was steering wealthy Democratic voters away from Section 527 groups. By early summer, Fund for America money had dried up.⁵² Late in the summer, Obama gave donors the cue to make

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Yoon, interview.

donations to 527s, allowing them to take the lead—especially with negative messages.⁵³ America Votes members used a variety of messages to mobilize voters to vote early. These included “we’ll stop bugging you,” “avoid the lines,” and “convenient, safe, and effective.”

Among the groups most active in campaigning for Obama were the unions. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Service Employees Union (SEIU COPE), and the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) were all vocal in their attacks on the Republicans and support for Obama. They primarily focused their attacks on the loss of American jobs, the poor state of the national economy, and the Republicans’ lack of response. Additional attack ads on issues such as health care, the environment and energy, and the war in Iraq came from groups such as the Campaign to Defend America and Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund. The Campaign to Defend America ads referred to McCain as “McSame” as Bush and promising a third Bush term if McCain were elected. Through advertisements and mailings with these messages, the Democrat allies put out negative attack ads without the Democratic candidate himself having to seem too nasty.

GOP allied groups were also engaged in largely negative campaigns. Among these, the group Freedom’s Watch stretched their ad dollars by running several ads with both the Democratic presidential candidate and the state’s Democratic congressional candidates side by side, showing how their positions on issues such as higher taxes would hurt America. In New Mexico, the candidate most often paired with Obama was Martin Heinrich, running for New Mexico’s First Congressional District. Most of the attack ads were focused on corruption and corrupt politicians. Obama, for example, was linked with the Tony Rezko scandal.

Both parties have increasingly relied on mobilizing voters to vote early over absentee or on Election Day. Both early voting modes theoretically allow candidates, parties and interest

⁵³ Ibid.

groups the ability to track voter activity by collecting this data from the County Clerks. Early voting provides the best vehicle because the vote history gets captured immediately. Absentee voting, of course, relies on the postal service and as such creates a time delay for monitoring voter activities. In our own statewide poll, we found that these GOTV efforts really paid off, especially for Obama and the Democrats (see table 9-8). Democratic identifiers indicated they were more likely to be encouraged to vote absentee and early than Independents or Republicans. And, when we consider all voting modes, the Democrats were overall more likely to be encouraged to vote than either Independents or Republicans. This success is also visible in the volume of voters voting early in the state, which was the modal voting mode for the first time, and increased dramatically over 2004. Over two-in-five (42 percent) of voters chose to vote early, just over one-in-five (21 percent) of voters chose to vote absentee and just under two in five (38 percent) of voters chose to vote on Election Day.

In 2004, the Democratic presidential strategy was to mobilize Democratic voters in urban areas. In 2004 this strategy did not work because, although the Democratic candidate won the urban areas of the state, the GOP was able to make up those gains in the rural parts of the state. In 2008, however, this same strategy was successful because urban voters overwhelmingly supported Obama and rural voters underwhelmingly supported McCain, compared to their 2004 support for Kerry and Bush.⁵⁴ For example, the difference in vote totals in Bernalillo between the Democratic and Republican candidate in 2004 was 10,798 votes, but it was 61,035 in 2008. In Santa Fe, the increase was about 11,000 votes, from 28,608 in 2004 to 39,760 in 2008; and in Doña Ana the difference went from a very close 2,214 votes in 2004 to a substantial 12,214 vote difference in 2008.

⁵⁴ Howard Berkes, "McCain Holds Lead with Rural Voters: Is It Enough?" National Public Radio, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=94893207>, (accessed June 5, 2009).

Even in Republican strongholds the vote difference was much smaller than before. For example, in Republican San Juan County a vote difference of 14,682 favoring Bush was seen in 2004, but this difference was only 9,841 in 2008. In Los Alamos, where non-major party registration makes up 22 percent of voters, there was a reversal from a small GOP lead in 2004 (694 votes) to a small Democratic lead in 2008 (760 votes). Especially in the largest areas of the state, changes in electoral outcomes—likely due to independent voters—led to a big Obama victory and McCain defeat.

First Congressional District Race

New Mexico's First District was created in 1968, splitting the single district that had represented New Mexico for 56 years. Located in the center of the state, the First District is home to New Mexico's most populated county, Bernalillo, and city, Albuquerque. It is an ethnically diverse district, almost evenly divided between white and Hispanic populations (48.6 percent and 42.6 percent, respectively).⁵⁵ Its registration numbers in 2008 were 48 percent Democratic, 33 percent Republican, and 16 percent declined to state.

Mostly urban and suburban, it is home to thousands of moderate and independent voters who cross party lines, in the words of reporter Mark Barabak, as “casually as they commute across the winding river.”⁵⁶ Despite party registration numbers that favor Democrats, the district typically sent fiscally conservative, defense-oriented, moderate Republicans to Congress. Representative Heather Wilson, introduced earlier, was one of those Republicans.

When Wilson opted to run for the Senate instead of the House in 2008, Democrats in the First District believed they could break the Republican streak. First, national conditions were in the Democrats' favor. Second, House Democrats (through the DCCC) had a huge financial

⁵⁵ Michael Barone and Richard E. Cohen, *The Almanac of American Politics, 2008* (Washington, DC: National Journal Group, 2008).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

advantage over House Republicans (see chapters 2 and 3). Third, the number of First District voters registered as Democrats was climbing. Consistent with the national trends reported by the Center for Democracy and Election Management,⁵⁷ Democrats' registration advantage in Bernalillo County—representing about 90 percent of First District voters—increased to 60,288 voters in 2008, compared to 39,621 in 2004.⁵⁸

The Candidates

After Representative Wilson declined running as an incumbent, the First District race featured two quality candidates: Democrat Martin Heinrich, a former Albuquerque city council president, and Republican Darren White, Bernalillo County sheriff. The contest was quickly dubbed a “race to watch” and “hot seat” by, among others, *Time* magazine, *Congressional Quarterly Politics* and *National Journal*.⁵⁹ In September, Brian Walsh of the NRCC predicted a fight:

Darren White is a great candidate. . . . They're going to try to pin him with the Bush stuff, but . . . he's well positioned to kind of run as that outsider candidate. . . . Martin Heinrich is a liberal environmentalist who's never held a real job, and they're going to ping him for it, and it's just going to be a battle.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Democratic registration increased nationwide by approximately 2,916,000, or 1.4 percent, while Republican registration declined by 1,458,000.

⁵⁸ The change was propelled by a 25,548 increase in Democratic registration between 2004 and 2008, compared to only a 4,881 increase for Republicans. See New Mexico Secretary of State, “New Mexico Voter Registration Statistics by District,” <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/pdf/CONG1103.pdf> (accessed January 15, 2009); see also Atkeson, Carrillo, and Walker, “New Mexico Presidential Race 2004.

⁵⁹ Randy James, “Races to Watch '08: New Mexico Republican Can't Shake Bush,” *Time*, http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1849130_1849126_1852091,00.html (accessed January 22, 2009); David Wasserman, “Races to Watch,” *National Journal*, July 25, 2008; Marie Horrigan, “Albuquerque House Race Stands Out in New Mexico's Open Season,” *CQ Politics*, February 17, 2008, <http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=news-000002672888> (accessed January 22, 2009).

⁶⁰ Brian Walsh, NRCC political director, interview by David Magleby, September 23, 2008.

Heinrich would have disputed Walsh's characterization. He had spent five years as head of a nonprofit foundation that sponsors educational wilderness expeditions for youth. He also ran a one-man public affairs consulting firm and worked with environmental groups such as the Sierra Club and the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. Heinrich's work on the environment—including his efforts in establishing the federal Ojito Wilderness just outside Albuquerque—earned him the position of New Mexico's Natural Resources Trustee in 2006. Appointed by Governor Bill Richardson, he stepped down from the position in 2007 when he decided to run for the congressional seat.

Only five days after Wilson said she would run for Domenici's seat, two-term Bernalillo County Sheriff Darren White announced his intent to succeed Wilson. His announcement emphasized his integrity and his record of independence from the Republican Party—a clear sign he was sensitive to the Democratic leanings of the district and was positioning himself as a moderate.⁶¹ Long seen as a rising GOP star, White is a U.S. Army veteran, former Albuquerque police officer, and one-time secretary of New Mexico's Department of Public Safety under Governor Gary Johnson. Being a sheriff was certainly a plus: White had no voting record for opponents to attack. "Sheriffs are great finds when you can find them," admitted one liberal political advisor.⁶² But White had a major vulnerability: In 2004, White served as county chairman of President George W. Bush's reelection effort. Not surprisingly, this alliance with the unpopular president became a central target for the Heinrich campaign and interest groups during the general election.

Neither party's primary was particularly interesting or hostile, even if somewhat competitive. White, however, appeared to be in the stronger position at the start of the general

⁶¹ Jeff Jones, "White Seeking House Seat: Sheriff Stresses Independence," *Albuquerque Journal*, October 11, 2007, A1.

⁶² Longabaugh, interview.

election campaign. White's name identification registered higher than Heinrich's because as the Sheriff of Bernalillo County he represented 90 percent of the district's voters. A July 24 Public Opinion Strategies (POS) poll showed White's name recognition at 78 percent versus Heinrich's 65 percent.⁶³ Heinrich was at that point still mostly a regional candidate with higher name ID in the area of town he represented in the city council. Second, early polls showed White ahead of Heinrich, even with the unfavorable political climate for Republicans. The POS poll showed White holding a 47 percent-to-41 percent lead despite not having run a single TV ad.⁶⁴ Third, White had almost twice as much cash on hand following the primary than did Heinrich. As of June 30, White had \$634,307.16 while Heinrich had only \$354,165.01. Coming out of the primary, then, White appeared well positioned to maintain the Republicans' dominance of New Mexico's First Congressional District.

The General Election: Money, Parties, and Strategy

Together, the two candidates spent roughly \$4.3 million on the congressional race, according to reports by the Federal Elections Commission (FEC). In comparison to the hotly contested 2006 race between incumbent Heather Wilson and Democratic challenger Patricia Madrid—in which Wilson and Madrid combined spent nearly \$8 million in roughly equal proportions—the amount of money spent by First District candidates in 2008 dropped by nearly half.⁶⁵ Martin Heinrich, however, amassed a huge resource advantage, outspending his opponent Darren White by over \$600,000 in the election cycle; during the general election alone, Heinrich spent \$1.8 million to White's \$1.2 million.

⁶³ See Public Opinion Strategies, "New Mexico CD-01 Survey Key Findings," <http://www.haussamen.com/WhitePoll.pdf> (accessed January 19, 2009).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ See Atkeson and Tafoya, "Not Close Enough."

Table 9-1 provides an initial breakdown of each candidate's sources of funding. Both candidates received roughly 70 percent of their contributions from individual donors (\$1,837,601 for Heinrich and \$1,223,871 for White). A little over 65 percent of individual contributions to Heinrich came from within Albuquerque, 23 percent was from the Santa Fe area, and the remaining 12 percent of contributions coming from outside the state. White's individual donors were much more local, with nearly 90 percent of their contributions coming from within Albuquerque, 4 percent from Santa Fe, and 6 percent from out of state.⁶⁶

Nearly all of the remaining contributions Heinrich and White received were from political action committees (PACs) as shown in table 9-1, making up 25 percent of Heinrich's contributions and 22 percent of White's. PAC contributions to Martin Heinrich's campaign were nearly evenly split between labor (at 37 percent) and ideological (41 percent) PACs, with the remaining 21 percent from business. In contrast, business PACs made up nearly 68 percent of PAC contributions to Darren White, with nearly all the remaining contributions to White's campaign coming from ideological PACs.⁶⁷ In collecting donations, Heinrich benefited from ActBlue, a pro-Democratic, Internet-based PAC, which helped facilitate donations to the candidate's campaign totaling \$403,495.⁶⁸

Where we see the greatest difference between the two campaigns is in the level of independent expenditures. Over \$3 million dollars were spent in the First District in independent expenditures, with over half of this money coming from the DCCC and most of the remaining

⁶⁶ Center for Responsive Politics, "Geography Data: 2008 Race New Mexico District 01," <http://www.opensecrets.org/races/geog.php?cycle=2008&id=NM01> (accessed January 19, 2009). These percentages are based on what is available on this site, and do not directly correspond to the figure of total individual contributions available in table 9-1.

⁶⁷ Center for Responsive Politics, "Business/Labor/Ideology Split in PAC Contributions: 2008 Race New Mexico District 01," <http://www.opensecrets.org/races/pacs.php?cycle=2008&id=NM01> (accessed May 17, 2009).

⁶⁸ See ActBlue, "Home Page," <http://www.actblue.com/> (accessed March 31, 2009).

activity coming from Democratic allies. In total, \$2,583,522 was spent in support of Heinrich (or against White). These figures are \$2 million greater than the \$555,302 spent by Republican allies in support of White or against Heinrich. The Republican Campaign Committee of New Mexico (RCCNM), a PAC of GOPNM, was responsible for \$465,000 of this expenditure, while the NRCC, hampered by a national lack of resources, spent just \$83,000 in support of the White campaign (a paltry 4 percent of what the DCCC spent on Heinrich).⁶⁹ Most of the RCCNM's expenditures were used to oppose Martin Heinrich through TV ads and mailers. They only spent \$704 in party coordinated expenditures on behalf of White.⁷⁰ By contrast, the DPNM spent \$10,364 on party coordinated expenditures for Heinrich and nothing on independent expenditures.

The other major groups that made independent expenditures in support of Heinrich included the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (\$500,000); Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund (\$305,632 in support of Heinrich or against White); National Wildlife Action (\$29,963 in support of Heinrich); and the Service Employees International Union (\$4,365 in support of Heinrich). Besides the state Republican Party and NRCC, the only other group to make independent expenditures in support of White was National Right to Life, who spent \$7,302 supporting White.⁷¹

Lack of support for White became a much publicized issue during the campaign. Similar to Pearce's experience with the NRSC, the NRCC pulled their funding from the First District race, leading voters to believe that the Republican Party had lost faith in White's ability to win

⁶⁹ None of our data indicated a funding source of RCCNM.

⁷⁰ Federal Election Commission, "Committees and Candidates Supported/Opposed: Republican Campaign Committee of New Mexico," http://query.nictusa.com/cgi-bin/com_supopp/C00020818 (accessed January 20, 2009).

⁷¹ Started in 2004, ActBlue provides an online, ready-made fundraising infrastructure to all Democratic candidates. See ActBlue, "Home Page," <http://www.actblue.com/> (accessed March 31, 2009).

the election. Indeed, the news of the NRCC's cancelled ads came at an unfortunate time for the White campaign—October 9, less than one week after an *Albuquerque Journal* poll showed White pulling to within 2 points of Heinrich.⁷² This statistical dead heat was the closest White had gotten to Heinrich since the July 24 POS poll showed him up 2 points on Heinrich. The NRCC pullout appeared to sap whatever momentum the White campaign had created. One month later Heinrich's lead had extended to 4 points.⁷³

As in the Senate race, money raised in the First Congressional District race went to two sources: television ads and mailers. The on-air competition between Martin Heinrich and Darren White did not start until the beginning of September and quickly turned negative. From September to Election Day, 24 unique television ads featured this contest,⁷⁴ and only two were exclusively positive. As can be seen in table 9-11, over \$4 million dollars were spent in the First District's air game. Although the Heinrich and White campaigns both spent about the same amount of their campaign's money on television advertising (a little over \$1 million for each campaign), White spent a much larger proportion of his (smaller) war chest on TV ads to make up for the lack of independent expenditure ads in his behalf. Nearly 60 percent of White's expenditures went towards the air game compared to a little over 40 percent of Heinrich's expenditures, leaving Heinrich more funds for other activities.

The major air game advantage for Heinrich came from heavy spending by the DCCC and Democratic allies, who combined spent an additional \$2 million on television ads, making three-

⁷² Colleen Heild, "Race For District 1 Seat Tight—Heinrich, White Nearly Even; 16 Percent Are Undecided," *Albuquerque Journal*, October 7, 2008, A1.

⁷³ Colleen Heild and Dan Boyd, "Heinrich Edging Out White—Teague, Lujan Also Out Front," *Albuquerque Journal*, November 2, 2008, B1.

⁷⁴ Table 9-10 suggests there were 28 different ads produced in this race. Two of the Heinrich campaign ads accounted for in the table were from the primary. The one positive ad from the White campaign was initially run as a joint expenditure between the NRCC and his campaign, but was then aired again as wholly paid for by the White campaign. This ad is accounted for 3 times in the table.

quarters of all ads in this race either for Heinrich or against White. Clearly, White and his allies were massively outspent on television, and the NRCC's canceled ad buys created a huge campaign deficit for White and a huge advantage for Heinrich.⁷⁵

A number of PACs also aired ads through their independent expenditure campaign that either supported Martin Heinrich or attacked Darren White (see listing in table 9-11). The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AMSCME) aired an ad at the end of October linking White to Bush, and attacking White for supporting free trade deals that would hurt New Mexico. The Patriot Majority West PAC aired an advertisement in late September attacking White's support for the war in Iraq. Finally, an ad by the Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund presented a positive message about Heinrich without attacking Bush or White. In this ad, aired in late October, Heinrich is portrayed as a courageous leader who will work "to break our dependence on foreign oil" and will invest "in clean energy like wind and solar, creating thousands of jobs here in New Mexico."

A few groups aired ads in support of White, although all of these ads were negative ads attacking Heinrich. The Republican Party of New Mexico (GOPNM) spent \$100,400 on a single ad that ran in mid-October, attacking Heinrich for calling General Petraeus a traitor and for promising "to block funding for body armor, bullets, and other critical equipment for our combat troops unless they're pulled from Iraq." Freedom's Watch spent \$1,036,710 (see table 9-11)—more than White's campaign spent on TV ads—and ran three negative ads attacking Heinrich's ethics and his support for higher taxes. They also ran ads on the Web.

The direct mail campaign contained many of the same messages present in the air game, but with added emphasis on getting out the vote. Although there were some interest group

⁷⁵ Heath Haussamen, "GOP: \$700,000 in TV Time Reserved for Homestretch in 1st CD Race," *The New Mexico Independent*, August 27, 2008, <http://newmexicoindependent.com/253/gop-700000-in-tvtime-reserved-for-homestretch-in-1st-cd-race> (accessed January 19, 2009).

mailers in the First District race (see table 9-10), the two parties had the most aggressive mail campaigns. Democratic party committees (DPNM and DCCC) sent 52 unique mailers, compared to Heinrich's campaign, which sent 10. Republican party committees sent 54 unique mail pieces, most of them funded by the NRCC. White's campaign sent 9.

The Democratic Party of New Mexico produced three mailers and one piece of campaign literature specific to Heinrich's campaign. The remaining pieces of mail produced by DPNM, as seen in table 9-10, were more general get-out-the-vote (GOTV) materials, such as postcards and fliers encouraging support for Obama, Udall, and Heinrich; door knockers; and campaign literature in support of the entire Democratic ticket. Of the three mailers produced by DPNM, two were very similar in style. The front side featured a positive message from Heinrich, suggesting, in one mailer, that he will "fight" for "economic policies that help Main Street, not just Wall Street . . . a safe and responsible end to the war in Iraq [and] an energy policy that makes us energy independent." On the flip side, the DPNM linked White to Bush and Bush policies.⁷⁶

The DCCC had a very active presence in the direct mail campaign, producing thirteen pieces specific to the First Congressional District race, including two different fundraising letters. All eleven of the DCCC's direct mail persuasion pieces were attacks on White, with messages such as "Darren White sold us George W. Bush's economic policies." Five mailers attacked White's record as sheriff, calling him "inexperienced, immature, a glory hound" and asserting that "The New Mexico State Police Association voted 'No Confidence' on Darren White."

⁷⁶ The other piece of direct mail was a strictly positive message highlighting Heinrich's support for energy independence.

Several of New Mexico's progressive groups within the America Votes coalition were very active for Heinrich. One effort that stands out was direct mail by the 56-union conglomerate American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), whose interest in the 2008 election was partly due to the pending Employee Free Choice Act (or "card check," explained in chapter 3). Nine of their fourteen direct mail pieces in the district were specifically related to this race. Of the nine direct mail pieces, five were positive messages in support of Heinrich's positions on health care, jobs, middle class tax relief, retirement benefits, and improving the economy. The remaining four direct mailers matched Heinrich and White on their support for policies related to employment, health care, and the hot-button "card check" for unions. The remaining materials were election guides supporting the entire Democratic ticket, GOTV fliers, and black-and-white fliers that were handed out in person by activists.

GOPNM produced eighteen pieces of direct mail specific to the First District race, along with another 28 pieces of general GOTV mailers that did not advocate support for any specific Republican candidates. Eleven of the eighteen mailers were exclusively negative attacks on Heinrich's ethics and his support for higher taxes. Four focused on local concerns, such as Heinrich's opposition to road projects on Albuquerque's Westside and his support for a trolley in his own "trendy neighborhood." The remaining attack mailers were similar to the TV ads produced by the White campaign, suggesting that "weasel" Heinrich "co-founded an organization with a radical felon," "lobbied illegally," and "ran an illegal business for three years." Two additional mailers contrasted White with Heinrich, while five positive mailers focused on White's leadership qualities and an increase in DWI arrests while White was sheriff.

In addition to participating in the air game, Freedom's Watch also was active in the ground game, producing seven unique direct mail pieces attacking Martin Heinrich. Among

other objections, Freedom's Watch criticized Heinrich's opposition to requiring voter identification, suggesting Heinrich is "leaving the door open for illegal immigrants to vote in our elections." The only other major player in the direct mail campaign for White (with three pieces of mail) was the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—interested, like the AFL-CIO in "card check" legislation, but on the other side.

Ground mobilization efforts by America Votes members, especially the Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) was also particularly important in the First Congressional District race as the general election campaign heated up. Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund targeted persuadable voters and precincts as defined by the voter file.⁷⁷ They spent about 200,000 on the First Congressional District race. Although usually their strategy is to beat up the candidate they do not like, in this case that was made more difficult because White was such a strong credentialed candidate. Therefore, canvassers emphasized a positive message for Heinrich that he was young, energetic and different and part of the change needed in Washington. Working in conjunction with SEIU, 40 to 50 paid canvassers knocked on about 180,000 doors over the general election with about 35,000 of those in the last 72 hours.

In the end, Martin Heinrich defeated Darren White by 12 points, 56 percent to 44 percent. It was a remarkable result, considering an October 30 *Albuquerque Journal* poll showed him up by only 4 points. While Heinrich certainly benefited from an edge in spending and favorable political climate, he was also undoubtedly helped by the extraordinary mobilization efforts of the Obama campaign and the work of America Votes, who played a particularly strong role in the First Congressional District.

⁷⁷ Yoon, interview.

DCCC executive director Brian Wolff reflected, “The sheriff was a good candidate on the Republican side, but I tell you what, with Obama winning the Albuquerque area in that district by fourteen, it was really going to be hard with that type of tailwind for any Republican to catch up to Martin Heinrich.”⁷⁸ Wolff praised the Congressional Hispanic Caucus who, along with the Congressional Black Caucus, “really made a difference in [House] races in helping to keep off those drop-off votes,” when voters begin voting for top-ticket candidates but don’t finish the ballot. Given that New Mexico allows voters a straight party option, with such a strong Democratic ticket statewide, this choice may have been an easy one for many voters.

Conclusion

The federal elections in New Mexico in 2008 were intense with potentially competitive races in all quarters. GOTV efforts on both sides of the isle were active, but Democrats and their allies had both more energy and financial resources to mobilize Democratic voters in numbers unprecedented for non-incumbent candidates.

In 2008 the Democratic Party, Obama, and progressive groups helped to change the flavor of elections and representation in New Mexico. For the first time since 2000 there were no close races and the Democrats took the state handily. Their largest win was in the U.S. Senate contest, where Udall beat Pearce 61 percent to 39 percent, followed by the presidential contest, with Obama beating McCain 57 percent to 42 percent. Not among our sample races, the Third Congressional District, where a third party candidate was in the race, saw another Democratic victory, by 57 percent to 42 percent. The First and Second Congressional Districts were last, with 56 percent of voters supporting Democrats and 44 percent, Republicans. All very comfortable margins for open seat races, three of which had previously been held by the GOP. The result was that New Mexico’s election outcomes helped increase the overall Democratic numbers in both

⁷⁸ Wolff, interview.

the House and the Senate. However, given the large number of independents and crossover voters, New Mexico is likely to continue to be an important and competitive federal election state in future contests.

Table 9-1
Candidate Receipts and Expenditures, New Mexico Congressional Races, 2007–08

	Tom Udall (D)	Steve Pearce (R)	Martin Heinrich (D)	Darren White (R)
From PACs	\$1,270,798	\$676,725	\$633,286	\$404,117
From individuals	\$5,539,268	\$3,224,350	\$1,837,601	\$1,223,871
From candidate	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	\$0
Other contributions	\$637,618	\$706,236	\$42,872	\$170,903
Total receipts	\$7,447,684	\$4,632,311	\$2,513,759	\$1,798,891
Total expenditures	\$7,841,887	\$4,626,706	\$2,481,040	\$1,778,319
Cash on hand (as of 12/31/08)	\$318,671	\$5,605	\$32,716	
	\$20,571			

Source: Federal Election Commission, “Candidate Summary Reports: 2007–2008 Election,” December 31, 2008, http://query.nictusa.com/cgi-bin/cancomsrs/?_08+S8NM00184 and http://query.nictusa.com/cgi-bin/cancomsrs/?_08+S0NM00041 (accessed May 18, 2009).

Table 9-2
The Air Game: Television and Radio Advertising Expenditures,
New Mexico Senate Race, 2007–08^a

Type and Organization	TV	Radio	Total \$ Spent	CMAG TV
Democratic allies^b				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Tom Udall for Congress	\$1,763,750	\$22,353	\$1,786,103	\$1,680,882
<i>Interest groups</i>				
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund	\$273,655	\$4,110	\$277,765	\$65,530
Environmental Defense Fund	\$35,385	...	\$35,385	...
Center for Civic Policy	...	\$5,400	\$5,400	...
Patriot Majority West	...	...	...	\$205,968
Republican allies^b				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Steve Pearce for Congress	\$1,418,505	\$233	\$1,418,738	\$616,395
<i>Interest groups</i>				
National Association of Realtors	\$214,460	...	\$214,460	...
American Energy Alliance		\$108,420	\$108,420	...
Born Alive Truth	\$11,588	...	\$11,588	...
Freedom's Watch		\$10,960	\$10,960	...
National Pro-Life Alliance	\$2,200	...	\$2,200	...
American Future Fund	\$1,332		\$1,332	...
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	...	...	...	\$143,575
Club for Growth	...	...	...	\$115,475
Nonpartisan				
<i>Interest groups</i>				
American Society of Anesthesiologists	...	\$1,191	\$1,191	...

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2008 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2008); and Campaign Media Analysis Group.

^a Please see appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. The ad-buy data collected for this study may contain extraneous data because of the difficulty in determining the content of the ads. The parties or interest groups that purchased the ad buys possibly ran some ads promoting House, Senatorial, or presidential candidates or ballot propositions not in the study's sample but still within that media market. Unless the participating academics were able to determine the exact content of the ad buy from the limited information given by the station, the data may contain observations that do not pertain to the study's relevant House, Senate, or presidential battleground races. For comparison purposes the CMAG data is included in the table. Because of the sheer volume of television and radio stations and varying degrees of compliance in providing ad-buy information, data on spending by various groups might be incomplete. This data does not include every station in the state. This table is not intended to represent comprehensive organization spending or activity within the sample races. Television ads purchased from national cable stations that aired in this state are not reflected in this table. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table with table 9-3.

^b Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal. In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.

Table 9-3
Number of Unique Campaign Communications by Organizations,
New Mexico Senate Race, 2007–08^a

Type and Organization ^b	Mail	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
Democratic allies						
<i>Candidates</i>						
Udall for Us All	6	...	9	...	13	28
<i>Political parties</i>						
Democratic Party of New Mexico	24	4	8	1	...	37
DSCC	1	...	1	...	...	2
<i>Interest groups</i>						
AFL-CIO	4	1	1	...	...	6
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund	...	...	...	1	3	4
League of Conservation Voters Action Fund	2	...	...	...	...	2
American Federation of Teachers	1	...	...	...	...	1
American Hunters and Shooters Association	1	...	...	...	...	1
Democrats for America's Future	1	...	...	...	...	1
Emily's List	1	...	...	...	...	1
NAACP	1	...	...	...	...	1
Patriot Majority	...	...	...	...	1	1
Rock the Vote	1	...	...	...	...	1
SEIU COPE	1	...	...	...	...	1
Sierra Club	...	...	1	...	...	1
Republican allies						
<i>Candidates</i>						
Steve Pearce for Congress	...	...	3	2	28	33
<i>Political parties</i>						
Republican Party of New Mexico	27	...	6	...	...	33
NRSC	...	...	1	...	...	1
RNC	1	...	...	...	...	1
<i>Interest groups</i>						
National Right to Life PAC	2	...	2	1	...	5
Club for Growth	...	...	...	...	3	3
National Pro-Life Alliance	1	...	...	...	1	2
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	1	...	...	...	1	2
American Energy Alliance	...	...	...	1	...	1
American Future Fund	...	...	...	...	1	1
Freedom's Watch	...	...	...	1	...	1
NRA Political Victory Fund	1	...	...	...	...	1
Susan B. Anthony List	1	...	...	...	...	1
Nonpartisan						
<i>Interest groups</i>						
Common Cause	1	...	...	...	...	1
Native American Voters Alliance	1	...	...	...	...	1
New Mexico Youth Organized	1	...	...	...	...	1
Southwest Organizing Project	1	...	...	...	...	1

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2008 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2008).

^a See appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. Data represent the number of unique or distinct pieces or ads by the group and do not represent a count of total items sent or made. This table is not intended to portray comprehensive organization activity within the sample races. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table together with table 9-2.

^b All state and local chapters or affiliates have been combined with their national affiliate to better render the picture of the organization's activity. For instance, data for Working America, a community affiliate of AFL-CIO, and New Mexico Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO have been included in the AFL-CIO totals.

^c Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal.

In blank cells, "... " only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.

Table 9-4
Number of Unique Campaign Communications by Organizations,
Presidential Race Activity in New Mexico, 2007–08^a

Type and Organization ^b	Mail	Newspaper/ Magazine	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
Democratic allies							
<i>Candidates</i>							
Obama for America	5	...	...	15	8	45	73
<i>Political parties</i>							
Democratic Party of New Mexico	35	...	5	19	2	...	61
DNC	7	...	...	...	...	...	7
DSCC	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
DCCC	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
<i>Interest groups</i>							
AFL-CIO	8	...	1	1	...	...	10
American Federation of Teachers	5	...	...	...	1	...	6
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund	5	...	...	...	...	...	5
American Hunters and Shooters Assn	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
NARAL Pro-Choice America	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
SEIU COPE	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
United Auto Workers	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
VoteVets.org	2	...	...	...	1	...	3
AFSCME	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
Emily's List	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
League of Conservation Voters Action Fund	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
National Nurses Organizing Cmte	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
United Steel Workers	1	1	...	...	...	...	2
Women's Voices, Women Vote Action Fund	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
Council For A Livable World Veterans' Alliance for Security and Democracy	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Defend America	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Democrats for America's Future	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
MoveOn.Org	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
NAACP	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Rock the Vote	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sierra Club	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Republican allies							
<i>Candidates</i>							
McCain for President	4	...	...	12	...	36	52
<i>Political parties</i>							
Republican Party of New Mexico	42	...	...	10	...	...	52
RNC	15	...	...	9	...	1	25
<i>Interest groups</i>							
Susan B. Anthony List	3	...	...	4	...	...	7
National Right to Life PAC	2	...	...	2	1	...	5
NRA Political Victory Fund	1	...	...	1	2	...	4

AIC 2008 RES	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
American Group	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Let Freedom Ring	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
National Poller 2008	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
National Pro-Life Alliance	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Priests for Life	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
National Republican Trust PAC	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Nonpartisan							
<i>Interest groups</i>							
Common Cause	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Native American Voters Alliance	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
New Mexico Youth Organized	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Southwest Organizing Project	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Other							
<i>Candidates</i>							
Barr 2008 Presidential Committee	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
<i>Interest groups</i>							
Libertarian National Committee	1	...	...	...	...	...	1

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2008 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2008).

^a See appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. Data represent the number of unique or distinct pieces or ads by the group and do not represent a count of total items sent or made. This table is not intended to portray comprehensive organization activity within the sample races. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table together with table 9-5.

^b All state and local chapters or affiliates have been combined with their national affiliate to better render the picture of the organization's activity. For instance, Working America, a community affiliate of AFL-CIO, and New Mexico Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO have been included in the AFL-CIO totals.

^c Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal.

In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.

Table 9-5
The Air Game: Television and Radio Advertising Expenditures,
Presidential Race Activity in New Mexico, 2007–08^a

Type and Organization	TV	Radio	Total \$ Spent	CMAG TV
Democratic allies^b				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Obama for America	\$3,224,705	\$152,342	\$3,377,047	\$3,220,214
<i>Interest groups</i>				
AFSCME	\$185,260	\$11,540	\$196,800	\$150,068
SEIU COPE	\$181,690	\$1,961	\$183,651	\$161,521
Power PAC	\$22,300	...	\$22,300	\$79,880
Defend America	\$21,625	...	\$21,625	...
New Democratic Network	...	\$10,325	\$10,325	...
Political 2008	...	\$5,710	\$5,710	...
Vote Vets Action Fund	...	\$2,970	\$2,970	...
Planned Parenthood	\$2,725	...	\$2,725	\$3,322
United Food and Commercial Workers	...	\$1,801	\$1,801	...
MoveOn.org	...	...	...	\$19,024
Republican allies^b				
<i>Candidates</i>				
McCain for President	\$2,846,690	\$1,465	\$2,848,155	\$3,088,367
McCain Hispanic Support	...	\$126,480	\$126,480	...
<i>Political parties</i>				
RNC	\$212,330	...	\$212,330	\$175,333
RNC / McCain	...	\$21,305	\$21,305	...
<i>Interest groups</i>				
Freedom's Watch	\$889,440	...	\$889,440	...
Born Alive Truth	\$75,615	...	\$75,615	\$60,841
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	\$53,360	...	\$53,360	...
Vets for Freedom	\$33,210	...	\$33,210	\$197,724
MATT.org	\$20,105	...	\$20,105	...
NRA Political Victory Fund	...	\$5,340	\$5,340	...
National Pro-Life Alliance	\$4,600	...	\$4,600	\$710
Susan B. Anthony PAC	...	\$3,531	\$3,531	...
Latinos for Reform	...	...	...	\$5,974
Nonpartisan				
<i>Interest groups</i>				
AARP	\$132,550	...	\$132,550	\$213,730
Strong American Schools	...	...	...	\$173,215
ONE Campaign	...	...	...	\$696
Other				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Ron Paul for President	...	\$5,780	\$5,780	...

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2008 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2008); and Campaign Media Analysis Group.

^a Please see appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. The ad-buy data collected for this study may contain extraneous data because of the difficulty in determining the content of the ads. The parties or interest groups that

purchased the ad buys possibly ran some ads promoting House, Senatorial, or presidential candidates or ballot propositions not in the study's sample but still within that media market. Unless the participating academics were able to determine the exact content of the ad buy from the limited information given by the station, the data may contain observations that do not pertain to the study's relevant House, Senate, or presidential battleground races. For comparison purposes the CMAG data is included in the table. Because of the sheer volume of television and radio stations and varying degrees of compliance in providing ad-buy information, data on spending by various groups might be incomplete. This data does not include every station in the state. This table is not intended to represent comprehensive organization spending or activity within the sample races. Television ads purchased from national cable stations that aired in this state are not reflected in this table. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table with table 9-4.

^b Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal. In blank cells, "... " only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.

Table 9-6
Changes in Voter Registration by County, 2000–2008

County	Voter Registration 2000	Voter Registration 2004	Voter Registration 2008	% Change 2000 to 2004	% Change 2004 to 2008
Bernalillo	300794	356536	393061	31	10
Santa Fe	73685	94634	96990	32	2
Doña Ana	78658	94345	108615	38	15
Sandoval	46186	63951	79220	72	24
San Juan	54614	63340	58001	6	-8
Valencia	31719	37398	40538	28	8
McKinley	30759	34934	37837	23	8
Chaves	31637	33520	34447	9	3
Otero	26573	31052	32658	23	5
Lea	10249	11085	12342	20	11
Eddy	27843	27926	27900	0	0
Rio Arriba	21934	24839	25629	17	3
Taos	17809	23080	24365	37	6
Grant	18785	21100	22233	18	5
Curry	19937	21554	22272	12	3
San Miguel	17585	21081	21659	23	3
Cibola	12897	14270	15475	20	8
Lincoln	12609	14100	13768	9	-2
Los Alamos	13111	13633	13194	1	-3
Socorro	26573	31052	32658	23	5
Luna	10249	11085	12342	20	11
Roosevelt	10078	11071	10434	4	6
Torrance	8241	9503	9616	17	1
Colfax	8455	8549	9213	9	8
Sierra	7398	7258	7694	8	10
Quay	6218	6198	6126	-1	-1
Mora	3957	4413	4069	3	-8
Guadalupe	3444	3821	3557	3	-4
Hidalgo	3254	2968	2880	-11	-3
Catron	2635	2766	2914	11	5
Union	2400	2523	2434	1	-4
De Baca	1517	1462	1467	-3	0
Harding	807	785	778	-4	-1
Total	942809	1105373	1183081	17	7

Table 9-7
Candidate Visits to New Mexico, 2000, 2004, and 2008

County	Democratic Ticket 2000	GOP Ticket 2000	Democratic Ticket 2004	GOP Ticket 2004	Democratic Ticket 2008	GOP Ticket 2008	Total Democratic Registration	Total GOP Registration
Bernalillo	7	3	4	4	5	6	188009	127721
Santa Fe	2	0	2	0	1	0	61603	16590
Doña Ana	0	2	2	1	1	2	53647	108747
Sandoval	0	1	0	1	0	0	36968	28006
San Juan	0	0	0	2	0	0	24562	29097
Valencia	0	1	0	1	0	0	20253	13316
McKinley	0	0	1	0	0	0	24345	6390
Chaves	0	1	0	1	0	2	12527	15960
Otero	0	0	0	1	0	0	11579	15057
Lea	0	0	0	1	0	0	55,511	10223
Rio Arriba	0	0	0	0	1	0	20508	2806
San Miguel	0	0	1	0	1	0	15801	2925
Total	9	8	10	12	9	10	525313	376838

Table 9-8
Who Was Encouraged to Vote, by Party Identification,
New Mexico, 2007–08

	Democrats	Independent	Republicans	Total
Encourage Absentee	27	21	22	24
Encourage Early	67	46	43	55
Encourage Election Day	27	32	34	30
Encourage All Voting Modes	77	62	60	68

Table 9-9
New Mexico Statewide Election Statistics 2000, 2004, and 2008

	2000	2004	2008
Registered Voters	973,533	1,105,372	1,185,439
Turnout	615,607	775,301	833,365
Turnout Rate of Registered Voters	63.2 %	70.1%	70.3 %
Absentee	18 %	20 %	20 %
Early	13 %	31 %	42 %
Voting Day	69 %	49 %	38 %
Voting Age Population (VAP)	1,318,425	1,404,259	1,485,995
Turnout Rate of VAP	46.7 %	55.2 %	56.1 %
Voting Eligible Population (VEP)	1,234,088	1,282,767	1,376,025
Turnout Rate of VEP	49.9	60.4	60.6

Table 9-10
Number of Unique Campaign Communications by Organizations,
New Mexico First Congressional District Race, 2007–08^a

Type and Organization ^b	Mail	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
Democratic allies^c						
<i>Candidates</i>						
Martin Heinrich for Congress	1	1	...	...	8	10
<i>Political parties</i>						
Democratic Party of New Mexico	21	4	8	1	...	34
DCCC	13	...	...	...	5	18
<i>Interest groups</i>						
AFL-CIO	14	1	...	...	...	15
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund	4	...	...	1	1	6
National Wildlife Federation Action Fund	4	...	...	...	...	4
AFSCME	...	...	...	...	1	1
American Federation of Teachers	1	...	...	...	...	1
Democrats for America's Future	1	...	...	...	...	1
Emily's List	1	...	...	...	...	1
NAACP	1	...	...	...	...	1
Patriot Majority	...	...	...	...	1	1
SEIU COPE	1	...	...	...	...	1
Sierra Club	...	...	1	...	...	1
Republican allies^c						
<i>Candidates</i>						
Darren White for Congress	1	...	1	...	7	9
<i>Political parties</i>						
Republican Party of New Mexico	46	...	5	...	1	52
NRCC	...	...	...	...	1	1
RNC	1	...	...	...	...	1
<i>Interest groups</i>						
Freedom's Watch	7	...	1	...	3	11
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	3	...	...	2	...	5
National Right to Life PAC	2	...	1	...	...	3
Nonpartisan						
<i>Interest groups</i>						
AARP	1	...	...	...	...	1
Common Cause	1	...	...	...	...	1
Native American Voters Alliance	1	...	...	...	...	1
New Mexico Youth Organized	1	...	...	...	...	1
Southwest Organizing Project	1	...	...	...	...	1

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2008 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2008).

^a See appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. Data represent the number of unique or distinct pieces or ads by the group and do not represent a count of total items sent or made. This table is not intended to portray comprehensive organization activity within the sample races. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table together with table 9-11.

^b All state and local chapters or affiliates have been combined with their national affiliate to better render the picture of the organization's activity. For instance, Working America, a community affiliate of AFL-CIO, and New Mexico Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO have been included in the AFL-CIO totals.

^c Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal.

In blank cells, “...” only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.

Table 9-11
The Air Game: Television and Radio Advertising Expenditures,
New Mexico First Congressional District Race, 2007–08^a

Type and Organization	TV	Radio	Total \$ Spent	CMAG TV
Democratic allies^b				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Martin Heinrich for Congress	\$1,040,960	...	\$1,040,960	\$892,165
<i>Political parties</i>				
DCCC	\$922,695	...	\$922,695	\$704,313
<i>Interest groups</i>				
AFSCME	\$545,685	...	\$545,685	\$130,029
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund	\$273,655	\$9,375	\$283,030	\$35,851
Patriot Majority	\$155,275	...	\$155,275	\$79,173
SEIU COPE	\$57,450	...	\$57,450	...
Environmental Defense Fund	\$21,880	...	\$21,880	...
Center for Civic Policy	...	\$5,400	\$5,400	...
Republican allies^b				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Darren White for Congress	\$1,022,905	\$1,045	\$1,023,950	\$584,767
<i>Political parties</i>				
Republican Party of New Mexico	\$100,400	\$6,790	\$107,190	\$93,914
NRCC	\$32,500	...	\$32,500	...
NRCC / Darren White	...	...	...	\$86,609
<i>Interest groups</i>				
Freedom's Watch	\$1,036,710	...	\$1,036,710	\$275,294
MATT.org	\$56,800	...	\$56,800	...
Club For Growth	\$36,780	...	\$36,780	...
National Association of Realtors	\$21,590	...	\$21,590	...
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	...	\$19,040	\$19,040	...
Associated Builders and Contractors	...	\$8,265	\$8,265	...

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2008 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2008); and Campaign Media Analysis Group.

^aPlease see appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. The ad-buy data collected for this study may contain extraneous data because of the difficulty in determining the content of the ads. The parties or interest groups that purchased the ad buys possibly ran some ads promoting House, Senatorial, or presidential candidates or ballot propositions not in the study's sample but still within that media market. Unless the participating academics were able to determine the exact content of the ad buy from the limited information given by the station, the data may contain observations that do not pertain to the study's relevant House, Senate, or presidential battleground races. For comparison purposes the CMAG data is included in the table. Because of the sheer volume of television and radio stations and varying degrees of compliance in providing ad-buy information, data on spending by various groups might be incomplete. This data does not include every station in the state. This table is not intended to represent comprehensive organization spending or activity within the sample races. Television ads purchased from national cable stations that aired in this state are not reflected in this table. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table with table 9-10.

^bCertain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal. In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.