Notes

Notes to Introduction

1. The answer to the inevitable trivia question here is William Howard Taft, Herbert Hoover, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George H. W. Bush.
2. Even Senate races tend to draw more attention from party leaders—see Westlye 1991 and Krasno 1994, 72–102 for a comparison of House and Senate races on this point.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. In fact, Zaller (1998) argues that the incumbency advantage has been dramatically overstated, and that what appears to be an incumbency advantage is merely the fact that electoral selection produces incumbents who generally tend to be better politicians than their opponents.
2. Banks and Kiewiet (1989) argue that these political “amateurs” appear precisely because they have the best chance to win in such races—that were the incumbent expected to be vulnerable, they would not be viable candidates for their party’s nomination and thus can only surmount this first hurdle toward winning election in races expected to be uncompetitive.
3. See Wittman (1973) for a more formal treatment of this argument.
4. Putnam (2000, 41) is an exception to this rule. For other political participation works, this omission is not due to an oversight by authors, but, most likely, due to the extremely small number of citizens who run for office.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. While simultaneous positioning, as in a one-shot game, is certainly not the same as a game with endless iterations, or unrestricted ability to reposition, the results here are identical. Where candidates take positions simultaneously, one candidate does not know what position the other candidate will take; if there is no limit to the number of moves that can be made, a candidate cannot know how his opponent will respond to any position taken. The result in both cases is convergence at the median. For simplicity, I refer to such a scenario in this chapter as simultaneous positioning.
2. This type of division-of-benefits framework is also used in Aldrich’s (1995) conditional party government model.
3. These are circumstances that drive models in which information asymmetries lead to divergence, as is the case in Ferejohn and Noll 1978.
Notes to Chapter 3

1. For a discussion of problems in using ADA scores and a review of major works that have used ADA scores to measure the positions of members of Congress, see Groseclose, Levitt, and Snyder 1999.

2. For other work using media surveys of congressional candidates in this fashion, see Erikson and Wright 1989; Wright 1986; Wright and Berkman 1986.

3. For evidence on the relationship between these issues and 1996 congressional voting, see Ferejohn 1998.

4. On the gays in the military question, it appears that incumbents may have viewed the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy as a compromise position that was to the right of what the Clinton administration had initially proposed. A majority of Democratic incumbents, including most of those in the more liberal wing of the party, opposed the policy, while a majority of Republican incumbents supported it. It appears—and I have verified this in conversation with nonincumbents of each party—that nonincumbents viewed this question as a comparison of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy with the status quo ante, the ban on homosexuals in the military that had been in place prior to the Clinton administration’s proposal to lift the ban entirely.

The differences in the EPA question are somewhat less subtle; the overwhelming difference between incumbents and nonincumbents in each party suggests that, insofar as incumbents could refer to their voting on the particular bill in question while nonincumbents could not, many nonincumbents misunderstood the question. The question is phrased in a confusing manner, with a double negative that may have caused many respondents to give the exact opposite response of what they intended. Again, I have tested this on a selection of the candidates themselves.

5. This was conservative Texas Democrat Ralph Hall’s reelection bid. Hall won easily.

6. Several candidates who declined to answer the questions on the Time/ Congressional Quarterly survey attached written statements making a similar argument when they returned their uncompleted surveys.

7. The correlation between the competitiveness categories and 1992 party presidential vote share is .559 for the fifty-seven candidates considered here. The mean 1992 party presidential vote share in the districts of long-shot candidates was 29.95 percent; for somewhat competitive candidates, 36.76 percent; and for very competitive candidates, 43.07 percent.

8. See Westlye (1991) for a similar distinction in analyzing Senate challengers’ campaigns.

Note to Chapter 4

1. This district was substantially redrawn after the 2000 elections; the majority of it is now in the Nineteenth District.
Notes to Chapter 5

1. Data from Herrnson’s 1998 survey (in Herrnson 2000, 195) are much more ambiguous; there is no significant difference in the degree to which competitive and uncompetitive challengers focused on issues, and incumbents are less likely to focus on image or personality.

2. The issue categories I use in figure 5.1 do not precisely parallel those of the Time/Congressional Quarterly survey, but given the question wording, the Brady Bill question could be categorized as a measure of attitudes on crime and on guns, while the Clinton Budget question mentions healthcare issues. The FMLA question also could capture attitudes on healthcare.

3. The absence of references to Clinton’s gays in the military proposal is also interesting in light of Ferejohn’s (1998, 57) finding that gays in the military was among the strongest issue-based predictors of candidates’ 1994 vote share.

4. Four of them were right.

5. Following the 2000 redistricting, this district became the Fifth District. The partisan composition of the district was not substantially changed.

6. In the 1996 elections, minor parties were permitted to cross-endorse major party candidates in Minnesota. A subsequent Supreme Court ruling, Timmons v. Twin City Area New Party, overturned this policy after the election (see Ryden 1999).

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Herrnson and Patterson (2002), for instance, find that in 2000, 82 percent of DCCC hard-money contributions and 91 percent of NRCC hard-money contributions went to candidates in competitive races; a total of ninety challengers received contributions from the DCCC or NRCC.

2. As is the case with Mary Rieder in chapter 5, this candidate was cross-endorsed by the Reform Party.

3. See Burden 2001a for a similar argument regarding congressional primaries.

4. Costello did face a tougher opponent in 1998; the Republican nominee was the son of Costello’s Democratic predecessor, Melvin Price. Although the NRCC purchased advertisements attacking Costello for his ethics problems, Costello still won with 60 percent of the vote (Duncan and Nutting 1999, 455).

Notes to Chapter 7

1. Five of these were in Louisiana, where a winner of the majority of the vote in the state’s “jungle primary” does not face opposition in the general election. Excluding Louisiana, the figure for uncontested incumbents is 23.0 percent.
