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Happy to be here - I take it as a much welcomed opportunity to talk about what I’m up to and to get some help in straightening myself out.

This colloquium will be different from most: I have no model, no hypotheses, no findings, no regression equation, no hand-outs! Though I do reserve the right to go to the board! I want to talk about my current research in a developmental way—as a developing research program—its methods, its conceptualization, its hunches, its progress. I want to try outlining briefly what I’ve been up to over the years, as a way of helping me to understand where I am now. When I’ve finished, the story may seem like a case of arrested development, but I’ll leave that to you. All I can say is—that’s the risk you take when you invite an old guy to come talk. (Theo Green)

The central interest of my research has always been elite political activity. And the central motivation of my research has always been to help political science produce empirical generalizations about elite political activity. The research began with a study of the President’s Cabinet and then moved to studies of Congress. The substantive focus of the Congressional studies began with member activity in committees and moved to member activity in constituencies. My present study of U.S. Senators is some combination of these previous studies—as I say, arrested development!
In a developmental sense, these changes in substantive focus have been partly a matter of logic and partly a matter of experience. That is, each distinct research program was driven by a research question which grew logically out of the previous research project. But, in most cases, the original research question got radically altered in the process of actually doing the research. Let me give a couple of past examples--to help me move myself closer to the present.

1. (Jesse Jones) in Cabinet study led to question: Why do some exec. bureaus have more success with Congress than other exec. bureaus? - led to Court of first resort in Congress - House Appropriations Committee - read about it, became interested in it - decided to go to Washington to talk to them - became 
fascinated 
with the committee as an institution making decisions and maintaining itself. (Ostertag story) Wrote book about Appropriations with House Committee as centerpiece. Changed my research question entirely. How does committee work? How does committee fit into the larger appropriations process?

2. Out of that study of one committee emerged, logically, I think, the question of whether or not this one committee was unique. And that question led to a comparative study of several committees. But the more I studied committee member activity inside Congress and in Washington, the more I
realized how little I knew about the activities of these same people outside the institution and outside Washington. I knew, intellectually, that political ideas, political change and political careers were generated out in the country, and that constituency influence on congressional politics was tremendously important. All our roll call studies told us that. Still, the operationalization of "the constituency" seemed quite unsatisfactory to me. I had gotten used to getting my information at first hand from interviews and from the perspective of the members. So, just as I had come to Washington to talk to them about their committee relationships, I decided to go to their districts to talk to them about their constituency relationships. The advantage, I thought, was that I could best study their perceptions of their constituency if I could look over their shoulders while we were in their constituency. Interest in perceptions came from experience in 1960. (Ostertag story)

The research question I took with me into the field was: How does a House members' perception of his or her constituency influence his or her roll call votes. It was Washington behavior I was trying to explain; and I intended to do a roll call study. Well, by the time I had spent a few days in each of my first four House districts, I lost interest once again, in my original research question. I became interested, instead, in what House members were doing in their
constituencies—in what I was watching them do. So I began to ask the question: How does their perception of their constituency influence what they do in their constituencies? I dropped the roll call question that had brought me beyond the beltway. And I did a study simply of House member activity in their districts.

I have talked about how this research agenda has changed because I want to highlight the degree to which personal experience in doing the research has altered the motivating research question. I'm sure there is nothing novel about a researcher changing focus in the process of doing the research. But the regularity with which I change as I go along, I think, may be extreme. And the point is that this experience may be endemic to the kind of research I do. That kind of research is characterized in the most fundamental way by an openness to a very wide range of experience. You start with a broad research question, but you relinquish a great deal of your control over it in the pursuit of it. You place yourself in a situation where your broad research question comes into immediate competition with other possible research questions. You have come to observe and inquire into a form of activity, but you find all kinds of unexpected activity going on all around you. And it's quite easy to be overstimulated and blown off course. That's because you're in the middle of a lot of ongoing political activity in the real world of politics.
Which brings me to some comments about research method. For one thing, that too has changed over time—from exclusively library research in the case of the Cabinet, to one-shot Washington interviews in the case of the committee studies, to prolonged periods of "hanging out" with members in the case of the constituency study. I call the most recent of these research methods, participant observation. And since I'm still doing that, it's probably another instance of arrested development.

As we know, research methods vary widely among political scientists. If you think of us as arrayed along a single dimension of "farthest from" and "closest to" the real world of politics, our mathematical modellers would be at one extreme and I would be at the other. (Coming from Rochester, I can speak with some confidence about this! I share with my colleagues the desire to generalize about political activity. But in most cases, our daily research lives could not be more different.) Their lives are spent moving between the blackboard and the computer. My life as a researcher is spent close by the real political world. And some of it is spent immersed in that world.

And that simple fact about working conditions is responsible for the problems associated with the research results. One of the problems, of course, is that of becoming overly influenced by the political world, to the point of becoming an actor in that world or, at least, becoming indistinguishable from a journalist. That
might happen if all the researcher did was to plop into the real world and sit there waiting to be shaped by the surroundings. And that way of doing things is something that must be guarded against. The way political scientists do it--as I tried to indicate in my travelogue--is to go into the field with a research question that is a political science question and when and if you alter that question, produce another political science question in its place.

Political scientists will behave this way--as journalists will not--because we are members of a scholarly community from which we take a huge amount and to which we continually try to give something back in return. A list of the political scientists who shaped my various research questions, for example, would be 10 feet long--the sum total, almost, of the best theoretical and empirical literature taught up to that time. The Cabinet study was much influenced by pluralism, the appropriations study by political sociology, the comparative study by rational choice ideas, the home style study by empirical work on constituencies, elections, voting, representation, etc. We go into the field swimming in political science research and we take our ideas and leads from that research. All the time we are soaking and poking we keep asking ourselves, what is it that we're seeing that might be of interest to our colleagues--as political scientists. So, while it may look like participant observation is a passive research method, it is anything but.
What participant observation research gives back to the political science community, I think, is a feel for the real world of politics. We go out and have a look at political activity from a perspective and in a form that most political scientists never see, and then report back to them—in as general a form as possible. Our reports and research are essentially exploratory in nature. The openness to personal experience in shaping questions—broad questions—the method of participant observation all lead to essentially exploratory rather than to verifying work—to the formulation of hypotheses rather than to the testing of hypotheses. Research reports from the politicians' world can, at their best, give other political scientists a politicians-eye-view of the world and produce ideas that can help others to organize their thoughts and discipline their work.

All this helps, I think, to illuminate my present research effort—which is true to form, driven by a wholly altered research question from the one I took with me into the political world. After the study of House member home styles, it seemed like a logical follow-up question: "Are senator home styles different from House member home styles and why?" I took that question with me to the states of several senators. After I had travelled fairly extensively with several senators or "wannabe" senators in their home territory, I concluded that while there seemed to be some difference to be explored—greater media reliance and greater policy emphasis among senators than among House members, for example—most of the time
senators behaved pretty much like House members--and more so the smaller the Senate constituency. Another home style study did not seem to be sufficiently exciting to keep me interested.

On the other hand, I had invested a good bit of effort in the research. So I returned to the same kind of question--somewhat broadened--that I had originally taken to my earlier travels with House members: How does the activity of senators at home affect the activity of senators in Washington and vice versa? With nine of my 16 senators still in the Senate, I went to spend a year in Washington--1981-1982--but not, now, to study roll calls, but rather to study Washington activity more broadly and open-endedly.

Well, OK, then, what am I up to: for starters, I am studying the relationships between the home and Washington activities of U.S. senators, or just studying senators. I began by following 16 Senate campaigns in 1978 and 1980. Then I followed the nine survivors while they worked in Washington in 1981-82. My shorthand for the two kinds of activities I’ve observed has been campaigning at home, where the main goal is to get elected or reelected, and governing in Washington, where the main goal is to help make good public policy. So I came to think of the relationship I was studying to be the relationship between campaigning and governing. There’s a lot of conventional wisdom which says that the two have nothing to do with one another, that what it takes to run for
office is not what it takes to run the country. Willie Horton -
Budget. There is surely something to that view, but I think of it
as a proposition to be investigated. For now, my view is that the
two activities are different enough to be separable and, at the
same time, that they are connected enough to encourage us to
examine their connections.

What struck me first and foremost was simply that campaigning came
before governing in time, that the two activities were separable
over a six year period, and that this sense of sequence--over-
simplified though it might be--provided the beginning of a
framework for investigation. Because I began the research out in
the states by studying campaigning and then went to Washington, my
strongest initial interest was in the front-end campaigning-to-
governing sequence and on the impact campaigning had on the
governing activity that followed. I found a couple of ways to
think in sequential terms about the campaigning-to-governing
relationship.

1. Electoral Interpretation: Every winning candidate devises his
or her own interpretation of what happened, why she won, what
it means--Marjorie Hershey calls this the "constructed
explanation" of the election. And what they do in office will
be influenced by this interpretation. How they arrive at
their own explanation is another question. But they all have
one, it is theirs and they act on it.
Paul Tsongas believed that he beat incumbent Ed Brooke with the campaign argument that Brooke had lost touch with his constituents. For the first year and a half of his Senate term, Tsongas ran around Massachusetts frantically trying to accept every invitation, trying to be everywhere at once in his home constituency. And this had a serious impact on his ability to concentrate on the business of governing. He finally realized he wasn't accomplishing anything in the Senate and he settled down to concentrate (and very productively) on the Alaska lands issue.

Arlen Specter interpreted his election as a triumph of his own prodigious effort, which owed nothing to Ronald Reagan or to his party, and he subsequently became one of the most independent Republican senators in dealing with the President. John Glenn interpreted his reelection victory as being of a magnitude necessary to legitimately run for the Presidency; and he did so.

Pre-election expectations, of course, affect these interpretations. Pete Domenici expected to win big in 1978 but did not. His electoral interpretation was that he had nearly lost because his opponent knew how to manipulate the media and he did not. This belief triggered his first post-election instructions to the Washington staff that the top priority of the office should henceforth be the media. And
for two years it was. Five press secretaries in six years. As a contemporary example, it would be critical to an understanding of the governing behavior of Senator Bill Bradley over the next six years to know how he interpreted his unexpected near loss in the last campaign.

Between campaigning and governing, then, there are individual electoral interpretations which grow out of electoral activity and affect governing activity. This connection, of course, is the subject of a perennial political science inquiry on the collective level—that is, the search for an electoral mandate to give an impetus to governing. Here, too, interpretation is key. But the connection needs to be studied and fit into our individual level analyses as well. And that becomes most obvious when you look over the shoulder of an elected legislator as he or she moves from one activity to the other.

2. Adjustment: A second perspective on the early campaigning and governing sequence is to think in terms of the adjustment people have to make from winning on the campaign trail to governing inside the Senate. Students of Congress have gotten an enormous amount of mileage out of studying the adjustment experiences of newcomers—under the rubric of "apprenticeship". Our idea now is that in any strict sense an apprenticeship period is gone. But the more general process of adjusting to a new institution still faces all newcomers.
And how they adjust to the Senate may be affected by how they adjust from their campaign. Adjustment is a "from" as well as a "to" process. I was particularly keyed into the adjustment process because I had deliberately selected a lopsided number of first-time Senate candidates, mostly House members, who would come fresh from their first Senate campaigns to a new institution.

Bill Cohen was attacked in his campaign as being a pretty boy-all style and no substance. In an effort to put that image to rest, he decided to behave in a manner exactly opposite to Paul Tsongas, to stay away from Maine in his early Senate days, and to bury himself instead in the work of the Armed Services Committee. I have come to think of the adjustment period for new senators as the time it takes for them to accomplish something substantial in terms of policy--something that is recognizably theirs. Vague and hard to measure - An unobtrusive measure is "Fenno’s Champagne Test" - PD & bargebill, AS & summit, DQ & JTPA. Each one of these accomplishments required some legislative skill in dealing with serious opposition.

For me, the most interesting adjustment process was that of Arlen Specter--who came from a classic, candidate-centered entrepreneurial campaign and had to adjust--not, of course, to the individualism of the Senate which came naturally, but to the
collective, communitarian side of the Senate where people need to cooperate, negotiate, communicate, work within a coalition in order to get something done. Specter had a very difficult time learning that he couldn't do it all by himself, that recognized expert on crime though he was, he needed others to help him accomplish something. I watched him off and on for four years while he struggled to pass his very own, home-grown career criminal bill—in drastically shrunken form.

Because I had originally chosen to travel with so many newcomers, my earliest attention gravitated naturally to the beginning or the front-end of the C-G-C sequence. Theoretically, of course, they were embarking on a sequence that could continue for a long time—at least from campaigning-to-governing-to-campaigning again, and perhaps across a succession of electoral cycles. There were three people in my group of nine who already exemplified that extended sequence, people whom I had watched get reelected—John Glenn after one term, Pete Domenici after one term, and Claiborne Pell after three terms. I knew they had engaged in a good deal of governing activity preceding their reelection, because I heard about it during their campaigns. But I hadn't seen it. I knew nothing about it firsthand, and, therefore, I had no confidence in fitting it into my scheme. I knew, however, that if I watched my nine senators' work in Washington, I could go back after six years to see how that governing activity influenced their subsequent campaigns for reelection.
As it turned out, I was able to get a good handle on the governing activity of only three of the nine--Arlen Specter on the career criminal bill, Pete Domenici on the budget, and Dan Quayle on JTPA. Some fleshing out of governing period--adjustment, accomplishment, style, reputation. Not well developed yet. Of those, the governing activity of Domenici and Quayle had a very great impact on their subsequent reelection. Specter’s governing activity--as I had seen it--had very little effect.

When I originally wrote up Dan Quayle’s Indiana-to-Washington-back to-Indiana sequence of activities, the major political science story was precisely the way in which he exploited his governing activity in Washington to promote his reelection at home. My thought at the time was that I was writing a book about the U.S. Senate using the campaign-governing-campaign framework with a case illustrating each of the points I wanted to make. And Dan Quayle was the best example I had of the relationship between governing and campaigning at the far end of the electoral cycle. When Quayle became the VP choice, he ceased to be one case in a larger book, and became a book. Talk about living in the real world of politics!

That event convinced me to publish the other cases as books--which CQ Press has obligingly helped me to do.

But as I’ve been working up the other cases, I began to think of

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what I’m doing as requiring a slightly enlarged conceptualization than what I had been working with. And that enlarged conceptualization involves the idea of a career.

Two back-to-back experiences, I think, were important here. One was dealing with John Glenn and realizing that we can’t begin to understand his Ohio or his Washington activity—and eventually his presidential campaign—without understanding what he did and what ideas he acquired long before he campaigned for the Senate. Glenn’s experiences as a Marine and an astronaut shaped his ideas about politics and his political behavior patterns to such a large degree that what he did as Senate candidate and senator right up to and including his life in the Keating Five can only be understood in the context of his pre-Senate career. His is an extreme case, of course, but you are left with the idea that the campaign-governing-campaign sequence has to be set—as it is in fact—within a career-long sequence that stretches back in time.

The second experience that taught me the importance of previous careers and, hence, a career perspective occurred when I went directly from my first campaign swing with Dan Quayle to my first campaign swing with Arlen Specter that same October in 1980. Dan Quayle was 37 years old, never been defeated in an election, country club Republican, never taken any hard knocks, his party’s fair-haired boy, optimistic, upbeat, buoyant. And then, a day later in the starkest of comparisons, I encountered Arlen Specter,
20 years older, twice elected as District Attorney of Philadelphia, once defeated for DA, once defeated for Mayor, defeated again, in a state-wide gubernatorial primary, and defeated again, in a state-wide senatorial primary, recently victorious in his third state-wide primary running against the choice of his party. He was part a hard-nosed prosecutor, part battered politician, part certified loser, very untrusting of others, very aggressive and very independent.

It was simply not possible to think about the C-G-C sequence in these two cases without taking into account their very different pre-Senate careers and the very different point in their adult political careers at which they were entering the Senate. While I could continue to talk in sequential, developmental terms, I had to think of my campaign-governing-campaign sequence as being embedded in a much longer career and I had to take account of that longer career when it seemed important. I have now come, therefore, to think of my case studies, each of which covers one six-year electoral cycle as the study of "career segments".

Political scientists have gotten a lot of mileage too out of career-oriented studies--Matthews, Schlesinger, Jacobson and Kernell, Fowler and McClure come to mind.

So where does that leave me? It leaves me with several cases and a changing framework. Less a study of the Senate than a study of
Senate careers. It is not, however, my intention to follow Dave Barber into childhood and adolescent experiences of senators. It is the most proximate pre-Senate career I am interested in, and only where the impact is obviously great. My interest remains the six-year cycle. What I want to do now is to work somewhat more intensively on the governing to campaigning end of the sequence. Most of my work, as I have indicated, has been done on the front end, exploring the effect of campaigning on governing, and emphasizing the electoral interpretation and the adjustment process in that regard. I want to bring the same degree of calibration to what I call the process of explanation that links governing back to campaigning at the end of the cycle.

I welcome suggestions as to how to do this. It is my intention to go to Washington in late summer to talk with three or four senators, to ask them if I can watch their preparations for the campaign, to see whether, what and how they think about the explanatory process that lies ahead, then to travel with them subsequently in their campaigns and, then afterwards, to help them to take a backward rather than a forward look at the linking mechanisms, if any, that related their governing experience in Washington to their campaigning experience back home.

I’ve moved a little bit down this road in the last of my full length cases from my previous research. I’m looking at North Dakota Senator Mark Andrews, and trying to answer the question as
to why he lost in 1986. I’m trying to answer the question by analyzing what happened during his six years in the Senate, as it led up to his unsuccessful reelection campaign.

The Andrews’ story is not just about the defeat of an incumbent—though that is the interesting thing initially. It’s the story of the defeat of a 23 year incumbent—of someone who was defeated after being elected to nine consecutive terms in the House and one in the Senate.

So, it’s another case, like Glenn and Arlen Specter, which forces us to look at the pre-Senate career—in this case Andrews’ long 17-year career in the House, most senior House member to be elected to Senate in at least 30 years. If you think about Andrews in career-long terms, you are forced to consider the possibility that he might not have been as good a senator as he was a House member—even though he had the same constituency in both offices. It encourages you to ask whether voters hold different expectations for occupants of the two offices. It encourages a sequential developmental account of Andrews’ governing behavior in the Senate and his constituency relationships at home to try to figure out what happened between 1980 and 1986 to cost him over 20 percentage points in the polls.

All this points us more towards the far end of the six year electoral cycle where his ultimate failure occurred rather than on
the front end of the cycle. And that’s where I want to focus my research than at the beginning of the cycle.

In Andrews’ case, one idea has emerged that might help us, as I say, to calibrate more finely the explanatory process that links governing to campaigning. A central question that emerges for Andrews is "How did he become vulnerable?" At some point, for some set of reasons, Andrews became vulnerable to a challenge, a tough challenger entered the race and exploited that vulnerability.

Now, as political scientists we know a lot about why voters vote the way they do, but almost nothing about the interelection process by which some incumbents become vulnerable. The interelection period is, for us, pretty much a black box. And a study that is conceptualized as running from campaign through governing to another campaign can help us formulate and answer the vulnerability question--which may often precede the reelection question.

The fact that the interelection period is six years long for senators makes it easier to study the process of becoming vulnerable. Six years is a political lifetime. And we will better understand the electoral results at the end of six years if we take a long look at those six years. At least this is one suggestion that comes out of trying to figure out why Mark Andrews end-of-the-cycle campaign was not successful. And I want to devote time now to the end of the cycle relationship between Washington and home
activity.

So there you’ve got it—a genealogy, a method, a conceptualization, some research, some revised conceptualization and future direction for more research.

Questions are welcome.