

## Groups and the Party Coalitions: A Network Analysis of Overlapping Donor Lists

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### **Abstract**

How are factions within the two major political parties related to each other? How tightly knit are the two political parties? Are there major structural differences between them? This paper examines the composition of the Democratic and Republican party coalitions by using social network analysis to analyze the contribution patterns of elite donors. I first identify all individual donors who gave over \$200 to one of the two major political party committees in the 2003-2004 election cycle. I then trace the contributions that each of those donors made to the most partisan committees and ideological groups. I then convert this two-mode data to a dataset that shows the degree of overlap between each group's donor pool, and conduct a series of exploratory analyses using network analysis techniques. These analyses show that both parties are similar in their degree of centralization, with the party committees being the most central actors in the network. For the Democrats, 527 organizations occupy central positions, whereas for the Republicans, Leadership PACs are most central. In neither party are there distinguishable interest group factions that are isolated from the rest of the party network.

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## Groups and the Party Coalitions: A Network Analysis of Overlapping Donor Lists

Political party organizations play crucial roles in a democratic society, and understanding their external behavior can tell us a great deal about political outcomes. It is important, for example, to understand how parties gather and expend organizational resources, choose platforms, and make strategic decisions about legislative goals. However, in order to really understand how party organizations behave externally in these contexts, it is first necessary to have some understanding of how the parties are organized internally. Traditional treatments of the two major American political parties describe the decentralized, varied party organizations nationally and in the fifty states (Key 1984, Jewell and Morehouse 2001, Herrnson 1990), and such studies have largely led us to conclude that the Democratic and Republican parties are so decentralized that they are able to exert only limited influence on the external political environment. Instead, candidates and interest groups are seen to dominate electoral strategy and legislative decision-making. Recently, however, a growing literature has begun to take seriously the idea that the political party organizations (outside of government) are coalitions that can and do set priorities for both legislative and electoral strategy (Cohen et al. 2001, Bernstein 1999, Monroe 2001, Schwartz 1990, Dominguez 2005, Masket 2004). Such studies reach this conclusion by considering the political parties to be loose networks of groups and elite actors who operate as a coalition, above and beyond the bounded institutional organization. In this conceptualization, the party coalition can be said to act cohesively or dissolve into factions, and strategic external decisions can be understood based on the party's internal relationships.

Prior research in support of this conceptualization of parties has varied, but has typically relied on elite interviews (Masket 2004, Bernstein 1999, Monroe 2001) or stated ties between elite partisan actors (Cohen et al. 2001, Dominguez 2005). Each approach has strengths. By interviewing as many active party participants as possible, it is possible to describe the motivations of elite actors, and draw conclusions about how their relationships with each other affect party business. For example, based on interviews and surveys, Bernstein (1999, 2001) and Monroe (2001), both conclude that professional campaign personnel and political staffers are highly partisan, and so their decisions about who to work for reflects a party insider consensus about a candidate or member's status within the party. On the other hand, it is difficult to learn about the national party coalitions entirely based on interviews, because of time and resource constraints. Relying on non-interview sources of data on the behavior of partisan actors can also be fruitful. Cohen et al., for example, examined pre-primary endorsements of presidential candidates (1976-2004) and found that nationally dispersed party elites tend to have pre-primary favorite candidates, and that those candidates tend to win the nomination. This project also relies on existing data, but adopts a different approach by utilizing the tools provided by social network analysis.

Social Network Analysis (SNA) was developed by graph theoretic mathematicians to analyze the relative positions of “nodes” in any network structure based on the number and direction of connections between them. In social science, SNA is used to analyze the relationships between actors. Network analysis relies on different data than political scientists usually work with. Most statistical analyses in political science use attributional data (*i.e.*, actor A has observable characteristics X, Y, and Z). In

contrast, the relational data collected for SNA must describe the number of *ties* between each individual “actor A” and “actor B” and between each of those actors and all others within a universe bounded by the researcher’s decision rule. Once that relationship data is gathered, network analysts assume that every actor is a “node” in a network and every relationship is a tie between those nodes. Relationships are graphically modeled as lines connecting nodes, and then mathematical techniques developed for analyzing spatial relationships are then used to describe the network as a whole. Based on that positional analysis, social scientists have been able to identify the most powerful actors, the least powerful actors, and the actors most likely to serve as brokers or intermediaries in a given network. They have also drawn conclusions about the overall centralization and decentralization of a network, the presence of factions and cliques, and the distribution of power within the network as a whole. Some examples of analyses that can be conducted are:

- identifying the actors that have the most ties to other actors
- identifying the actors with the most ties to other well-connected actors
- identifying the number of actors that would need to be removed to break the network into parts, and
- identifying distinct subgroups within the network.

Although the mathematical tools themselves are atheoretical, SNA has been fairly widely used in sociology to describe the relationships between individuals in a wide variety of contexts. One famous dataset, for example, presents the records of the attendance of twenty women at a variety of social events. By analyzing who attended

which events, scholars have been able to identify social cliques and dominance roles among the women in that social circle.<sup>1</sup> The most prominent use of this technique in the study of political parties has been Schwartz' (1990) study of the relationships between elite Illinois Republicans, which identifies the relative importance of actors like the Governor, State Central Committeemen, interest groups, and financial contributors in different contexts in Illinois politics. Schwartz' study uses the typical SNA data collection methodology: snowball-sample interviewing techniques. This technique has the benefit of gathering rich, detailed data on relationships between actors, but unfortunately, it is exceedingly time-consuming and resource intensive, particularly for a broad treatment of the national political party coalitions.

This study employs a different approach, applying SNA techniques to existing relational data. Using publicly available data on financial contributions to political committees, I model the relationships between groups inside the party coalitions based on the degree to which they receive donations from the same individual donors.<sup>2</sup> My goal is to identify factions within the two major American political parties, to compare their relative cohesiveness, and to explore the relationships between key party coalition members and the newly formed "527 organizations"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The original study was Davis, Gardner and Gardner, but the data have been widely used to develop and test new methods and to teach SNA methods.

<sup>2</sup> Such dual-mode analyses do have precedent, for example in sociological studies of the financial relationships between corporations based on the degree of overlap between their corporate boards (cites). Overlapping board memberships could help explain, for example, the merger decisions or community investments made by those corporations.

<sup>3</sup> 527s derive their name from the section of the tax code that exempts political organizations from income taxes. When the IRS determined that an organization may seek "to influence the outcome of federal elections" without being subject to FECA restrictions or (initially) disclosure requirements so long as it does not "expressly advocate" the election or defeat of federal candidates, many groups and individuals responded by forming 527s (Corrado 2005).

If we are to understand how political parties operate as coalitions, it is important to understand whether the multitude of actors who work on behalf of the party (in this case, PACs), draw support from the same people or types of people. Financial contributors, in particular, provide a resource that is important both to the party as a stable organization and to its electoral efforts. If party committees, interest group and leadership PACs, and 527s tap into the same pool of donors, that means that they are making ideologically and strategically similar appeals to a limited group of people, who may, through their connections to these PACs, know each other and disseminate political messages and strategic advice through the coalition. For example, if there is little overlap between the contributor lists to MoveOn.org and to the Democratic Party, then MoveOn.org may be seen as a faction of the party with an independent base of support and participants who are not interested in supporting the party as an organization. If that were the case, MoveOn might choose to bargain its popularity for programmatic concessions by party leaders. If, however, MoveOn.org's and the party's lists overlap considerably, MoveOn.org may be seen as more integral to the party coalition, and we might interpret its actions as speaking on behalf of many loyal Democratic partisans. Similarly, single issue groups like Planned Parenthood and the Sierra Club may have donor lists that overlap more or less considerably with the party, or with other groups that focus on abortion or the environment. The resulting pattern of overlapping donors may signal an interest among their membership in employing more or less centrist, seat-maximizing strategies.

It makes sense to look for party structures by examining donor behavior for two reasons. First, I restrict my universe to those contributors who write checks of \$200 or

greater. There is good reason to assume that donations of this size do reflect social ties. Both of the major surveys of political contributors (Brown, Powell and Wilcox 1995, Cooper 2003) have found that donors who give large sums of money were asked to give by someone they know. So it is reasonable to assume that if a good fraction of large donations to any two committees are made between acquaintances or at personal meetings, and is a great degree of overlap between the donor lists of two committees, those two organizations tap into the same social circle. If supporters of two committees are connected socially, that may mean that they communicate their opinions about party business to each other and to the committees they support, which means that examining which committees share donors in common may tell us which committees are likely to adopt similar strategies and positions.

Secondly, it is safe to assume that donors probably give to these highly partisan committees out of ideological affinity with the groups' goals and issue positions. If this is the case, then groups whose donor lists overlap considerably reflect ideological as well as social connections. By using SNA to map the degree to which every group's donor pool overlaps with every other group's donor pool, we can identify committees or groups of committees which pursue partisan goals more cohesively, and those that are more isolated and who may act on their own to pursue partisan goals. This may be a first step in systematically identifying social and ideological factions within the national party coalitions at a given moment in time.

## **Hypotheses**

At this point, this project is largely exploratory and descriptive. The key relationships that interest me for this paper are the relationships between each committee (and all the committees collectively) and the party committees. I expect that most donors who give to one of these committees will also give to the party committee. That will show that the parties are, in fact, the center of their respective coalitions. I expect that business groups and single-issue groups will show less overlap with the parties than Leadership PACs do. I hypothesize that since many of the 527 groups were set up as surrogate party organizations to collect the soft money that parties were no longer permitted to raise after the passage of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, that many 527s would be closely connected to the parties. Not all 527s fit that profile, so we should see different patterns given the different origins of the 527s.

## **Data**

One limitation of SNA is that it works best with a small sample of actors. So a difficult task in network analysis is to limit the universe that will be examined. It may be the case that important players in the party coalitions give significant fractions to both parties. Or, it may be the case that important factions within the party coalitions attempt to pressure the parties through lobbying and independent expenditures without contributing significantly to the party's committees or candidates. But in a first attempt to examine intra-party factions, I am limiting my search to those PACs whose contribution patterns are highly partisan. Therefore I collected the total amounts given by each PAC

and 527 to candidates of each party during the 2003-2004 election cycle, and sorted them by how much money each committee gave to Democrats and Republicans. I selected for inclusion in this study only those committees that contributed at least 90% of their 2003-2004 contributions to candidates of a single party. In a further attempt to limit the universe to those organizations that are most important to the party coalitions, I focus on the committees that gave the most money to candidates in the party (or, in the case of 527 committees, spent the most money on the party's behalf.) I then limited that list to the 100 groups that gave the most to Democrats, and the 100 groups that gave the most to Republicans.<sup>4</sup>

Table 1 lists the number of each type of PAC that appear on each party's Top 100 committees list. The lists themselves are attached as an appendix to this paper. In this iteration of this project, I lump together all of the national, senate, house, and party convention political action committees into one "party" committee pool.

After identifying each committee of interest, I collected, from the Federal Election Commission individual donor databases, the names of all of the individuals who gave \$200 or more to that committee during the 2003-2004 election cycle. For the 527s, I collected the same data from the Internal Revenue Service. I then wrote software that "cleans" the names as much as possible, standardizing capitalization, the use of titles and suffixes, and irregular spacing, so that the same name can be readily compared on different donor lists.<sup>5</sup> I came up with a list of 107,364 unique individual Democratic donors and 144,860 unique Republican individual donors. I then compared each

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<sup>4</sup> I collected lists of the "top PACs" in the 2004 cycle from [opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org), accessed on June 1, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> I continue to refine the cleaning algorithms.

committee’s donor (name and zip code) list to every other committee’s donor list, and recorded the number of name-zip code combinations that overlapped.<sup>6</sup>

Table 1. Number of Committees on Top 100 Lists, by Type

Organization Type	Democrats	Republicans
527	58	21
Leadership PAC	12	44
Other PAC	29	35
Labor	20	0
Environment	1	0
Abortion	2	1
Industry	0	24
Other	6	10
Party	1	1

## Results

### The Democratic Coalition

I begin by asking which committees are closest to the party committees, and which are less well-connected to the party. Table 2 shows the committees whose donor lists showed the greatest degree of overlap with the party committees. In other words, the greatest percentage of contributors to these groups also gave to their respective parties. Note that for the Democrats, most of the lists that overlap most with the party list belong to 527 organizations, many of which were set up explicitly to collect soft money, after the passage of BCRA. It is interesting that Leadership PACs do not appear in the top of the list, whereas they do for Republicans (see Table 5). Note also that there are a few 527 committees that had extremely small donor lists (and so even though they had considerable proportional overlap with the party list, it was because of only a few

<sup>6</sup> At this step I convert the dataset from a two-mode dataset (individuals and committees) to a one-mode dataset (consisting of only committees, with the entries being the number of overlapping donors in each).

individuals). The reason for this is that there are several 527s that raised several million dollars only from a few wealthy individuals. The committees that showed *no* overlap with the party committees tended to be these smaller 527s and PACs.<sup>7</sup>

Table 3. Fifteen Committees with Greatest Proportion of Contributors In Common with the Democratic Party.

Organization	Organization type	Number of organization's contributors who also gave to the party	Percent of organization's contributors who also gave to the party
New Democrat Network	PAC	2	0.18
Moveon.org	PAC	2047	0.18
EMILYS List Non Federal	527	75	0.19
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund 527 Account	527	2	0.22
Natl Cmte to Preserve Social Security	PAC	13	0.22
Sierra Club Voter Ed Fd	527	38	0.24
The Real Economy Group	527	1	0.25
Democracy for America	L-PAC	468	0.25
The Media Fund	527	6	0.26
Win Back Respect	527	59	0.28
Campaign Money Watch	527	16	0.30
Texans for Truth	527	75	0.30
National Progress Fund	527	10	0.32
Revolutionary Women	527	1	0.33
Click Back America	527	1	0.33
Campaign for Americas Future - CC Fund	527	1	0.50

The presence of two particular committees in Table 2 is particularly intriguing.

The first is Democracy for America, Howard Dean's PAC. Dean's supporters apparently followed his call to become active in party politics, and as many as a quarter of donors to his committee also give money to the Democratic Party. Perhaps it is unsurprising in retrospect that a man who was able to galvanize such grass-roots party support became

<sup>7</sup> Labor committees, which are an integral part of the party coalition, are eliminated from this analysis because they do not receive contributions from individuals, and therefore cannot be captured by the matching algorithm as it is currently written.

chair of the party immediately afterward. The second committee of particular interest is the Sierra Club's 527. Almost a quarter of the people who wrote large checks to that committee also gave money to the Democratic party. Perhaps that reflects the mainstream, partisan strategies employed by the Sierra Club. Note that no other Environmental groups appear on this top 15 list.

The next set of analyses use SNA measures<sup>8</sup> to describe the relationships among the Democratic committees. Because most SNA methods are best at analyzing the existence of ties between actors, rather than the strength of those ties, from here forward I count a "tie" between two committees as consisting of at least one overlapping donor, rather than weighting those ties by the number or percentage of donors who overlap. In the process, I lose information about the strength of the ties between committees (based on the number of donors who overlap), but gain some simplicity in order to examine which committee(s) have the most ties to the rest of the network. Network analysts argue that actors who have a greater number of ties to other actors have a positional advantage in the network, conferring greater power and access to resources through those relationships. In this case, if Committee A's donor list overlaps with many other committees, that means that Committee A is supported by donors with broad investments in the party, rather than merely narrow ideological or single-issue interests. Such well-connected committees may be more interested in pursuing power within the party coalition rather than trying to develop proprietary power bases to pressure the party from without.

It is important to point out that there is a relationship between the number of donors who gave to a committee and the number of ties that that committee has to other

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<sup>8</sup> As implemented by the software program UCINET. Borgatti, S.P., Everett, M.G. and Freeman, L.C. 2002. Ucinet for Windows: Software for Social Network Analysis. Harvard, MA: Analytic Technologies.

committees. After all, it could be the case that this analysis is merely capturing the fact that a committee to which more people gave is more likely, by the law of averages, to capture a donor who gave to other committees. But the Pearson's correlation coefficient between the number of donors who gave to a committee and the number of other committees to which that committee is tied by at least one donor is only .47 for the Democrats and .41 for the Republicans. That relationship seems modest enough that examining the ties between committees tells us more than merely the number of people who donated to them.

### *Centrality Measures*

Table 3 presents a list of the committees with the highest "degree centrality," that is, the largest number of connections to other committees. As expected, the Democratic party had the most connections to other organizations. MoveOn.org's PAC and 527 occupy the second and third places on the list, indicating that at least some of MoveOn's supporters are broad investors in the party coalition. Here again, most of the most connected organizations within the party coalition are 527 organizations. The only leadership PAC besides Democracy for America that has donors in common with a significant number of other party organizations is Hillary Clinton's PAC, HILLPAC. As will be noted in the next section, this is a striking contrast with the Republican party, where Leadership PACs are far more central to the network. Two issue-oriented groups, both 527s, the Sierra Club and Environment 2004, appear to have participants who invest broadly in the party.

Table 3. Degree Centrality of Most Central Democratic Groups

Committee	Organization type	Degree Centrality
Democratic Party	Party	61
MoveOn.org Voter Fund	527	43
Moveon.org	PAC	42
New Democrat Network (527)	527	41
America Coming Together	527	39
Joint Victory Campaign	527	33
Sierra Club Voter Ed Fund	527	31
Emily's List Nonfederal	527	31
Win Back Respect	527	29
HILLPAC	Leadership PAC	29
Campaign MoneyWatch	527	29
National Cmte for an Effective Congress	Ideological	28
Democracy for America	Leadership PAC	27
The Real Economy Group	527	24
Environment 2004, Inc.	527	23

In addition to asking which committees are most connected to other committees by overlapping donors, it is also possible to describe the overall centralization of the network. The Democratic Party network, as a whole, is fairly centralized. Its Freeman Network Centralization number is 52%, which means that this graph of connections is about half as centralized as a maximally centralized graph of the same size. Removing the isolates that had no connections to other committees (including the labor committees that were dropped from the analysis) ratchets that centralization number up to 60%. The mean (10.5) and standard deviation (12.4) of the individual degree scores for each committee are almost equal (with and without isolates) which again indicates that there is a great deal of variation in the number of ties between committees. This tells us that there is a core group of committees that share donors (and perhaps donor lists) and appeal equally successfully to the same group of participants, and a number of other committees

outside this core that do not tap into a communal pool, but have independent bases of support.

Several other measures of the centralization of the network tell a similar story.<sup>9</sup> For example, if we visualize the connection between two actors to be a line between them, another way of measuring the centralization of the network is to look at the number of (non-repeating) lines that must be traced to go from a particular actor to every other actor in the network. The sum of each of those shortest paths (geodesic distances) is considered to be a measure of the “farness” of each actor from all other actors, and the reciprocal of that number, normalized to the most central actor, is called the measure of “closeness centrality.” The top and bottom 15 committees in closeness centrality are virtually identical to their order based on degree centrality, so their scores are not presented here. The stability across measures indicates that there is, indeed, a core group of committees in the Democratic party that appeal to a broad partisan base, and a smaller number of small, peripheral committees that have independent bases of support.

Figures 1-3 show a graphical representation of the ties between the committees in the Democratic coalition. The size of the node representing each committee corresponds to its relative centrality in the network. Figure 1 shows all of the committees in the network that share a common donor with at least one other committee. Although the

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<sup>9</sup> Another measure of centralization is “betweenness centrality,” which takes into account the frequency with which an actor falls on the shortest path between two other actors. Most of the same committees score high on betweenness centrality as on the other two measures, although in this case the substantive significance of that centrality is more difficult to interpret. In general, network theorists argue that if many actors have to go through actor A in order to get to their destination, that gives some brokerage and gatekeeper power to actor A. In this case, a committee with a high betweenness score would not necessarily directly overlap with the most other committees’ lists, but would rather have at least one donor who also gives to some other central committees such that in a theoretical graph rendering of the network, the committee often sits on the shortest path between two committees. For lack of a ready substantive interpretation of this measure, I do not present data on this measure, except to note that the results are very similar to those with degree centrality.

number of committees makes it somewhat difficult to read, note the prominence of the party committee and of MoveOn.org. Figure 2 shows the relationships among Leadership PACs and the party, which do not show any distinct patterns except, perhaps, the prominence of House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's PAC, (PAC to the Future) and former Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle's PAC, DASHPAC. Figure 3 shows the relationships among the 527s and PACs that are associated with the interest groups and single issue groups that are often thought to comprise distinct factions within the Democratic party. The graph shows that these committees are supported by people who invest in both the party committee and committees that focus on different issues, rather than only in committees that deal only with a single issue. Women's groups and environmental groups, in particular, do not appear to be segregated by issue, but rather share contributors in common with each other and with the party.

### *Sub-group analysis*

A second analysis that can be conducted using these data is to ask whether there are natural groupings of committees that share donors in common with each other but not with the rest of the coalition. Identifying such factions or sub-groups is significant because since they are not tied to the rest of the party coalition and have independent sources of funds, they may attempt to influence the party coalition's direction from the outside based on that support.

One way to identify subgroups is to search for "cliques," groupings of committees that are maximally connected in that each committee overlaps with every other committee in the clique. An initial clique analysis shows that there were 127 maximally

connected cliques consisting of only three committees. This means that there are 127 different groups of three committees that all share donors in common. Increasing that minimum clique size until no more cliques were found identifies one clique of 12 committees that have at least one overlapping donor with all other committees on the list. That list of core Democratic coalition committees (see Table 4) will look familiar by now, as many names are also the most connected and most central to the network. The only major difference is the addition of the Clean Water Action Education Fund and Planned Parenthood.

There were also a number of other, smaller cliques, especially those including Leadership PACs. One includes, for example, PAC to the Future, DASHPAC, New Jersey United, Prairie PAC, CHRIS PAC, and the Democratic Party. This means that each of these committees shared at least one donor with every other committee in the clique. Rather than pointing to a faction of the Democratic party, however, this potentially indicates that congressional leaders (Rep. Pelosi and Senators Daschle, Corzine, Durbin and Dodd) share donor lists or tap into the same donor pool.

Table 4. Largest Maximally Connected Democratic Clique

Organization	Type
Democratic Party	Party
Win Back Respect	527
National Cmte for an Effective Congress	Ideological PAC
Emily's List Non Federal	527
Planned Parenthood	PAC
Sierra Club Voter Ed Fd	527
New Democrat Network	527
Campaign Money Watch	527
MoveOn.org Voter Ed Fund	527
America Coming Together	527
Clean Water Action Ed Fd	527
Joint Victory Campaign	527

There were no striking “outsider” cliques consisting of interest group PACs or ideological groups. This means that, somewhat surprisingly, given the conventional wisdom about the Democratic Party, there were no real factions, as we traditionally think of them, identified in this analysis. Instead, it identifies a core group of committees in the party. This may be a consequence of choosing to examine highly partisan committees—but even these could have had few or no overlapping donors with the party committees, so the analysis is still informative, even if the finding is slightly counterintuitive.

It should be noted, though, that there is substantive significance to the fact that labor PACs had to be eliminated from these analyses. Although they were eliminated for technical reasons (they did not receive donations from individuals, so their contributor lists show no overlaps with other committees), labor did fund several 527 organizations of its own, and contributed to some of the central partisan committees. To the degree that labor has its own independent resources, it may be considered a faction that is missing from this analysis. Further exploration of ways to include labor will follow in subsequent drafts.

## The Republican Coalition

For the Republicans, the committees that overlapped most with the Republican party lists tended to be Leadership PACs rather than 527s. This may indicate that in the Republican party, the Congressional leadership is highly integrated with the leadership of the party as a whole, or perhaps that donor lists are more widely shared in the Republican coalition. Recall that this was not the case for the Democrats, for whom 527 organizations were most closely tied to the party, and Leadership PACs occupied peripheral territory in the network. For the Republican coalition, most PACs tended to have larger numbers of donors, giving smaller, regulated donations, and so there is less variation in the number of donors overlapping with the party than there is for the Democrats.

Table 5. Fifteen Committees with Greatest Number of Contributors In Common with the Republican Party.

Organization	Organization type	Number of organization contributors who also gave to the party	Percent of organization's contributors who also gave to the party
Softer Voices		4	0.15
Northern Lights PAC	Leadership PAC	16	0.15
Freshmen PAC	Ideological PAC	96	0.15
Americans for a Republican Majority	Leadership PAC	94	0.15
America's Majority Trust	Leadership PAC	31	0.17
DalenPAC	Leadership PAC	7	0.21
Pioneer PAC	Leadership PAC	11	0.22
Republican Leadership Coalition Inc		13	0.29
Republican Leadership Coun (RLC)		3	0.33
Bayou Leader PAC	Leadership PAC	5	0.33
Republican Jewish Coalition	Issue PAC	11	0.38
Senate Majority Fund	Leadership PAC	13	0.38
America's Foundation	Leadership PAC	67	0.48
Federal Victory Fund	Leadership PAC	15	0.54
New Republican Majority Fund	Leadership PAC	182	0.64
National Conservative Campaign Fund	Ideological PAC	33	0.75

I am reluctant to draw definitive conclusions, for either party, about committees that show *no* overlap with the party committee, or have *no* ties to other committees, because I am continuing to develop the name-matching algorithms, and so a finding that a committee has no overlapping donors may be due to a weakness in that software. Nevertheless, for the Republicans, the committees that did not have overlapping party donors, or overlapping donors with other committees of any kind, were corporate and industry association PACs. The list includes: International Paper, Flowers Industries, Cooper Industries, Goodyear Tire and Rubber, Halliburton, Caterpillar Inc, and others. These organizations may simply focus their political strategies on rewarding and punishing members of Congress who write policy dealing with their industries, and stay out of partisan politics *per se*.

## *Centrality*

The Republican coalition is centralized at a level similar to the Democratic party. The average number of ties that each committee has to another is 16.7, with a standard deviation of 15.6, indicating wide dispersion in the number of committees that overlap with each other. Strikingly similar to the Democrats, the Network Centralization number is 61.4%, indicating that the network as a whole is 61% as centralized as a maximally centralized graph of the same size could be. Table 6 shows that again, the Party is the most central actor, as would be expected. Just as with the committees that overlap to the greatest degree with the party committee, here, Leadership PACs occupy the most central positions in the party coalition. This means that it is Leadership PACs that have at least one donor in common with the greatest number of other committees. Note, though, that the committees connected to the greatest number of other committees are not exactly the same Leadership PACs that overlapped to the greatest degree with the party. There are, in fact, only three committees that appear on both lists. Americans for a Republican Majority (Rep. Tom DeLay's Leadership PAC), America's Foundation (Sen. Rick Santorum's Leadership PAC), and the New Republican Majority Fund (Sen. Trent Lott's Leadership PAC) are the only committees that are both highly central to the network (share donors with a great number of committees) and share a great percentage of their donors in common with the Republican Party.

In general, Leadership PACs occupy the most central positions in the Republican party network. The one exception is the high degree centrality of the 527 organization Swift Boat Veterans for Truth. Recall from the 2004 election that this organization

funded negative ads against Democratic Nominee Senator John Kerry that claimed first that he had not won his medals legitimately and then later criticized his vocal opposition to the Vietnam War. Although the party and the President distanced themselves from the organization, its high degree centrality indicates that at least some loyal Republicans who supported many other Republican committees also contributed to Swift Boat Veterans for Truth.

Table 7: Republican Committees with Connections to Greatest Number of Other Committees

Organization	Organization Type	Degree Centrality
Republican Party	Party	77
Volunteer PAC	Leadership PAC	54
Americans for a Republican Majority	Leadership PAC	52
America's Foundation	Leadership PAC	44
Swift Boat Veterans for Truth	527	42
New Republican Majority Fund	Leadership PAC	41
Daniel Webster PAC	Leadership PAC	40
Cmte for the Preservation of Capitalism	Leadership PAC	39
Bluegrass Cmte	Leadership PAC	39
Keep Our Majority PAC	Leadership PAC	38
Promoting Republicans You Can Elect	Leadership PAC	38
Rely on Your Beliefs	Leadership PAC	37
CARE PAC	Leadership PAC	37
Every Republican is Crucial PAC	Leadership PAC	36
Leadership PAC 2004	Leadership PAC	35

Just as with the Democrats, the results for “degree” centrality and “closeness” centrality are virtually identical, so the closeness centrality scores and table are not presented. The centrality analyses, combined with the list of committees that share the greatest number of donors in common with the party, shows a somewhat larger core of committees than the Democrats had, although they have very similar overall Network Centralization numbers, indicating that both have a core group of committees that are connected to each other and a periphery composed of groups that are not connected to

that core. Again, it may be substantively interesting that the core group of committees for the Republicans consists almost uniformly of Leadership PACs.

Figures 4-6 show a graphical representation of the ties between the committees in the Republican coalition. As with the Democrats, the size of the node representing each committee corresponds to its relative centrality in the network. Figure 4 shows all of the committees in the network that have an overlapping donor with at least one committee. Note that the overall density of the network is higher than was the case for the Democrats. At least some Republican donors who give to many of the committees in this sample give to multiple committees. Figure 5 shows the relationships among Leadership PACs and the party. This figure, again, is denser and larger than the similar graph for the Democrats, which makes sense given the relative importance of Leadership PACs to the Republicans' fundraising strategy. Figure 6 shows the relationships among the 527s and PACs that are associated with the interest groups and industry groups that might be expected to operate as factions within the Republican party. Again, as was the case for Democratic interest groups, these committees are supported by people who invest in both the party committee and committees that focus on different issues, rather than only in committees that deal only with a single issue. Although it does not appear to be one of the most central members of the network by other measures, the Club For Growth does appear to appeal to donors who give to a broad range of conservative/Republican issue groups. In addition, Swift Boat Veterans for Truth seems to have had overlapping donors with a number of conservative groups, including pro-life groups, the Eagle Forum, and Club for Growth. Once leadership PACs are removed from the network graph, Club for

Growth and the Swift Boat Veterans occupy a more clearly central role in the party structure.

### *Sub-group analysis*

Recall that a clique analysis searches for all groups of committees such that every committee in the clique is connected to every other committee in the clique. At the most basic level, a clique of three committees, the analysis shows that the Republicans have more than twice as many three-committee cliques (288) than the Democrats did (127). This means that the Republican network consists of denser relationships than the Democrats' does. The Democrats' largest maximally connected clique consisted of 12 committees. The Republicans have 116 cliques that consist of 12 maximally connected committees. There are five cliques that have 19 members, which means that at least one donor to each of those 19 committees gave to each of the other 18 committees. These cliques consist of Leadership PACs and the party, identifying a core group of committees that is consistent with the patterns already observed. One of those five cliques is identified in Table 8. As would make sense, this list of inter-connected PACs overlaps is very similar to the list of committees that are connected to the greatest number of other committees.

Table8. Largest Maximally Connected Republican Clique

Impact America	Leadership PAC
Americans for a Republican Majority	Leadership PAC
Keep Our Majority PAC	Leadership PAC
Volunteer PAC	Leadership PAC
Together for Our Majority	Leadership PAC
Freedom Project	Leadership PAC
Rely on Your Beliefs	Leadership PAC
CARE PAC	Leadership PAC
Cmte for the Preservation of Capitalism	Leadership PAC
Leadership PAC 2004	Leadership PAC
Every Republican is Crucial PAC	Leadership PAC
Promoting Republicans You Can Elect	Leadership PAC
Congressional Majority Cmte	Leadership PAC
Bluegrass Cmte	Leadership PAC
American Success PAC	Leadership PAC
America's Foundation	Leadership PAC
Daniel Webster PAC	Leadership PAC
Common Sense Leadership Fund	Leadership PAC
Republican Party	Party

## Discussion

The results described here are not entirely surprising. The political party committees are supported by donors who give to many other committees that spend most of their resources on their party's candidates and causes. The most central actors in the Democratic party's coalition are 527 organizations, led by MoveOn.org, which in less than a decade has become a formidable engine for communicating grass roots sentiment and resources to the party, and elite partisan sentiments to the grass roots. The most central actors in the Republican party fundraising machine are Leadership PACs, since many of the same individuals support the party and a large number of Leadership PACs.

One surprise is that there were no issue-specific cliques or subgroups identified in these analyses. Rather, in both parties, the interest groups that were included in this analysis, those that gave over 90% of their 2003-2004 contributions to candidates of one political party, and those that were among the biggest donors to party coffers, did not

form self-enclosed cliques. They tended to overlap donor lists with the political party, and with a small number of other committees, but not necessarily other committees with the same programmatic goals. Perhaps applying these techniques to all groups in an issue area (say, Christian groups, or environmental groups), regardless of how much they had given to one party, would identify issue-specific factions.

These somewhat obvious findings are an important confirmation that this method of analysis can accurately describe the internal organization of the party. Other types of analyses based on financial data could look at transfers between committees, rather than at the individual contributor bases of each committee. The method can be applied to other types of data as well, and may be prove fruitful in describing and analyzing the internal dynamics of the party coalitions and the relationships between parties and interest groups.

## Appendix 1: Top 100 Democratic Committees

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Amount to Democrats</b>	<b>Committee type</b>
America Coming Together - NonFederal Account	\$ 79,795,487.00	527
Joint Victory Campaign 2004	\$ 71,811,666.00	527
The Media Fund	\$ 59,404,183.00	527
Service Employees International Union Political Education & Action Fund	\$ 48,426,867.00	527
AFSCME Special Account	\$ 25,144,915.00	527
New Democrat Network Non Federal Account	\$ 12,726,158.00	527
MoveOn.org Voter Fund	\$ 12,558,215.00	527
Citizens for a Strong Senate	\$ 10,853,730.00	527
Sierra Club Voter Education Fund	\$ 8,727,127.00	527
EMILYS List Non Federal	\$ 7,739,946.00	527
1199 SEIU Non Federal Committee	\$ 7,477,295.00	527
Voices For Working Families	\$ 7,466,056.00	527
AFL-CIO-COPE - Treasury Fund	\$ 6,585,072.00	527
League of Conservation Voters Inc. 527	\$ 6,049,500.00	527
Laborers Political League Education Fund	\$ 3,920,101.00	527
Democratic Victory 2004	\$ 3,836,969.00	527
America Votes, Inc.	\$ 3,174,936.00	527
The Partnership for America's Families	\$ 3,071,211.00	527
CWA Non Federal Separate Segregated Fund	\$ 3,070,348.00	527
Grassroots Democrats	\$ 2,819,483.00	527
Stronger America Now	\$ 2,790,817.00	527
21st Century Democrats	\$ 2,542,116.00	527
Intl Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	\$ 2,254,500.00	labor
United Auto Workers	\$ 2,038,200.00	labor
Assn of Trial Lawyers of America	\$ 2,034,999.00	law

Coalition to Defend the American Dream	\$ 1,925,890.00	527
Machinists/Aerospace Workers Union	\$ 1,915,000.00	labor
SMWIA Political Ed League	\$ 1,877,505.00	527
American Federation of Teachers	\$ 1,668,122.00	labor
Music for America	\$ 1,667,820.00	527
United Food & Commercial Workers Union	\$ 1,591,860.00	labor
American Fedn of St/Cnty/Munic Employees	\$ 1,590,498.00	labor
National Education Assn	\$ 1,522,300.00	labor
Communications Workers of America	\$ 1,419,828.00	labor
Win Back Respect	\$ 1,387,727.00	527
Sheet Metal Workers Union	\$ 1,366,500.00	labor
Americans for Progress & Opportunity	\$ 1,306,092.00	527
Environment2004, Inc.	\$ 1,205,849.00	527
Young Democrats of America	\$ 1,110,227.00	527
Environmental Accountability Fund	\$ 1,084,807.00	527
American Family Voices Voters' Alliance, Inc.	\$ 1,060,000.00	527
National Cmte for an Effective Congress	\$ 1,040,500.00	IDEOLOGICAL/ SINGLE ISSUE
Campaign Money Watch	\$ 1,022,842.00	527
United Steelworkers of America	\$ 1,006,850.00	labor
Americans for Jobs	\$ 1,000,000.00	527
Plumbers/Pipefitters Union	\$ 883,750.00	labor
Democracy for America Non Federal	\$ 879,500.00	527
Planned Parenthood Votes	\$ 799,683.00	527
Revolutionary Women	\$ 789,640.00	527
		LEADERSHIP PAC
AmeriPAC: The Fund for a Greater America	\$ 782,500.00	(Rep. Steny Hoyer)
Boilermakers Union	\$ 766,815.00	Labor

AFL-CIO	\$	710,200.00	Labor
Focus South Dakota, Inc.	\$	687,450.00	527
Progressive Majority	\$	659,300.00	527
PunkVoter, Inc.	\$	636,161.00	527
PAC to the Future	\$	614,500.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Rep. Nancy Pelosi)
Compare Decide Vote	\$	600,000.00	527
The Real Economy Group	\$	585,000.00	527
Transport Workers Union	\$	565,200.00	Labor
Campaign for America's Future - CC Fund	\$	550,651.00	527
UFCW Active Ballot Club Education Fund	\$	543,550.00	527
Bricklayers Union	\$	542,000.00	Labor
National Progress Fund	\$	517,149.00	527
Environment2004 Action Fund	\$	507,750.00	527
Organizing and Campaign Training Center	\$	501,765.00	527
NJDC Victory Fund	\$	484,461.00	527
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund 527 Account	\$	484,000.00	527
Arts PAC	\$	464,753.00	527
Planned Parenthood	\$	458,114.00	ABORTION
Natl Cmte to Preserve Social Security	\$	445,534.00	MISC PAC
NARAL Pro-Choice America	\$	430,750.00	ABORTION
Communities Voting Together	\$	412,096.00	527
Bring Ohio Back	\$	400,681.00	527
Blue Dog PAC	\$	399,000.00	IDEOLOGICAL/ SINGLE ISSUE
Click Back America	\$	398,000.00	527
New Millenium PAC	\$	389,000.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Rep. Robert Menendez)
United Mine Workers	\$	380,500.00	Labor
Sierra Club	\$	364,763.00	ENVIRONMENT

American Democracy Project	\$	364,500.00	527
National Leadership PAC	\$	363,000.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Rep. Charles Rangel)
DASHPAC	\$	354,500.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Sen. Tom Daschle)
Democracy for America	\$	350,942.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Gov. Howard Dean)
Intl Longshoremen's/Warehousemen's Union	\$	344,400.00	Labor
Clean Water Action Education Fund	\$	343,300.00	527
HILLPAC	\$	312,500.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Sen. Hillary R. Clinton)
UNITE HERE	\$	303,700.00	Labor
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers	\$	292,700.00	Labor
Uniting People for Victory	\$	284,000.00	527
Our Common Values PAC	\$	269,000.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Rep. Rahm Emanuel)
New Jersey United	\$	238,000.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Sen. John Corzine)
Roofers Political Ed and Legislative Fund	\$	232,432.00	527
Texans for Truth	\$	225,495.00	527
Prairie PAC	\$	217,500.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Sen. Richard Durbin)
CHRIS PAC	\$	215,500.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Sen. Christopher Dodd)
National Democratic Ethnic Leadership PAC Council	\$	212,040.00	527
Solidarity PAC	\$	208,500.00	LEADERSHIP PAC (Rep. George Miller)
New Democrat Network	\$	205,781.00	IDEOLOGICAL/ SINGLE ISSUE
Moveon.org PAC	\$	203,442.00	IDEOLOGICAL/ SINGLE ISSUE
Maintenance of Way Employees	\$	200,920.00	Labor
Office & Professional Employees Union	\$	193,150.00	Labor

## Republican Top 100 Committees

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Amount to Republicans</b>	<b>Committee type</b>
Progress for America Voter Fund	\$44,929,178.00	527
Swift Boat Vets and POWs for Truth	\$17,008,090.00	527
Club for Growth	\$13,385,551.00	527
College Republican National Committee, Inc.	\$ 8,224,075.00	527
Club for Growth.net	\$ 4,115,037.00	527
National Association of Realtors 527 Fund	\$ 3,215,263.00	527
The November Fund	\$ 3,151,170.00	527
CA Republican National Convention Delegation 2004 Account	\$ 2,792,305.00	527
National Federation of Republican Women	\$ 1,613,965.00	527
Associated Builders & Contractors	\$ 1,333,000.00	construction
Republican Leadership Coalition, Inc.	\$ 1,294,950.00	527
Americans United to Preserve Marriage	\$ 1,192,090.00	527
Americas Pac	\$ 1,081,700.00	527
Americans for a Republican Majority	\$ 980,278.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Tom DeLay)
Florida Leadership Council	\$ 878,500.00	527
National Restaurant Assn	\$ 851,997.00	business-misc. LEADERSHIP
Keep Our Majority PAC	\$ 836,500.00	(Spkr. Dennis Hastert)
Associated General Contractors	\$ 762,454.00	Construction LEADERSHIP
Volunteer PAC	\$ 757,000.00	(Sen. Bill Frist)
Republican Leadership Council (RLC)	\$ 753,303.00	527
Together for Our Majority	\$ 748,000.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Thomas Reynolds)
National Fedn of Independent Business	\$ 742,416.00	business-misc. LEADERSHIP
Freedom Project	\$ 715,847.00	(Rep. John A. Boehner)
Rely on Your Beliefs	\$ 702,039.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Roy Blunt)
CARE PAC	\$ 698,000.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Ralph Regula)
The Leadership Forum	\$ 696,973.00	527
Exxon Mobil	\$ 691,870.00	energy/natural resources
Softer Voices	\$ 676,100.00	527

Help America's Leaders	\$ 656,000.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Hal Rogers)
America's Majority Trust	\$ 603,500.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Rob Portman)
Wish List Non Federal	\$ 585,197.00	527
Cmte for the Preservation of Capitalism	\$ 544,500.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Jim McCrery)
Leadership PAC 2004	\$ 516,342.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Michael Oxley)
Every Republican is Crucial PAC	\$ 515,292.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Eric Cantor)
Promoting Republicans You Can Elect	\$ 505,940.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Deborah Pryce)
Congressional Majority Cmte	\$ 485,500.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Bill Thomas)
Main Street Individual Fund	\$ 471,600.00	527
Republicans Abroad Non Federal	\$ 444,057.00	527
Outback Steakhouse	\$ 418,500.00	business-misc.
Future Leaders PAC	\$ 413,000.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Jerry Lewis)
Property/Casualty Insurers Assn/America	\$ 373,000.00	finance/insurance/realestate
Bluegrass Cmte	\$ 362,500.00	LEADERSHIP (Sen. Mitch McConnell)
21st Century PAC	\$ 361,297.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon)
American Success PAC	\$ 353,852.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. David Drier)
Texas Freedom Fund	\$ 309,162.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Joe Barton)
Majority Initiative-Keep Electing Repubs	\$ 301,750.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Mike Rogers)
Council for Better Government	\$ 294,000.00	527
Wendy's International	\$ 278,000.00	business-misc.
Independent Petroleum Assn of America	\$ 274,000.00	energy/natrec
International Paper	\$ 272,927.00	Agribusiness
Federal Victory Fund	\$ 272,000.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Thomas M. Davis)
America's Foundation	\$ 262,500.00	LEADERSHIP (Sen. Rick Santorum)
Defend America PAC	\$ 251,500.00	LEADERSHIP (Sen. Richard Shelby)
Campaign for Working Families	\$ 242,000.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE
Friends of Phil Gramm	\$ 240,040.00	LEADERSHIP (ex.-Sen. Phil Gramm)
Concern for Better Government	\$ 236,000.00	527
Sandhills PAC	\$ 231,280.00	LEADERSHIP

(Sen. Chuck Hagel)

National Conservative Campaign Fund	\$ 223,500.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE LEADERSHIP
New Republican Majority Fund	\$ 223,168.00	(Sen. Trent Lott) LEADERSHIP
Senate Victory Fund	\$ 218,000.00	(Sen. Thad Cochran)
Club for Growth	\$ 215,184.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE LEADERSHIP
Growth & Prosperity PAC	\$ 213,500.00	(Rep. Spencer Bachus)
Cooper Industries	\$ 213,000.00	business-misc.
Caterpillar Inc	\$ 212,500.00	Construction LEADERSHIP
Northern Lights PAC	\$ 212,042.00	(Sen. Ted Stevens)
National Pro-Life Alliance	\$ 209,600.00	ABORTION LEADERSHIP
Senate Majority Fund	\$ 209,500.00	(Sen. Jon Kyl)
Goodyear Tire & Rubber	\$ 209,000.00	business-misc. LEADERSHIP
American Liberty PAC	\$ 207,500.00	(Rep. Bob Ney) LEADERSHIP
People for Enterprise/Trade/Econ Growth	\$ 206,000.00	(Rep. Pete Sessions) LEADERSHIP
Northstar Leadership PAC	\$ 200,000.00	(Sen. Norm Coleman)
Flowers Industries	\$ 194,000.00	Agribusiness
American Neurological Surgery PAC	\$ 189,068.00	Health
Halliburton Co	\$ 189,000.00	energy/natural resources LEADERSHIP
Pioneer PAC	\$ 183,087.00	(ex-Rep. John Kasich)
Safari Club International	\$ 181,900.00	energy/natural resources LEADERSHIP
Daniel Webster PAC	\$ 180,000.00	(Sen. John Sununu)
Freshmen PAC	\$ 179,000.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE
Darden Restaurants	\$ 176,880.00	business-misc. LEADERSHIP
Midnight Sun	\$ 174,000.00	(Rep. John Young)
Hawkeye PAC	\$ 168,000.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE
Harris Corp	\$ 167,500.00	Defense LEADERSHIP
Bayou Leader PAC	\$ 166,792.00	(Rep. W. J. Tauzin)
Anadarko Petroleum	\$ 166,500.00	energy/natural resources
DalenPAC	\$ 163,500.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE
Good Government for America	\$ 162,500.00	LEADERSHIP

		(Rep. George Allen)
Rich PAC	\$ 162,183.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. Richard Pombo)
Superior California Fed Leadership Fund	\$ 158,474.00	LEADERSHIP (Rep. John Doolittle)
Eagle Forum	\$ 154,935.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE
Illinois Tool Works	\$ 152,500.00	Miscbusiness LEADERSHIP
Democracy Believers PAC	\$ 147,792.00	(Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart) LEADERSHIP
Impact America	\$ 147,500.00	(Sen. Gordon H. Smith)
Gun Owners of America	\$ 146,250.00	GUNS LEADERSHIP
Fund for a Conservative Future	\$ 145,000.00	(Sen. James Inhofe)
Republican Jewish Coalition	\$ 141,500.00	IDEOLOGICAL SINGLE ISSUE
National Franchisee Assn	\$ 141,000.00	business-misc. LEADERSHIP
Back America's Conservatives PAC	\$ 139,500.00	(Rep. Richard Baker) LEADERSHIP
Common Sense Leadership Fund	\$ 135,797.00	(Sen. Saxby Chambliss)
Physicians for Women's Health	\$ 135,135.00	Health
National Apartment Assn	\$ 132,750.00	finance/insurance/realestate

These categories are based on the industry categories used by [opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org).

Leadership PACs are typically formed by members of the House or Senate to raise money to contribute to their colleagues' reelection campaigns.

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