

**THE ILLINOIS PRIMARY 2002:
A HISTORIAN VIEWS THE POLITICS OF THE
PERSONAL: A LOOK BACK AFTER THE DUST HAS
CLEARED**

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INTRODUCTION—OR CLIO THE MUSE ATE MY HOMEWORK¹

This paper was originally presented last year, June 12, 2002, at the first Hawaii International Social Science Conference—just 2 ½ months after Illinois Primary 2002. Concluding the presentation proved difficult, because it was just too soon. The dust hadn't cleared; one election lacked a clear winner.¹ This meant that it was possible only to point to trends and raise questions.

The dust has since cleared. It's over a year since the primary; seven months since the general election. The role of history and the politics of the personal as they applied to the Illinois 2002 Primary need to be revisited because:

1. It sheds light on the Illinois General Election
2. Both elections in retrospect reveal the pitfalls of campaigning in a democracy when coalitions and individual aspirations collide
3. Understanding the dynamics between the primary and the general elections will result in the means to cope with the changing definition of democracy

Most important, this paper needs a conclusion. Isn't it about time to draw that conclusion?

THE NATURE OF POLITICS

Politics², like love, "is a many splendored thing."³ Originally politics was the business of governing the Greek *polis*, or city-state. Today the word "politics" encompasses every facet of public

¹ The race between Pat Hughes and Michael Ian Bender for State Representative in Illinois' 17th Legislative district would not be decided until August.

² The research for this paper came from interviews and personal accounts of what occurred during the campaigns in the 9th Congressional District. The following works were germane to the topic of the paper, covering the following subjects: campaigns, democracy, voter decline, the politics of the personal, political marketing and voter attitudes, political biographies of local officials, and works concerning Cook County politics: Carl Bernstein, Bob Woodward, *All the President's Men*, New York: Touchstone Press, 1994; Adam Cohen, Elizabeth Taylor, *American Pharaoh: Richard J. Daley: His Battle for Chicago and the Nation*, Boston: Little Brown, 2000; E.J. Dionne, *Why American Hate Politics*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991; Wojciech Czalina, Andrzej Falkowski, "Decision Processes in Perception in the Political Preferences Research: A Comparative Analysis of Poland, France and Germany", *Journal for Mental Changes*, Lublin: V, #2, 1999, 27-49; Jack C. Doppelt, Ellen Shearer, *NonVoters America's No-Shows*, Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage Publications, 1999; Edith Efron, *The Media Twisters*, New York: Nash Press,

governance as well as the pursuit of public office, from the planning, strategizing, and execution of campaigns to the negotiation behind producing laws and policy.

The term “politics” is imprecise because it relies upon human interaction—and humans are not always logical. Politics aren’t for the faint of heart; campaigns are war, just without weapons. In most countries, it’s war without weapons—most of the time. In some countries weapons are indeed used.

Today “politics,” “politicians,” and “political” commonly evoke images of deals, cheating and swindle. Gone is the robed figure, declaiming for the public good in the agora. Why has the political realm so fallen from grace? Perhaps, because most political negotiations involve compromise, and reaching goals. Compromise implies abandoning ideals. Politics, as Machiavelli noted in *The Prince*,⁴ are amoral.

But politics are here to stay because all human inter-action involves negotiation, and public policy demands the most negotiation of all. All governments, including totalitarian regimes, are political organizations.⁵ “All politics is local,” said U.S. Speaker of the House Tip O’Neill. Upon close examination, even international issues have local roots.⁶

American politics, the interactions and compromises that give an individual or group decision making capacity fall into three categories. Politics based on ideology and party, concentrate on the attaining political power by working through the framework provided by the *Constitution*. Followers of each are convinced that their beliefs are pragmatic, resulting in solid public policy.

The third category, the politics of the personal, relies on personal interaction and negotiation in campaigns to gain office. These interactions extend beyond philosophy. The politics of the personal

1971; Robert Fisher, *Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America*, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994; J.H. Hatfield *et al*, *Fortunate Son: George W. Bush and the Making of an American President*, New York: Soft Shell Press 2002; Eugene Kennedy, *Himself: The Life and Times of Mayor Daley*, New York: Viking, 1978; Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*, New York: Perseus Books, 2000; Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Nations*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999; Harvey C. Mansfield, Delba Winthrop (Eds., Trans., Introduction), Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000; Stanley Mellon, *Alexis De Tocqueville’s Paris*: Chicago: John Wiley, 1972; Bruce I. Newman, “Politics in an Age of Manufactured Images,” *Journal for Mental Changes*, Lublin: V, #2, 1999, 7-26; Len O’Connor, *Clout: Mayor Daley and His City*, New York: Regnery, 1975; Len O’Connor, *Requiem: The decline and demise of Mayor Daley and his era*. Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1977; Greg Palast, *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy: An Investigative Reporter Exposes the Truth about Globalization, Corporate Cons, and High Finance*, New York: Plume Press, 2003; Milton Rakove, *Don’t make no waves...Don’t Back No Losers*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975; Milton Rakove, *Don’t want nobody nobody sent*, Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1979; Judith-Rae E. Ross, “A Tale of Three Cultures: Thoughts on Doppelt and Shearer’s *Nonvoters America’s No-Shows*”, *Citizens Information Service Newsletter*, Summer, 2000; Judith-Rae E. Ross, “Tallying an Election that Defied Tallying,” Guest Essay: *The Skokie and Barrington Reviews*, Pioneer Press, November 16, 2000, 8; Judith-Rae E. Ross, “The Machine was Alive and Well and Living in Skokie”, Chapter 28, Bruce Newman (ed.) *Handbook of Political Marketing*, Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 1999; Judith-Rae E. Ross, “Thoughts of a Tired Campaign Chair,” Guest Essay, *The Skokie Review*, Pioneer Press, May 12, 1999; Judith-Rae E. Ross, “Trends not Tallied: Opinions not Polled: A Politician Looks at the Past, and Three Elections Significance for the Future,” *Journal for Mental Changes*, Lublin: V, #2, 1999, 87-117; Mike Royko, *Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago*, New York: E.F. Dutton, 1971; Dejan Vercie, “The Politics of Total Communication”, *Journal for Mental Changes*, Lublin: V, #2, 1999, 51-61; Theodore Harold White, *The Making of a President*, 1960 New York: Signet, 1967; Mr. White also discussed presidential campaigns in, *The Making of a President, 1964, 1968 & 1972*.

³ Title song from *Love is a Many Splendored Thing*, starring William Holden and Jennifer Jones, released 1955.

⁴ Daniel Donno (Intro), Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, New York: Bantam, 1994.

⁵ Iraq recently had a presidential election in which Saddam Hussein received 100% of the vote.

⁶ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*, New York: Anchor Books, 2000; Schakowsky has consistently voted against lower tariffs because it would endanger American jobs.

become the vehicle for getting things done, including campaign strategy and negotiations within the government.⁷

The categories overlap. Ideologues, for example, may be party members who employ a personal style to accomplish their goals. But each category merits separate examination⁸.

The contests on the Democrat ticket in Illinois Primary 2002 provide a glimpse of politics, ideas and history for state and local races. Like politics all campaigning is local; national and state races targeted to local communities. But “second tier” races raise an intriguing question: Are they simply geared to local issues, or do they presage things to come on the national level?

Using the Illinois Primary March 19, 2002 in the Illinois 9th Congressional district as a case study this paper examines:

1. History’s role in the formulation of candidate campaign stances and the candidate’s relation to party politics
2. History’s role in the creation of candidate image
3. History’s role in defining the voter population during the primary campaign
4. History’s role in defining the salient issues during the primary campaign
5. History’s role in creating the relationships between the candidates and voters that resulted in both victories and defeats

For History forms the basis of our communal and individual identities, and is the fulcrum of the politics of the personal. Illinois Primary 2002 was the house that history built.

DEFINITION AND DYNAMICS OF THE POLITICS OF THE PERSONAL

How was the material derived for this paper? It’s time for a personal note and a caveat: I’m a self-confessed political junkie, although my friends call me a passionate politico. I’ve been in politics for 35 years with experience that includes everything from serving in public office, to political campaign strategist, to precinct captain, to envelope stuffer. Politics have shaped my academic career, as well as my son’s career as an Assistant to Governor Rod Blagojevich. I’ve lived in Skokie, Illinois, a Chicago suburb for over 41 years. That gave me a ringside seat to the races in the recent Illinois primary.

What are the politics of the personal? Simply put they’re campaign strategies that create an electable persona for the candidate, while denigrating the opponents’ personal attributes, by emphasizing his/her shortcomings, and portraying him/her as a caricature. Personal ideals, stances on issues, and beliefs are distorted; personal behavior becomes an issue. The candidate is engineered to appear to be one step from sainthood, the opponent unfit for office. Campaign politics of the personal rely on marketing of a successful image in order to sway the voters, and depend on technology.

Time plays a crucial role in candidate’s image creation. Candidates must sell themselves in 5 to 30 second sound bytes, precluding detailed issue-oriented messages. Today’s voters are unwilling to spend time listening and analyzing issues, especially in state and local elections. Issues simply become vehicles by which candidates reach desired audiences, the means to the end.⁹

The politics of the personal are not new in American campaigning. Negative images appeared with the first emergence of political parties during the presidential election of 1801, when the Federalists referred to Thomas Jefferson as “Mad Tom.”¹⁰ During the campaign of 1860, Abraham Lincoln’s

⁷ See Appendix I; e.g. Gordon Simpson’s comments quoting Gloria Steinem on the tenor of feminist campaigns at the close of the 20th century. These campaigns were couched in strictly personal terms

⁸ See Appendices following the conclusion for a discussion of the politics of ideology and party.

⁹ Ross, Trends...104-106.

¹⁰ Jefferson defeated the Federalist candidate, Hamilton. Hamilton was killed in a duel with Vice President Aaron Burr. Politics was not only “dirty.” It was deadly; cf. Gore Vidal, *Lincoln*, New York: Vintage, 2002.

opponents called him a guerilla and baboon. Both characterizations exemplify caricature and exploitation of personal beliefs.¹¹

With increased technology the politics of the personal reached new heights—or lows—in the 20th century. Here are two of the worst examples. In 1948, Nixon displayed doctored photograph of Helen Duhagen Douglas with a ‘Communist: In 1998, Congressman Hyde spearheaded campaign to impeach President Clinton for reasons that had nothing to do with his job performance.

A famous evocation of the politics of the personal comes in one of the great American movies, *Citizen Kane*. The protagonist, Charles Foster Kane, wishes to run for president but is thwarted when his wife uncovers his affair with a budding singer. The implication is that an officeholder must have a blemish-free personal life. It was this disquietude that fueled the attempt to force President Clinton out of office.

The politics of the personal also loom large in American culture through literature. In the novel *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, author Betty Smith describes machine politics at the turn of the century in Brooklyn, describing a campaign candidate’s fundraiser in which every number ends with the musicians chanting, “Compliments of Mattie Mahoney.”¹²

Robert Penn Warren’s character in the novel *All the King’s Men*¹³ based on Louisiana’s Governor Huey Long goes deeper when he describes the necessity of blending good and evil: goodness stems from “badness.” Penn Warren may have hit on the core of the politics of the personal. Personal politics concentrates on image creation, not morality. Whether something is good and evil often becomes secondary to being victorious in the campaign. Niccolo Machiavelli summed it up: “The end justifies the means.”

APPROACHES BEHIND THE CREATION OF THE PERSONNA

Recent studies exploring campaigns that employ the politics of the personal focus either on how to create a successful image and campaign, or attempt to delineate voter preferences.

The adage “A picture is worth a thousand words,” explains why the politics of the personal have become the engine that drives political campaigns. Television made even national politics personal because it made it possible for candidates to connect with most citizens. Two examples: President Kennedy’s performance during the 1960 television debates played a pivotal role in his victory. Governor George W. Bush leveled the playing field during the Election 2000 debates with the expected winner, Vice President Al Gore, making the election so close it became possible for the election to hang on the Florida results.

How is a successful image actually created? Three political consultants who played large roles in the Illinois Primary 2002 campaigns saw it differently.

David Wilhelm, former chair of the Democratic National Committee, political consultant and Chairman of the Rod Blagojevich’s campaign for governor maintains that the successful candidate finds his strong points and repeatedly drives them home. Blagojevich stresses his immigrant background and his commitment to senior citizens and working people. After the voters have heard the same messages over and over again, many of them accept the messages, almost without thinking. This approach, so successful in selling soap, enables the candidate to develop an organized, powerful image.¹⁴

Paul Vallas, an unsuccessful Democrat candidate for governor in the Illinois Primary, followed Wilhelm’s advice and nearly won the nomination by stressing his ability to balance budgets. On the Republican side, Corinne Wood pushed a moderate and pro-choice stance. She gathered endorsements of feminist leaders, such as Gloria Steinem, who asked feminists to “just this once” take a Republican ballot in order to protect the right to choose. Neither candidate won, but their clarity made them contenders.

Micah Taylor, Niles Township political coordinator for Illinois Gubernatorial candidate Rod Blagojevich during the primary campaign, noted that successful candidates “reach” voters on an emotional level. Once that bond is forged, Taylor maintains, it supersedes individual issues. Personal bonds often do

¹¹ Orson Welles, *Citizen Kane*, 1941.

¹² Betty Smith, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, New York: 1943. Republished New York: Perennial Books, 1998.

¹³ Robert Penn Warren, *All the King’s Men*, New York: Harvest, 1996.

¹⁴ Interview with David Wilhelm January, 2002.

survive political and personal scandal. Nixon's supporters never wavered, despite the continuing revelations during and after the Watergate scandal.¹⁵

Voter response to President Clinton's entanglement with Monica Lewinsky also bears this out. The 1998 Congressional election undermined the campaign to throw President Clinton out of office. When President Clinton was impeached in the House of Representatives, the Republican loss of seats made it clear to legislators that the voters would not tolerate Clinton's removal. It probably was no coincidence that Clinton was acquitted in the Senate.

Baxter Swilley, Political Director for Congresswoman Janice D. Schakowsky D 9th District Illinois, takes Taylor's observations a step further. Swilley proposes there is a national political soul that underlies American voter attitudes. Once this soul is defined, the need for polls and issues becomes irrelevant. The bond between voter, candidate and office holder has become so entirely personal and so strong that once established it's next to impossible to unseat the incumbent. This bond can be seen in cases where candidates are regularly re-elected and the opposition seems to be no more than tokens. In extreme cases, voters overlook scandal and even conviction of favored candidates.¹⁶ This bond becomes the basis for the "sleaze" defense. Even when voters are confronted with the fact that their candidate belongs in jail, they'll agree but state, "He's sleaze but he's our sleaze."¹⁷

THE VOTER BONDING PROCESS

The second way to approach the politics of the personal is to analyze voter attitudes prior to and after an election. Such analysis takes into account the role of candidates' personal attributes, political party, and the media. It also clarifies how the voter arrives at a decision as to whom to support. Research has been done at the national level supporting this hypothesis.

Prior to Election 2000 a research team of which this author was a member surveyed potential voters on their choice of presidential candidates in each country, their party affiliations, the role of the media, and how these influenced their choice of candidate. We also investigated how candidates' character impacted voter choice. Bruce Newman created a voter model to track voters' decisions. He notes that voters go through two processes when deciding upon a candidate. Voters first scan the issues, and if they agree predominantly with one of the candidates they will often emotionally bond with that candidate. Election 2000, according to Newman, also made clear what happens when none of the candidates is particularly appealing: voters get bored, disconnect, and stay home.

Falkowski and Czalina, researching the presidential election in Poland, found that voters react to candidates first with emotion, than move to the issues, i.e. the constructive side. Emotions become the filter for voter decisions.

Dejan Vercie's survey in Slovenia pointed to an opposite conclusion. Like Newman, Vercie found that emotion played a lesser role in the Slovenian elections in 2000. Voters chose their candidate based most closely on the issues. Emotions and the candidates' personal lives didn't enter the equation. The Slovenian case was the exception to our research.¹⁸

But whether voters bond logically then emotionally or emotionally then logically, the successful candidate tends to come across as more human to the majority of the voters. The objective is to either transform the candidate into a "real" human being or make the election seem to have a personal impact.

ENTER CLIO THE MUSE

History's role in the politics of the personal receives less attention because candidate image creation and marketing focuses more on how to create an effective personal candidate image based on current needs and issues, rather than the candidate's, parties', and communities' past. History is too often perceived as the study of the far side of the disconnect factor, which allows the past to get overlooked when

¹⁵ Taylor, January 2002.

¹⁶ Swilley, Interview, February 2002.

¹⁷ Betty Loren Maltese, the former Town President of Cicero, recently convicted of bilking the suburb out of \$10 million dollars retained the love and confidence of Cicero Residents.

¹⁸ Paper's quoted presented at the Prystop conference on Political Marketing, Bled Slovenia July 6-8, 2001 Published in Proceedings.

analyzing the present.¹⁹ But understanding the personal animus, issues, and rivalries that transformed Illinois primary 2002 into a Battle *Royal* requires knowing the history of the 9th Congressional district. History holds the key to how 9th district candidates approached the issues; why certain candidates won and others lost; and the future's shape of the 9th district. For the traveling salesmen so eloquently portrayed in the *Music Man* were right: "You got to know the territory."²⁰

The Historical relationships underlying the personal nature of the 2002 Illinois primary campaign are best understood by examining:

1. The relations between Skokie and Evanston in the 1950s and 1960s
2. How history influenced the structure of both communities' political organizations
3. The clash between the two political organizations during the 1998 Congressional primary
4. How the history of all these events fueled Illinois Primary 2002

Let the History lesson begin...

THE BACKGROUND: A TALE OF TWO COMMUNITIES, ONE CITY AND ONE SUBURB:

The Village of Skokie and the city of Evanston Illinois both lie directly north of Chicago. Today both suburbs vote overwhelmingly Democrat; majority voter attitudes range from moderate to progressive. Both suburbs are diverse. Evanston has a larger African American population; Skokie has larger Asian, Middle Eastern and Hispanic populations. Both communities have significant middle/upper middle class populations; both have poverty.

Both Evanston and Skokie have significant Jewish populations that are active in local politics. The leaders of the factions controlling each community are both Jewish. They differ significantly on how Judaism shaped their politics.

Skokie and Evanston are the municipal equivalent of Siamese twins. One third of Skokie's children attend Evanston schools. One fourth of Skokie's residents actually have an Evanston postal address and zip code.

What makes Skokie and Evanston so politically strategic? The two suburbs have a critical mass of population that provides sufficient votes to strongly influence and even decide elections. With urban sprawl politics have increasingly become regional. For local and state politicians to succeed, they must carry regions. Much of Gore's Illinois majority in Election 2000 came from Evanston and Niles Township.

Though Skokie and Evanston have much in common, a history and perception that played the deciding role in Illinois Primary 2002, separate them. Familiarity bred contempt. Like the original Siamese twins, Evanston and Skokie residents sometimes barely speak. The discord between Skokie and Evanston began in the 1950s.

Skokie, Pottawatomie for "one who dwells in a swamp," had taken that name only in 1948. It had previously been called Niles Center. Prior to the 1950s, Skokie was a village, whose founders grew and sold flowers. In the late 1950s the community experienced a growth spurt when a largely Jewish population moved to Skokie from Chicago's changing neighborhoods.

Evanston, on the other hand, was an established community, known to Ralph Waldo

¹⁹ Even when the emphasis lies on getting to the root of a past event future implications are muted. Few historians seek causality in the War of the Roses or the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. Eileen Powers in her essay on the "Fall" of the Roman Empire attempts to draw a line between that event and the imminent beginning of World War II. But the lines are muted. One result of this is that Freshmen are often dragged kicking and screaming into the first segment of World Civilizations.

²⁰ Meredith Willson (Author and Lyricist), (Kermit Bloomgarden (Producer), Morton Da Costa (Director), Onna White (Choreographer), "Overture/Rock Island," in *The Music Man*, New York, Broadway: The Majestic Theater, first performed December 19, 1957.

Emerson.²¹ The community, originally an amalgam of three communities,²² had a tradition of gentility and old money. True, there was poverty in parts of Evanston, but the city was home to such mainstream institutions as Rotary international, the Women's Christian Temperance Union and Northwestern University. This fueled an intolerant attitude on the part of some of the more established residents toward all minorities.

Anti-Semitism was present in both communities. Evanston didn't attract a significant Jewish population until the late 1960s and early 1970s. For example, an upscale woman's shop refused to serve Jewish customers. Another example: Northwestern University restricted admission on the basis of a quota on Jewish students until the early 1970s.

These strains form the background of a political rivalry. The first and second-generation immigrants in Skokie had little in common with the more established if not staid Evanston residents who viewed their neighbors to the west as *parvenus*. Skokie's residents viewed white Evanston residents as wealthier, snobbish bigots. The African-American Evanston residents were too busy fighting for their civil rights to be involved in the Evanston/Skokie rivalry.²³

In those days, Skokie also had its share of anti-Semitism. The village's established residents, most of whose ancestors came from Luxembourg, were disquieted by the large Jewish influx in the late 1950s. By the mid-1960s, after a bitter high school board election, the bitterness finally waned.

Evanston and Skokie's Democratic Party political organizations reflect their roots. Evanston became more progressive and cause oriented, spearheaded by younger people moving into the city, challenging the older conservative Republican establishment. The Democratic Party of Evanston (DPOE) took a grassroots model, employing the strategies of the politics of ideas used by Congressman Abner Mikva.

Mikva, a liberal Democrat, who had moved to Evanston from the area surrounding the University of Chicago, Hyde Park, won election to Congress in 1968, but lost his bid for reelection to Conservative Republican incumbent Sam Young in 1972.

Undaunted by the defeat, Mikva fashioned an organization which resembled organizations built by the Progressives at the turn of the 20th century. They banded together, rang doorbells, baked cookies, involving families. This resulted in Mikva winning in 1972 by 200 votes, the slimmest margin of any member of Congress. This led Mikva's Congressional colleagues to nickname him "Landslide Ab."

The Mikva model took hold in Evanston, and the political underdog Evanston's Democrats succeeded in becoming Evanston's majority party by ringing doorbell, placing signs, and treating campaigns as communal events. Former Congressman Abner Mikva has returned to Chicago, and keeps in close touch with the DPOE. In fact, this Liberal Democrat continues to be respected and loved by the vast majority of Evanston Democrats, and has a new nickname: the "Prince" of the DPOE.²⁴

Since the 1950s, Skokie and Niles Township had a politics-of-party, Chicago style, mold. Skokie was known for its dance halls and liquor during the 1920s, making the suburb conducive to machine party politics. Under Democratic Committeeman Scotty Krier, Skokie Democrats formed an organization that resembled the Democratic Party in Chicago. The Democratic Party had one elected office holder, State Representative Aaron Jaffe, who also was the Democratic Committeeman. Skokie had a Democratic Mayor, Myron "Mike" Greisdorf, between 1961 and 1965, but Greisdorf had lost the election in 1965 to Albert Smith of the Caucus Party. The Caucus, a combination of Republicans, Democrats and Independents has controlled Skokie government elected offices since.

²¹ Emerson noted that a storm blew the roof off of the local university in Evans Town in 1852.

²² Patricia A. Vance, Supervisor of Evanston Township. Evanston grew out of a community of former slaves, artisans and servants, and established settlers. Comment made c. March 30, 1998.

²³ Robert L. Wharton, CEO CEDA recalls Evanston's Varsity Theater insisting African Americans sit in the balcony. The main floor was reserved for whites only.

²⁴ Mikva's grassroots volunteer campaign organization formed the working model for the Democratic Party of Evanston. When the Mikva's made an appearance at the victory party after the general election, November 5, 2002, they were introduced as the "Prince and Princess of Evanston Politics."

When Calvin R. Sutker²⁵ became committeeman in 1973, he built the Niles Township Regular Democratic Organization on the traditional Chicago model. It was the model he understood and knew. Sutker grew up in Chicago's 24th Ward, controlled by Jake Arvey. His family owned a delicatessen on Madison and Central; his mother worked a precinct for Arvey's organization. Sutker learned much from the 24th Ward organization. He understood the need for loyalty to the committeeman; patronage for a precinct well worked. He wasn't alone. Many of the families, moving to the communities in Niles Township knew and liked Chicago politics. These new Niles Township residents may have left Chicago behind, but they packed Chicago-style politics along with the family silver.²⁶

When Sutker became Committeeman, the Niles Township Democrats held one local office. Within 4 years, this changed. With the help of an effective administrator, Patricia Morowitz, Sutker organized the precinct captains, binding the organization into something of a political family. By 1977, the Democrats and the Caucus declared a truce. Currently, only two Skokie trustees list themselves as Republicans, while 85-90% of Caucus party members are Democrats, making both parties synonymous. That same year, the Democrats won control of Niles Township. Democrats also won the state legislative districts in Skokie.

But as the Regular Democratic Organization of Niles Township gained offices, it took on an increasingly authoritarian mold, even more closely resembling the older model of a political organization. Why? Sutker found increasingly difficult to find jobs. Contributions became an issue, meaning that offices seemed to be offered to the most generous contributors to the party.

As the number of opportunities for patronage declined, executive authority expanded. A power struggle between Sutker's administrator in the forest preserve district, Barbara Panozzo and Patricia Morowitz ensued. Panozzo won, and began to mold the organization to resemble city ward organizations. The quest for control over more jobs and money led to reduced flexibility and less discussion. On one occasion, Panozzo commented that "Regular Democrat" meant following orders. On another she blasted liberals for desegregation, claiming that integration forced people to move out to the suburbs. On another occasion, Panozzo commented that people who crossed her would suffer revenge. "You won't know how and you won't know when..."²⁷ Panozzo's tactics did not endear her to some party members²⁸, and the organization's membership began to shrink, although it still delivered the vote.

Although the two communities largely overcame the issues that had separated them in the 1950s, much mistrust remained. The difference in style between the two regular Democratic political organizations reflected basic differences in outlook, and was a key factor in the formation of opposing sides during Primary 2002. Skokie and Evanston both possessed viable Democratic political organizations, existing side by side with different structures and worldviews.

But their disparate organizational structures and philosophies didn't matter because both communities had separate state representatives, local and township officials, resulting in a political equilibrium between the two communities. Evanston and Skokie worked for the same candidates in national and statewide offices. County officials were elected at-large, making regional representation difficult. But because both communities had little shared representation on the state and county level, the party organizations rarely came in conflict with each other. This equilibrium continued in the two areas until 1990.

The Illinois constitution mandates that in the event the Democratic and Republican parties cannot agree on the borders of legislative districts, the map will be decided by a coin toss and the winner of the coin toss draws the legislative district map to favor their political party. The Democrats lost the coin toss, whereupon the Republicans drew a map containing two legislative districts, encompassing parts of both

²⁵ Sutker also learned politics from the politics of party mode. The family moved to Skokie from Chicago's west side. Sutker's mother was a precinct captain in Jake Arvey's 24th Ward organization. The family owned a popular delicatessen on Madison and Central in Chicago.

²⁶ Ross, J-R. E., "The Machine was Alive and Well and Living in Skokie," Bruce Newman, (ed.), *The Handbook of Political Marketing*, California: Sage Press, 1999, 521, 524-526.

²⁷ Panozzo, comments made 1987-1994.

²⁸ Three elected officials, one in the township, 2 in village politics worried about Panozzo's influence.

Evanston and Skokie. The communities were no longer separate and equal. This placed Skokie and Evanston on a collision course.²⁹

THE CLASH OF THE POLS: INTRODUCTION

The Niles Township Regular Democratic Organization led by Calvin R. Sutker prospered in the 1970s through the mid-1980s. Sutker and the Niles Township Democrats gained national pre-eminence after presidential candidate Jimmy Carter visited the Niles Township Jewish Congregation in Skokie on October 26, 1976.

But by the 1990s Sutker's power in the Cook County Democratic Party had waned. Lower voter totals in Niles Township had reduced his "weighted" vote in the Cook County Democratic Organization. Committeemen's power in this council depends on the number of Democratic votes in her/his ward or township.

Sutker had run for statewide and county offices in the hopes of gaining more influence. But his previous candidacies for Illinois Secretary of State and Clerk of Cook County had failed, either in the slating session or during the primary. This reduced his ability to find jobs for party members. Promises were made that could not be kept.

Seeking an office that would deliver more influence and jobs, Sutker won a seat on the Cook County Board in 1994, but lost any potential political influence because he supported Aurelia Pucinski over Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley's brother, John, for chair of the county Finance Committee. It's not nice to diss The Mayor. Pucinski, the Clerk of the Circuit Court, was, by all measures is a walking political disaster³⁰.

As Sutker's influence waned, he demanded stronger proof of unconditional loyalty and money from his organization. His demands for loyalty were in inverse to his influence. In the process he made some poor decisions that only made matters worse. Case in point: In 1992, he backed Governor Mario Cuomo for the Democratic Presidential nomination, after Cuomo withdrew from the campaign. William Jefferson Clinton owed nothing to the Democrats in Niles Township, and offers to Skokie democrats for federal government jobs diminished after President Bill Clinton assumed office.³¹

The reapportionment of 1990 worsened matters. As a result of the remap Skokie and Evanston were both placed in the 18th legislative district. Cal Sutker now had a state representative within Niles Township that he didn't support and who therefore gained office without his help--State Representative Janice D. Schakowsky from Evanston.

THE CLASH OF THE POLS: YOU'RE NOT MY STYLE

Because politics are local, rivalries tend to be personal. No one can say for certain why Sutker and Schakowsky disliked each other. But the differences in their backgrounds and political styles may well have fueled their feelings.

Sutker grew up on the West Side of Chicago. Sutker was a Jewish liberal, but as the only Jewish committeeman in Mayor Richard J. Daley's Chicago, and as a World War II veteran, he'd experienced anti-Semitism. His wife Phyllis is an ardent Zionist, and no group is more sensitive to anti-Jewish feeling than Zionists. World War II, the Holocaust and the nascent anti-Semitism encountered in the late 50s may well have led to a siege mentality, which in turn made Sutker somewhat suspicious, and quick to accuse those who disagree of betrayal and racism.

This mentality may have automatically cast suspicion on Schakowsky. Members of the Niles Township Regular Democratic Organization, like their 24th Ward counterparts, earned their spurs by

²⁹ Unless there is a clear majority in the Legislature to approve the remap that follows the census, the controlling party is decided by a coin toss. In 1990 the Republicans won the toss and drew the map.

³⁰ After losing the clerkship to Dorothy Brown in 1999, Pucinski switched her party allegiance to Republican and ran against County Board President John Stroger. She lost that election as well. Ms. Pucinski then ran for Appellate Court Judge, but had no better luck. Not to worry, a patronage job in the bureau of Professional Registration followed whereupon she hired a press secretary. After Blagojevich was sworn in as Governor Ms. Pucinski was summarily fired.

³¹ I still possess the Cuomo button. It has historical import.

repeatedly carrying precincts, making contributions, and following the party line set by Sutker and his associates. An elected official who didn't rise through the ranks and wasn't dependent on the organization was suspect.

It should also be noted that the older party politics of the 1930s through the mid-1960s were male-dominated. Schakowsky didn't fit the mold. Jan Schakowsky grew up in West Rogers Park, gaining prominence as a consumer advocate. Her cause placing public freshness codes on groceries brought her into prominence. She ran, but lost, a race for the Cook County Board in 1986. In 1990 she succeeded Woods Bowman in the Illinois Legislature. Schakowsky won because she followed the Mikva model, building grass-root coalitions. Schakowsky brought grassroots into the heart of Niles Township, a campaign strategy that challenged the power of the Committeeman.

Campaign strategy, at least in Niles Township, placed all involved in campaigns in a situation in which the wagons are circled. The opponents become invaders who, if victorious, will make life not worth living. Captains were routinely reminded of what would happen if they failed. This was the basis of fear-driven campaigns.³²

Schakowsky, like Sutker is Jewish, and belongs to numerous Jewish organizations. Unlike Sutker, Schakowsky's religious and organization background makes her a more inclusive politician. She routinely forms coalitions and recruits activists to work for her causes. Her campaign strategy is based on involving people in the political process who previously sat on the sidelines.

Schakowsky easily won reelection in 1992 and began to develop a following in Niles Township independent of the regular democrats. Schakowsky's popularity grew precisely at the same time that Sutker was working overtime to regain the influence he had in the 1970s.

By 1994 Sutker and Schakowsky were on a collision course. Their styles and backgrounds differed radically. Sutker favored males who had proven their loyalty. Schakowsky had little use for "boss" types, especially male chauvinist boss types. Maybe that's reason Schakowsky hesitated jumping onto Sutker's bandwagon after Sutker announced his candidacy for the county board in 1996.

That did it. Whatever was under the surface flared up. Sutker retaliated, by seeking a rival candidate to challenge Schakowsky in the State Representative's 1996 primary race. He told his proposed challenger that Schakowsky was hated, and that her support in Evanston was thin. Insisting that the DPOE wasn't capable of mounting an organized campaign because it was based on a grassroots model, Sutker said that a well-orchestrated Niles Township campaign would oust her from office. It would also provide Sutker with a state representative who owed election to the Niles Township Regular Democratic Organization. But the rival candidate refused the "honor," and Schakowsky ultimately did endorse Sutker's bid for County Commissioner. There was "peace in our time."³³

But, political rivalries, like the proverbial genie, aren't easily returned to the bottle. The animosities between Sutker and Schakowsky went on hold after Republican victories in 1996 and the presidential campaign victory in 1996. Like the plague bacillus in the blankets tucked in the hope chest, Schakowsky and Sutker smiled thinly at each other in public.³⁴ But the rivalry still smoldered.

THE CLASH OF THE POLS: THE SPARK OR THE STRAW

In 1998, 9th District Congressman Sidney Yates, after serving for 48 years in Congress, announced his retirement. Since the 9th District was overwhelmingly Democrat, the winner of the 1998 Illinois primary on the Democrat side would almost certainly become the 9th District Representative in the U.S. House of Representatives. Previously, the 9th district Congressional seat had not been an issue. Yates enjoyed support throughout the district, automatically winning re-election after re-election. Sutker enjoyed

³² I had broken my foot in December, 1996 and was barely able to walk. The Caucus party was holding its slating session, and Sutker feared they planned to slate Republican, Lourdes Mon. He demanded I attend the session, refusing to believe I could hardly walk.

³³ Sutker asked me to run against Schakowsky.

³⁴ These are the concluding remarks in Albert Camus' allegorical novel, *The Plague*. First published in 1947, Paris: Gallimard, the novel explores what happens when Bubonic Plague attacks the city of Oran in Algeria. The Plague symbolizes World War II. The book concludes with life returning to normal. But Camus warns that the plague hides in the drapes and hope chests, and will return.

special access to Yates and Washington D.C. because the Suburban Head of Operations, George Van Dusen, was a member of the Niles Township Regular Democrats, and a Village of Skokie trustee.

Family ties also played a role. Van Dusen's wife, Susan Nixon-Van Dusen shared a personal bond with the Sutker's; her mother Adeline Nixon and Phyllis Sutker had been lifelong friends.

But Yates' imminent retirement placed Sutker's Washington ties in jeopardy while also imperiling George Van Dusen's job as Legislative Aide. It was imperative that Yates's successor continued the relationship Sutker achieved with Yates. All of this underlay his decision to support Chicago's 50th Ward Committeeman and 1st District Senator, Howard Carroll. The Senator and Committeeman appeared to be the logical choice for successor. He had legislative experience, a good political organization, and support in the 50th as well as in Niles Township. During the fall of 1997 it looked like he was the heir apparent.

Carroll was one of three candidates. His most powerful rival was none other than State Representative Jan Schakowsky. Schakowsky had realized by 1993 that her legislative district lay at the heart of the 9th congressional district. Her campaign calculated the number of votes needed to win, and concluded that victory was within reach.

The third candidate J.B. Pritzker belonged to one of the wealthiest families in America, and by some accounts, sought Sutker's support, only to be perfunctorily turned down. Some believe he purposely ran on his own as a spoiler.³⁵

Campaign rivalries were further complicated by Sutker's attempt to obtain the Cook County Board presidency made him an opponent of the Cook County Democratic Organization. He may have declared his candidacy because he thought it would result in more influence, and the incumbent President, John Stroger, was recovering from cancer. Sutker may have figured that Stroger wouldn't be able to campaign, and that two wins on the county and state levels would bolster his influence.

Two coalitions of sorts formed. Three women ran in tandem: they were Schakowsky, Candidate for State Representative, Julie Hamos, and Candidate for State Central Democratic Committeeman, Carol Ronen. Cal Sutker, State Representative Louis Lang, and Hamos' opponent Meribeth Mermall loosely formed the other side.

The veneer cracked wide open; the strains between Evanston and Skokie reemerged. Skokie people formed the base of Sutker and Lang's support; Evanston supported Schakowsky, Hamos and Ronen. Pritzker's support dwindled toward the end of the campaign, much of it apparently going to Schakowsky. The differences in the styles of the party organizations flared, along with some of feelings of distrust from the 1950s and 1960s.

It was a hard fought campaign; friends didn't speak; a house to house battle for votes ensued. By March 18, 1998 the election was too close to call. By 10:00 PM Schakowsky, Ronen and Hamos had won clear victories in both Skokie and Evanston; Sutker lost his bid to become president of the county board.

The defeat was total, and there was little attempt at a show of unity. All of the other committeemen in the 9th and most of the local office holders went to Washington for Schakowsky's swearing in. Sutker was notably absent, and I, a mere Niles Township Trustee at the time, was the highest-ranking municipal official in Niles Township present.

Time healed no wounds. In March 1999 Sutker lost another election. The supposedly nonpartisan Skokie Park District election unexpectedly became a test of party strength after the park board came out in support of 3 independent candidates. The independents won, and Sutker wrote out of the local Democratic Party everyone who supported them.³⁶

Election 2000 only made matters worse. Gore's 9th district headquarters were in Evanston at the DPOE, an area Sutker considered unfriendly, and the campaign initiative was called Schakowsky/Gore. Sutker gave Schakowsky--and--Gore tepid support, even though both candidates carried Niles Township.

Sutker and the regular democrats had weakened to the point that a coalition made up of Independent Democrats and Republicans, the Community Vision Party, challenged Sutker and the Caucus Party in the municipal elections held April 3, 2001. The Caucus Party won all of Skokie's elective offices, but only after a bitter, expensive campaign. It was the first time in 35 years that the Caucus Party faced an organized challenge. This caused trauma, and pointed up a weakening of Sutker's power base. It cost

³⁵ By one account Pritzker sought Sutker's blessing, only to be turned away. As he left, Pritzker said, "I may not get elected. But I'll stop your candidate from being elected." He did just that!

³⁶ I stopped receiving mail from any of the organizations in which Sutker was involved.

Sutker in the 6 figures to secure the election. Sutker refused to speak to anyone who hadn't supported his candidates.

THE CLASH OF THE POLS: THE SHOWDOWN AT THE PRIMARY CORRAL: COALITION FORMATION

The results of Census 2000 it was believed would result in the loss of one Illinois urban congressional seat. It was feared that the 5th and 9th congressional would be combined, which would pit 5th district Congressman Rod Blagojevich against Congresswoman Schakowsky.

Another 10 years passed; another census; another coin toss; another reapportionment. This time the Democrats won the coin toss and controlled the remap. Skokie and Evanston would again have separate state representatives and senators. But the rivalries and dislikes that previously festered were now out in the open. How did the 2 rival coalitions form? The first part of the coalition that formed the basis "Team Jan" began prior to the 2000 census.

It's against this background that Congressman Blagojevich announced his bid for Illinois Governor in August 2001.³⁷ Schakowsky introduced him as her choice in late August 2000. That was the beginning. Schakowsky was already thinking of campaigning in coalition formation. She hired Baxter Swilley as her Political Director by June 2001. His job was to work with each of the designated campaigns to promote victory for each.

The Democrat's remap resulted in the creation of a new district, the 17th legislative district, which included Skokie, Glenview, Wilmette and a small part of Evanston. When State Representative Jeffrey Schoenberg announced he'd run for the State Senate, the new 17th District became an open seat.

While several activists considered running for the seat, Patrick Hughes, a Wilmette village trustee and Schakowsky supporter announced his candidacy. A second member of "Team Jan" was in place.

But the race that became the most divisive primary race was the race for the 13th Cook County District seat on the county board. Sutker was up for reelection and was challenged by former Evanston Democratic Committeeman and lobbyist Lawrence Suffredin. Congresswoman Schakowsky became the chair of Suffredin's campaign and in Niles Township Suffredin's strongest supporters' came from the defeated local party in the Skokie municipal election, the Community Vision Party.

Why was this race so important? It was a personal challenge to Sutker. If defeated, Sutker would lose his power base beyond Niles Township. County offices aren't simply ceremonial; the county has a \$2.7 billion budget. It controls the healthcare, the court system, and forest preserve system, and it was Sutker's last tie to power beyond Niles Township. Even more important this race would decide just how important Sutker and his style of politics were.³⁸ This contest dredged up all the history between Skokie and Evanston. Further it touched every sore spot created by previous campaigns. Sutker had to win this race, if only to maintain his image. Control of the 9th District lay in the balance. And for both Sutker and Schakowsky their worldview, the careers and their personal beliefs were on trial. This wasn't an election: it was a "do or die"³⁹ trial by ordeal.

There were other races in the area comprising the 9th Congressional District, but these three races were the heart of the coalition cited as "Team Jan."

The stakes in the primary were higher than past primaries. 9/11 had ended politics as usual. Each party, each faction within sensed that whoever won would play a major role in shaping Illinois' and America's uncertain future. Besides, the clashes surrounding the previous elections were unresolved. All the differences in style and history mentioned previously surfaced to be settled by Illinois Primary 2002.

Sutker wasn't going to let Schakowsky win without a fight. Seeing an opportunity to have 2 state representatives as allies, Sutker encouraged newly elected Skokie Park Board Trustee Michael Ian Bender to run for the open seat, which resulted in religion becoming an issue. Bender is an Orthodox Jew; Hughes a Catholic. The religious strains, a huge component of politics of the personal, cast this race as a contest between faiths.

³⁷ The announcement took place at Finkl's steel mill on August 8, 2001.

³⁸ Two political forms of life met each other in this primary, making it a matter of political life and death.

³⁹ Walter Lord Tennyson, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*.

Then there was the governor's race, and the opportunity to acquire influence in Springfield. State Representative Louis Lang, an ally of Cal Sutker, opposed Blagojevich. Chicago School chief Paul Vallas, former Attorney General Roland Burris, and former Illinois school Chief Theodore Bakalis also threw their hats into the ring. Lang and Bakalis ultimately withdrew, making the governor's race a three-way contest.

Schakowsky backed Blagojevich; Sutker backed Vallas. Schakowsky aided Hughes; Sutker ran in tandem with Bender.

The race for commissioner quickly became the most venomous. Schakowsky chaired Suffredin's campaign; Carroll chaired Sutker's campaign. Senator Richard Durbin concentrated on his own primary bid, but drew support from both campaigns, and was very friendly to Schakowsky.

The bitter tenor of both coalitions quickly became apparent after Sutker urged another newly elected Skokie Village Trustee, Michelle Bromberg a woman with no prior political experience, to run against Schakowsky in the primary. Sutker told Bromberg the Congressional race was winnable, using the same reasons stressed to the possible challenger in 1994. Bromberg announced becoming a Member of Congress had always been her ambition, asserting the race was winnable because she had been informed everybody hated Schakowsky. Bromberg also claimed to be the candidate representing Orthodox Jewish interests.⁴⁰

Congresswoman Schakowsky began her campaign by preparing to make a public announcement of her candidacy, surrounded by allies in a packed auditorium at Rogers School in Chicago's West Rogers Park neighborhood.

Pressure was put on Bromberg to withdraw by some of her allies, who worried that opponents would be found to challenge them. Bromberg withdrew her candidacy by the time of Schakowsky's formal announcement. Another candidate filed but was thrown off the ballot because he lacked the requisite petition signatures. Schakowsky ran unopposed, spending her energies on bringing in her coalition.⁴¹ Turf leadership hung in the balance.

Both coalitions symbolized differing political styles and values. "Team Jan" represented the politics of inclusion and an upsurge of grassroots campaigning. The emphasis was on progressive values, diversity, gender issues, and to some extent younger voters. Senior issues also became paramount. The campaign concentrated on inclusion without the hierarchies so often present in older political styles. Jewish tradition played a role, supporting the move to gain influence by making common causes.

"Team Cal" represented the interests of the older politicians and those activists who wished to support a Jewish power base using the hierarchies inherent in campaigning. It should be added that no one here is a villain. These are simply styles that reflect philosophical substance.

The issues and styles became increasingly personal as historic battles were fought, coloring the political campaigns. The Niles Township Regular Democratic Organization and the DPOE competed frantically to secure votes, striving to justify their legitimacy. Illinois Primary 2002 had become a test of personal validation as much as it was a political contest. That's why the primary campaigns became so personal, so bitter.

THE CLASH OF THE POLS: COMPLICATING FACTORS: THE FALLOUT

Defining the teams may seem to be easy, but it wasn't. Personal friendships crossed the coalitions, blurring their borders. State Representative Hamos' position illustrated this. Hamos is married to Appeals Court Judge and Former State Representative Alan J. Greiman. Greiman and Sutker did not always see eye to eye, but by 2002 they had become close friends. Greiman supported Sutker and Hamos did likewise, putting her in opposition to her ally Jan Schakowsky.

The race for Governor added another strain. Vallas cut into Schakowsky's coalition by winning support from certain noted feminists, among them former gubernatorial candidate Dawn Clark Netsch and activist Joanne Alter. Vallas also won the DPOE's endorsement, and made inroads into the African

⁴⁰ Bromberg, comments made to Debbie Alexander, August 2001; note the resemblance in Sutker's comments to Bromberg and to me in 1994.

⁴¹ Richard Mayer didn't live in the district, and had ties to bigots. Once knocked off the ballot no one ever heard of him again.

American churches. This led to a large majority in Cook County for Vallas, almost securing for him the nomination.

Vallas' endorsement further muddied the waters. Suffredin's campaign manager, Jennifer Roniger, supported Blagojevich while working in the headquarters of the Democratic Party of Evanston, an organization that endorsed Vallas.

This meant that Schakowsky and Hamos sometimes shared podiums but spoke for opposing candidates. Hamos, who was unopposed, spent much time toward the end supporting Lisa Madigan, who was running for Attorney General against John Schmidt, an Evanston resident and favorite son. It was a delicate balancing act that pleased no one.

THE CLASH OF THE POLS: HISTORY AND CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES

Campaign strategy varied in individual campaigns, but there were similarities that reflected both coalitions. Interestingly, both teams used the media in the same ways.

In the governor's race, candidates Blagojevich and Vallas both used TV commercials. The candidates for local offices relied on mailings, shaking hands at L train hubs, and going door to door. There were also lots of "low cost" fundraisers and coffees. Candidates asked their supporters to send out support postcards to their friends as elections drew near. All of the campaigns used phone banking to pinpoint the number of their supporters, and to achieve the needed magic number of supporters for victory.

Even when issues were addressed, the different campaigns addressed them in personal ways. Suffredin dubbed Sutker "Silent Cal," castigating him as a do nothing member of the County Board.⁴²

Sutker accused Suffredin of being a lobbyist for the tobacco and gun industries. Suffredin, on the other hand, portrayed himself as an "advocate for us all." An experienced politician with impeccable credentials, fighting for progressive causes, Suffredin campaigned as younger as and more active than Sutker.

Sutker portrayed himself as a seasoned campaigner. Decades of experience had made him an experienced warrior. His campaign literature included a wedding picture and picture of himself in uniform.

Sutker's campaign plan postulated an 80-90% majority in Niles Township, a similar majority in the 50th ward, and inroads in Evanston Township. While positioning himself as a Jewish candidate, Sutker also courted Hindus and African Americans, pointing out they've been shortchanged by the government agencies. Here too the rivalry between Skokie and Evanston became an issue. Sutker obtained the support of Evanston 5th ward Alderman Joe Kent, by noting that the DPOE didn't include many African Americans. Extending the siege mentality while hinting at the possibility of jobs and influence, in return for support was the method Sutker employed to make alliances. It's a negative form of campaigning that appears to be inclusive. It's actually a variation on the campaign ploy:⁴³ nobody likes the opponent; his/her organization is weak.

Suffredin's strength came from Evanston, New Trier Township, and the Northeast segment of Chicago, East Rogers Park. The campaign plan conceded a majority to Sutker in Niles Township and the 50th ward, but reducing the margin of victory so Sutker wouldn't overcome the majorities in Suffredin's strongholds.

The Governor's race also got personal. Lang divided his time between Sutker and Blagojevich. Mutual endorsements were exchanged. Both helped Vallas portray Blagojevich as a "machine" candidate controlled by his father-in-law, Chicago Alderman Richard Mell. Vallas cast himself as the "take charge" savior of the Chicago school system. The issue of parental involvement superceded many of the issues in the Governor's race--the most personal of politics of all.

Anti-Semitism, always a personal issue, reemerged as a campaign issue. Skokie gained international fame, or perhaps notoriety, when the village refused to issue a permit for a proposed neo-Nazi march in 1977. As a result of the proposed Nazi march, the Holocaust Memorial Foundation was formed and a museum was created, dedicated to the Holocaust's study and remembrance. But the Holocaust Memorial Foundation outgrew its quarters. Ground was purchased on land that was first a public school

⁴² "Silent Cal" appeared in all of Suffredin's campaign literature.

⁴³ During the village election, Sutker slated Usha Kamaria, a Hindu, to run for the township board. This slating, it was hoped, would bring Hindu support to the ticket, while casting Sutker as inclusive.

then a Jewish Day School. The foundation “made no little plans.” Its planners envisioned a complex that would be the second largest Holocaust museum and research institution in America. But the location was residential, requiring a zoning variance.

Opponents of the site worried about congestion. Proponents cast the issue as a confrontation between tolerance and bigotry; those opposing the site were accused of anti-Semitic, even if they were Jewish. Schakowsky and Suffredin were denounced both as anti-Semites and outsiders, as they lived in Evanston.⁴⁴

The issue was decided at a packed meeting held at the Skokie Public Library on January 22, 2002. Citing zoning concerns, Skokie village trustees voted down the variance 4 to 3. The 3 trustees that voted for the variance were Jewish; the 4 trustees voting “no” Christian.

The zoning question pointed up the two views of Judaism which were reflected by the separate coalitions. Jews, usually younger Reform or Conservative, supporters of coalition politics, tended to view the Holocaust Museum case as a zoning issue. Similarly, “The Fairview Neighbors,” both Jewish and Christian, the group that opposed the proposed museum location threw their support to Schakowsky’s candidates Suffredin and Hughes.

Viewing themselves as under siege, many members of the Observant Jewish community, and senior citizens who lived through World War II tended to back Bender and Sutker. Bender made his Judaism a campaign issue. Hughes concentrated more on meeting the voters.

Enter the scandal element. Sutker had been under subpoena for hiring ghost pay rollers’ in the North Shore Mosquito Abatement District in 2000. After months it appeared the investigation may have ended, but in January 2002 the investigation revived, and the FBI searched Sutker’s county offices. Sutker’s supporter Scott Bagnall accused “a “congresswoman”⁴⁵ (a not-so-veiled reference to Congresswoman Schakowsky) of telling the FBI, casting her as a snitch. Ghost pay rolling took a back seat to the soap opera “Who Told on the Commissioner?”

Other charges followed. Sutker “kicked up his attacks a notch” by repeating that Suffredin was nothing more than a lobbyist for SBC Ameritech, the gun lobby and the tobacco industry, and a person who funneled contributions to Republicans. Suffredin charged the commissioner did nothing for 8 years, except for hiring ghost pay rollers and securing a no-bid \$25,000 contract for his daughter.

Family got into the act. Sutker’s grandchildren went door-to-door to some homes in Skokie. Suffredin brought his extended family to his low-cost fundraiser at Leona’s, a popular Skokie restaurant. His wife, Gloria Calesi, was a fixture at headquarters.

The campaigns on both sides grew feverish as each campaign worked to put volunteers into the field. The feverishness an attempt at validation as much as it was an attempt to secure votes.

Both Hughes and Bender’s literature listed accomplishments and included family pictures. Each endeavored to convince voters that he was the better candidate because he was an excellent husband and parent. Both attempted primarily on personal grounds to forge bonds with the voters.

Blagojevich touted his record of service to children, senior citizens and working people. He announced his candidacy at Finkl’s steel mill, a factory where his father once worked. The Congressman projected his hardworking immigrant background quite effectively.

By March 19, 2002 the images created earlier in the campaigns had crystallized completely. A vote for “Team Jan” was a vote for change, inclusion and unity. This was a progressive ticket that spanned all cultures. A vote for “Team Cal,” on the other hand was a vote for older progressives, protection from anti-Semitism, and maintenance of Skokie’s political status quo. The campaigns had become so personal that even supporters became issues. If supporters formerly belonged in the opposite camp, they were suspected of being latter-day Benedict Arnolds or closet Storm Troopers.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

⁴⁴ Anyone who opposed the museum location was branded an anti-Semite. Anti-Semitism is used as a political weapon; those accused deny the charge by stating, “I am not...” But the charges are repeated, resulting in the accused growing silent, his/her name ruined. Sutker included me in this charge. I agreed, stating that, “I’m the first anti-Semite on my block studying for my Bar Mitzvah!” That ended the accusations.

⁴⁵ Sutker and his closest supporters refuse to refer to Schakowsky by name, calling her the Congresswoman.

New voting machines were being used that tallied votes automatically and quickly transmitted results to the election board. By 9:30 PM, the interim totals revealed that Suffredin defeated Sutker 55 to 44 percent. Hughes, in a very close race, bested Bender by 116 votes. Blagojevich and Vallas remained neck in neck until 11:00. Blagojevich held the victory balloon drop shortly after 1 AM.

Suffredin's victory party illustrated just how much person politics had entered these races. Like all victory parties, there was general rejoicing. But this rejoicing had an edge.

A few personal examples: I was taking pictures of the Calisi/Suffredin's when I was nearly knocked over by a jubilant Evanston Township Committeeman Jeanne Cleveland-Bernstein. As she hugged me she shouted, "There is a G-d." Richard Witry and I were Suffredin's Campaign co-chairs for Skokie, and both of us had been slandered during the campaign. When we first saw each other I walked up to Dick, saying "Ding dong the witch is..." (I never finished the sentence). He gave me a bear hug, and we stood in the middle of the room repeating, "The dragon's dead" over and over. It took Suffredin close to 45 minutes just to thank everyone in the room.

Sutker conceded the following day; Blagojevich held a unity press conference with Vallas and Burris then began planning his campaign for Election 2002. Shortly thereafter Vallas left Chicago to become the Superintendent of Schools in Philadelphia.

Michael Ian Bender refused to concede; he demanded and lost a recount, and has sued the Clerk of Cook County in federal court, attempting to win in the courts the seat the voters denied him. He ultimately conceded in August.

Schakowsky began raising money and putting together a victorious coalition for Election 2002. The campaign steering committee began meeting on May 16th and the opening rally was held on June 9th.

CONCLUSION—APRIL 11, 2003

Shortly after the primary it appeared that Illinois Primary 2002 was the first step in a latter day "Grand Design." Today, victory in Illinois; tomorrow America. What wasn't readily understood was the depth of emotion that emerged from the primary campaign: over ½ century of distrust, differing political styles, and desperate need for personal validation. This wasn't a tennis match to be replayed after a handshake and a clap on the back. Illinois Primary 2002 signaled a shift of political power, leaving festering wounds in its wake. The genie could not be returned to the bottle.

This raises an interesting question: how is party unity restored when some party members find it distasteful to be in the same room? Overtures were made to heal rifts and secure victory in the November, 2002 elections. The candidates and elected officials met on May 3, 2002 to plan strategy, but according to some of the attendees some strains remained. Some attempts by Vallas supporters at rapprochement were rebuffed at the unity lunch.⁴⁶

State Representative Lang feared his loss of influence for supporting Vallas. Bender took his election battle to the courts. Sutker kept a low profile; it was believed he might retire. If so Niles Township might become a political battleground.

While candidates met, planned and posed together, no one seemed willing to bury the hatchet and let bygones be bygones. Joint planning became difficult, usually confined to ritual meetings, rather than serious work sessions.

Looking at the primary from time's vantage illuminates the pitfalls of the politics of the personal. Logic cannot overcome the emotion engendered by history. Candidates and strategists employing personal politics not only couch their arguments in historical terms, candidates and voters alike relive the past. And that past may not be pleasant. Remembering pain forces one to relive it. The Illinois 2002 Primary dredged up memories of persecution which became all too real. This makes it difficult to shake hands and let bygones be bygones.

For some candidates Illinois Primary 2002 was a personal test of validation. Lifetimes hung in the balance. The winners rejoiced; the losers withdrew, making reconciliation difficult. Losing such a campaign is tantamount to a nervous breakdown.

⁴⁶ One Vallas supporter asked Blagojevich's representative to visit his district. Blagojevich's representative replied the State Representative must either guarantee 2500 participants or pay \$20,000.

Further strains emerged after the primary. Blagojevich, having nearly lost the election, reshuffled his staff. The Strategic Campaign Group⁴⁷ wasn't retained. This resulted in a strain between the Blagojevich and Schakowsky campaigns. Party organizations that supported Vallas were sometimes viewed warily. Could they be trusted on Election-Day?

Then it began to dawn that Democratic Party victories up and down the ticket were possibilities. There might well be jobs and rewards. That's when further anxiety set in: what if everyone else got a job, but you were left standing at the station when the train rolled out? This became an added stress factor.

Sometimes it was difficult to believe the party's good fortune. Democrats still contend with the 1994 Republican "Revolution," Clinton's impeachment, and Election 2000. Further 9/11 always looms in the background. None of us feel as secure as we did before that day. These factors also influenced feelings after the primary.

But these strains weren't readily visible during the summer of 2002. Rather, they rustled in the background, waiting. There was too much work to do, and the belief that victory was imminent. All it would take was hard work. The work needed for Election 2002 obscured the depth of the breaches.

Some of the issues noted at last year's conference came to pass. Team Jan gained a solid political progressive base with this victory, becoming a major player on the Illinois political stage. There is speculation that larger statewide coalitions will form with other minorities, such as the African American communities in Congressmen Danny Davis and Jesse Jackson JR's districts.⁴⁸

It appears that the 2002 Illinois primary was actually the first salvo of Election 2004. Schakowsky has entered the House leadership, and is raising money nationwide. Illinois and team Jan are poised to play a national leadership position in the upcoming presidential election. Is there an Illinois candidate waiting in the wings? Are negotiations beginning that a Democratic win will make members of this coalition into national leaders?

The events of September 11th heightened the sense of history. Societies flourish when they cultivate roots to create commonalties based on shared pasts. Americans don't share a common heritage, but even in a divisive election ethnic groups can be brought closer together.

There are still unanswered questions: How will the situation in the Middle East and the aftermath of September 11, 2001 affect future elections? Will they bring people together or drive them apart? Will fear of future terrorism polarize populations that need to make alliances if the Democrats are to be victorious?

Anti-Semitism in all of its forms is on the rise. Jewish Americans usually vote. Will the struggle between Israel and the Palestinians, and the war in Iraq make Jewish Americans feel vulnerable when Israel is challenged in the American media? Will they vote according to their fear? Do non-Jewish Americans distinguish between Jewish Israeli citizens and Jewish Americans, or do they lop all of them together? Will Jewish Americans become targets for terrorist groups unable to spew their venom at Israelis? The Holocaust ended close to 60 years ago, but its memory lingers. Jewish Americans will use their votes to defend their freedom. The question is how?

India and Pakistan, both with nuclear capability, are on the brink of war. Indians and Pakistanis work well together in America. Will they continue to do so? Polarization alters elections by weakening communal bonds. What happens to democracy then?

The primary raised concerns about coalition's affects; will coalitions coupled with the politics of the personal transform American electoral political campaigns into exercises in corporatism, rather than individualism? Will elections become team sports? What happens to democracy then?

Will coalitions exacerbate the present trend to raise large amounts of money? Money talks. Will over reliance on coalition's price individual candidate out of the race? What happens to democracy then?

A second lesson: future campaigns will become increasingly personal. History's role becomes the margin of victory. Team Jan used history to create winning strategies.

⁴⁷ The Strategic Campaign group is headed by Schakowsky's husband Bob Creamer. Jan Schakowsky was not amused.

⁴⁸ October 2002, Reverend Jackson visited Northwestern University in the hopes of starting a Northwestern University chapter of PUSH. During his talk he spoke of the classic alliance between African-Americans and Jews.

History's role in the 2002 Illinois Primary Election has become increasingly clear. Illinois Primary 2002 *was* the house that History built. History created the battlefield, fueled the personal rivalries, underlies the formation of coalitions, set the tone for campaign strategies, and framed the issues.

Most important, history pointed to why Team Jan won. Schakowsky's coalition practiced the politics of inclusiveness. They brought voters together. All of us crave a sense of community in the wake of 9/11. Team Jan fostered that community.

Team Cal, on the other hand, practiced the politics of siege. Skokie was under siege, Jews were under siege; it's us against them. One Sutker supporter confided to me that she was told a Suffredin victory meant Evanston was taking over Skokie. It was not made clear to some folks that Sutker was uncontested in his effort to be re-elected as Niles Township Democratic Committeeman.

Siege campaigns raise adrenaline, but over time they generate so much stress that the campaign tires and makes mistakes. There's a lesson here: winning campaigns are positive. They don't terrify to win.

Every election, to some measure, employs historical precedence. Incumbents and challengers alike run on their records. But in this election History was the key to understanding the relationships between Skokie and Evanston. History shed light on voter response to perceived anti-Semitism. History also revealed the factors resulting in the personal dislike between Sutker and Schakowsky—and how that dislike led to this contest.

Each team saw the primary through a different lens. Fear and dislikes older than some of the candidates reared their heads during this election. History came alive for voters and candidates alike in a frightening way.

For History, like the coin, has two sides. The bitterness during the campaign resulted in distrust among allies, making reconciliation difficult. During the TV series *LA Law* one character ended a relationship with another, stating, "There's too much history between us."⁴⁹ This line could have been written in the aftermath of Illinois Primary 2002.

But none of this was visible last June. It will play a large role in the Illinois 2002 General Election. But that's another story. Finally this paper is complete.

APPENDIX I:

DEFINITIONS:

THE POLITICS OF IDEOLOGY:

The politics of the ideological is driven by causes. Its practitioners believe promoting and implementing particular causes will assure good government. This is a large category, embracing community organizations, faith based organizations, and hate based organizations. The ACLU, Illinois Republican Assembly, CEDA, Catholic Charities, B'nai B'rith, Neo Nazis, and the KKK are typical cause organizations.

The "cause" politicians in this group work to further their particular causes through organizations usually found in the not-for-profit sector. They're the organizers and lobbyists of the political world, relying on strength of numbers to advance their causes. They're non-partisan, supporting friends on both sides of the political aisle, targeting for defeat those elected officials who don't share their goals.

The second group of "cause" politicians is political philosophers, most often liberals or conservatives, working to further political philosophies rather than organizational goals. Neither group is mutually exclusive.

Liberals and conservatives alike support not-for-profit organizations whose goals match their ideological agenda. Their objective is the adoption of their political philosophy manifested through supportive laws and programs.

Not every cause politician stays in the NFP world. Some seek political office, usually starting locally. If successful, they may then seek higher statewide office, then national office-- with varying

⁴⁹ Roxanne Melman to Arnie Becker, *LA Law*, 1994.

degrees of success. But cause politicians often don't possess the flexibility needed to represent diverse populations. If they reach the national level they tend to represent a cluster of related causes rather than one issue.

Ralph Nader, longtime consumer advocate and environmentalist, lost his presidential bid in Election 2000, gathering less than 5 % of the vote. Nader's candidacy siphoned votes away from Vice President Al Gore, denying him the presidency, while facilitating Governor George W. Bush's election. Bush was Governor of Texas, a state with one of the worst environmental records in America.

Senators Barry Goldwater and Robert Taft are good examples of the second group of "cause" politicians. Each espoused a return to political conservatism in their unsuccessful bids for the presidency. Taft lost the Republican presidential nomination to General Dwight Eisenhower; Goldwater lost the 1964 presidential election to President Lyndon Baines Johnson. Senator George McGovern in 1972 positioned himself as the liberal alternative to President Richard Millhouse Nixon, and lost in a landslide.

Organization "cause" politicians often don't have appeal beyond the local level. They run simply to bring their issues into the spotlight.

THE POLITICS OF PARTY

The politics of party in America value political party fortunes over particular causes, individual candidate aspiration and political philosophy. Neither party is monolithic. Liberal Republicans and Conservative Democrats are vital to their survival. Senator Jim Jeffords switch from Republican to Independent exemplifies this.

Party politics are especially effective at the local level. Local political organizations slate candidates and provide campaign workers, enabling local candidates to attain public office. It was local political organizations that developed that most famous of political institutions, the political machine.

The political machine was an organization that controlled government and government services in urban areas, securing votes in return for jobs or favors on the local level, on occasion employing means of dubious legality. By the beginning of the 20th century, political machines became synonymous with party politics. In their heyday political machines served constituents well, otherwise they would not have survived. Some say that the Cook County political organization is stronger than ever.

The politics of party humanized democracy, and provided social services. They made it possible for even the newest of immigrants to participate in the process as America industrialized in the decades after the Civil War.

But party politics demand unquestioning loyalty. Once the local party slates a candidate, party regulars are expected to support him/her—no questions asked. The amount of influence in the slating policy varies. Some party organizations hold endorsement sessions during which members voice opinions, and vote on candidates, some requiring a 2/3 vote before issuing an endorsement. Other organizations endorse candidates chosen by the leaders, without party endorsement sessions. This results in many a harried precinct captain grudgingly admitting that Candidate X possesses a less than stellar record, but none the less arguing for support, by acknowledging "he's sleaze. But he's *our* sleaze."

Until 1996, Illinois voters could select parties rather than candidates at the polls. For many years, straight voting was a staple of Illinois party politics. Voters punched a Democrat or Republican hole at the top of the ballot that automatically registered a vote for every Republican or Democrat candidate on the ballot. Cook County Democrat precinct captains often wore, for example, "Punch 10" buttons, rather than individual campaign pins. Party regulars know the most crucial races to local party politics are on the bottom of the ballot. These races usually are for offices with patronage jobs...the jobs that sustain local political party organizations.

The outgoing Republican controlled Illinois legislature outlawed straight party voting in 1996 as their last act in power. Democratic Party regulars, fretting that tired voters would ignore candidates and races at the bottom of the ballot, appealed the new law, but to no avail.

APPENDIX II:

HISTORICAL ADDENDUM TO TAYLOR'S COMMENTS:

Edmund Burke, the British Member of Parliament and political philosopher bolsters Taylor's view. Burke contended that office holders are elected for their judgment, not their ability to grant constituents' wishes.

A second political philosopher and office holder, Alexis DeTocqueville, feared the “tyranny of the majority,” in American Democracy. Majorities may be created because people bond with candidates rather than issues.

APPENDIX III:

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON CALVIN R. SUTKER

Initially, Sutker was a successful committeeman. He forged an alliance with the Caucus in 1977, and won control of the Niles Township Board in 1978. Sutker also got national attention when candidate Jimmy Carter came to Skokie in 1976. By the 1980s the Caucus party was largely comprised of Democrats, in effect making it an extension of the Regular Democrats of Niles Township. Sutker now supports candidates for non-partisan offices, such as school, library and park boards.

It’s tempting to cast him as a power hungry villain. That’s unfair. Committeeman Sutker may well exemplify the leader who falls in love with power and confuses toadying with loyalty. His defeat at Suffredin’s hands must have been devastating for him. No one likes to find out how much he/she is despised.

In a recent article in the Evanston Review, Sutker claims he wishes to heal the rifts in Niles Townships between himself and Schakowsky’s supporters. While none of us have received phone calls, it’s a worthy goal. There’s something tragic about a man that rises to almost national importance, then becomes so reviled. Maybe “tragic” is too strong a word. But whether Sutker is tragic or pathetic, Willie Loman’s wife, Linda, said it best when she defended her husband to her sons. Linda Loman put it simply and eloquently when she said, “Attention must be paid.”