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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UTAH'S PRIMARY ELECTIONS

by

Owen B. Daw

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Political Science

Approved:

~~Major Professor~~

~~Head of Department~~

~~Dean of Graduate Studies~~

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1968

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Owen B. Daw

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ABSTRACT

A Comparative Study of Utah's Primary Elections

by

Owen B. Daw, Master of Arts

Utah State University, 1968

Major Professor: Dr. JeDon Emenhiser  
Department: Political Science

The advantage of the incumbent in gaining re-nomination and voter participation in primary elections was studied. Six states, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Montana, and Washington were used as examples of different types of primaries during the years compared.

There seemed to be no significant difference in the voter participation between the open and closed primaries. The other factors which influence voting behavior affected voter turnout more than the type of primary did.

The incumbent advantage was slightly greater in the open primary, but not enough to be statistically significant.

The closed primary of 1966 in Utah did affect the amount of voter participation slightly, but probably due more to a lack of understanding of the primary than a protest of it.

(95 pages)

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

The basic difference between the totalitarian "democracies" and the type of democracy that we know in the United States is not in the power to vote, but in the power to nominate. In some totalitarian states the voters are encouraged-- even forced-- to vote, but their choice is an empty one because often there is no choice, only a ratification of the ruling power's slate of candidates. Because a man must be nominated before he can be elected, it is at this level that real political power lies. Bone quotes Theodore Roosevelt on this subject:

The right of popular government is incomplete, unless it includes the right of the voters not merely to choose between candidates when they have been nominated, but also the right to determine who these candidates shall be.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps more than ever before in our history the Electorate now has the opportunity not only to elect, but to nominate. The direct primary permits the average voter to express his wishes on who shall be the ones to run for public office.

The direct primary exists in many forms and variations. All those connected with it are not completely pleased with the method of its operation. One variation, the closed primary,

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<sup>1</sup>Hugh A. Bone, American Politics and the Party System (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955), p. 395.

caused a great deal of controversy in Utah in 1966. During the 1965 legislature a closed primary was adopted, commonly called the Primary Registration Law of Utah. Many citizens became indignant and felt that their rights had been destroyed and that the law was "un-American" because they were obligated to declare publicly their party affiliation.<sup>2</sup>

This study is undertaken with the purpose of exploring some of the facets of the direct primary and perhaps discovering things not previously known and documenting some of the things that are only accepted on faith. The response of the voters varies from year to year. What makes them turn out more for one election than another? What are the variables that influence voting behavior? It is well-known that the incumbent has an advantage for re-election, but how big is this advantage and does it change with variations in the type of primary? How often have the parties denied the nomination to the incumbent?

Utah will be compared to several states in this study. The states were chosen on the basis of (1) geographical proximity to Utah and (2) examples of both similar and contrasting systems of primary election.

There are a few obstacles which make a study of this kind difficult. Perhaps foremost of these is the fact that many public records are incomplete or unavailable. It seems impossible to go back farther than 1956 in Utah to find the

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<sup>2</sup>Letters to the Editor, Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Sept. 19, 20 and 22, 1966).

number of registered voters. Other states have similar problems in finding the number of registered voters. Where these figures are not available, attempt has been made to establish accurate figures by taking census figures for the years involved, taking averages and percents for the known years, and assuming the same ratios for the unknown years.

The number of registered voters in Utah in 1954 is not available. This figure was computed by taking the years 1952 and 1956 through 1966 (percent of registered voters to population) and assuming the same ratio for 1954.

It is noted that some of the official figures given for the number of registered voters may be inaccurate. Utah, Nevada, and New Mexico list only one figure for the number of registered voters in a given year; each of these states permits voter registration between the time of the primary election and the general election,<sup>3</sup> so the number of registered voters should be different for each election. The figures for Washington and Montana include the number of registered voters for each election so these figures are accurate.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the figures on the number of voters voting may be inaccurate. Where there is no official listing of the numbers of ballots cast, the total vote for the highest office of that

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<sup>3</sup>Election Abstracts for the States of Utah, Nevada, and New Mexico.

<sup>4</sup>Election Abstracts for the States of Washington and Montana.

election is used as the basis of the number of ballots cast. Voters do not always vote for every office or issue on a ballot. There are always some who "fall off" or do not vote on a particular office or issue.<sup>5</sup> As an example of this, a survey was taken in the State of Washington showing the number of voters which fell off during the 1964 election. In that year 18,400 persons cast ballots but did not vote for the office of President of the United States. The fall off was less than 01.44 percent. The greatest amount of fall off in this election was on a vote for a Senate Resolution where 326,839 did not vote on the measure for a fall off of 25.59 percent.<sup>6</sup>

The number of registered voters in Oklahoma seems abnormally high. The number of registered voters is based on only one known year, 1964, and this same ratio between population and voters is assumed for the other years. The average in that year was 51.1 percent of the population registered to vote. Because it was a presidential election year and it is unusually high, its validity is in question, but it is based on the best information available.

Conditions and laws vary from state to state and from time to time in the same state. This makes a study somewhat difficult as the factors which may influence voter turnout and incumbency advantage are not easily compared. Areas that have strong one-

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<sup>5</sup>Lewis A. Froman, Jr., Congressmen and Their Constituencies, (Chicago, Rand McNally & Co. 1963), p. 20-35.

<sup>6</sup>Election Abstracts, State of Washington, (Olympia, Washington), November 3, 1964.

party politics will have a different background from that of a two-party state; states which allow the parties to limit the choice of candidates to two by the use of a convention will have factors not found in other states; some state constitutions forbid certain offices to succeed themselves or limit the number of terms of office.

Finally it is impossible to determine exactly why citizens in a free society respond the way they do. Certainly reasons may be propounded, surveys taken, and voting behavior studied. Still, the reasons why voters turn out, or do not turn out, or vote the way they do, are left to a reasonable estimate by the author.

The direct primary has become so much a part of the American system of nomination that many citizens regard it as a part of our rights as citizens to be able to choose candidates to run for election to public office.<sup>7</sup> It is a vital part in the election of those who will make the choices of government for us. It should be important to the voting citizen that he understand the system of primary election so that he can make meaningful choices in it. The suspicion, distrust, and hostility shown by the Utah citizens toward the Party Registration Law in 1966, would indicate a gross misunderstanding of the closed primary. To call a primary election system used by 43 states "Un-American" reveals that part of our citizenry is uninformed on some of the procedures of our American Government.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>"Letters to the Editor", op. cit.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

It is hoped that this study may shed some light on the aspects of primary election which relate to the advantage the officeholder has for re-nomination by the party and to the response of the voters in supporting the primary election itself.

It is of the opinion of some that there is little difference, if any, in the size of vote between open and closed primary states indicating that the form of the primary is not a determining factor.<sup>9</sup> This study will test this opinion and determine if it is valid in the states to be tested.

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<sup>9</sup>H. Bone and A. Ranney, Politics and Voters (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 114-116.



CHAPTER II  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIRECT PRIMARY  
Background of the Direct Primary

In America's political history several methods have been used to nominate candidates for public office. The three principal methods are (1) the caucus, (2) the convention, and (3) the direct primary.

The earliest method was the caucus. This dates back to pre-revolutionary days with election to city councils or colonial assemblies. The caucus was an informal gathering of party, faction, or community leaders at which it was agreed to support a candidate or proposal. Members of state legislatures met in a party caucus to designate nominees for state office.<sup>1</sup>

The predominate mode of designating candidates from 1825 to 1910 was the party convention. The convention is a body of persons chosen by the members of the party in caucus or primary election to make nominations for offices in the area which it represents. Conventions also take on the function of drawing up party platforms which represent the feeling of the party faithful.<sup>2</sup>

Behind the scenes of the convention a few leaders continued

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<sup>1</sup>Bone and Ranney, 110 - 111.

<sup>2</sup>H. Bone, American Politics and the Party System, third ed. (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1965), p. 280-282.

to meet as before in caucus and propose slates, which the rank and file delegates might accept. With this difference, however, a larger and more representative segment of the party had the opportunity to ratify or veto the leaders' choices. Conventions are temporary bodies and are dissolved as soon as their work is finished.<sup>3</sup> The national party conventions are still among our nation's institutions.

Though the convention offered a chance to democratize nominations, it failed to elicit wide-spread popular enthusiasm. Voters did not go to the polls in large numbers to choose delegates and many considered it uninteresting. Public-spirited members of the party too often did not seek a place in the convention. Sometimes those who were delegates found themselves hopelessly outnumbered and ineffective. Out of the dissatisfaction with the convention method grew a demand to place nominations on a more democratic basis; the device for developing this was the direct primary.<sup>4</sup>

#### Description of the Direct Primary

The essence of the direct primary is the selection of candidates by the voters themselves. This is done by permitting the general electorate to go to the polls as is done on the general election day and by casting ballots to "elect" the

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<sup>3</sup>Ostrogorskii, M., Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties, Vol. II: The United States, (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964) p. 75.

<sup>4</sup>John R. Owens, The American Party System, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1965) p. 54.

nominee. The primaries of the different parties are commonly held on the same day, and at the same place where the regular elections are held later; they are administered by the regular election officials, with costs met by the public treasury; the ballots are similar to those used in regular elections; and the same corrupt-practice laws and other safeguards apply.<sup>5</sup>

Persons seeking nomination to an office may get their names on the primary ballot, in some cases, simply by self announcement and perhaps the payment of a fee; or they may have been picked at some sort of caucus or preliminary convention. Ordinarily the candidate with the highest number of votes is declared the nominee, although in some states a majority is required, so in these states a run-off is often needed.<sup>6</sup>

Until 1960 it was possible in a few states for a candidate to enter the primary of both parties or to "cross-file" and thus receive the nomination from either or both the major parties. California was the last state to permit this practice. It was found that cross-filing gave the advantage to incumbents of the dominate party and to candidates who were especially well known.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Bone, p. 281

<sup>6</sup>Key, p. 392.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

### Variations of the Direct Primary

There are two general types of direct primary -- the open and the closed. The open is one in which no test is made of party allegiance and anyone may vote in any party without pre-condition other than normal suffrage requirements. The closed primary is one in which the voter must, by some means, declare his party affiliation and vote only for one of that party's candidates for nomination. While his vote is secret, his party choice is not.

Washington has the so-called "blanket," or wide-open, primary in which voters may choose from all parties. Candidates are grouped by office and partisans and independents are placed in the same column. The highest candidate from each party meet in the general election.<sup>8</sup> This would mean that if the second highest candidate were to be of the same party as the highest, he would not run in the general election.

The closed primary is the older of the two types and is one in which the voter must "declare" his party before he can vote. Party leaders fear "raiding" by the other party to nominate the weakest candidate to give the opposite party a better chance in the general election. To prevent this they feel that if the voter is limited to his own party he cannot cross the line. Party leaders also desire a list of party members prior to the election. Two principal methods are used in the closed

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<sup>8</sup>Bone and Ranney, p. 281.

primary. The first is the advanced enrollment type in which the voters must declare their party prior to the election. The time required varies, but usually not less than three months previous to the election. When the voters come to the polls, they receive only the ballot of the party to which they belong. The second is the challenge system in which voters are merely asked by the election clerk with which party they are affiliated and then they are given the ballot of that party.<sup>9</sup> Poll watchers from that party may challenge the voter to support his statement by recalling party candidates he has voted for in the past.

In some cases persons are required to state that they intend to support the candidates of their particular party. Either of these two procedures can be flouted by persons of easy conscience if there is sufficient motive; the second method is particularly weak.<sup>10</sup>

Some states, such as Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico, in order to limit the number of candidates in the primary and increase party responsibility, have adopted a combination of the convention and the primary. The party meets in convention prior to the primary election and nominates two persons whose names will be placed on the primary ballot. The voters then have a choice between the two party candidates. Independents may run

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<sup>9</sup>Clarence P. Berdahl, "Party Membership in the U.S.," American Political Science Review, XXXVI (1942), p. 28-31.

<sup>10</sup>Austin Ranney, "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System: A Commentary," American Political Science Review XLV, No. 2 (June 1951) p. 489.

by filing a petition, but without party endorsement.<sup>11</sup>

Connecticut, the last of the 50 states to accept the direct primary, operates mostly by convention, but has provision for the primary when requested by a candidate who received at least 20 percent of the convention vote. This is called a "challenge" primary and means the loser in the convention may challenge the winner in a primary. The primary is seldom used in Connecticut and has never been used for statewide office.<sup>12</sup>

The open primary is used in Alaska, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Utah, and Wisconsin. Washington employs the blanket primary which is a variation of the open primary. The closed primary is used in the remaining 43 states.<sup>13</sup>

#### History of the Direct Primary

The direct primary was first used in Crawford County, Pennsylvania, by the Democrats from 1842 to 1850. The Republicans picked up the idea and began using it in 1860 in Crawford County.<sup>14</sup> Even though the primary was an apparent success in Crawford County, it was not until 1903 that Wisconsin, under the leadership of LaFollette, became the first state to adopt the direct primary for statewide offices.

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<sup>11</sup>Utah Code Annotated, 1953, 20-3-38.

<sup>12</sup>Alvin Dozeman, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Connecticut, Letter to the Writer, June 16, 1967.

<sup>13</sup>The Book of the States, 1966-1967, Vol. XVI, (Chicago, Illinois), Council of State Government.

<sup>14</sup>Wm. D. Goodman, The Two Party System in the U.S. (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1956), p. 126.

By 1909, 22 states had adopted the system and by 1917 every state but four had enacted similar laws. All states have adopted the direct primary in some form; the last to adopt it was Connecticut in 1955, although it still depends primarily on the convention.<sup>15</sup> The primary spread more rapidly through the West where social and economic dissent was greater, and it was more slowly adopted in the states along the eastern seaboard where the political parties were more firmly established.<sup>16</sup>

The fact that Utah did not accept the direct primary until 1937 is perhaps an indication that it is a conservative state in the midst of more liberal states of the West.

#### Problems of the Direct Primary

The direct primary is found nationwide and seems to be preferred by the voters. There are, however, problems that must be resolved by each political division to bring about effective operation of the direct primary. These problems include such things as cost of administering the election, the voter turnout to the primary, and provisions for the party to organize itself.

The direct primary costs more than other methods of nomination. The cost is greater both to the public and to the candidates. One of the arguments for change from the convention was that the direct primary would permit anyone to run and pave the way for those who could not afford to compete for nomination

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<sup>15</sup>Clarence P. Berdahl, p. 16-50.

<sup>16</sup>Bone, p. 281.

under the convention system. It has been found, however, that the cost of nomination is greater, because the candidate conducts two campaigns instead of one. This is made more difficult because the primary campaign is made without having party funds available to the candidate. This means that candidates with financial backing are still favored.<sup>17</sup>

The cost to the public is much greater. Election supplies must be furnished and ballots printed; judges and election personnel must be paid; polling places must be rented or maintained. Money, which formerly came from private donations to the party, now must come from the public treasury.

The voter turnout to the primaries generally has been much smaller than to the general election. There is a feeling that the primaries are less important than the general election. Adoption of the direct primary left the way open for all voters to share with party leadership in the selection of candidates. The assumption was that the voters would be happy for such an opportunity and would turn out in large numbers to participate. The extent of popular participation in the primary differs from state to state and from time to time. In over two-thirds of the primaries to nominate gubernatorial candidates in a group of non-southern states from 1926 to 1952, one study shows that less than 35 percent of the potential voters participated in one or the other of the major party primaries.<sup>18</sup> Another study made in 1954 shows

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<sup>17</sup> Stanley Kelly, Jr., Political Campaigning (Menasha, Wisconsin: The Brookings Institute, 1960), p. 35-36.

<sup>18</sup> Key, p. 378.



that typically a primary election gets less than 50 percent of the potential vote.<sup>19</sup>

Under the direct primary there is no provision made for the political parties to organize themselves for the purpose of drawing up a party platform or to agree on methods of campaigning. This is essential if the party is to exist as an influential political body. This is solved in different ways by different state organizations. Platforms may be drawn up by a post-primary convention, by the state central committee, by the primary winners themselves, or by caucus of holdover officeholders and nominated candidates.<sup>20</sup>

#### Criticism of the Direct Primary

The system is extremely prejudicial to the smaller parties. For them it is both unnecessary and unsuitable, for there are rarely any contests among them. Direct primaries are regulated by state laws, which in many instances run counter to party principles. As an example, some parties require that in order to make party choices, the members must be in good standing, which often means the payment of dues and other requirements. The state laws do not provide for any such requirement and the parties themselves may not keep anyone from voting in the public

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<sup>19</sup>Quincy Howe and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Guide to Politics (New York: Dial Press, 1954), p. 115.

<sup>20</sup>C. E. Merriam, The American Party System (New York: Macmillan Co., 1922), p. 266-267.

primary.<sup>21</sup>

Many criticisms have been offered against the open primary, particularly by party workers. They feel that a primary should not involve "outsiders" in the settling of intra-party quarrels; they argue, rightly or wrongly, that party responsibility and self-control are broken down under this method. The primary is open to raiding and there is a real or imagined fear that the other party will cross party lines to elect a weak candidate. While this has certainly been done on occasions, it is not commonly done, and it is more common for private interest to enter open primaries to defeat unfriendly candidates.<sup>22</sup>

Strong partisans from those areas in a state in which a party is dominant tend to vote in primaries in especially high degree. Primary winners may, thus, reflect a particular strain of party outlook or type of party follower. The standpat conservative may control; metropolitan ethnics may prevail; or some other sector of the party may give the dominant tone to state primary results. Candidates capable of popular triumph in the primary under such circumstances may not be a strong candidate before the larger electorate in the general election. The party, in convention could decide on a well-balanced ticket that would bring popular support. The primaries do not insure well-balanced tickets and to that extent are not effective

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<sup>21</sup>Maurice Duverger, Political Parties, Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1963), p. 362-363.

<sup>22</sup>Bone, p. 409-410.

agencies for nominating candidates.<sup>23</sup>

### Summary

In summary, it would seem that the direct primary is here to stay. The party officials have recognized this and have directed their attentions in trying to obtain control of the primaries and get the type of primary which will give them the greatest amount of control. There is no serious effort being made at present to eliminate the direct primary altogether.<sup>24</sup> It is evident that the general voter is satisfied with the present system even though voter response at the polls has not been large.

The courts have recognized the legality of the primary. In the case of U.S. vs. Classic, the Supreme Court recognized that the primary in some states effectively controlled the choice of the person elected and that the primary was an integral part of election.<sup>25</sup>

The goal of the primary was to extend the power of nomination, which is the real political power, to the electorate and thus democratize the nominating procedure. This is not, of course, to infer that the previous systems caused the political system to be undemocratic. As Key says:

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<sup>23</sup>Key, p. 379.

<sup>24</sup>Bone, p. 409.

<sup>25</sup>383 U.S. 299 (1941)

A democratic popular choice between parties existed even though the intraparty procedures for the designation of candidates were quite undemocratic.<sup>26</sup>

The direct primary has brought forth more candidates than did the older system and this has made the voters' task greater. It has greatly increased election cost to both government and the candidate. The primary system sometimes results in a victory over bossism and the machines; but more often the bosses and machines, where they did exist at all, are still able, by various methods, to maintain effective control over nominations.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Key, p. 377.

<sup>27</sup>Duverger, p. 88.

CHAPTER III  
INCUMBENT ADVANTAGE

The incumbent running for re-election has quite an advantage over the non-incumbent. First, he has a base from which to operate. His staff, employed at public expense, provides an excellent nucleus for a campaign. Second, he has generally established himself as a winner and an officeholder with the prestige of the office. Third, he is established with the party and has some measure of control in the party.

It is an accepted fact among party workers that the incumbent has an advantage and is, in fact, one of the cardinal tenets of the nation's political folklore.<sup>1</sup> The incumbent is rarely defeated for nomination and the chances are fairly good that he will be unopposed for the nomination, which means that he will not have to run in the primary. This eliminates intra-party dissension caused by a campaign and saves the expense of running two campaigns.

One study shows that on the average four of five candidates for Representative who win are already House members.<sup>2</sup> This advantage even carries over where a presidential candidate carries a state in a national election. When the incumbent belongs to the same party as a winning presidential candidate, the chances

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<sup>1</sup>M. C. Cummings Jr., Congressmen and the Electorate (New York: The Free Press, 1966), p. 57.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

of his winning are better than 97 percent. When the incumbent belongs to the opposite party of the winning presidential candidate, his chances of winning are over 83 percent.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the only exception to the advantage enjoyed by an incumbent is in those areas where one party controls. In these areas the advantage is not as great. Where the party nomination means the election, the contest for office really takes place in the primary. While the incumbent is more apt to have a race in these areas, he still has an advantage over the non-incumbent.

This same study shows the following figures for incumbent and non-incumbent house nominees.

Table 1. The Fate of Congressional Candidates of the Party that Lost the Presidency 1924-1964

Number of Districts	Number of Incumbents who:		Number of Non-Incumbents who:	
	Ran	Won	Ran	Won
3,853	1,540	1,282 (83.2%)	1,910	208 (10.9%)

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

Table 2. The Fate of Congressional Candidates of the Party that Won the Presidency 1924-1964

Number of Districts	Number of Incumbents who:			Number of Non-Incumbents who:		
	Ran	Won	Lost	Ran	Won	Lost
3,853	1,872	1,811(97.3%)	61	1,669	529(31.6%)	1,440

#### Tests of Incumbency

Two things can be used to test incumbent advantage. One is the number of times that the incumbent candidate has been unopposed in the party primary, signifying that the candidate has strong support in his own party and no one dares challenge him. Because there are some offices which are not attractive and as such do not draw much interest of prospective candidates, only the major state offices are included in this analysis. Occasionally candidates are elected without opposition both in the primary and in the general election. These candidates are not included in this study because there is not enough of a contest to warrant consideration in the advantage of incumbency in seeking re-election.

For these reasons, the number of state offices shown is not always the total number of possible state offices, but only the number of major contested offices. For instance, in Oklahoma, there may be as many as 27 candidates for public office in a given year. Typically 14 of these 27 offices will be filled by Democrats without opposition both in the

primary and in the general election.<sup>4</sup>

The second test of incumbent advantage is to compare the number of times that the incumbent has lost in the party primary. Is the obstacle of the party primary more difficult for the incumbent or the non-incumbent?

It is noted that in the case of the non-incumbent who seeks office, many have been incumbent in another office or previously held the same office. Many times an officeholder will seek a higher office, such as a representative who runs for senator, etc. These are not considered as incumbents in this study. The incumbent is considered to be the man who is running for re-election to the same office which he holds.

#### Incumbents Receiving the Party Nomination Without Opposition

##### Utah 1938-1946

Utah has had two different methods of primary election. The first, adopted in 1937, was a direct primary with a run-off. The second, adopted in 1947, is a combination of a convention and a primary. Because of the differences in selecting candidates during these two periods, they will be discussed separately.

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<sup>4</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Oklahoma, 1950-1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



Table 3. Comparison of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Nomination in Utah by Primary 1938-1946<sup>5</sup>

Number of Incumbents		Number of Incumbents Seeking Re-election		Number and Percent of Incumbents Unopposed	
N=20		N=15		N=8 (53%)	
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem	Rep.
19	1	14	1	8 (57.1%)	0 (0%)
Number of Non-Incumbents Seeking Election			Number and Percent of Non-Incumbents Unopposed		
N=25			N=6 (24%)		
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
5	19	2 (40%)	4 (21.1%)		

The offices considered here are Senator, Representative (2), Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General. The Treasurer and Auditor by law may not succeed themselves, hence could not be an incumbent candidate for re-election. During this period the Democratic party was dominant. This was during the Roosevelt Era and Democratic policies prevailed.

The incumbents ran unopposed more than twice as often as did the non-incumbents. There were not enough Republican office-holders to really make a fair test of incumbency for that party. For the Democrats, the advantage of incumbency was typical of states where one party dominates.

<sup>5</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Utah, 1938-1946, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Utah 1948 to 1966Table 4. Comparison of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Nomination in Utah by Primary 1948-1966<sup>6</sup>

Number of Incumbents		Number of Incumbents Seeking Re-election		Number and Percent of Incumbents Unopposed	
N=41		N=31		N=18 (58%)	
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
15	26	14	17	8 (57.1%)	10 (58.8%)
Number of Non-Incumbents Seeking Election			Number and Percent of Non-Incumbents Unopposed		
N=51			N=8 (15.7%)		
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
27	24	4 (14.8%)		4 (16.6%)	

The offices considered were the same as those of the period 1938-1946.

From these figures one can see that the incumbent ran unopposed more than three times as often as the non-incumbent. During this period, there is very little difference in the percent of wins of the parties.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 1948-1966.

Table 5. Incumbent Wins and Losses in Six States for the Period Shown

State	Years	Incumbents	Incumbents Seeking Re-election	Incumbents Winning Primary	Incumbents Losing Primary
Utah	1938-1966	61	46	44	2
Nevada	1952-1966	41	29	29	0
Montana	1950-1960	46	31	29	0
Oklahoma	1952-1962	56	44	40	4
Washington	1952-1966	68	56	56	0
New Mexico	1954-1966	36	26	26	0
Total		<u>308</u>	<u>232</u>	<u>224</u>	<u>6</u>

Table 6. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Utah 1938-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 20	observed 62	82
	expected 31.3	expected 52.7	
Unopposed	observed 26	observed 14	40
	expected 14.7	expected 24.3	
Total	46	76	122

Chi Square = 17.96 ( $P < .001$ )

Table 7. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Utah 1938-1946

	Incumbent		Non-Incumbent		Total
Opposed	observed	7	observed	19	26
	expected	9.7	expected	16.3	
Unopposed	observed	8	observed	6	14
	expected	5.2	expected	8.7	
Total		15		25	40

Chi Square = 3.39 (P < .10)

Table 8. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Utah 1947-1966

	Incumbent		Non-Incumbent		Total
Opposed	observed	13	observed	43	56
	expected	28	expected	34.8	
Unopposed	observed	18	observed	8	26
	expected	13	expected	16.2	
Total		31		51	82

Chi Square = 45.67 (P < .0001)

Table 9. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Utah (Republican) 1938-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 8	observed 3.5	43
	expected 12.69	expected 30.31	
Unopposed	observed 10	observed 8	18
	expected 5.31	expected 12.69	
Total	18	43	61

Chi Square = 6.94 ( $P < .01$ )

Table 10. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Utah (Democrat) 1938-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 12	observed 26	38
	expected 17.73	expected 9.27	
Unopposed	observed 16	observed 6	22
	expected 10.27	expected 11.72	
Total	28	32	60

Chi Square = 11.39 ( $P < .01$ )

Table 11. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Utah (Republican) 1938-1946

	Incumbent		Non-Incumbent		Total
Opposed	observed	1.0	observed	15	16
	expected	0.8	expected	15.2	
Unopposed	observed	0.0	observed	4	4
	expected	0.2	expected	3.8	
Total		1.0		19	20

Chi Square = .21 ( $P < .65$ )

Table 12. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Utah (Democrat) 1938-1946

	Incumbent		Non-Incumbent		Total
Opposed	observed	6	observed	3	9
	expected	6.63	expected	2.37	
Unopposed	observed	8	observed	2	10
	expected	7.37	expected	2.63	
Total		14		5	19

Chi Square = 5.50 ( $P > .02$ )

Table 13. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Utah (Republican) 1947-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 7	observed 20	27
	expected 11.19	expected 15.81	
Unopposed	observed 10	observed 4	14
	expected 5.81	expected 8.19	
Total	17	24	41

Chi Square = 7.84 (P < .01)

Table 14. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Utah (Democrat) 1948-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 6	observed 23	29
	expected 9.90	expected 19.10	
Unopposed	observed 8	observed 4	12
	expected 4.10	expected 7.90	
Total	14	27	41

Chi Square = 8.07 (P < .01)

Nevada 1952 to 1966Table 15. Comparison of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Nomination in Nevada by Primary 1952-1966<sup>7</sup>

Number of Offices		Number of Incumbents Seeking Re-election		Number and Percent of Incumbents Unopposed	
N=41		N=29		N=18 (62.0%)	
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
30	11	21	8	11 (52.4%)	7 (87.5%)
Number of Non-Incumbents Seeking Election		Number and Percent of Non-Incumbents Unopposed			
N=53		N=23 (39.8%)			
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
20	33	2 (10%)	21 (63.3%)		

The offices considered here are Senator, Representative (1), Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer, Controller, State Printer, and Mine Inspector.

The incumbent ran unopposed 1.5 times more than the non-incumbent. The Democrats had the edge on office holding and the Republicans ran unopposed more often. Both parties, however, gave a distinct advantage to the incumbent.

<sup>7</sup>Data taken from A Political History of Nevada, 1965, Issued by John Koontz, Secretary of State (Nevada State Printing Office) and from Election Abstracts, State of Nevada, Carson City, Nevada.



Table 16. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Nevada 1952-1966

	Incumbent		Non-Incumbent		Total
Opposed	observed	11	observed	30	51
	expected	14.5	expected	26.5	
Unopposed	observed	18	observed	23	41
	expected	14.5	expected	26.5	
Total		29		53	82

Chi Square = 2.67 (P > .10)

Table 17. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
In Nevada (Republican) 1952-1960

	Incumbent		Non-Incumbent		Total
Opposed	observed	1	observed	11	12
	expected	2.40	expected	9.60	
Unopposed	observed	7	observed	21	28
	expected	5.60	expected	22.40	
Total		8		32	40

Chi Square = 1.46 (P > .25)

Table 18. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Nevada (Democrat) 1952-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 10	observed 18	28
	expected 14.34	expected 13.66	
Unopposed	observed 11	observed 2	13
	expected 6.66	expected 6.34	
Total	21	20	41

Chi Square = 8.49 ( $P < .01$ )

Montana 1950 to 1960Table 19. Comparison of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Nomination in Montana by Primary 1950-1960<sup>8</sup>

Number of Offices	Number of Incumbents Seeking Re-election		Number and Percent of Incumbents Unopposed	
N=46	N=31		N=15 (48.4%)	
Dem.    Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
30      16	23	8	10 (43.5%)	5 (62.5%)
Number of Non-Incumbents Seeking Election	Number and Percent of Non-Incumbents Unopposed			
N=61	N=19 (31.1%)			
Dem.    Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
23      38	3 (13.0%)		18 (47.3%)	

The offices considered are Senator, Representative (2), Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer, and Auditor.

It is interesting to compare Nevada and Montana, because each has a slight edge of Democratic officeholders. In each the incumbent ran unopposed about 1.5 times as often as the non-incumbent. Although the incumbent has the advantage in each party, the minority party non-incumbent is unopposed more often than the majority party incumbent.

<sup>8</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Montana, 1950-1966, Helena, Montana.

Table 20. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Montana 1950-1960

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 16	observed 42	58
	expected 19.5	expected 38.4	
Unopposed	observed 15	observed 19	34
	expected 11.4	expected 22.5	
Total	31	61	92

Chi Square = 3.34 ( $P < .10$ )

Table 21. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Montana (Republican) 1950-1960

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 3	observed 20	23
	expected 4	expected 19	
Unopposed	observed 5	observed 18	23
	expected 4	expected 19	
Total	8	38	46

Chi Square = 1.00 ( $P < .50$ )

Table 22. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Montana (Democrat) 1950-1960

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 13	observed 20	33
	expected 16.50	expected 16.50	
Unopposed	observed 10	observed 3	13
	expected 6.50	expected 6.50	
Total	23	23	46

Chi Square = 4.56 ( $P < .05$ )

Oklahoma 1952 to 1962Table 23. Comparison of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Nomination in Oklahoma by Primary 1952-1962<sup>9</sup>

Incumbents		Number of Incumbents Seeking Re-election		Number and Percent of Incumbents Unopposed	
N=56		N=44		N=13 (29.5%)	
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
49	7	38	6	8 (21.0%)	5 (83.3%)
Number of Non-Incumbents Seeking Election		Number and Percent of Non-Incumbents Unopposed			
N=68		N=29 (42.6%)			
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.		
18	50	1 (05.5%)	28 (56.0%)		

The offices considered are Senator, Representative (6), Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer, and Auditor.

In the figures for both parties it seems that the incumbent has no advantage over the non-incumbent. A closer look at the party figures, however, shows that in each party the incumbent does have the advantage. The real race for election is in the primary of the majority party. The incumbent has less of a chance in running unopposed than in other states, but the non-incumbent has almost no chance of running unopposed. In the minority party the chances are very good to run without opposition. There is not much of a contest to be a candidate in a

<sup>9</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Oklahoma, 1952-1966.

losing cause.

Table 24. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Oklahoma 1952-1962

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 31	observed 39	70
	expected 27.5	expected 42.5	
Unopposed	observed 13	observed 29	42
	expected 16.5	expected 25.5	
Total	44	68	112

Chi Square = 1.96 (P > 2.0)

Table 25. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in Oklahoma (Republican) 1952-1962

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 1	observed 22	23
	expected 2.46	expected 20.54	
Unopposed	observed 5	observed 28	33
	expected 3.54	expected 29.46	
Total	6	50	56

Chi Square = 1.63 (P > .21)

Table 26. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Oklahoma (Democrat) 1952-1962

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 30	observed 17	47
	expected 32	expected 15	
Unopposed	observed 8	observed 1	9
	expected 6	expected 3	
Total	38	18	56

Chi Square = 2.40 (P > .12)



New Mexico 1954 to 1966Table 27. Comparison of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Nomination in New Mexico by Primary 1954-1966<sup>10</sup>

Number of Offices		Number of Incumbents Seeking Re-election		Number and Percent of Incumbents Unopposed	
N=36		N=26		N=18 (69.2%)	
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
36	2	24	2	16 (66.7%)	2 (100%)
Number of Non-Incumbents Seeking Election		Number and Percent of Non-Incumbents Unopposed			
N=46		N=18 (39.1%)			
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Rep.	
12	34	2 (17.7%)		16 (47.0%)	

The offices considered are Senator, Representative, and Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer, and Attorney General for some of the years. By law the state officers may not serve for more than two terms or four years. These state officers were dropped from consideration in those years where the incumbent was not eligible to run for re-election. This law gives the non-incumbent a tremendous advantage in gaining the nomination.

The overall advantage of the incumbent is nearly twice that of the non-incumbent. The Republicans have held so few offices that the statistics of their part are not truly meaningful.

<sup>10</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of New Mexico, 1954-1966, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The incumbent advantage on the Democratic side is nearly four times that of the non-incumbent. It seems that the pre-primary convention enhances the position of the incumbent in New Mexico.

Table 28. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in New Mexico 1954-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 8	observed 28	36
	expected 13.0	expected 23.0	
Unopposed	observed 18	observed 18	36
	expected 13.0	expected 23.0	
Total	26	46	72

Chi Square = 6.00 (P < .02)

Table 29. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in New Mexico (Republican) 1954-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 0	observed 14	14
	expected .87	expected 13.13	
Unopposed	observed 2	observed 16	18
	expected 1.13	expected 16.87	
Total	2	30	32

Chi Square = 1.70 ( $P < .20$ )

Table 30. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage in New Mexico (Democrat) 1954-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 8	observed 32	40
	expected 16.55	expected 23.45	
Unopposed	observed 16	observed 2	18
	expected 7.45	expected 10.55	
Total	24	34	58

Chi Square = 24.25 ( $P < .001$ )

Washington 1952 to 1966Table 31. Comparison of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Nomination in Washington by Primary 1952-1966<sup>11</sup>

Number of Incumbents		Number of Incumbents Seeking Re-election		Number and Percent of Incumbents Unopposed	
N=68		N=56		N=37 (66.1%)	
Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
35	33	27	29	13 (48.1%)	24 (82.7%)
Number of Non-Incumbents Seeking Election				Number and Percent of Non-Incumbents Unopposed	
N=80				N=20 (25.0%)	
Dem.		Rep.		Dem.	Rep.
41		39		10 (24.4%)	10 (25.6%)

The offices considered are Senator, Representative (7), Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, and Attorney General. The years 1954 and 1958 are not included because of lack of primary election information.

The overall incumbent advantage is well over twice that of the non-incumbent. The parties have held office nearly an equal number of times during this period. The incumbent advantage among the Democrats is exactly twice that of the non-incumbent and among Republicans more than three times.

These figures would give an indication that the control of the party is fairly strong even under the blanket primary.

<sup>11</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Washington.

Table 32. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Washington 1952-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 19	observed 60	79
	expected 32.53	expected 46.41	
Unopposed	observed 37	observed 20	57
	expected 23.47	expected 33.52	
Total	56	80	136

Chi Square = 22.13. ( $P > .001$ )

Table 33. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Washington (Republican) 1952-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 5	observed 29	34
	expected 14.5	expected 19.5	
Unopposed	observed 24	observed 10	34
	expected 14.5	expected 19.5	
Total	29	39	68

Chi Square = 21.70 ( $P > .001$ )

Table 34. Computation of Chi Square for Incumbent Advantage  
in Washington (Democrat) 1952-1966

	Incumbent	Non-Incumbent	Total
Opposed	observed 14	observed 31	45
	expected 18.0	expected 27.0	
Unopposed	observed 13	observed 10	23
	expected 9.0	expected 14.0	
Total	27	41	68

Chi Square = 4.38 (P > .03)

Incumbent Losses in the Primary

The incumbent has the advantage of prestige, patronage, seniority, and public acceptance, which makes him valuable to the party for re-nomination. Occasionally the party will not give the nomination to an incumbent. There is some problem in documenting each instance where an incumbent has fallen from party favor and has not received the nomination because personal efforts are made to "persuade" the incumbent not to run. In Connecticut, where the convention is still dominant in nomination, there is no record in recent history of a candidate being denied the nomination. There is no way to show which of the incumbents would like to have been a candidate for re-nomination, but did not seek it because the party discouraged him.<sup>12</sup>

One case in a general election where a candidate was persuaded not to run occurred in Utah in 1956. Congressman Douglas Stringfellow was caught in an embarrassing and unpolitic situation and was persuaded not to run even though he probably wanted to.<sup>13</sup>

Comment on Incumbent Losses in Utah

Utah, since the direct primary was adopted in 1937, has only twice denied the nomination to an incumbent who ran for

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<sup>12</sup>Alvin Dozeman, Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Connecticut, Letter to the Author, June, 1967.

<sup>13</sup>Frank A. Jonas, The Story of a Political Hoax (Salt Lake City, Utah, Institute of Government, University of Utah, 1966).

re-election. The first denial occurred in 1940 when the Democrats chose Abe Murdock over the incumbent Senator, William H. King. The second time was in 1956 when the Republicans chose George D. Clyde over the incumbent Governor, J. Bracken Lee.

William H. King was first elected in 1917, to represent Utah in the Senate. He had been very popular in Utah and was noted for his speaking ability. Because of his popularity and ability, he seemed to feel that he was not dependent on the party. During the period when Roosevelt came to the Presidency with his New Deal, Senator King opposed the program even though he belonged to the President's party. Because of the tremendous popularity of Roosevelt in Utah, King's stand against him seems to be the biggest reason for a defeat in 1940. The man who defeated him, Abe Murdock, had served in the House of Representatives and was a strong Roosevelt supporter there. It seems that the impact of national politics and an influential President led to the defeat of the incumbent in 1940.<sup>14</sup>

J. Bracken Lee ran for the Governorship in 1948. His opponent, R. Mabey, was the front runner in the convention by nearly 100 votes. Lee was able to gain public support and won by a large majority in the primary. Lee did not always have a reputation for being popular in the party, but was given the nomination for re-election in 1952 without opposition. In 1956, the convention vote was 348 for Lee and 318 for Clyde. Clyde won

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<sup>14</sup>Herbert B. Maw, Calvin Rawlings, and Wendell Anderson, information gathered by personal interview, July 1967.



in the primary by about 8,000 votes.

Ex-Governor Clyde feels that there were two main reasons why he was able to defeat Lee in the primary. He said that his support came from the general electorate-- Democrats crossing party lines and from Republicans--because: (1) they were "fed up" with the Lee administration, and (2) they were opposed to a Governor running for a third term.<sup>15</sup>

In the primary election there were 117,355 Republican and 78,706 Democratic votes cast for Governor. This compares with 1952, the next previous gubernatorial contest, with 83,671 Republican votes and 96,385 Democratic votes; 1960, the next following gubernatorial election had 87,594 Republican votes and 105,469 Democratic votes.<sup>16</sup> Because the Republicans had an unusually high portion of the votes in that year it seems that ex-Governor Clyde's appraisal that the Republicans received many Democratic votes in the primary seems accurate.

Ex-Governor Lee attributes his loss to lack of effective campaigning on his part because of over-confidence. He does not doubt Democrats crossing over, but feels that he may have had as many Democrats voting for him in a losing cause as voted for Clyde in winning. Ex-Governor Lee discounts the third term argument as "only something to talk about."<sup>17</sup> In spite of this, there has been no Utah Governor elected for a third term.

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<sup>15</sup>George D. Clyde, Personal Interview, July 1967.

<sup>16</sup>Election Abstracts, State of Utah

<sup>17</sup>J. Bracken Lee, Personal Interview, July 1967.

Calvin Rawlings, who has been prominent in the Utah Democratic party, feels that there were a lot of Democrats who crossed the party line in 1956 because "Lee was the antithesis of the thinking of the Democratic party." He also feels that Utah is a conservative state and as such is extremely reluctant to defy tradition and give an officeholder a third term.<sup>18</sup>

The Deseret News of 12 September 1956, is of the opinion that many Democrats and Independents moved into the Republican primary to defeat Lee.<sup>19</sup>

#### Comment on Incumbent Losses in Nevada

The voters in Nevada have defeated the incumbent in primary elections six times since 1910 when the direct primary was adopted. Four of these occasions have been for minor state offices, Printer, Surveyor, Mine Inspector, and Controller. The other two occasions were in 1942 when Mr. Scrugham defeated the appointed incumbent, Mr. Bunker for the U.S. Senate and in 1944 when the same Mr. Bunker defeated the incumbent Mr. Sullivan for the seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.<sup>20</sup>

Mr. Scrugham was a long time, popular Congressman. Mr. Bunker, who was the Speaker of the House in the Nevada Legislature, was appointed to the Senate on the death of Senator Pittman in 1940. Mr. Scrugham had a much wider acquaintance in

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<sup>18</sup> Calvin Rawlings, Personal Interview, July 1967.

<sup>19</sup> Deseret News, 12 September 1956.

<sup>20</sup> Political History of Nevada.

the state and it is the opinion of Mr. Bunker that most of the voters felt that he was entitled to the nomination.<sup>21</sup>

The 1944 election was somewhat the reverse. Mr. Sullivan had only served two years in Congress and was not a very strong vote getter. Because of the 1942 senatorial campaign, Mr. Bunker was able to establish a base of acquaintanceship that made it possible for him to receive the nomination over the incumbent.<sup>22</sup>

#### Other Incumbent Losses

Montana, with an open primary, has in the years from 1950 to 1966, denied the nomination to the incumbent twice, once in 1952 and the second time in 1956. Both of these were Democrats who lost during the years when a strong Republican presidential candidate, Eisenhower, won the election.<sup>23</sup>

Oklahoma, a closed primary state where the Democratic party is very strong, has defeated the incumbent four times in the years since 1950. There was one each in 1954, 1956, 1958, and 1960. All these were Democrats.<sup>24</sup>

Washington, with a blanket primary, and New Mexico, with a closed primary in connection with a convention, the years since

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<sup>21</sup>Berkley L. Bunker, Letter to the Author, August 1967.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Election Abstracts, State of Montana.

<sup>24</sup>Election Abstracts, State of Oklahoma.

1950, have not defeated an incumbent in the primary elections.<sup>25</sup>

In the six states surveyed since 1950, there were 290 offices sought. The incumbents ran 217 times and lost seven; the non-incumbents ran 359 times and lost 279 times.

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<sup>25</sup>Election Abstracts, State of New Mexico, and Election Abstracts, State of Washington.

Table 35. Computation of Chi Square on Summary of Wins and Losses of Incumbents

	Utah	Nevada	Montana	Oklahoma	Washington	New Mexico	Total
Years	1938-1966	1952-1966	1950-1960	1952-1962	1952-1966	1954-1966	
Number	61	41	46	56	68	36	308
Winners observed	44	29	29	40	56	26	224
Winners expected	44	28	30	42	55	25	
Losers observed	2	0	2	4	0	0	8
Losers expected	2	1	1	2	1	1	
Total Seeking	46	29	31	44	56	26	232

Chi Square = 7.4 (P < .04)

Relationship of the Convention and Primary in Utah

It is interesting to note the number of times that the candidate with the largest number of votes in the convention has lost in the primary. While such a candidate is not necessarily the incumbent, he would have been the party's choice except for the direct primary. For the 41 previously mentioned state offices in Utah held from 1947 to 1966, there have been 82 candidates, 26 of these have been unopposed. Of the remaining 56, 11 have been the front runner in the convention and have lost in the primary. This means that 19.8 percent of the time the first choice of the convention lost in the primary.<sup>26</sup>

Utah has given further opportunity for candidates to run without opposition in the primary. In 1963, the legislature amended the election laws so that any candidate who received more than 80 percent of the convention vote would automatically be declared the candidate.<sup>27</sup> This law was passed for the purpose of preventing "nuisance" candidates from running, when they had no chance of winning or even getting a significant number of votes. The theory was that anyone who could not get 20 percent of the convention vote could not win the primary, but would merely be a nuisance to the front-runner. In 1964, there were no candidates, except those who were unopposed, who won nomination to state office under this rule. In 1966, there were two

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<sup>26</sup>Data taken from the Salt Lake Tribune and Election Abstracts, State of Utah.

<sup>27</sup>Utah Code, 1963 Amendments, 20-4-9.

Republicans and one Democrat who succeeded in getting 80 percent of their convention's vote.<sup>28</sup>

In a survey of Utah county office nominations, filled in the same manner, with six counties not responding, there were eight candidates nominated by an 80 percent convention vote in 1964 and 17 in 1966.<sup>29</sup>

Of the candidates who lost in the primary, after being the front runner in the convention during the years of 1947 to 1966, none had an 80 percent convention vote. The percentages of the convention winners ran from 50.8 percent to 72.5 percent, with seven of the 11 under 60 percent.<sup>30</sup>

Table 36. Comparison of Convention and Primary Result in Utah 1948-1966

	Primary Winner		Primary Loser		Total
Convention leader	observed	45	observed	11	56
	expected	28	expected	28	
Convention Runner-up	observed	11	observed	45	56
	expected	28	expected	28	
Total		56		56	112

Chi Square = 5.2 (P < .02)

<sup>28</sup>Data taken from the Salt Lake Tribune.

<sup>29</sup>Survey made by the Author in 1966.

<sup>30</sup>Data taken from the Salt Lake Tribune and Election Abstracts, State of Utah.

CHAPTER IV  
VOTER PARTICIPATION

The participation of voters in elections varies from year to year and from state to state. There are many variables which may influence voter turnout. This is true not only of the general election, but of the primaries as well.

Voters turn out better for general elections than they do for primaries; voters turn out better when national offices, president and vice-president, are being elected; the least response from the voters comes in county and city elections.<sup>1</sup> It is not unusual to see bond and school elections defeated because the requisite 10 percent of the voters do not turn out to vote.<sup>2</sup> Voters sometimes do not turn out to vote because they do not understand the issues or procedures.<sup>3</sup>

The two most important reasons for the failure of more voters to go to the polls at the average elections are (1) the failure of the parties or candidates to define clearly the issues upon which the citizen is to express an opinion and (2) the welter of candidates, legislative questions and constitutional amendments on which he must vote.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duverger, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup>Bone, p. 560-561.

<sup>3</sup>Duverger, p. 365.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



One study shows that typically primary turnout is 35 percent to 50 percent of the general election turnout.<sup>5</sup> Utah follows this trend with an overall percentage for the general elections from 1952 to 1966 of 82.8 percent of those registered and for the primaries for the same period of 39.2 percent for a ratio of 47.3 percent.<sup>6</sup> (See Figure 2 on page 63.)

In comparing the voter response during presidential years and "off" years, Utah voters turned out nearly 11 percentage points more during the presidential years. During the years of 1956, 1960, and 1964 -- years of national elections -- 88.4 percent of the registered voters cast ballots. In the "off" years, 1954, 1958, 1962, and 1966, the voting turnout was 77.3 percent. In the years of 1954 and 1966, years when the only statewide office elected was Representative, the voter response was 77.2 percent and 72.2 percent.<sup>7</sup>

The effect of presidential elections extends down to the primaries, also. The voting turnout for primaries in Utah in presidential election years has been 48.2 percent, which compares to 33.1 percent for the off year election and the 39.2 percent average.<sup>8</sup> It is noted that a Governor is elected during presidential years.

Even though the voter response at the primaries averages 39.2 percent, the response is even lower in the primaries for

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<sup>5</sup>Howe and Schlesinger, p. 115.

<sup>6</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Utah for the named years.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

county and city offices. Elections are held for these offices in the odd numbered years. The percent of registered voters voting in the elections held during the odd numbered years from 1951 to 1965 was 25.4 percent.<sup>9</sup>

Voting Percent in Utah

Table 37. Voting Percent in Utah 1952-1964<sup>10</sup>

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting in Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio of Primary to General
1952 to 1964	45.6	39.2 (100% of norm)	82.8 (100% of norm)	47.3

During these years Utah had an open primary. Utah has rated quite high in the percent of voters who turn out to the general election.<sup>11</sup> The time graphs show that they do have a high percent at this election. Nevada was the only state higher in general election percent of the states selected in this study. Of the six states selected for comparison, Utah was next to the lowest in the percent of primary vote.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Bone, p. 561-562.

Table 38. Voting Percent in Utah 1966 and 1954<sup>12</sup>

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting in Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio of Primary to General
1966	44.9	25 (63.7% of norm)	72.2 (87.2% of norm)	34.6
1954	45.9	29.3 (74.7% of norm)	77.3 (94.4% of norm)	37.9

The years of 1966 and 1954 were selected for comparison because they were alike in the scope of the offices selected. The only state-wide office elected in these years was Representative in Congress. Such elections occur every 12 years in Utah. The voting turnout in 1966 during the short-lived Party Registration Law was 4.3 percentage points below that of 1954. Based on the 1966 registration, this would represent about 19,600 voters. The ratio of voter participation in the primary election to the general election for the two years shows that there was a drop of 2.5 percentage points from 1954 to 1966. The 1954 ratio was down nearly 10 percentage points from the average.

These figures indicate that there were fewer voters in 1966 than might have been expected. Because the voter turnout is only slightly less than a comparable year and because the voters turned out less to the general election, which is not affected by the new law, it seems likely that the voters stayed away from the

<sup>12</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Utah.

polls for some other reasons, such as lack of interest, rather than as a boycott in protest of the new law.

Table 39. Computation of Chi Square for Voting and Non-Voting in Open and Closed Primaries in 1954 and 1966

Year	Voters		Non-Voters		Total
1954 Open Primary	observed	100,000	observed	241,000	241,000
	expected	89,000	expected	252,000	
1966 Closed Primary	observed	109,000	observed	347,000	456,000
	expected	120,000	expected	336,000	
Total		209,000		588,000	797,000

Chi Square = 3.21 (P < .07)

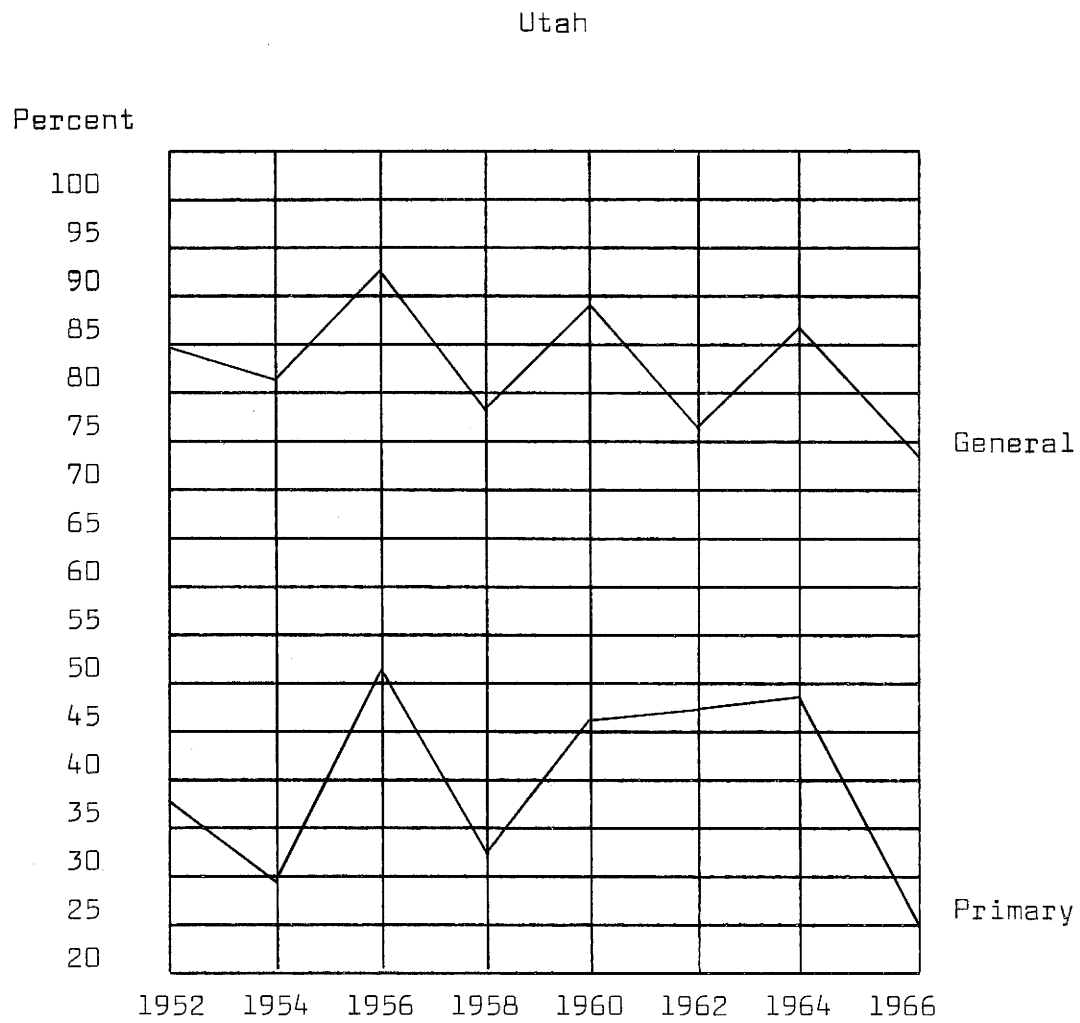


Figure 1. Percent of voter turnout to primary and general elections.

To make a comparison of the findings of Table 38, Utah's most populous county, Salt Lake County, is examined for the same years.

Table 40. Voting Percent in Salt Lake County 1966 and 1954<sup>13</sup>

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio of Primary To General
1966	46.1	25.5	75.6	33.7%
1954	51.8	24.7	69.1	35.7%

In Salt Lake County there was actually a larger turnout at the polls, but the percent of registered voters is down from the 1954 level by over five percentage points. It would seem that the greatest level of unpopularity of the 1966 registration law came from outside Salt Lake.

The ratio of voter turnout in the primary and general election shows that the 1966 turnout was down two percentage points from the 1954 level. Although not in the same proportion, the voters of Salt Lake County followed the trend of the state for a poor voter turnout in the 1966 primary.

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

Voting Percent in Nevada

Table 41. Voting Percent in Nevada 1952-1966<sup>14</sup>

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting in Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio of Primary to General
1952 to 1966	34.1	60.7	84.6	71.7%

Nevada has a closed primary. Its voting percentages rank the highest of the states surveyed in this study. It has a high ratio of turnout in the primary election. The lowest turnout in a primary election--56.4 percent in 1960--was higher than Utah's highest percent--51.6 percent in 1956.<sup>15</sup> The high voter participation in Nevada may be partly explained in the low ratio of population to registered voters. It has the lowest percent of its population registered of any of the surveyed states. It would seem that those who are politically active both register and vote to a high degree.

<sup>14</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Nevada.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

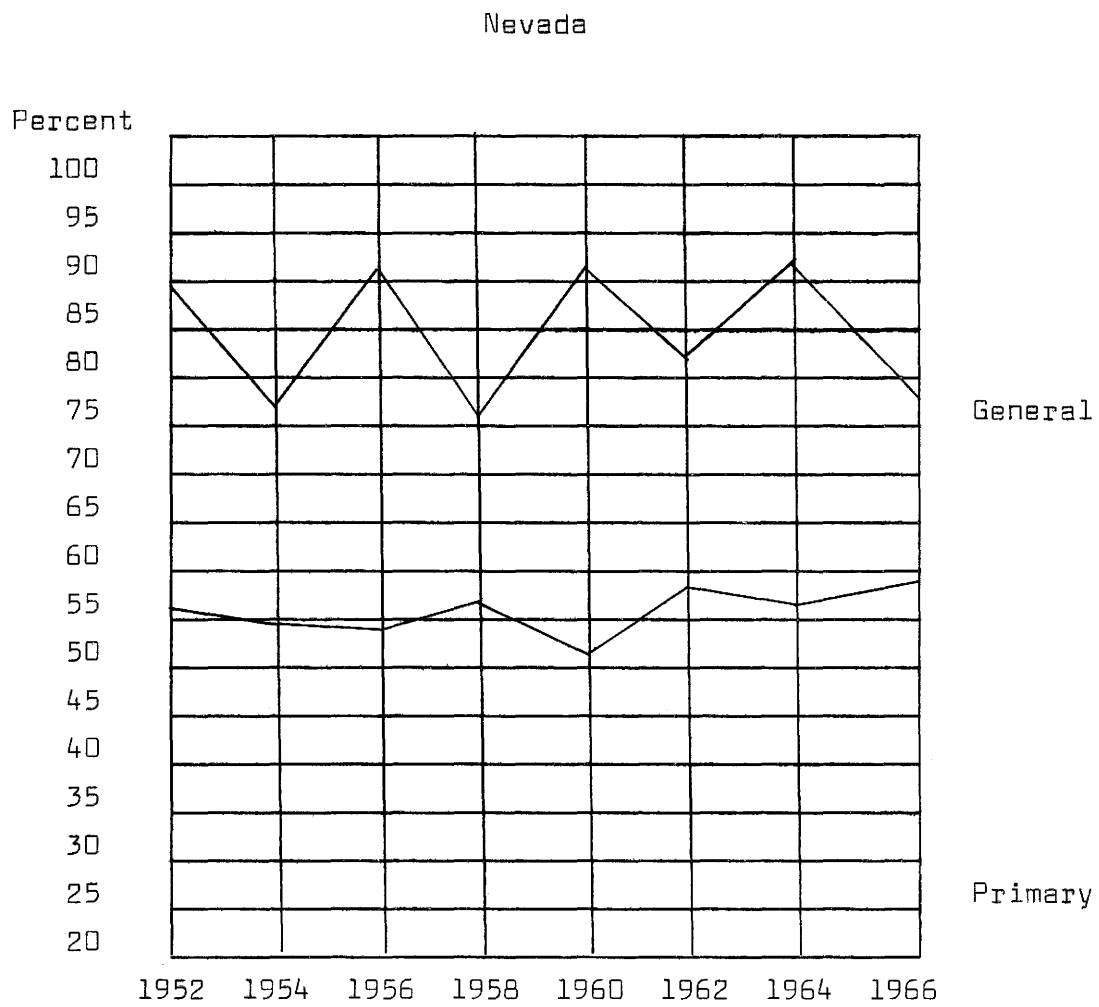


Figure 2. Percent of voter turnout in Nevada to primary and general elections.



Voting Percent in Montana

Table 42. Voting Percent in Montana 1952-1966<sup>16</sup>

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting in Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio of Primary to General
1952 to 1966	44.9	55.7	81.6	69.5%

Montana has an open primary. In the percent of population which is registered to vote and in the percent of the general election, Montana rates very close to Utah.<sup>17</sup> In the percent voting in the primary, however, Montana rates much higher than does Utah. The ratio of the primary election to the general election rates quite high.

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<sup>16</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Montana.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

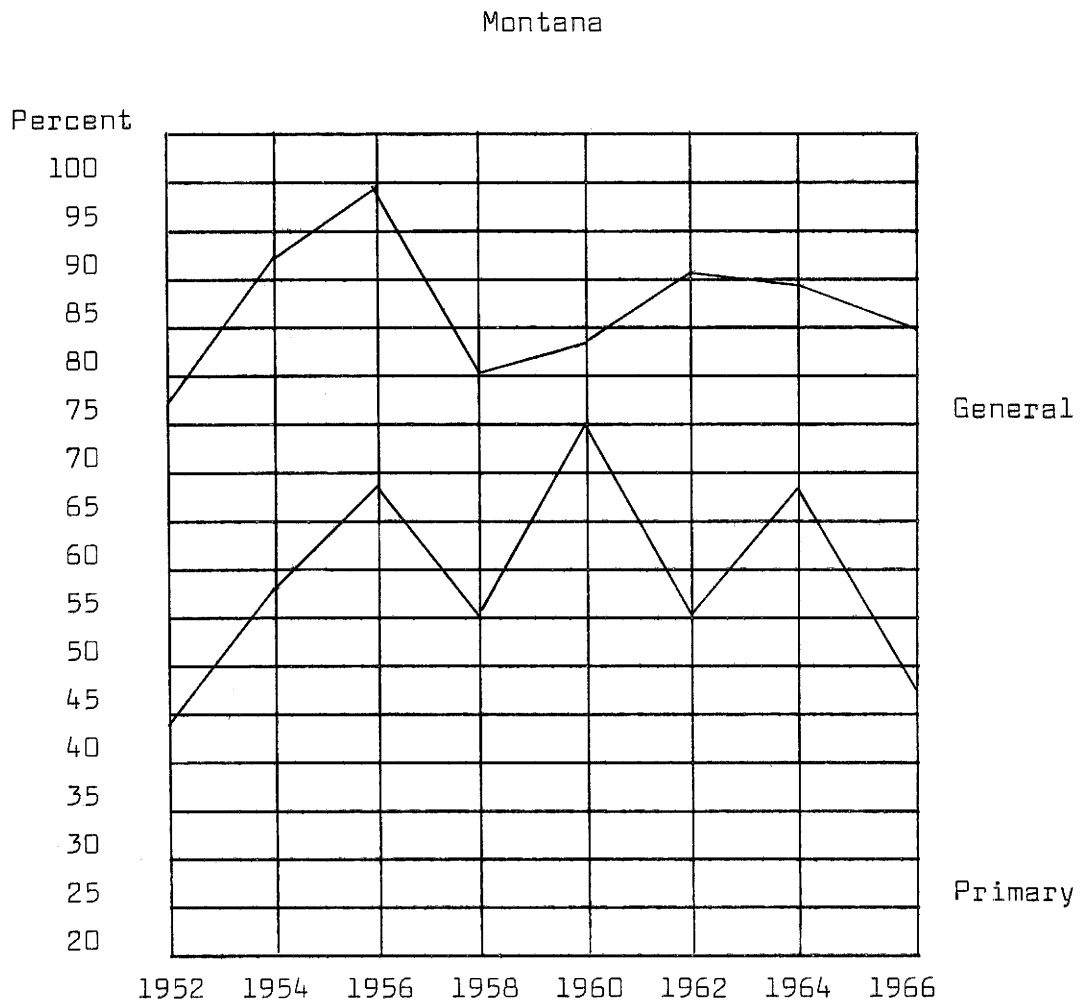


Figure 3. Percent of voter turnout in Montana to primary and general elections.

Voting Percent in Washington

Table 43. Voting Percent in Washington 1950-1966<sup>18</sup>

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting in Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio of Primary to General
1950 to 1966	50.8	47.32	74.71	63.2%

Washington is unique in its system of primary election with a wide-open primary that permits voters to choose candidates from either party. There is a very high percent of the population registered. The voter turnout in both the primary and the general election is fairly high, being better than Utah for the primary but lower than Utah in the general election.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Washington.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

## Washington

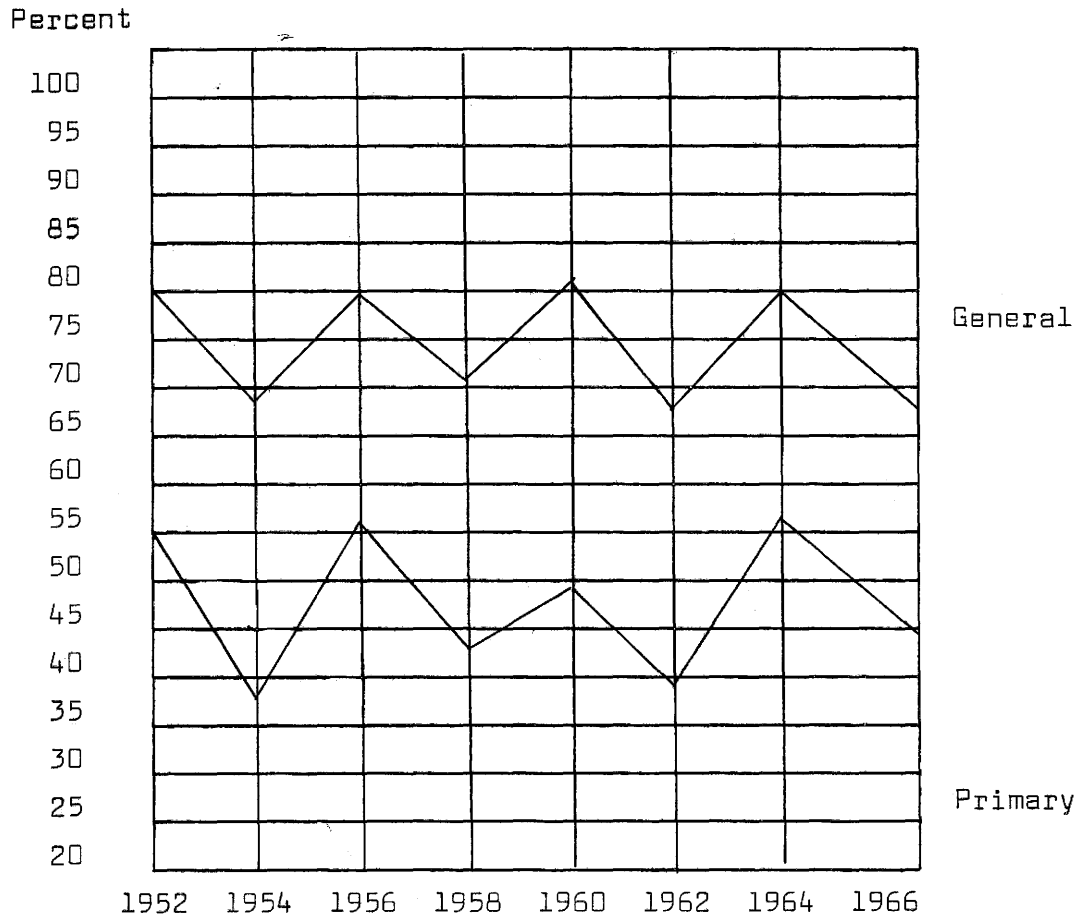


Figure 4. Percent of voter turnout in Washington to primary and general elections.

Voting Percent in New Mexico

Table 44. Voting Percent in New Mexico 1952-1966<sup>20</sup>

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting in Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio Primary to General
1952 to 1966	46.0	34.4	64.4	53.4%

New Mexico has a closed primary with a pre-primary convention. It is a state which is strongly one-party. The percent of voter turnout in the primary is the lowest of any of the states surveyed. It is possible that the control of a single party, the Democratic party, is a factor in the low turnout, although this is impossible to determine; there are no figures on the number of registered voters by party to see if the controlling party turned out more or less than the minority party. Normally one would expect a higher turnout for the primaries in a one-party state.

The voter response in the general election is also the lowest of any of the surveyed states and it is suggested that the minority may be discouraged from voting because its vote seems to be ineffective.

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<sup>20</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, New Mexico State.

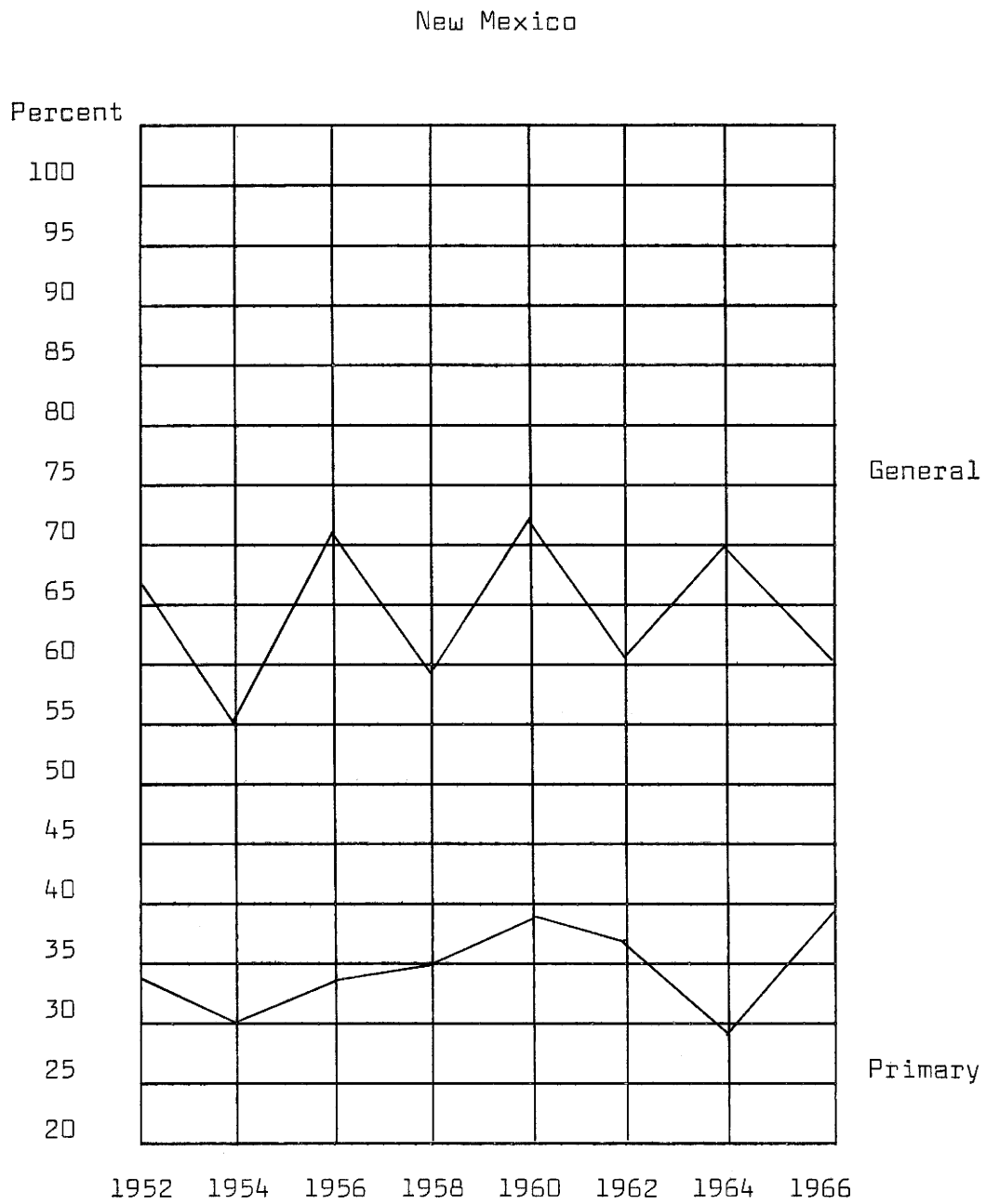


Figure 5. Percent of voter turnout in New Mexico to primary and general elections.

Voting Percent in Oklahoma

Table 45. Voting Percent in Oklahoma 1950-1966

Years	Percent of Population Registered	Percent Voting in Primary	Percent Voting in General	Ratio of Primary to General
1950 to 1966	51.1	49.4 (runoff 37.9)	65.8	75.0

Oklahoma has a closed primary and is strongly Democratic. It is noted that the percent of population which is registered seems quite high. The number of registered voters in Oklahoma is not available in years past, so figures used for computing the percent registered is based on the 1964 statistics.<sup>22</sup>

Because Oklahoma law requires that a candidate receive a majority of the primary vote to be nominated, there is a run-off vote in those cases where the leading candidate does not have a majority. The run-off runs below the primary in voter participation.

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<sup>21</sup>Data taken from Election Abstracts, State of Oklahoma.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

Public Feeling Toward the 1966 Utah Closed Primary

The 1965 Utah Legislature passed a law requiring all voters to declare the party ballot they wanted to have for the primary election.<sup>23</sup> In its passage the bill had bi-partisan support and was passed without much difficulty. It passed the House by a 21-2 vote and the Senate by a 39-29 vote.<sup>24</sup> There was a lot of publicity given this new law and the public reacted by calling for its repeal.

To inform the public on the law, the newspapers responded by providing weekly announcements concerning it. In the period between August 1, 1966, and the primary election on September 13, 1966, the Deseret News ran 19 articles on 15 different days relating to the new law and its implications. The only criticisms that might be made of these articles is that they predicted a poor voter turnout and perhaps caused some of the criticism against the law because of their public anticipation of voter rejection. None of the above-mentioned articles seemed to the author to be negative in approach except to predict poor turnout. Three of the articles were positive in nature or called for voter support and the remaining articles were neutral reports.<sup>25</sup>

Following the Primary on September 13, 1966, the Deseret News in an editorial called for the repeal of the Party

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<sup>23</sup>Utah Code Annotated, 1953, 20-2-11.

<sup>24</sup>Senate Journal and House Journal, 1965 Legislature.

<sup>25</sup>Deseret News, August 1, 1966 through September 13, 1966.



Registration Law.<sup>26</sup> This was done against the wishes of the Deseret News Political Editor.<sup>27</sup>

During the week of September 26, 1966, KSL-TV, in an editorial, called for a reconsideration of the Primary Registration Law. After citing arguments for and against the law, this editorial was of the opinion that "The dangers involved in the law far out-weigh its advantages."<sup>28</sup>

Both the Democratic and Republican Party Headquarters received sufficient volume of telephone calls from citizens who were protesting the registration law that the workers in these headquarters were convinced that the public did not want the law.<sup>29</sup> The Republican Party ran a survey in this year but did not ask those surveyed for their opinion on the closed primary because it was felt that "it was a foregone conclusion and it would be a wasted question to ask."<sup>30</sup>

As evidence that the law was highly unpopular, the 1967 Legislature repealed the Party Registration Law in its first act to pass the Session.<sup>31</sup> Two legislators in this session were asked why they felt that the law was repealed. One, a State

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<sup>26</sup>Deseret News, September 14, 1966.

<sup>27</sup>Demar Teuscher, Interview with the Author, August 1967.

<sup>28</sup>KSL Editorial, Week of September 26, 1966.

<sup>29</sup>Interviews at the Democratic and Republican Headquarters, August 21, 1967.

<sup>30</sup>Ray Townsend, Republican Headquarters, Interview, August 21, 1967.

<sup>31</sup>Senate Journal, 1967 Legislature.

Senator, who was personally opposed to the law, reported that there was no doubt in his mind that it was the public pressure against the law that forced its repeal.<sup>32</sup> The other, a State Representative, who was personally in favor of the law, said he voted against it because he felt the voters of his district were overwhelmingly opposed to the law.<sup>33</sup>

A survey conducted by Dan Jones Associates after the repeal of the law shows that less than 10 percent of the persons interviewed were in favor of the Party Registration Law. Dan Jones stated that he does not know of anything that has been as unpopular in the state as that law was.<sup>34</sup>

#### Summary

Utah has responded well for the general election. In the primaries, however, public response has been quite low in comparison to the other states studied. In comparison with itself during the open and closed primary, there is no different evidence to indicate any significant different in turnout.

It is interesting to note that the state with the highest percent of participation in the primaries has a closed primary as does the state with the lowest turnout. A relationship of

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<sup>32</sup>J. Rex Mackay, State Senator, State of Utah, Personal Interview, August 27, 1967.

<sup>33</sup>Allan Behunin, State Representative, State of Utah, Personal Interview, August 20, 1967.

<sup>34</sup>Dan Jones, Personal Interview, August 21, 1967.

amount of voter participation and type of primary cannot be seen from the depth of this study. It appears that the type of primary is not an influential factor in bringing voters to the polls or in keeping them away. Perhaps the experiment Utah made in 1966 is an exception to this, but it is felt that the lack of voter response in 1966 is due to two things: (1) lack of interest because there was not a race for a major state office, and (2) confusion and lack of understanding of the Party Registration Law.

CHAPTER V  
CONCLUSIONS

The attitude of both the parties and the voters indicates that the direct primary has been adopted into the American political scene to stay for a long time. There is, at present, as far as can be foreseen, no change in prospect in the method of nomination. That the voters regard the primary as a "right", that cannot be denied them, is an indication of how the voters have accepted the primary. That the primary has been adopted in some form by all states is an indication of its acceptance by the party leaders.

Party leaders feared the direct primary at first, fearing that it would rob them of some control and destroy party responsibility.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the incumbent has such a tremendous advantage in renomination speaks well for the amount of control that the party is able to exert and the influence the party is able to bear on an election.

It seems that the direct primary has neither achieved the amount of popular participation that its planners envisioned, nor has it destroyed the political party as feared by some of its critics.

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<sup>1</sup>Ferguson and McHenry, p. 224.

### Incumbent Advantage

The advantage of the incumbent varies little from state to state. There has been a feeling that the closed primary would give the party more control and with it increase the propensity of the incumbent to gain the party nomination without opposition. It is ironic that the opposite is true in the states sampled in this study. The advantage of the incumbent within the party is slightly greater, but not enough to be deemed significant, among those states which have an open primary as opposed to those that have the closed. It should be noted that some of the states sampled include those which have a predominance of one party. In these states, because the primary is the real race for election, it is more difficult to assess the advantage of the incumbent.

The incumbent has been denied the nomination by his party eight times in the three states with the closed primary and four times in the three states with the open primary. Only in Nevada and Utah, one an open state and the other closed, have figures before 1950 been used. Since 1950, the score would be four denials for the closed states and three for the open states.

The state of Connecticut, which depends primarily on the convention, has not gone on record denying the nomination to any incumbent in recent history.

Even though the states with an open primary seem to have given the incumbent the nomination unopposed a larger percent of the time, the figures are close enough, 53.6 percent to 56.4 percent, to indicate that there is not a significant advantage in

this regard. There is quite a range in the difference between the incumbent and non-incumbent being able to run unopposed. The non-incumbent has run unopposed a larger percent of the time in the closed state than he has in the open states. It is kept in mind that all the variables have not been considered here, but based on the information available, it would seem that the incumbent does slightly better in the primary in the open states than in the closed states. This also indicates that the electorate supports the incumbent, since he is known to the voter.

In counting the victories of incumbents in the primaries of the two different systems, the open primary has the edge over the closed. For a total of 155 offices in open primaries and 135 for the closed, the incumbents in the closed primary won 96.9 percent of the time and in the open they won 98.9 percent of the time. The comparison of non-incumbent victories for the same offices, in the closed they won 24.7 percent to the opens 20.5 percent. The chi square computation shows some as highly significant; others less significant.

These figures, while consistent in each of the states sampled, do not show a large variation between the two. In each case the difference is only a matter of a few percentage points. It seems that there is very little difference, if any, in giving the incumbent an advantage or disadvantage that can be attributed to the type of primary system.

### Voter Participation

The range of variation in voter participation is from Nevada with a closed primary at the high end to New Mexico, also with a closed primary, at the low end. The other factors which influence voting behavior seem to have a greater effect than does the type of primary. From the states sampled there seems to be no correlation between voting turnout and type of primary.

One of the largest factors influencing voter participation is the office being filled. The more important the office, the larger is the voter turnout. This is especially true in the general election, but is also true in the primary. Voters tend to vote in increased numbers during presidential years in the primary even in those states which do not have a presidential primary. The lower turnout in Utah's 1966 primary does not seem to be the fault of the Primary Registration Law.

### Suggestions for Research

In the course of this research a few things were discovered which would make a project such as this in the future easier and more accurate. Some of these things can be undertaken by the researcher and some can be accomplished by public officials keeping records.

It was found that the most reliable information was obtained from the election abstracts supplied by the Secretary of State offices in the various states studied. Requests to State Universities were not responded to in all cases and in

some cases questions were misunderstood.

Personal opinion of persons involved in former events were found to be inaccurate in some cases. While these opinions are vital to some of the reasons for action, it was found that the memory of some individuals did not agree with official records.

There are several things that could be done by state and local election officials which would be helpful. A count of the total ballots cast would eliminate errors in estimating the voter turnout. Totals of registered voters before the primary and again before the general election would give an accurate picture of the percent of voters in each election.

More is being done now in the way of election reporting than has been done in the past, but more could be done yet. The State of Washington provides good statistics to accompany their election abstracts. The number of registered voters for each election, the vote cast for each and the percentages for each are given. The winner is starred and the plurality of the winner indicated. The fall off for each office or issue is shown.

Several states provide, in their election abstracts, a comprehensive book of both the primary and the general election with the vote of each precinct shown. An election summary along with this would give the researcher access to either detail or summary as would be needed.



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## APPENDIX

Voter TurnoutUtah

Year	Number of Registered Voters	Number of Primary Vote	Percent of Primary Vote	Number of General Vote	Percent of General Vote
1966	455,985	109,125 <sup>1</sup>	25.0 <sup>2</sup>	329,362	72.2
1964	448,463	211,364	47.1	401,881	87.9
1962	414,879	192,470	46.6	319,398	76.8
1960	419,095	193,063	46.0	374,981	89.0
1958	376,768	118,754	31.5	292,579	78.0
1956	379,703 <sup>3</sup>	196,061 <sup>4</sup>	51.6	334,294	88.0
1954	340,500 <sup>3</sup>	100,000 <sup>4</sup>	29.3	263,031	77.2
1952	411,839	153,512	37.0	327,704	79.6

Nevada

1966	175,341	110,252	62.9	136,169	77.6
1964	147,625	92,451	62.6	135,433	91.7
1962	128,437	81,062	63.1	97,192	83.4
1960	116,788	65,858	56.4	107,267	91.8
1958	112,797	69,119	61.1	84,889	75.7
1956	106,796	63,635	59.5	96,689	90.5
1954	102,458	60,972	59.5	78,462	76.6
1952	91,428	55,256	60.4	82,190	89.9

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<sup>1</sup>Data taken from Salt Lake Tribune, September, 1966.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Official Figure unavailable. Figure used is the average.

<sup>4</sup>Data taken from Salt Lake Tribune, September, 1954.

New Mexico

Year	Number of Registered Voters	Number of Primary Vote	Percent of Primary Vote	Number of General Vote	Percent of General Vote
1966	451,540	178,000*	39.6	271,592	60.1
1964	464,911	132,000*	28.4	326,000*	70.1
1962	409,998	154,000*	37.8	248,000*	60.4
1960	423,265	163,000*	38.5	311,107	73.5
1958	356,595	126,000*	35.3	211,295	59.2
1956	366,174	117,000*	31.9	259,469	70.8
1954	366,422	111,176	30.3	199,828	54.5
1952	366,671	123,292	33.6	244,502	66.6

Washington

1966	1,450,192	643,477	44.3	987,134	67.06
1964	1,501,906	841,932	56.0	1,276,956	80.7
1962	1,412,400	546,886	38.7	971,706	67.1
1960	1,393,909	682,290	48.9	1,257,952	82.3
1958	1,338,757	574,003	42.8	978,400	71.1
1956	1,363,332	762,690	55.9	1,164,104	80.2
1954	1,269,951	475,011	37.4	890,509	68.8
1952	1,316,489	714,145	54.2	1,116,414	80.1

\*approximate

Montana

Year	Number of Registered Voters	Number of Primary Vote	Percent of Primary Vote	Number of General Vote	Percent of General Vote
1966	306,852	128,803	41.9		
	330,182			264,971	80.3
1964	290,109	185,102	63.8		
	327,477			278,628	85.0
1962	301,003	152,422	50.6		
	318,721			248,441	85.9
1960	279,685	196,710	70.1		
	322,867			277,579	77.9
1958	289,851	145,462	50.1		
	305,614			229,483	75.0
1956	275,000*	173,435	63.1		
	295,000*			270,366	95.1
1954	250,000*	136,466	54.6		
	265,000*			227,454	85.8
1952	360,000*	141,918	39.1		
	377,733			265,037	73.2

\*approximate

## VITA

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