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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. BRAZILE: Thank you so much for being here. I'm Donna Brazile, and let me tell you delighted I am to moderate this event.

As you know, there are 5 weeks remaining in the 2014 midterm election, and the Primaries Project is a culmination of 9 months of work by two research institutions: Brookings and the Campaign Finance Institute. Together, they have undertaken, I think, one of the most comprehensive looks ever at the primary candidates for both the United States House as well as the United States Senate.

Now, the Brookings team set out to study nearly every single candidate who ran for Congress in the 2014 cycle. That's all 1662 of them, something that has never been done before.

The Campaign Finance Team set out to study where their money came from and which types of groups were playing financially in this year's primaries with special attention, of course, to all the important issues with independent expenditures.

We know primaries are extremely important, but often they are overlooked. Part of our political system, of course. We simply see primary elections or even midterm elections as like the ninth game in the regular season of a football league versus the Super Bowl, but we all know that it's very important.

The hope is that the research you will hear about today will provide insights into the November elections and the governing challenges ahead of us.

Now, before I introduce our distinguished panelists, let me say a word about one primary that was omitted. Of course, it comes from my homestead of Louisiana. Louisiana has what is called a nonpartisan blanket primary. Sometimes it's called an open primary; mostly it's called a free fall.

All the candidates will appear on the same ballot regardless of party

identification on November 4. If nobody gets over fifty percent of the vote, the top two candidates will meet each other in a run-off. It's essentially a primary if everybody was in the same party, but our primaries are a little like rugby. It's crazy, unpredictable, and it seems like the kind of thing you do in another country, not here in America.

One of the people trying to get elected to the United States House of Representatives, I just thought I'd give a shout-out to former Governor Edwin Edwards. Now, Edwin Edwards is an old-school southern Democrat, except if he had been from an actual old school he would've lost his accreditation by now.

As some of you know, Governor Edwards has been married three times, which is one less than the number of times he served as our Governor of Louisiana. Edwin Edwards was in the office for a total of 16 years, that's a long time. I think that's like Hewitt P. Long kind of long time.

Also running on the ballot, just so you don't get bored anytime soon covering Louisiana politics, is Vance McAllister who is better known as the Kissing Congressman. So, we have some delightful things to ensure that you will come and enjoy the delightful four seasons of Louisiana if you're there after November 4. Shrimp, crab, crawfish, and, of course, oysters, and we don't eat up; we drink up.

So, let me introduce the panelists and bring up, of course, to start this conversation Dr. Elaine Kamarck. Elaine Kamarck is a Senior Fellow here at Brookings, and she will describe the findings from her paper that she and a graduate student of Political Science at Georgetown, Mr. Alex Podkul, Georgetown Guhoyas. They did an excellent job on analyzing all of the candidates who ran in this year's primaries.

Then we'll bring up two veterans, award-winning journalists in American politics, Jill Lawrence, reporter, analyst columnist, and an adjunct professor at American University, and Walter Shapiro, political columnist, lecturer of politics at Yale University,

and Walter will soon be off to chasing and running and managing -- no, you're not going to be doing any of those things. Walter will be covering his ninth presidential campaign shortly.

Elaine Kamarck is also the founding director of the Center for Effective Public Management. She's an (inaudible) advocate, and she's also my colleague on the Rose Committee at the Democratic National Committee. Dr. Kamarck, why don't you come on up, and then I'll bring up the other two esteemed guests, and then we'll start our conversation.

DR. KAMARCK: Thank you, Donna. Thank you, everyone, for coming today. I want to give a special thanks to my coauthor, Alex Podkul. Alex, stand. (Applause) Alex ran the elaborate data collection needed to make this study happen. To my loyal research assistants, Ashley Gabriele and Grace Wallack. Stand up, ladies. Come on. (Applause) To the army of interns who worked hard to look at all these websites over the past 9 months.

I'm about to present data -- the highlights really -- from the first ever comprehensive look at the candidates who ran in primaries for the House and Senate in 2014. We conducted this study because, in American politics, the key to understanding government is to understand the factions within the two big political parties.

The place where factions compete for power in modern America are the congressional and presidential primaries. Presidential primaries have frequently been studied, but congressional primaries have been until now the ignored stepchild of the American political system. The scholars on the program today, in this hour and in the next hour, have set out to change that.

Here's what we did. Over a period of 6 months, a team of researchers looked at every single candidate's website and coded them on a wide variety of positions

and issues. As Professor Boatright will show this afternoon, many incumbent Senators and Congressmen face no primary challengers at all. Most of them who do win easily.

Nonetheless, over a thousand brave souls decided to take on incumbents this year, and we collected data on, as Donna said, 662 candidates for the House and Senate, 719 Democrats, 896 Republicans, 47 who ran in the open primary systems.

Not surprisingly, most of these candidates were men, although Democrats had a higher percentage of women candidates than did Republicans. Most of these candidates were married, most had a college degree or more, and there were plenty of lawyers on both sides of the aisle. A slightly number of these candidates were military veterans than in the population as a whole.

Consistent with the popular narrative of this primary season, there were more contested primaries on the Republican side than on the Democratic side. The bulk of our study, however, focused on the internal divisions within each party. In the interest of time, I'm not going to go into a long explanation of how we coded each category, but there is a six-page appendix to the report available in the back and online that describes in detail our coding procedures.

Let me start by looking at the factional breakdown of each party. Among Democrats, the largest faction is progressives or left-wing Democrats, and the smallest faction are moderates and, of course, there are mostly establishment Democrats. As you can see, in 2014 there's very few moderates. This is consistent with what we've seen in the political sector as a whole; a, kind of, sorting out ideologically of the parties.

Among Republicans, the largest faction was the business establishment one followed by conservatives and Tea Party identifiers. There's not too much difference between the latter two except that conservatives do not self-identify with the Tea Party

faction. So, while on a variety of issues they, kind of, look alike, the difference between these two factions is that the ones who call themselves just, 'I'm a conservative Republican,' had no Tea Party identification at all, no endorsements from the Tea Party, etc.

So, that's the factional breakdown within the two parties. How did they do? This next slide shows how they fared in the primaries. On the Democratic side, progressives and establishment Democrats won in about exactly equal percentages, and moderates won slightly more of their races than the other two factions, but, as you remember, there are not many of them.

On the much more interesting Republican side, the business establishment wing outperformed both the Tea Party and the conservatives, a finding consistent with the overall press narrative that it wasn't a great year for Tea Party candidates. On the other hand, remember that -- and I'm going to give a caveat here -- that winning one out of two of your races, isn't it really bad. Part of this was just expectations from the last midterm election.

We now turn to a great graphic which shows that these candidates were talking about during the primaries. This illustrates the issues most frequently mentioned by the candidates for the House of Representatives. The first thing we notice is that this was a primary election about healthcare. In both parties, a large majority of the candidates had positions on healthcare. The new healthcare law was thus the lead.

The second issue for Democrats was climate change. Note that it doesn't even make the top five issues for the Republicans. In fact, among Republicans it barely registers; neither does the minimum wage. So, these are issues Democrats talked about; Republicans did not.

Both parties do, however, talk about taxes. Republicans also talk about

the debt and regulations; two things that barely register among the Democrats.

So, the only other issue -- and I'll spend a little bit more time on it -- that both parties do talk about is immigration. We will talk a little bit about that in a minute.

As Jill Lawrence and Walter Shapiro will elaborate on more in their paper, foreign policy and international issues are totally missing from these primaries even though, as they show in their paper, these primaries took place over a period of time when there was a great deal of international news, shall we say, turmoil.

The next slide tells us a little bit more about the two parties' positions on healthcare. This issue remains every bit as polarized as it was last year at this time with every Republican who expressed an opinion saying that they opposed the law and most of them saying they wanted to repeal it. Democrats are, of course, more supportive, but on the Democratic side there's a little bit of deviation from the standard party line with some Democrats taking a 'mend it, don't end it' approach, and others, mostly progressives, arguing that the law needs to go further and include a public option or even a single-payer system.

On the Republican side, every single faction was uniformly opposed to the President's healthcare law, that's why I didn't bother to put that slide up. Don't expect that the somewhat diminished fortunes of the Tea Party indicate any change of part on this issue for the Republican Party.

This slide shows positions on immigration reform. No surprises here: Republicans oppose it; Democrats are in favor; although nearly half of the candidates in both parties declined to take any position at all. It is, therefore, less frequently mentioned than healthcare was.

The next table, however, shows that, among Republicans, the real energy against immigration reform comes from the Tea Party faction. In fact, more than

twice as many Tea Partiers take a hardline position against immigration reform as do the business-establishment types. I'll let Jill and Walter elaborate on the nuances they found on this issue in their reporting.

Suffice it to say that while Democrats show openness to reform on healthcare, among Republicans there is some openness to reform on immigration, supported, of course, by the Chamber of Commerce's extensive giving to Republican candidates who supported immigration reform. This is a sliver -- and I mean a sliver -- of hope to those who would like to see some reduction in the overall polarization in the American system on this issue.

The next five slides were chosen to illustrate how, on a variety of other issues, factions within each party drive the party position. Let's look at climate change. Climate change is very much a Democratic issue. More than half of all Republicans don't even bother to talk about it. Among Democrats, it is driven by progressives who mention it significantly more than any other faction within the party.

The same is true, maybe even more so, of the minimum wage. Over ninety percent of Republican candidates simply ignore it even though this was an issue that was quite frequently discussed in the news during this period of time. Among Democrats, the issue is once again driven by self-identified progressives, although establishment Democrats also support it.

The next slide deals with taxes. Republicans are unified in favor of lower taxes across all parts of the party, which is why I didn't bother to show you a separate table on it. Among Democrats however, the Democratic position in favor of raising taxes on the rich is led by progressives, as you can see: Sixty percent to thirty-nine percent the next closest.

The national debt is clearly a Republican issue with nearly three-quarters

of all candidates taking a position against government spending and against increased debt. Democrats, on the other hand, tended to ignore the issue, and there were no major differences within either of the parties on this. This tended to be uniform across the factions within the parties.

Finally, government regulation is clearly a Republican issue, not a Democratic issue. As we can see looking down to table 13, within the Republican Party a focus on regulation is clearly driven by the Tea Party faction even though the other Republicans are also on the wavelength.

Finally, it makes sense to have a look at this year's incumbent margins of victory. Here we have a chart that shows what has been happening to margins of victory in primaries for the House of Representatives over the past decade. Both parties are on a downward slope, but in 2014, Democrats' margins increased while Republican margins continued their downward trajectory.

Margins are important. To quote the title of an old book by my colleague, Tom Mann, "Unsafe at any margin," members of Congress pay exquisite attention to their margins. Members of Congress can tell you, as anybody in here who hangs out with politicians knows, that politicians can tell you exactly how much they won by probably back a whole decade. In fact, when they're too old to remember that, they're probably old enough that they get beat. Politicians pay a lot of attention to this.

It is safe to say that as incumbents feel more vulnerable in primaries, they will continue to pay or increase their attention to the factions within their party that could mount a primary challenge whether it's the progressive group in your district for the Democrats, whether it's the Tea Party group or Libertarian group for the Republicans. This is one of the reasons that, in spite of the Tea Party's failure this year to defeat any big names with the exception of Eric Canter, the rest of the Republican Party is starting to

sound just like them.

In addition, as Bob Boatright will show in his paper, challengers had more money in 2014 than they had at any time in the previous two cycles. Altogether, these are a recipe for nervous incumbents in the next Congress, and for incumbents to pay particular attention to their primary electorate.

I want to conclude by referring to an old and eminent political scientist, Dick Fenno, who had spent a lot of time with politicians and, years ago, wrote a famous book about this. He talked about their world.

Their world begins, of course, with their close-in friends and family, and, of course, their most intense supporters and financial supporters. The very next circle after this close-in circle are people who vote in their primaries. The third circle out, of course, is people who vote for them in the congressional election itself.

That second circle is the circle that we think has been understudied and underappreciated, especially since that third circle, the congressional election circle, is more and more a foregone conclusion with more and more districts in the country being for one party or the other.

Today we want to start a discussion about that all-important second circle. To do that, I would like to invite Donna Brazile, Jill Lawrence, and Walter Shapiro back onto the stage to hear the result of the extensive reporting that they have done. Come on up, everybody.

MS. BRAZILE: Let's hear now from two award-winning journalists, Walter Shapiro and Jill Lawrence. They wrote a very interesting paper that looked at the campaigns, the advertisement, some of the competitive races, and they've titled the report, *Phoning It In and Failing to Show: The Story of the 2014 House Primaries*. Then we'll have some time for some questions and conversation with the panelists after their

presentation.

MS. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Donna, and thanks, everybody, for coming to our unveiling. We've spent the last few months delving into more than 60 House races in both parties, and it's been quite an eye-opening experience. It turns out primaries really are the Rodney Dangerfield of American politics, and unfortunately if they don't get any respect at times, it's because they don't really deserve it. (Laughter)

The most striking findings for us were just how generic and standardized these races have become and how old and tired the party platforms are. The economic issues on both sides, for instance, are familiar to anyone who's paid attention at any point in the last 3, 5 years, and in the case of Democrats make that 75 to 80 years. So, nothing new there.

We also are struck by how often the primary process fails as an instrument of democracy. We're not just talking about turnouts; we'll talk about that a little bit later also.

I want to explain to you a little bit about our methodologies so you know how we chose our races. We first looked at all open seats and all seats that were rated competitive or potentially competitive in the general election by Stuart Rothenberg or Charlie Cook. Then we looked at the multi-candidate primaries in those districts and eliminated the ones where only one candidate had raised enough money to have to file a report with the Federal Election Commission. Finally, we looked at the partisan makeup of the districts and extremely lopsided districts where one party or the other stood virtually no chance of winning, we focused on the dominant party whose nominee probably would be going to Congress.

So, Walter's going to handle the Democratic narrative, and I'll start out by talking a little bit about the overall Republican story. As we know, we had a very

confrontational Tea Party faction preoccupied with liberty and freedom from government intrusion that was facing off this year against a business establishment faction that prizes order, stability, and -- in the words of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce -- a willing to govern, which is a new standard that they've added in the last few years. They felt it necessary to make sure that the people they endorse are willing to govern.

Who won this season? If you want to look at how colorful the personalities, biographies, and pronouncements were, it had to be the Tea Party wing. They made headlines for their gun giveaways and shooting at drones and ads and they had military backgrounds. Their rhetoric was very fiery about civil liberties and the Obama administration, and above all they had what we might call the Tea Party state of mind: The inclination to take things to the limit; to challenge everything and everyone, including their own leaders, even if that means risking a government shutdown or a default on debt.

But the Tea Party didn't just win in the headlines; they actually won some races. By my estimation, in the universal races that we studied, about half a dozen actually won nominations in very heavily Republican districts and are probably going to Congress. They are much more conservative than the people they are replacing.

That pretty much sums it up except for the environment, which Elaine touched on. This is another area where the Tea Party really did pretty well. One consultant that we talked to characterized this environment as the opposite of NASCAR: You're constantly turning right and hitting the gas pedal. (Laughter) I think that was a really good description of what's been happening in some of these districts.

The purest example of this, as you saw in some of those charts, is the attitudes towards the Affordable Care Act. It was practically a prerequisite to pledge to fight it to the death. It almost seemed like they were sitting there with a thesaurus trying

to find the worst word they could think of to describe it. The big competition was was it a monstrosity, a nightmare, reckless, a debacle? Was it a massive redistribution of wealth? This was the grounds for competition.

The triumph of the Tea Party was that there were no constructive suggestions to make it better. There were no ideas to work with Democrats to make it easier on business or to make it less expensive or anything like that. Just kill it. This was a pretty much full-out repeal was the price of admission to run in a Republican primary this year.

Democrats, as Elaine mentioned, had more diversity. They obviously felt freer to talk about their yearning for a public option or a single-payer system. But Republicans did not talk like that. It would have been political death.

Also as Elaine mentioned, there was a surprising range of diversity on immigration within the Republican Party, and this was particularly apparent in districts with agricultural sectors; where farmers had made it pretty clear of what they wanted and what they needed. So, you had a pretty decent number of candidates who were open to some form of reform ranging from legal workers to a pathway to citizenship even.

Then on the other end of the spectrum you had candidates like Jodi Heiss and George Allen who won the nomination and probably will be going to Congress. He actually favors self-deportation, which is a word that probably most of us thought disappeared after it worked so badly for Mitt Romney. (Laughter) He also wants to end birthright citizenship, and that was a (inaudible) in the 2010 midterms which I thought had faded, but apparently not in some quarters.

Heiss was one of the people who made this project feel at times like we were going deeper and deeper into a rabbit hole, and we really didn't want to come out of it because it was so incredibly interesting. The quirks of the minor and major candidates

were very engaging, and we've catalogued many of them for you in our report.

The things that you find you just can't really believe. For instance, maybe between 5 and 10 had (inaudible) pages that were all about their state capitals, complaining about what was going on in Sacramento (inaudible) Washington, clearly just lifted from a previous campaign or their page in the state legislature.

Then there was one of our favorite people, Tom Emmer in Minnesota 6 who won the nomination just by giving out his cell number to people and saying, just call me and we'll talk. I'm not running an issues campaign. He told the newspaper there, I'll talk about issues if someone asks, but nobody's asking. (Laughter)

But really it's the quirks of the process that are most important for our country, so we looked at those too. The top two jungle primaries in California and Washington have not performed as hoped. They've not brought us a wave of moderate nominees and members of Congress. Research shows why: People are choosing a candidate based on a D or R after their name, and it's a low-information environment. It's not like they know exactly which faction of the party each candidate is from, so they're not saying, I want the moderate, not the Tea Party person, or the reverse. It's just not working out that way.

The other thing that's becoming increasingly clear is the risk of having many candidates from the same party in one of these competitive jungle primaries. Democrats have been the victims, but Republicans could be the victims. If you have too many candidates, you don't get a top two slot, and you don't make it onto the fall ballot. It's not hard to see that there could be a return to some metaphorical, smoke-filled room where the party leaders choose a candidate and then muscle everyone out of the race.

Other antidemocratic trends with a small D included the Iowa system of having a convention if nobody clears thirty-five percent in a primary. This is how it came

to pass that 512 people in Iowa 3 chose the fifth place finisher in the Republican primary as their nominee. (Laughter) It's an amazing story which we tell in our report. It was so unexpected and strange that people in both parties and Iowa are now talking about changing their system and maybe instituting a run-off.

But run-offs have their own problems because turnout starts out low in primaries, and run-offs make it lower because in those days and weeks, sometimes months, waiting for the run-off, turnout falls off tremendously.

We're not proposing the answers here, but there are a couple of ideas that people have that we think are worth looking at: One is an instant run-off where people rank their choices right on primary day. Another is a National Primary Day which Elaine and other people have written about. It would bring a lot more attention to primaries and elevate them a lot more than the current system where we have months of strung-out races that hardly anyone's paying attention to. The other alternative, which I think Walter is going to talk about, is candidates could try something really strange like a little creativity. Maybe give us something interesting to listen to. (Laughter) Some reasons to get to the polls; an idea we want to vote for.

With that, Mr. Shapiro, over to you.

MR. SHAPIRO: Thank you. It's a thrill to be here. Thank you, Elaine, for starting us down this road. It is always a pleasure both to be on a panel moderated by Donna and to do any project with my long-time colleague, Jill Lawrence.

I will say that since Jill and I both are writers, please read the whole report in the sense that we have written it not to be academic, but to be fun. I think a lot can be gleaned from watching us do what I know I do best, which is write rather than talk. (Laughter)

That said, let me explain. I'm going to talk about the Democratic

narrative, and let me explain a little about the Democratic races we looked at. Our methodology was to go deep using journalistic tools into either competitive races or open-seat primaries.

Since there are very few competitive races where a Democratic challenger has a good shot against the Republican incumbent, what we ended up looking at mostly on the Democratic side were open-seat primaries in overwhelmingly Democratic districts. Almost all my examples of winning candidates are from people who are going to be in Congress next January. If anyone thought that there was any hope that the next generation of Democrats on Capitol Hill will provide an issue mandate for the party beyond preserve, preserve, preserve, their hopes should be dashed by these election results.

Remember, these are safe Democratic districts; primaries talking only to Democrats. Any of the moderation, any of the positioning for a competitive Senate race, say, is not necessary in these districts.

Let's go to a high-class district, one that, oh, I don't know, is represented by a physicist in Congress. Rush Holt is retiring. A former physicist, professor of physics at Princeton, is retiring from New Jersey 12. Therefore, it was an upscale audience voted to replace him. Let's go right to a TV ad by the winning candidate in that primary, state legislator Bonnie Watson Coleman.

This is her ad. This is the signature ad of her campaign. The Tea Party wants to end Social Security and Medicare and roll back the clock on women's rights. Bonnie Watson Coleman will fight them every step of the way. Let's just say in a safe Democratic district with no chance of a Republican representing a physicist in Congress, an upscale audience including Princeton University, the winner said the choice is me or the Tea Party. Maybe there might have been a different choice in that district.

Another candidate who ran third in the primary was a state legislator, Upendra Chivukula, who was the first Indian American to ever serve in the New Jersey legislature. His ad, sort of, encapsulated the Democrats this year where it was about identity politics. The ad starts with him looking straight at the camera and saying, I'm the Tea Party's worst nightmare. I don't look like them. I don't talk like them.

The whole idea that there should be issues in a Democratic primary somehow never registered across the board. Almost everywhere you look, Democrats were -- and this comes as a shock, so anyone with weak hearts you might want to walk to the back of the room -- in favor of women's reproductive rights. (Laughter) My god. They were going to do anything to preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare. Sometimes they would just stand up for climate change against all the climate change deniers in the state Democratic districts. (Laughter) It is just breathtaking. When any of them are elected to Congress, the Tea Party will never recover.

The whole idea of a party primary -- at least that I innocently thought before I went down this unbelievably sobering route -- was that this was the sort of place where policy differences within parties are hammered out in a safe environment where the seat is not in jeopardy. This was going to be Elizabeth Warren's get tough on Wall Street versus the business Democrats. This was going to be Obama's foreign policy versus skeptics of Obama's foreign policy. This was going to be critics of the NSA versus those who believe our President. I don't even want to repeat this because none of this happened, and it was not just New Jersey 12; this was across the board.

Luckily, Democratic candidates did stand for things. The Democratic primaries in these winnable districts were, sort of, the opposite of Lake Woebegone. Every single candidate had a below-average childhood. (Laughter) In Hawaii's first district, which is Honolulu, the one-time favorite who ended up losing the primary, Donna

Mercado Kim, ran an ad where her mother said -- and this was about Donna's upbringing -- hot water was a luxury. In Arizona 7, a largely Latino district focused on Phoenix, the winning candidate, Rubin Diego, a Harvard graduate, announced proudly in an ad, I didn't have a bed until I got to college. In Pennsylvania 13, which is a Philadelphia area district that had been represented by Allyson Schwartz until she gave up the seat to unsuccessfully run for governor, the winning candidate, Brendan Boyle, ran ads that just stressed one thing: Not issues, but that his father swept out subway stations for the Philadelphia transit authority.

DR. KAMARCK: Brendan was my student at Harvard, just to keep this going. (Laughter)

MR. SHAPIRO: Brendan also was a rarity. He won his primary largely because it was a mixture of Philadelphia City and Philadelphia affluent suburbs, and he was the only candidate in the city part of Philadelphia. He also did an apology in the paper about once having questions about abortion rights in which he explained that if the pro-choice movement only allowed people who were there from the beginning, it would be a small movement. You have to allow for converts. That was about as much of an issue of dissent on social issues that were available in the Democratic Party.

What I will say is that the Republicans also were keenly into identity politics. If they weren't bragging about being part of the team that snared Saddam Hussein in Iraq, they were advertising their ability to shoot drones out of the air in the 'Montana At Large' race, an ad that is one of the most unbelievable ones. The candidate, who is Tea Party to the heart, literally poses with a rifle against, 'If that was a drone, I'd be shooting it down.' (Laughter) He lost, but his accuracy with the ad was high level.

The other thing the Republicans really worshipped is being part of a non-Washington contingent because we all know Washington is the embodiment of all evil in

this universe, so how could you be part of Washington? That's fine if you're a challenger, but if you're an incumbent facing a Tea Party challenger it gets a little tricky. Luckily, in Michigan's 1st district, which is the Upper Peninsula at northern Michigan, the Republic incumbent, Dan Benishek, had a perfect solution. He wasn't Congressman Benishek even though he was running for his third term. He was Dr. Dan. He was the friendly doctor who, if you really forced him under truth serum, will admit that he occasionally went to Washington, but it was always Dr. Dan out there.

My other favorite candidate, which is in Upstate New York in a Republican primary, is Elise Stefanik in New York 21. Elise had a blue ribbon resume for a 29 year old. She worked in the George W. Bush White House, she was issued director for the short-lived Tim Pawlenty presidential campaign, and went on to head up doing debate prep for Paul Ryan in his debate as Vice Presidential nominee. How did Elise identify herself to Upstate New York voters? She's a small businesswoman from Willsboro. Yes, technically her parents did have a business in the district, and technically she did come back and technically had a nominal job with the business for 6 months.

Jill had alluded to this earlier, but I just want to say that the most depressing thing was candidates who should know better who didn't have an issues page anywhere. Running in what could be a winnable district for a Democrat, the heavily Latino, Central Valley district in California 21, Amanda Renteria had no issues page at all on her website. It is not that she didn't understand that issues are something you sometimes take up in Congress since her former job, which she tried never to mention during this campaign, was as Senate Chief of Staff to Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow. Like, back home, no issues page. In the same way, running against Elise Stefanik in New York 21, Matt Doheny, who had been the Republican nominee in 2012 and should know what a general election is like and sometimes issues come up -- no

issues page.

Lastly, let me just talk about the fact that someday historians are going to look back on the summer of 2014 and all of the tremendous crises facing America, the fact that Russia annexed the Crimea in mid-March just as the primary season was getting underway, and in mid-June the Islamic state, ISIL, ISIS, name your acronym, took the city of Mosul, and suddenly we had a new Iraq war on our hands. Most candidates we looked at in these winnable districts, as Elaine alluded to earlier, did not have any foreign policy component whatsoever on their websites.

If there were a chance of getting money there was an exception to that, and that was a strong pan to Israel as our only ally in the Middle East, but with Israel and no other foreign policy issues whatsoever. Russia wasn't mentioned and rarely was Iraq mentioned.

I had thought that there would be a robust debate over NSA spying since this issue was hot when we started out down this road. While a few candidates like Ted Lieu in California's 33rd district, that Santa Monica, Malibu, parts of Hollywood, a district that Mark Leibovich in the New York Times Magazine called the Botox Belt -- had Lieu did win his primary in part by writing an ad opposing NSA spying without ever mentioning the President who is in charge of the NSA. But much more importantly, this was less of an NSA vote than a way of product differentiating. In an intensely liberal district, it was his way of saying, 'I'm the most liberal candidate in the race.'

I will now end just by saying four decades ago I ran for Congress as a childhood runaway in a congressional district in Ann Arbor in Michigan. I spent weeks putting together an issues page. All I'm asking from these candidates: Spend a half an hour. Thanks so much. (Laughter)

DR. KAMARCK: Thank you. (Applause)

MS. BRAZILE: Did you check their social media, the internet?

MR. SHAPIRO: We did look at some of the Facebook pages, yes.

MS. LAWRENCE: Some of the Twitter feeds were prominently featured on the webpages. In fact, some were substituting Twitter feeds for issues pages and press releases and everything else.

MS. BRAZILE: Yeah, it's superficial over the substance. I read the Twitter pages, so that's why I know there's a lot more substance on the Twitter pages than on the front page of the -- All right. Let's open it up for questions. In a minute we'll also hear from Professor Robert Boatright, who is a political scientist at Clark University and author of a very important book called *Getting Primaried*. We'll have that discussion shortly.

Elaine, I read your report. You seem to find a lot of uniformity among Republicans and their message. Why is this and what do you think it means?

DR. KAMARCK: It's interesting. I did find a lot of uniformity. The big contrast to me between the Democrats and the Republicans were that the Republicans were really about a unified message. Even though there were parts of the message that one faction would drive or another, there was great uniformity in their messaging. It, kind of, tracks with some work that some other political scientists have been doing talking about the Republicans as much more of an ideologically-based party.

Whereas the Democrats seem to be all about self. In fact, Walter and Jill, in their paper, have a segment called 'The Selfie Campaign' where there was a lot of emphasis -- I got a particular chuckle about all the people who were claiming poverty and hiding their Stanford, Harvard, MBAs, etc. On the Democratic side you tended to see more people trying to identify with people in constituencies and pretty much an absence.

The problem with that for Democrats is that it's fine when you're running

in all-Democratic districts, etc., but when you get to a competitive election like the next presidential, you do have to have something to say.

When we started this, I thought we would see the beginnings of the post-Obama Democratic Party. Bottom line is we didn't, so I guess we've got to wait until after November.

MS. BRAZILE: Walter, to Elaine's point, is the Democratic Party really suffering from a lack of ideas? Do you think the reason Democrats are out fishing is simply to get out of the way of the Republicans who seem to be making most of the noise these days?

MR. SHAPIRO: I've been thinking a lot about that, and I think part of it is the Democrats, for want of a better word, are depressed. What's possible in Washington seems exceedingly truncated. The great hopes that were aroused by Obama in 2008 looks like ancient history, and the Democrats feel like they're beleaguered on all fronts. But at the same point, I really think there's also just an intellectual gap in the Democratic Party, that there is no one out there talking about if we ever had a governing majority again in Washington; this is what we'd do. I find anyone who is looking for any hope there, that there is an emerging etiology of the Democratic Party other than, 'Don't take it away,' is apt to be disappointed.

MS. BRAZILE: Jill, I know you want to also chime in, but what did the primaries tell us about the Republican Party, especially if they take control of the United States Senate? What unifying messages are they sending to voters who might be in the middle or even a message that they may be sending to Washington if they retain power?

MS. LAWRENCE: It's interesting. The Republicans should be depressed, but they're not. (Laughter) In some of the campaigns that we've studied they're talking about impeaching the President, and you're considered, kind of, a

moderate if you say, 'That's probably not going to be possible for the next couple of years at least.'

Their agenda is from the Reagan years. They have no creative alternative to the Affordable Care Act. They have an entire party that's campaigning on getting rid of it as it gets woven into the fabric of life everywhere, including in red states, day by day by day. I don't think it's ever going to happen, so I don't know exactly what they plan to do. I've read they're going to try to gut various agencies, but they can't do anything while Obama's in the White House.

I think a lot of this, on both sides of the aisle, has been dependent on the presidential nominating process, and Hillary Clinton, if she's the dominant person, as it seems like she will be, she'll be very influential in setting the Democratic agenda, and she'll have a chance to do that with creativity. Who knows if she'll take advantage of that.

On the Republican side, there's going to be a lot of problems for Republicans, a lot of challenges, because you're going to have at least two founders of the Tea Party Movement, Ted Cruz and Rand Paul, involved in this campaign. Ted Cruz already has a lot of influence in the House. There's going to be a lot of Tea Party energy in the presidential race.

If somebody eventually emerges who has a plan that involves reaching across the aisle or at least reaching to the middle, then there may be an argument on Capitol Hill for immigration reform or for other things; for amending instead of ending Obamacare, something like that. But it's hard to see that now in the environment we're in.

MS. BRAZILE: Let me ask Elaine, and Jill and Walter feel free to chime in, but why do both parties seem so stuck in talking about the past in terms of economics? What will it take to blast them out of this conversation? Walter, you

mentioned Democrats preserve, preserve, preserve. Elaine, you mentioned Republicans are talking about the dead and (inaudible) and tax cuts and regulations. What will it take to blast them out of the past and talk about the future?

MR. SHAPIRO: I was thinking about this as Jill was talking. I think on the Democratic side there's nothing that's going to be bottoms up. It's going to be tops down. Whether it's Hillary Clinton or someone else is going to impose and run on a new and different etiology, and it's going to be popular among the Democrats or maybe it'll be more of the same. But the idea that something is emerging in the grassroots in the Democratic Party was just not evident at all in the kind of primaries that are not putting out symbolic candidates, but they are going to be sending people to the House of Representatives next year.

DR. KAMARCK: I think part of the Democratic sleepiness, if you will, is due to the attack the Republicans have chosen, that when you attack Social Security and Medicare, you are attacking the economic foundations of the vast middle class in America. If you're a Democrat and you say, oh my god, those guys are doing this. I'll just sit back. Let them do it. I think that until the Republicans move to a more future-oriented message, I'm not sure the Democrats are going to move.

I was looking for little slivers of hope in all of this research -- ours, Jill's, everybody's -- and the one little ray of hope I found is that the Chamber of Commerce saying to the candidates that they were considering endorsing, are you going to govern? Because that, it seems to me, is the question that basically the last couple Congress's they've said no to. The answer to that is no. We're not going to govern. We're going to shut down the government, etc. I think that's primarily a problem on the Republican side because of the Tea Party's intransigents. Until we get to a lot of people in Congress saying, yes, we are going to govern, I'm not sure you're going to get much conversation,

much dialogue, or much talk about the future.

MS. BRAZILE: Jill?

MS. LAWRENCE: I just wanted to mention a few green shoots on the Republican side. It was very striking in an essay by David Frum, a conservative theorist. Deep in the bottom of it it was about the future of the Republican Party. He just (inaudible) tossed off, and they're going to have to accept some type of universal healthcare scheme which every other developed country in the world has. Reading this after having looked at 40 websites or something where they were saying, kill Obamacare, it's an amazing statement of fact.

The other thing is that you have some candidates for President or potential candidates like Marco Rubio and Paul Ryan, talking about how we can improve our antipoverty programs, how we can improve our entitlements, and not always how we can cut them. Sometimes they're not talking about less money, and there is room. Anyone who's studied these programs knows there is room for improvement.

MS. BRAZILE: Go ahead.

MR. SHAPIRO: I just wanted to throw in one sentence, which is that what this whole project taught us is that the issues obsessing Washington, Benghazi, the IRS investigations, NSA spying; all of these issues didn't register at all at any discernible level in the primaries. If you remember one thing from this presentation, don't assume that just because they're talking about something on the Sunday shows means even people who vote in primaries are talking about it.

MS. BRAZILE: Good. Let's open it up for questions. Can you just stand up and tell us your name and affiliation? If you want to direct your --

DR. KAMARCK: Here comes the mic.

MS. BRAZILE: Great.

MR. CARDO: Hi, my name's Adam Cardo, and I'm a student at American University. My question is to Mr. Shapiro. You mentioned a lot about how you were disappointed by a lot of the House candidates and (inaudible) Congress. Are there any you would say you were impressed by or (inaudible) is it really that bad?

MR. SHAPIRO: That's a very good question. A sometime book author, management consultant, and journalist by the name of Mac Miller did run in that Botox Belt primary in California number 33 on a very interesting ideas-based program. In a multi-candidate race with former mayoral candidates of Los Angeles running, he did run a respectable third among the Democrats.

There were a couple of candidates in, as I recall, that Philadelphia primary that I mentioned. There was a state senator by the name of Nathan Legge who ran a very detailed, issue-oriented, progressive campaign. I think he finished fourth.

Jill, if I recall, you were entranced by a logger running in Maine who just gave a speech, whose name I cannot remember.

MS. LAWRENCE: He gave a terrific speech. I don't know anything about his issues.

MR. SHAPIRO: He lost badly, but he gave the kind of speech that for those a little older in this room might remember. It was the kind of speech that Neil Kinnock gave in the 1980s and Joe Biden borrowed. (Laughter)

MS. BRAZILE: We have time for one more question. Anyone? Yes.

MS. MANNY: Jay Manny with Carnegie. Could you just say something about the turnout because it's such an abysmal turnout usually in primaries, and how can you really extrapolate this is how the public is really feeling?

DR. KAMARCK: As far as we know, and we're still doing those numbers because we're waiting for official election returns, but it looks like the turnout in the

primaries was every bit as abysmal as it has ever been; the classically low turnout. There are some congressional districts where you're looking at five percent of the voting age population in the district voting.

We are not saying that this is representative of the country. We're saying this is representative, however, of the groups that members of Congress have to pay attention to. That is, in fact, one of my big reform hobby horses. We've been working here at Brookings for years now on solutions to polarization. There aren't many good ones out there, but if somehow we could start increasing turnout in primaries so that the primaries started to look more like the general election in the voters in terms of who votes, I think we would go a long way towards reducing some of the polarization.

Now, let me just say one word about these new blanket primaries. They haven't increased turnout. So far, they've been, sort of, a flop on that. However, there's a little bit of an indication -- you've got one example in your paper from Washington, I've heard other people talk about it -- that as potential candidates get used to these, the calculation may change a bit.

Take the following example: You're a moderate Republican in a totally Republican district. Today, in a traditional primary, you probably are going to say, oh, to heck with it. I can't run. I can't win, because, frankly, somebody to the right of you is probably going to do better in a primary.

In a blanket primary in a big Republican district, you might say to yourself, if I do a good race and maybe get a couple Democratic votes, I might come in second place on the ballot and then get to go to the general election where I might get Democrats voting for me or independents or moderate people voting for me.

It's funny. Reforms, they never exactly work out the way you think. These blanket primaries may not produce more moderate candidates because they've

increased turnout. They may however, in some cases, produce more moderate candidates if they exist long enough and if candidates start looking at the game differently than they look at it now.

MS. BRAZILE: I read somewhere, Elaine, that at the end of July before the last round of primaries, turnout among Democrats was twenty-nine percent lower, and among Republicans fifteen percent lower in 2010. We have an enthusiasm gap.

Primaries are notorious for just being difficult to get partisans active and involved. They're just hard, and they're costly, and often candidates prefer to hold their money for the general election. There's not enough resources to go around to the low-information voters, and so what you see is a huge drop-off in in midterm elections, especially in the primaries.

Let us thank our panelists, and we'll come back following a presentation by Professor Boatright. (Applause)

Thank you, Dr. Kamarck. Take it from here. She's about to talk about money and politics. I can skip this one. (Laughter) I've never had enough money to run anything.

DR. KAMARCK: Thank you, sweetheart.

(Recess)

DR. KAMARCK: Our next session is going to feature Professor Robert Boatright of Clark University, and he's going to do double duty today. Professor Boatright is going to -- I think you're going to start with Michael's presentation. We had two papers from the Campaign Finance Institute, our partners in this, and unfortunately Dr. Malbin broke his leg and is home and can't leave his home to get to be with us, so Professor Boatright is going to do both Michael's presentation and his presentation.

Professor Boatright is at Clark University. He is the foremost academic

in this country, expert on Congressional primaries. For those of you really interested in this, please see his paper on the Campaign Finance Institute website, but he's got a whole book called *Getting Primaried*, which I heartily recommend. Professor Boatright, stage is yours.

MR. BOATRIGHT: All right, I'm going to begin with Michael Malbin's presentation. Michael sends his regrets that he can't be here. He really wanted to be part of this, and on Michael's behalf I'd like to thank Elaine Kamarck and everyone at The Brookings Institution for sharing this event with us.

We're delighted to be part of this, and in addition, Michael has asked me to thank the following supporters for underwriting this part of CFI's work: The Democracy Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. McArthur Foundation, the Mertz Gilmore Foundation, The Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The Smith Richardson Foundation, and the Steward Family Foundation.

I think the virtue of the project that the Brookings folks have done is that as Jill Lawrence has said, "They kind of got down into the rabbit hole to see what really goes on in some of these races." Michael's slides and mine take a somewhat different approach; that is you can think of us as being, I don't know, in a hot air balloon or something like that, floating overhead trying to figure out how this year compared to prior election years.

So, the slides that I'll present -- here again, this is Michael's work, not my own -- will have to do with the interest-group side of the equation, and the ones I will show you will give you a sense of how this year's candidates compared to prior year's candidates.

You can download all of this information from the Campaign Finance Institute website. In addition, we have this nice little tool that the CFI staff put together so

that you can take a look at what sorts of groups were spending money in which Congressional primaries this year.

Now, the background for the slides that I'll be showing you in a moment have something to do with the book I wrote that Elaine had mentioned. I studied primaries in the early parts of the century, the 21st century, and I came to the conclusion that a select number of primaries in each year from roughly 2004 through 20012 were effectively nationalized; that organizations such as moveon.org or the Club for Growth were able to pick two or three primary elections and pay a lot of attention to getting their members mobilized in these races, to putting money into these campaigns in order to send a message to the political parties.

The people who were fired up by these sorts of campaigns, the sorts of donors that gave money to primary candidates at the behest of these groups tended to be more ideologically extreme than the average person who contributed to a Congressional campaign, so in other words we've seen a number of primary elections and over the past decade that have effectively been nationalized and have effectively been turned into referenda on the alleged centrism of the political parties.

So, the questions Michael's asking in his slides is did this happen again in 2014, or more precisely have independent expenditures since the Citizens United decision increase polarization or the level of ideological conflict in House and Senate primaries? The answer so far if we look at the independent expenditure data is no; that Michael's argument is that the primaries of 2014 can best be described as a year of counter-mobilization by the political establishment.

Now, what does this mean? Well, first of all, a little bit of background. As many of you know, incumbent members of Congress spend way, way more money than their opponents do in elections; however, challenger money, when there is some is

the best sign of a potentially competitive race. Groups that spend money independently of candidates tend to concentrate on a small number of races where there is already a viable challenger; that is, where the challenger has already shown the ability to spend a significant amount of money, and in such races groups tend to spend in instances where their additional contribution could make the difference between winning and losing or where the outcome has something to do with the core concerns of these groups.

So, in this small number of races money spent by interest groups in the form of independent expenditures can be close to what the candidates and parties themselves have spent. Let me give you an example of this from 2014. There were 15 candidates for the House of Representatives for whom outside groups spent $500,000 or more. In these instances, independent expenditures constituted over 3/4 as much money as the candidates themselves spent. That is, the message that voters were getting in these races arguably had as much to do with what groups had to say as what the candidates had to say.

In the case of the Senate, the crowd of groups is not quite as large in part simply because Senate candidates tend to raise a lot more money than House candidates, but it is still striking. In the case of the 30 Senate candidates for whom $500,000 was spent independently, these groups spent about 44 percent as much money as the candidates themselves.

Now, part of the story here has to do with which side the money was being spent on. The table you see here shows the breakdown of independent expenditures according to the ideology of the group making the expenditures. As you can see here, the yellow shaded boxes, conservative groups spent far more than liberal groups in both the 2012 and 2014 primaries. Conservative money went up slightly in 2014, but the comparative advantage of conservative groups went down in 2014. Liberal

groups, counting the quasi-leadership of PACs organizations like Majority PAC and Senate Majority PAC, were well out in front in both years in terms of spending in preparation for the general election.

However, there was a big change among conservative groups, so what Michael has done here in his slide is try to code groups that were working on behalf of the Republican establishment and groups that are working on behalf of anti-establishment forces such as the Tea Party. You can see there's a huge change here. The anti-establishment groups have a substantial advantage in their spending in 2012 in the Republican primaries, but the establishment strikes back in 2014. Far more money was spent on behalf of establishment groups, and even the Main Street or moderate Republicans who had largely disappeared from the scene in 2012 were back a little bit, and there was a little bit of money spent on centrist Republicans.

Now, perhaps the best way to show this is to take a look at some of the groups that we're talking about. This slide shows the organizations that had the biggest increases in spending from 2012 to 2014. Three of these groups are liberal groups, two are what we call establishment conservative groups. These would be the Chamber of Commerce and Ending Spending, and only one group is clearly on the anti-establishment right. That would be the group at the bottom, the Senate Conservatives Fund founded by former senator Jim DeMint. In addition, there's one race -- the Citizens for Working America was only involved in one race, the Georgia senate race.

Compare this to the groups whose spending declined the most between 2012 and 2014. The top three groups on this list are all part of the anti-establishment right: The Club for Growth, Liberty for All Super PAC, and the Tea Party affiliated group Freedom Works for America. So, there's a big decline not only in overall spending by anti-establishment groups but the types of groups that it constituted; the insurgent right,

you might say, in 2012, reduced their spending substantially in 2014.

Now, one caution here. We're only talking about independent expenditures. A lot of journalists have spent a great deal of time trying to figure out how much money is being spent by 501(c) organizations. A recent estimate in the *Wall Street Journal* estimated that over $70 million had been spent in this year's primaries by just three 501(c) organizations, so it's hard to get an accurate picture of exactly how much money is being spent.

Compounding this problem perhaps, we've seen a surge in the number of single-candidate independent expenditure organizations; that is, organizations that were formed for the express purpose of assisting one and only one candidate in the primaries. Now, these groups are important to study in part because they can be sort of an end-run around contribution limits, but they're also important to study because it's debatable whether these are really groups, whether they really have any ambition to stick around politically as opposed to just being a place for money to go in one election cycle.

So, you can see here single-candidate independent expenditure groups were responsible for just under a quarter of all independent expenditure spending in the 2014 primaries, so they're clearly important, but what is most striking is that these groups were far more present in Senate primaries than in House primaries; that is, $13.4 million was spent by these groups, and 3/4 of that spending took place in Senate primaries.

Perhaps much more striking is the fact that the groups that were active, the single-candidate groups active in Senate primaries, overwhelmingly supported incumbents. If you combine primary spending and general election spending through a couple weeks ago, 77 percent of the money spent by single-candidate groups went to aid Senate incumbents.

This is not the case in the House. Only 4 percent of single-candidate

independent expenditure groups supported incumbents. Thirty-eight percent of their spending came from family members seeking to help non-incumbent candidates for Congress, and the balance, 58 percent of that was spent helping non-incumbents.

So, this is interesting, and we're not quite sure what to make of this, but two stories seem sensible. First of all, the House majority is not really in play in 2014, and there simply aren't that many well-financed primary challenges, so to the extent that incumbent members of Congress can encourage the formation of groups that will work solely on their behalf, House incumbents may simply have felt less need. They felt less threatened.

Or perhaps another way to look at this, we saw on the 2012 Presidential election that it's kind of become the norm for Presidential candidates to have an outside group that works exclusively on their behalf. Maybe Senate candidates can do this and House candidates can't. That is, Senate incumbents, they're the big fish, right? They're able to command the sort of support that will lead to the formation of a single-candidate super-PAC whereas House incumbents simply can't.

And finally, another type of organization I think that's worth watching over the next few election cycles are what Michael has termed evidence in organizations; that is, groups that come and go. Single-candidate organizations are a subset of a much larger set of groups that can form and disband relatively quickly.

As you can see here on this table, one of the most striking things about outside groups in this year's elections, if you put the 2012 and 2014 elections together they're 281 groups that made independent expenditures in Congressional primaries, but 232 of these groups or more than 80 percent were involved in only one election or the other, but not both. So, most of the groups that are making these big expenditures don't desire to stick around, right? They don't intend to become a permanent fixture of the

campaign-finance landscape; instead they're a place that money goes to help a candidate or to be active in one election.

So, what does all of this mean? Well, let's look first of all at the politics. A couple political stories that we can take from this: first of all, pro-Democratic groups look like they're in somewhat better shape for the general election than do Republican groups. That is, although there's more Republican spending so far this year overall, much of that was about fighting things out in the primaries, whereas Democratic groups have stockpiled some money for the general election. It's not clear at all how important that is that a few major donations to conservative groups could tip the balance there, but that's how things stand right now.

In terms of the future, as Michael has put things, the establishment is back. That is, the main stream of the Republican party and Republican incumbents have figured out a way to make the Citizens United decision and the new independent expenditure regime work for them.

Now, what do we make of this fact that I noted a while ago that we've seen a lot of evidence in groups. Well, I think there's a public policy concern here. It's hard to keep track of who these organizations are. Many journalists have put a lot of effort into tracking the activities of 501(c) groups, groups that don't disclose their donors, but the fact that a group can form and disband relatively quickly, there may be so many of these that it really overwhelms the capacity of our investigative reporters to gather information on who these groups are and to present that information to the public in a timely manner.

And finally, what does this mean in terms of incumbency? Well, many people began this year thinking that there was some sort of civil war going on within the Republican party. I'll take this up in my own comments in a moment. If there was such a

civil war, I think that single-candidate PACs in the Senate have weighed in on side of incumbents and enabled incumbents to effectively win that war. Now, it's not clear what this means for the future; that is it's clear that Senate incumbents felt threatened this year, and that they mobilized accordingly. It's not clear that that's going to become a permanent feature of Senate elections or whether this is something that will go away once incumbent members of Congress feel a little bit safer.

And then the second important question: what does this mean for the House, right? Is the House just a little bit behind the curve but following the Senate? That is will we see Super-PACs working on behalf of individual members of the House in future elections?

So, that's where I will leave things off for Michael's presentation. I want to add that although Michael's not here, he welcomes any questions you may have, so if you're a reporter out there wondering about some of these numbers, his contact information is on the CFI website, and he encourages you to get in touch.

Now, let me talk about my own work on this election. As Elaine has mentioned, I got involved in all of this because a couple years ago I published a book called *Getting Primary*. I wrote that book in large part to address a lot of claims that had been made about Congressional primaries over the last decade or so, and in the book what I sought to do was to gather data going all the way back to 1970 on the frequency of primary challenges to incumbents and the reasons for these challenges. So, three claims that I tried to address in my book which again covered the period from 1970 through about 2010, are primary challenges more frequent today than they were in the past?

My argument in the book -- again, only information through 2010 -- was no, they're not. Primary challenges to incumbents used to be far more common in the 1970s and early 1980s than they are today.

In general, primary challenges seem to fluctuate along with general election turnover. That is you have an election year like 2010 or going further back, 1992 or 1994 where a lot of incumbents lose, usually you have a lot of stuff going on in the primaries too. It's as if -- conservatives get mad, and they get mad at Democrats in Congress, but they also get mad at moderates of their own party, and a similar story could be told for good years for Democrats like 1974 or 2006 or 2008.

Second, is there a threat for centrist incumbents of getting challenged from the extremes in the primaries? I concluded that there isn't. Most Congressional primaries are about something other than ideology. They're about the personal failings of the incumbent, about scandals, or the incumbent being deemed too old or incompetent. It's not necessarily clear that moderate incumbents have anything more to worry about from primaries than they ever did.

And finally, are recent primaries more consequential than in the past? Well, our first group mentioned a small number of defeats this year. It's pretty rare for incumbents to be defeated in primaries, so then you get into a question of, as Elaine has put it, whether margins matter. I don't think that they do necessarily. I think that for the most part, a primary challenge that an incumbent survives does not necessarily yield measureable consequences for an incumbent's behavior. We don't see any evidence that incumbent's voting changes in Congress. We don't see any evidence that they're more likely to retire, so maybe they change in some sort of way that political scientists can't measure, but it's not necessarily clear that you can point to identifiable consequences of primaries.

So in sum, my conclusion at the time was that primary challenges are not more common, not more consequential, but they are more hyped. That is, we talk a lot more about primary challenges, about getting primaried than we used to. I think this is in

part because we have year-round political media, something we didn't have back in the 1970s or 1980s, so if it's March of an election year and political junkies are bored looking for information, they can read about the latest weird primary going on in Texas, right? They couldn't do that back in the 1970s.

Similarly we've seen groups that have formed for the express purpose of using primaries to send a message to politicians. Such groups were not part of the campaign finance landscape a couple decades ago, and finally the Internet is a wonderful tool for these sorts of groups to aggregate small contributions from fired up ideologues around the country, and if they can do this and again focus on a small number of races, they can send a message to the Democratic or Republican parties.

So, what happened in 2014? That is, is my theory of a couple years ago still accurate? Well, you can see here this is what the 2014 election looks like. The green bars there are instances where incumbent members of the House were held to less than 60 percent of the vote. The blue bars are instances where they were held to between 60 and 75 percent of the vote. So, 2014 was a pretty competitive year. That is the last three election cycles. We've reached the levels that we saw back in the 1970s.

2014 was less competitive overall by this measure than was 2012, something that may be important, and this is noteworthy. The graph here, what I'm trying to show you is that the blue line there is the total number of incumbents challenged in the primaries, and the green line there is the total number of incumbents who lost their seats in the general election. You can see there's a pretty tight correlation except this year, 2012, looks weird, and this year it's going to look weird. Nobody is predicting that very many incumbents are going to lose in the 2014 general election, so there's not a wave out there, right? It's not like people are going to take out their anger on members of Congress, and yet there does seem to be a lot going on in the primaries, so you have to

go all the way back to the late 1970s to find a year where primary competition looks so different from general election competition.

This just shows you the number of defeated incumbents in the primaries. You see here there are four this year. That's pretty typical, right, so not a whole lot interesting going on in terms of the number of defeats.

Now, I'd add here since I've talked to you a little bit about ideological challenges; that is, people getting challenged because they're too moderate. That wasn't what the defeats this year were about. One of the candidates in Michigan was challenged because he was deemed to be incompetent. One primary in Massachusetts featured an incumbent whose wife was involved in a particularly nasty scandal. Ralph Hall of Texas who lost his seat is over 90 years old, and that was an issue in his race, so at most you have one race; the Eric Cantor race where the challenge seemed to be about ideology, and even there if you read about that race there was a lot of other stuff going on that may have mattered.

So, in any given year, most primary challenges are not about ideology. I try to show that here. The blue bars, over time, are challenges that are based on something other than ideology. The green bars are ideological challenges where the challenger is running from the right in the Republican party or the left for Democrats. So, this is kind of a striking disjuncture, right? Ideological challengers are not very successful, but we clearly did see more of them this year than we have at any time over the past 40 years.

Now, part of the story that you heard about earlier had to do with differences between Republicans and Democrats. You can see this here as well. The red bars there are the number if Republican primary challenges to incumbents, and the blue bars there are Democrats. You can see that once upon a time the Democrats were

the party that had the exciting primaries. That's no longer the case. For the past three election cycles, Republicans have had way more challenges to incumbents than have Democrats, so you put all that together. How many of these ideological challenges took place in the Republican party and how many happened to Democrats? Not a single Democratic primary this year featured a challenger who is running to the left of the incumbent. We did see some primary challenges, but again they had to do with scandals or incompetence or stuff like that, not with allegations that the incumbent was too moderate.

On the Republican side, you can see that the story is quite different. You can see furthermore when you look at the two parties that ideological challenges do track pretty closely with partisan surges. You see that in 2006 and 2008, for instance. There were some liberals running against Democrats saying that they were not liberal enough, and in the case of Republicans you can see there in 1994, right, a lot of moderate Republicans got challenged in their primaries, and you see that in 2010 but instead of tailing off it just keeps going. That is, there's a faction of the Republican party that is getting madder and madder at Republican incumbents, even if they don't necessarily have anything to show for it.

So, this, I think, corresponds somewhat with what you heard earlier. It used to be that political scientists thought of Democrats as the disorganized party that was fighting with itself all the time. That simply is not true anymore, although the Democrat Congressional Delegation is much more heterogeneous than the Republican Congressional Delegation, Democrats are having very, very orderly primaries where the preferred choice of the party waltzes through to the nomination. You'll see this here as well. I can talk about my method here. It's complex math that you can read about in my paper, but basically this is a measurement of the fractionalization in party primaries.

You see over on the right, these are challenger primaries; that is, primaries for the nomination to take on an incumbent, and over on the left, open-seat primaries. Republicans, whatever type of primary you're talking about, have far more competitive primaries than do the Democrats, and at least in the case of open season they have done this for a decade.

The money story, right? How does money play in here? At the beginning of my remarks I talked a little bit about what I call the nationalization of primaries. It's easy to spot this when you look at fundraising by individual candidates; that is candidates who have managed to create some sort of national following for their primary campaigns tend to do better in terms of raising money overall. They tend to do better in terms of raising small contributions, and they tend to get contributions from outside of the state that they're running in. So, in this sense 2014 looks like a year when a lot of people paid attention to primaries. Money, over there on the right, was sharply up -- the green line in both graphs. A lot more money was given to primary challengers. Small contributions on the left were up slightly, and contributions from outside of the state in which the candidate was running -- that's where my big arrow is on the right -- were sharply up in 2014.

So, a lot more money went into House primaries, but here's why 2014 is I think different in an important way from prior years. This graph -- I don't expect you to know who all the people are down there at the bottom, but the point of this graph is that if you look at -- these are the top 20 fundraisers among primary challengers from 2004 to 2012. The blue bars are total money raised. The red bars are money raised from out of state. You can see that there are a few people who really stand out, right, and it turns out that when you break those down by year, every year from 2004 through 2012 there are a couple people who really monopolize the out-of-state money, right? Those are the

people who get the national attention.

2014 is a little bit different, right? These are the top fundraisers in 2014 with Republics on the right, Democrats on the left. There's not one obvious choice if you're like a conservative Republican and you're mad at the Republican party in Congress and want to find somebody who will stand up for you, there's not really an obvious choice about who to give to. The candidate who did the best in terms of raising out-of-state money in the House was Brian Smith of Idaho who got a lot of out-of-state money and didn't do all that well. David Brat, over on the right was Eric Cantor's challenger. Nobody paid any attention to him until he won that race, right? He got no money at all really.

You see, in fact, over on the left, the candidates who did the best at raising money from around the country were Democrats, right? Over there, Seth Moulton, the fellow who won the Massachusetts race up on the North Shore, and Row Conna out in California did far better at raising money from a national donor base than did most Republicans. So, I think this is particularly consequential in understanding the House.

So, to summarize, the House was less competitive in 2014 than 2012, but still pretty competitive. Not very many defeated incumbent, a lot of ideological challengers. A lot of money overall, but the money didn't all go to one or two candidates. It was kind of spread around.

Now, you might say, well, what people did is they gave money to Senate candidates, not House candidates. It's hard to measure what goes on in the Senate in large part because Senate elections are so fluky, right? You never know who's going to be running in any given year, so Senate primaries from one year to the next can be quite different.

Nate Silver pointed out earlier this year that Republican incumbents were doing far worse in terms of their overall vote percentage in the primaries this year than they ever had, and I went and graphed this and turns out that Nate was right. Republican incumbents -- you see the thing on left -- have a far lower voting percentage than any year, at least going back to the 1950s, but none of them lost, right? And you see here Republican incumbents don't lose. Incumbents in the Senate in general don't lose their primaries. You have to go all the way back to 1980 to find a year where more than one incumbent was defeated, and you have to go all the way back to 2002 to find an instance of an incumbent who was defeated in the primary by somebody who went on to win a Senate seat.

So, I'm not sure how much this matters, right? There were three Republican incumbents who had close calls this year, but overall -- and I think this corresponds to what Michael's slide suggests -- Republican incumbents were prepared, right? A lot of money was spent, and arguably that money was spent to deter challenges from arising in the first place.

The money story in the Senate looks pretty much like the House. You can see on the left a lot more money was raised by Senate challengers than in past years, and the green line there is self-financing, right? Usually in the case of Senate primaries we have self-financed candidates who can rely almost exclusively on their own fortunes. That didn't happen this year. None of the Senate primary challenges spent their own money.

But you see over here on the right these are the five Senate primary challengers who got more than a quarter of the primary vote. Money was kind of spread out between them. The blue bars were overall money. The red bars are out-of-state money. The green bars are small contributions. So, again, in the Senate there wasn't an

obvious choice. There wasn't somebody like if you go back to 2012, somebody like Richard Mourdock in Indiana in that year or Ned Lamont if you go all the way back to the 2006 Joe Lieberman challenge. There wasn't one person out there who got everybody fired up. There were a bunch of candidates.

So, what do we do with all this information? Well, the story at the beginning of the year was that this was going to be the year of the Republican civil war in the primaries. Maybe there was. If there was, arguably the incumbents won. I think a better way to think about this year is there was a hangover from 2010, right? We still have a lot of unrest on the Republican side. My data suggests that this stuff goes away; that we have these surges in primary competition around years of exciting elections, and that it takes an election or two for that excitement to kind of go away.

What do we make of the fact that money in the primaries was spread out, that it went to a large number of candidates, and none of them really got enough to make a difference? Maybe this year's primary challengers were not just that good? There wasn't anybody who was that awesome that everybody wanted to support them nationally. Maybe it was that there were too many, right? That there was no way for groups to coordinate around one or two campaigns, or it could be that the rise of independent expenditures has made it a real headache for groups to round up money around the country; that is it's easier for an organization like the Club for Growth or any other group that can make independent expenditures to just go and find a few rich donors than it is to send out emails to people all over the country trying to get them all worked up about some primary candidate.

Third, do margins matter? Well, I suspect that it doesn't. It's hard to prove one way or the other. Certainly incumbents were forced to spend a lot more money this year than they did in the past. It's hard to measure primary spending by

incumbents, but this might be problem if incumbents were spending money in the primary that they needed for the general. I don't know that any incumbents were in that position.

What do incumbents learn? Well, incumbents were certainly prepared this year, and as Michael's slide suggests, part of this preparation involved getting independent expenditure groups to work in your behalf.

What do challengers learn? Well, I think this is a matter of perception. I think when people go around talking about there being some sort of civil war in the primaries, this encourages other people to run, so the way we talk about primaries may encourage primary challengers to emerge. If that's the case I don't know that we'll see as many competitive primaries next year as this year.

And finally, should we do anything about all of this? Well, as our last panel suggested, voter turnout was historically low this year, so should we pay more attention to primaries? I think it would be awesome if more voters paid attention to primaries, and anything that can encourage voter turnout is all for the good.

I think political leads should actually pay less attention to primaries. I know that's weird coming from somebody on a panel talking about primaries, but I think we create the sort of dramatic story about primaries which leads the media to take a couple weird results and make this into a big story when in reality it's a couple weird results.

Should we change the rules? Again, this is something that was mentioned earlier. There's no evidence that switching to a top-two primary or switching from an open or closed primary, making primaries earlier or later -- there's no evidence that any of that stuff makes a difference. Maybe the story will be different when people get used to the primary in California, but until then I don't know that we have a magic bullet.

Should we worry about who votes in primaries? Well, strangely enough, there's no evidence that Republican primary voters are any different from the kinds of people who vote for Republicans in the general election, or that Democrat primary voters are different from people who just happen to vote for Democrats in the general election, so I would suggest we shouldn't worry about this.

I would suggest what we should do is kind of have fun watching these things, right? As Donna Brazil suggested at the beginning, primaries have these really interesting characters in them, right? They're fun to learn about the weird people who run. We should appreciate that as political theater, sit back and enjoy it because I think in a few years we'll be talking about the lack of competition in primaries and wishing that our primaries were more interesting. Okay. (Applause)

DR. KAMARCK: Thank you. Have a seat. We're back. Now, I know we cut short questions a little bit before, so I'll make sure that we get plenty of time for questions this time, and I just wanted to start just on this question of margins because Rob and I have a disagreement on this.

I think that the reason political scientists don't think margins matter is that they look at votes, and as we know from watching Congress, increasingly there aren't any votes. These guys don't vote on anything, okay? Or they vote on massive bills on which all sorts of stuff is tacked on. In other words, that measure alone, which political scientists rely on, is becoming a less and less good indicator of divisions between the parties, factions, et cetera. It's just not a very meaningful indicator.

I do think factions matter enormously in a very important part of Congressional operations which is the Congressional caucuses. I mean when they caucus they pick leaders, and the leaders decide on the agenda, and the factions within that party have a great deal to say about what appears on the floor to begin with. So, I

think that the questions of margins and how important they are to the system depends on a little bit deeper understanding of Congressional behavior than you can get from aggregate data, and so that would be my one caveat to that.

MR. BOATRIGHT: I think you're correct. I think it's partly a matter of measurement tools, right?

DR. KAMARCK: Yes.

MR. BOATRIGHT: And to make your story more complex, part of the story that we've heard over the past few years is that incumbents are proactively changing what they're doing because they're worried that somebody might run against them, right, so then you've got to measure their psychological perception of threat which you just can't do.

So, I agree -- there's all these good stories out there. For instance, Lindsay Graham who's by all accounts a fundamentally nice guy, started talking much meaner as the South Carolina primary got going, and that was probably about the primary, so we need to come up with better measurement tools, but we also need to be honest that the tools we have don't suggest that we necessarily have a problem.

DR. KAMARCK: I totally agree with you.

MR. SHAPIRO: I just want to ask something --

DR. KAMARCK: Walter?

MR. SHAPIRO: -- that you raised, Rob, toward the end of your presentation. You said flatly that voters in the Republican primaries are not different than the Republican electorate, and that voters in the Democrat primaries are not different than the Democrat electorate. Since there have never been any exit polls whatsoever involving House primaries and very few about Senate primaries, what are you basing it on?

MR. BOATRIGHT: Well, the study that does the best on that is the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study which is the only study out there that measures people's preferences in the primaries on a large enough scale that you can break it down to the local level.

I probably went over that a little bit too quickly. There is evidence that primary voters are older. They're more likely to own a home, that they have other characteristics that habitual voters have, but when you look at the ideology of people; where they stand on positions or how conservative or liberal they claim to be, there's not any evidence that there's any difference. And that's striking because there are intuitive reasons to think that there is a difference.

MR. SHAPIRO: I'm just a little struck that based on one study we're throwing out all those intuitive reasons.

MR. BOATRIGHT: Well, what I'm saying is that there's no evidence, right? There are intuitive reasons to think there should be differences, but unless we have proof we have to couch (inaudible).

DR. KAMARCK: In Presidential primaries we have 30 years of exit polling which show definitely that the primary voters in Presidential primaries are in fact more ideological than the general elections, so wouldn't you think the same dynamic would work in Congressional primaries?

MR. BOATRIGHT: The evidence in Presidential primaries is pretty mixed as well and Barbara Norr Anders work suggests that there are not noticeable differences. Part of the problem, in addition, with Presidential primaries is that in any given year some of them aren't competitive or some of them just don't happen, right. You get going and say the 2004 election you're really only looking at a bunch of states, right, because all of a sudden the nominee's decided, and then it doesn't make any sense to

look at the later primaries, so it's difficult to look at Presidential primaries and extrapolate anything about the general electorate. So, Congress, at least we know that there are primaries all over the country, and it stands to reason that there should be differences, but as of yet there's no evidence that there are.

DR. KAMARCK: See, I guess I'm a little -- I'm very skeptical of that data. Also it is not exit polling, so if you're talking about elections -- here's my problem with that data -- is any data on elections that is not exit polling has the problem with people saying they voted when they didn't, and we know from lots of comparisons of those studies that there's always more people who say they voted than, in fact, actually voted, so given how few people actually vote in Congressional primaries, I would be very skeptical of any conclusion about a Congressional primary that is not based on an exit poll, and we don't have any, and we've never done exit polling on Congressional primaries. Jill, did you want to --

MS. LAWRENCE: I wanted to ask about a different thing and I don't know if this is your area or Michael Malbin's area, but one of the things that I noticed that was kind of really fun in the races that we studied where there was at least one Democratic group, and there was the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee that were spending in Republican primaries to try to elect Tea Party candidates so that they could run against Tea Party candidates in general elections. I'm thinking in particular of New Jersey three I think it was where Tom McArthur was the moderate that Republicans wanted to be nominated because this is a toss-up district, and the Democrats spent half a million dollars to try to elect Steve Lonegan who's lost four races before New Jersey as a Tea Party candidate, and it's just not the right state for him, but he doesn't give up, so they spent over half a million dollars trying to nominate this guy and it didn't work. But I'm just wondering if this is a more common phenomenon now.

MR. BOATRIGHT: We think it is. Michael would be the better one to address that, but I can tell you that he and I did have a long back and forth about this because we noticed that Democratic groups were spending money in states where there wasn't necessarily a Democrat primary, and it's hard to tell just from the disclosure data whether they're spending money for the purpose of the general election, or whether they're spending money to try to mess with the Republican primary.

We have clear evidence that Democrats did this is Missouri last time in the Claire McCaskill race, so there certainly is some of that going on, but unless we have the actual ability to look at the ads, right, we're not quite certain how to measure whether this has taken place.

DR. KAMARCK: Let's open it up to the audience. Yes, back here?

MR. SKINNER: Hi Rob. I'm Richard Skinner from American University, and Rob, in your work *Getting Primaried*, you talk about the rise of groups for whom their whole raise on detra, their whole means of keeping themselves in business is promoting primary challenges, and I'm wondering whether that has an effect of encouraging stronger candidates to run because they know they'll have support from these groups, or does that mean that these groups really have to hype candidates no matter what even if the candidates they're supporting are actually really bad? That would be kind of the Milton Wolf effect.

MR. BOATRIGHT: Well, one of the most striking things about this year -- this came through in the data that Michael had -- is that Club for Growth which is the group that was known for doing that seems to have mysteriously ramped down their spending, so the groups you're talking about are a relatively small number of organizations. I think there is evidence that these sorts of groups have tried to recruit candidates to run. They've interviewed candidates and talked to them about the races.

They tend to focus on the same people all the time. That is, the Club for Growth was out to get Arlen Specter for many years before they actually got him, right, and there are other House races where they did this as well. So, yes, I think that it could be that groups such as that used to recruit candidates or at least promise candidates support in the campaigns and that this year's races just didn't feature anybody like that, right. Again, there are an awful lot of primary challengers this year, but it could just be that they were not an impressive bunch, and that the groups that did that stayed out.

Or again, as I mentioned, it could just be that it's much easier to just drop a lot of independent spending in a district rather than it is to go to the trouble of recruiting a candidate and getting your donor base excited and creating some sort of national buzz. Maybe that's too much work.

DR. KAMARCK: Other questions? Comments? Yes, back there?

MR. NYE: Hi, I'm Peter Nye with the Ford Law firm. One question I have about primaries is from the strategy of a given party, shouldn't the party chairperson be thinking, okay, how far in advance of the election do we want to decide whom our candidate's going to be because regardless of whom our candidate is, deciding and having it publicly announced whom the candidate is the right number of months before the election is to his or her advantage because if it's too soon it's too hard to maintain momentum, but if it's too late then it's too late a start. So, what do you think is the ideal number of months before the election, and why do you think that kind of consideration has been seen largely absent from the dialogue?

DR. KAMARCK: Can I tell you from having moved around a lot of primaries in my career (laughter), that consideration is not at all absent. In fact, that is the primary consideration when state legislators and their Republican and Democrat party chairmen get together to decide the date of a primary. It is all about their individual

calculations as to what the ideal primary data is for them winning internally to the state.

Those of us who've tried to move Presidential primaries from year to year depending on the candidate and where were sitting know that you come right up against state party calculations, and that's why we have this wide variety of primary dates that go all the way from March to September the 9th when we had the Florida and Massachusetts, and I think Rhode Island was on the 9th -- primary. So, you have this wide variety -- what was --

QUESTIONER: New Hampshire.

DR. KAMARCK: New Hampshire. You had this wide variety of dates, all of it had to do with internal political calculations among the party leadership. They may be right. They may be wrong, but that is very much exactly how we get those primary dates.

MR. SHAPIRO: A perfect illustration is if you'll look at the Congressional primary dates for this year, there was an oddly large clustering in the month of August. Looking at things rationally, why would you have a primary where people are disproportionately likely to be out of town on a vacation or totally uninterested in politics? Answer, easy; that means that no one unpredictable will vote.

DR. KAMARCK: That's exactly right. Other questions, comments? Well, I've got one. I'm fascinated by Michael's finding, Rob, about the decrease in expenditures on some of these anti-establishment Republican groups. Walter, you had a theory about why that's the case, and given that our colleague here, Darryl West, has just published a book on billionaires and their political activity, I'd like you to repeat that for the group.

MR. SHAPIRO: And this is -- I've written about this repeatedly as a fellow at the Brandan Center. I've also called upon another terrific book on super-PACs

entitled *Big Money* by Kenneth Vogel of *Politico*, and that is that the interpretation of campaign reformers is that the only reason these super-PAC donors are involved is to basically get economic self-interest and to dominate the world, and the Koch brothers will never have any government regulation.

There's enough of a hint that the reason that many of these super-PAC donors do this is rampant ego; the idea that if I'm so rich I have to be smart; therefore, I know more than the political pros. And since everyone is -- if you're at that level of a super-PAC donor, you are hyper-tax sensitive about every art you give to the Metropolitan, everything you do, how you set up trusts for your children, but in giving to super-PACs, oh, no, it doesn't matter if there are no tax consequences here. It doesn't matter if you are spending money on campaign ads in the 60 days before a general election where super-PACs pay much more than candidates because you know so much better than everyone else, and the theory -- and I think what this data illustrates is that super-PAC donors, billionaires, get bored. If they don't have enough ego rewards for their giving and political races, they're back to buying islands. They're back to buying major art. They're back to setting up elaborate trusts for their children, and that's what the Club for Growth and other groups may be witnessing.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah, well, there's one aspect of the Darryl West book on billionaires that was very striking which is the most effective political activity that they do is very quiet. It's not this money they give. It's not these candidates they campaign for. It's the tax policies they lobby for quietly and privately and get the things that help them keep their wealth and grow their wealth, and so they may be reverting to that, although I can think of one exception to your rule and that would be Sheldon Adelson who really wanted a set of policies on Israel and picked Newt Gingrich, right, because he thought that that was the best way to achieve it. I guess the real lesson

there is that he didn't get what he wanted.

DR. KAMARCK: Well -- and I think there's something else here. If they're in it for the ego and they make the investment and then the investment doesn't pan out, you can see somebody who spent their life as a businessman or sometimes woman looking at these things and saying, "Well, gee, that wasn't a very good investment," and maybe backing off from it a little bit. Rob, do you have any insight from talking to Michael about why?

MR. BOATRIGHT: We're just going through this year's information, but I think one way to think about this -- you mentioned the decline in spending by what we call anti-establishment groups. I think part of the story is that for an organization like the Club for Growth or for that matter for several of the newly formed super-PACs, these are groups that don't necessarily care about one issue, right, but they do want to show that they got results, right, that they won that race, that they were the ones responsible for defeating that person. I analgested in my book till like, you know, an episode of the Sopranos, right, where you've got somebody low-down in the gang who wants to do that hit, right, so that everybody pays attention to them, and they tie into your ego story. And there wasn't a good race to do that, right? You've got to find an incumbent who's kind of asleep at the switch so that you can spend a lot of money and surprise them other than maybe Eric Cantor who again nobody thought that he would not be paying attention.

DR. KAMARCK: Nobody thought he was asleep at the switch.

MR. BOATRIGHT: They paid attention to Tennessee, and they paid attention to -- they looked at all of these states to find incumbents that were vulnerable, but incumbents were prepared, right? So, I think after a while groups like the Club for Growth kind of gave up.

DR. KAMARCK: Interesting.

MR. SHAPIRO: One other thing I'd love -- when you talk about money and the fact that out-of-state money didn't particularly gravitate anywhere on the Democrat side this year. Maybe it did and it did not show up on any of our data. The money is going to Wendy Davis running for governor in California which doesn't fit anyone's model of where money goes.

DR. KAMARCK: Texas, yeah. Other questions, comments? We've got time for about two more. You've been a great, patient audience. Donna, got one?

MS. BRAZILE: (inaudible 00:50:23)

DR. KAMARCK: Good. Thank you for treat.

MS. BRAZILE: I'm curious in terms of all the independent (audio skips) how do you really (inaudible) those of us(inaudible)?

MR. SHAPIRO: I had the Campaign Finance Institute staff working for me, so I actually can't give you the technical details of it, but Brendan do you want to say how you did it?

DR. KAMARCK: Yes, give him the microphone.

MR. GLAVIN: I thought this was one of those "If you tell us, we'll have to kill you," moments.

MR. SHAPIRO: This is Brendan Glavin from the Campaign Finance Institute.

MR. GLAVIN: Well, we take the information from the Federal Election Commission, and the independent expenditures are filed electronically, and then it's available pretty much as soon as it's filed, and they aggregate the data and update it regularly, but then you have to download it and parse it out.

DR. KAMARCK: Is it filed in real time? Is it filed with the FEC in real time?

MR. GAVIN: When it's filed it will become -- the raw file becomes available, but then there's a delay on getting an aggregate file that's usable.

DR. KAMARCK: And what's the delay?

MR. GAVIN: Every day the file is updated.

MS. BRAZILE: (inaudible) days out or is it pretty much (inaudible)?

MR. GAVIN: You really start to see -- really start to see come in with the general election, although a lot of that is with the party committees, but certainly there's a lot more of it now than the old years past. It'd be just a drip up until the fall. Now it's more of a steady stream.

DR. KAMARCK: Thank you. One more question? Okay, we have -- sorry. I wanted to get somebody new, but that's -- right up here.

QUESTIONER: How's it going? My name's Juwad. I'm a student at Georgetown University. I wanted to ask -- I know a couple times it's been brought up -- the nationalization of sort of Congressional primary politics, and while it's been kind of a critical tone towards it, do you think that at least a nationalization of those kind of politics will more ideas to increasing voter turnout in these Congressional primaries?

QUESTIONER: I would actually say the opposite. The nationalization that we've seen, it's like a top line in a poll. It's so superficial. There are places like Michigan where you do see a little bit of localization because the economy's been so bad, and that -- people are intensely interested in whether they're going to have a job in Michigan.

In Maine in sort of an inadvertently hilarious development, the person who won the Democrat nomination in Maine two had alphabetized her page of issues, so her first one was agriculture, and that meant that the first thing you saw when you went to her website was Maine potatoes and Maine blueberries. And so you had these little

anomalies, and I think that those -- there were places where there was water issues or there were these local issues every once in a while, and I think that that gives voters something to latch onto actually, but there's no pork-barrel spending now, and there's no -- it's very generic, very kind of top-line.

MR. SHAPIRO: And Jill and I talked about this a bit. I think there's more localization in areas of economic hardship. For example, the Republican race in West Virginia two, which just runs across the entire center of the state, was protecting our coal industry -- played a major, major role. How do I say this? In the Republican primary in Idaho coal did not come up as an issue. But there is a sense of this but there is also a sense of too many candidates. When they do have issue pages, we never did the actual plagiarism search, but one suggests that many of them were downloaded from centralized websites and a few words would be changed like instead of the Democrats, we'll fight for -- candidate X we'll fight for.

DR. KAMARCK: I'd like to thank our panelists and participants: Robert, Walter, Jill. I'd also like to tell the audience and the webcast audience that there are four papers available on the Brookings website, the Campaign Finance Institute website, where you can hear more of this, see more of this, get the charts, tweet them and re-tweet them please, and I want to thank all of you for being a very attentive audience for a longish session in the afternoon, but particularly our panelists and our scholars. Thank you. (Applause)

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