

American Resistance
Chapter 4: Organizing the Resistance in the Districts
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As previous chapters have noted, participants in the Resistance in the Streets have been very engaged in other civic and political activities since the Resistance began in January 2017. Demonstrations have focused on a range of progressive issues—from Women’s Rights to Gun Control—and across all events and issues, protesters have reported remarkably high levels of civic engagement. The finding that people participating in demonstrations are more politically engaged than the general population is not particularly surprising. Many scholars have noted that individuals who participate in activism tend to be joiners.¹ They are, therefore, more civically engaged than the rest of the population by design. At the same time, participating in a protest has become much more common in recent years. In the most recent General Social Survey (in 2014), less than 10% of the population reported participating in a rally or demonstration.² Four years later, a 2018 poll by the *Washington Post* found 20% had participated in the past two years.³ This increase is consistent with the expectations of Caren and colleagues in their work on the social movement generation, which looks at trends in political participation. The authors note that changes in more confrontational forms of political action, like protest, are “likely to happen suddenly during periods of political unrest.”⁴

As I mentioned in the introduction to this book, the actions of President Trump and his Administration have fanned the flames of resistance, motivating people to participate in marches that focus on issues that span the progressive spectrum. Many participants in the Resistance in the Streets report deciding to participate without any connection to the groups that were organizing the event. Rather, like the research that finds moral shocks are an effective tool for mobilizing strangers,⁵ many respondents noted turning out without strong social ties to other individuals or organizations after seeing calls to march on social media.⁶ Although moral shocks can be an

effective way of mobilizing strangers to participate in a march or even a number of marches, without personal ties to groups that do the work of organizing it is very hard to sustain activism. In the words of an October 2017 op-ed in the *New York Times*, Kenneth T. Andrews stresses that “Strong organizations make possible the sort of sustained participation that supports a protest’s agenda for the long haul.”⁷ Accordingly, this chapter discusses how groups are working with these motivated individuals to channel their outrage into action in Congressional Districts and communities around the country.

In contrast to Chapters 2 and 3, which are based on evidence collected through surveys and observations with individual participants in the Resistance in the Streets, this chapter is based on findings from open-ended semi-structured interviews conducted with the representatives of organizations that are leading the Resistance in the Districts, along with observations of their work in the field.⁸ As I will discuss in detail below, the majority of these groups formed in direct response to the outcome of the 2016 election. Since many of these groups referred to themselves as “Resistance Groups” during our conversations in 2017 and 2018, I also use this term.

This chapter is separated into four sections. First, I provide an overview of the organizational landscape, focusing on the major Resistance Groups that are aiming their sights on the districts. Second, I discuss the goals of these groups. Third, I describe how they see themselves connecting with traditional political channels in the districts, as well as how they are distinguishing themselves from them. Fourth, I explore some of the conflicts that have emerged within this organizational landscape that includes such a broad and, in some cases, unlikely coalition of groups working together to overturn the Trump agenda.

Who are Resistance Groups?

The organizational landscape of the Resistance is densely populated by groups with overlapping missions and constituencies. As previously mentioned, most of the Resistance Groups are newly formed. Perhaps the most well-known of them is Indivisible. The group's origin story was described in a piece in *Salon* in February 2017: "After the 26-page Indivisible Guide was put online as a Google doc in mid-December, it quickly went viral...and Google's servers kept crashing, rendering it virtually useless. Created by a group of former congressional staffers, the guide, now a website, provides specific tactics for fighting against President Donald Trump's agenda by taking a page from the Tea Party's playbook."⁹ By the end of 2017, Indivisible reported having over 5,000 local groups across the country.¹⁰

Many Resistance Groups, including Indivisible, reported connections to one another, as well as to the Resistance in the Streets. The connections took various forms. For example, the chief communications officer of Indivisible, Sarah Dohl, notes that many of their local chapters were "formed on buses [coming] home from the Women's March" in January 2017 (Interview with author, 1/16/18).

Although it may be the most renowned, Indivisible is not the only Resistance Group with such an origin. The Town Hall Project, which aims to make information about town hall meetings with elected officials available to the general public, was launched by electoral campaign veterans as a Google doc a few weeks later in January 2017.¹¹ A little over a year later, this group partnered with the organizers of the March for Our Lives to hold "Town Hall for Our Lives" events with elected officials around the issue of gun control. The group reported holding over 150 events in districts around the country during the Congressional recess from March 23-April 9.¹²

In contrast to Indivisible and the Town Hall Project, which were both started by people who had already been working in politics, other new Resistance Groups were not. One such group

is Swing Left, which is focused on changing the party in control of the House of Representatives by focusing on swing districts. As its website notes: “We're not politicians or professional organizers. We're a group of individuals from diverse industries, including tech, media, finance, nonprofits, and art. We have no formal affiliation with any party, union, or organization, though we're not against such affiliations. We are citizens. And like many people, we've been sitting on the sidelines for too long. We don't have all the answers, but we know it's time to channel our anger and despair in a positive direction.”¹³ When asked about how they connect with other Resistance Groups, the co-founder and executive director of Swing Left, Ethan Todras-Whitehill, pointed out: “We work with some Indivisible groups as closely as some groups that call themselves Swing Left. We consider ourselves a conduit for the larger activism ecosystem, a way for anyone to do electoral work in these key House races.” (interview with author, date). In other words, the national group sees itself as a resource for local organizations.

Other new Resistance Groups were created for different purposes but redirected their focus to the Midterm elections. As noted in chapter 2, the Women’s March was formed in response to a collective call-to-action on Facebook to coordinate a huge march on Washington, DC to be held on the day after Donald Trump’s inauguration. In 2017, some of the leaders of the sister marches that took place around the US on the same day established their own group called MarchOn.¹⁴ By the beginning of 2018, both of the Women’s March and MarchOn had become focused on the Midterm elections with their “Power to the Polls”¹⁵ and “March On the Polls”¹⁶ campaigns. Vanessa Wruble headed Campaign Operations for the Women’s March and now serves as the Executive Director of March On.¹⁷ She explains her group’s decision to target the election: “We came to the conclusion that the only thing to do was to work on the midterms and all the other things we wanted to happen – reproductive rights, climate change, racial and social justice – there was just no real point in

focusing on those things until we changed our representation. So that's how we ended up focusing on the elections.” (interview with author, 2/9/18)

A number of more established organizations are also working specifically at the congressional district-level leading up to the 2018 midterm elections. These older groups tend to be staffed by people with political backgrounds, including working for government agencies, as well as experience organizing for progressive issues. Most of these groups are continuing previous projects and campaigns, such as the Hip Hop Caucus, which focuses on connecting the Hip Hop community to build power and create positive change.¹⁸ Senior Vice President of Climate, Environmental Justice & Community Revitalization for the Hip Hop Caucus, Mustafa Santiago Ali, explains the purpose of their ongoing Respect My Vote campaign.¹⁹ It aims to get “more folks engaged in the civic process who might not normally be engaged...[because they are] communities of color, young people, returning citizens” (interview with author, 1/8/18).

Like the newer groups, these more established organizations are also connecting with other Resistance Groups and the Resistance in the Streets. For example, during the March for Our Lives in March 2017, the Hip Hop Caucus’ Respect My Vote Campaign sent an “army of hundreds of volunteers to register young voters.”²⁰ In the end, working with partners, the campaign reported registering over 1,500 people who were marching in the streets to vote in their districts, which spanned 40 different states.

Another established group that is investing a lot of in the midterm elections is MoveOn, which was started as an email campaign to move beyond the efforts to impeach President Bill Clinton in 1998, and is a pioneer in the field of online organizing.²¹ Although a focus in the districts around elections is not new to MoveOn, Victoria Kaplan, the group’s organizing director, notes that this work has expanded to be “more active in more districts” this year (interview with author,

2/20/18). Although the group is not known for organizing big marches, it has supported a number of them and was an official partner of the 2017 Women's March.²²

In contrast to older groups like MoveOn and the Hip Hop Caucus that are continuing pre-2016 efforts, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is new to electoral work. The ACLU gained notoriety for the role it played in organizing around the Trump Administration's efforts to implement a travel ban, including mobilizing thousands of lawyers to go to airports the weekend after the first ban was announced.²³ In 2018, the ACLU began a new program to engage in electoral politics. The group's political director, Faiz Shakir, explains the motivation for starting People Power, which includes a 50-state voting-rights campaign:

This year, the ACLU plans to do electoral work in a serious way for the first time. We're getting involved in elections because the stakes are incredibly high for civil rights and civil liberties issues in America. The ACLU aims to educate voters about the civil liberties and civil rights records of candidates and build a base of voters who will factor those records into how they will vote. At the same time, we'll be mobilizing ACLU volunteers to ensure that Americans around the country understand the potential consequences of these elections.²⁴

Focusing on the Local

Though the backgrounds and focus of Resistance Groups are somewhat diverse, when asked what motivated them to get involved in Resistance in the Districts, there was consensus that they were motivated to act as a direct response to the election of Donald Trump. To that end, most Resistance Groups stressed the need to invest in politics at the local level. For years, scholars have noted significant changes taking place in American politics. Many have observed that there is a growing disconnection between regular people and politics, and that, with the professionalization of interest-oriented political groups, members of civic groups have become more like consumers and less like engaged participants.²⁵

In my 2006 book—*Activism, Inc.*—I discuss how passive participation and armchair activism compares with campaigns that involve members in meaningful ways.²⁶ By analyzing the campaign

strategies and political infrastructures of the Right and the Left during the 2004 elections, I found substantial differences that have significant effects on the ways that the grassroots in the districts were mobilized and engaged on both sides. While the Republicans rallied local networks of conservatives to work for their campaigns in swing states, the Democrats relied on paid professionals and imported volunteers from blue states to canvass and work for campaigns in swing states. The Democrats were laying sod while Republicans were cultivating grass.

One of the unifying themes across all of the Resistance Groups is their recognition that the Left needs to invest in developing true grassroots connections that connect with individuals at the local level. Mustafa Ali Santiago of the Hip Hop Caucus, which has been working within communities of color for 14 years, best summarizes this perspective: “You see lots of organizations that often parachute into vulnerable communities and some are well meaning, but folks know they're only going to be there for a little while, not create authentic connections that take time and hardly ever make long term investments that support communities in building their own capacity.” This statement from early 2018 echoes a number of the critiques of the practices of left-leaning groups and the Democratic Party in the early 2000s.²⁷

The Hip Hop caucus is not alone in this focus. The chief communications officer of Indivisible, Sarah Dohl, spoke specifically about how the group’s focus is locally directed: “our theory of change is that the only voices that matter are the people within a congressional district...[it’s like] a 50-state strategy without being top-down.” Here, one of the leaders of Indivisible references the so-called “50-state strategy” that was originally pushed by DNC-chair Howard Dean after the 2004 election. The goal of this strategy was to build a Democratic grassroots infrastructure. It was recently resuscitated by the DNC chair Tom Perez after the 2016 election attracting some criticism.²⁸

Overall, these strategies by Resistance Groups and the Democratic Party appear to be working. Since November 2016, Democrats have triumphed in both special elections and the off-cycle 2017 elections.²⁹ Longtime organizer Phil Aroneanu who works with the ACLU's People Power acknowledges the importance of local efforts when reflecting on these recent Democratic electoral victories: "the engine that drove a lot of those victories were really just people busting their butts at the local level – knocking on doors, raising money, posting on social media...the real action is happening locally" (interview with author, 1/19/18).

The importance of the local level of politics is even recognized by those new groups that aim to support candidates in swing districts in Congress (Swing Left) and flippable seats in state elections (Flippable). Even though these groups aim to pool resources and turnout volunteers who may not live in the candidates' districts, they recognize that successful campaigns come from the local level. Ethan Todras-Whitehill, the executive director and co-founder of Swing Left explains how the group's work builds supports local interests: "We trust the Democrats in a district to pick the best candidate for themselves, and then we'll be there to support those nominees" (interview with author, 1/19/18).

This conviction that local people need to select their own candidates differs from observations of Democratic Party practice in recent years.³⁰ A number of other Resistance Groups mentioned specifically working on primary campaigns, which has been a standard tactic for right-leaning groups since at least 2008.³¹ In fact, when the subject came up, these groups noted that they are prepared for the situation where they support a primary candidate who is not being supported by the Democratic Party.³² One interpretation of this focus on local engagement and representation, along with groups' reserving the right to challenge candidates in the Democratic Primaries is as part of a broader critique of the workings of the Democratic Party.

The Challenge of an Infrastructural Deficit

In my previous work, I concluded that the Democratic Party was investing in local contact that “ensures that the locals are contacted, but it does not engage the local institutions of civil society that have enduring roots in communities.”³³ This process did not lay any infrastructure for the Democratic party or progressive movement in the long term. Indeed, hiring people to do voter outreach and grassroots mobilization or importing them from Blue states instead of bringing in local volunteers during campaigns has had lasting effects on the Democratic Party’s infrastructure (or lack thereof). For a political infrastructure to support successful campaigns, groups on the Left must put in the time and effort and lay down roots where the Party’s base lives, works, and votes, mobilizing people locally and engaging them in a meaningful way.³⁴ Although the 50-state strategy implemented by Howard Dean in 2005 as well as independent efforts by the 2008 Obama-for-America campaign aimed to fill this infrastructural void,³⁵ the consolidation of Organizing for America into the Democratic Party after the 2008 election cut the roots off of many of these efforts.³⁶ The *American Resistance* is a direct response by progressive Americans to fill this infrastructural deficit.

During my conversations with leaders of these Resistance Groups, the Democratic party’s infrastructural weaknesses were noted repeatedly. For example, while talking about local politics with Catherine Vaughan, the founder of the new group Flippable, which is working specifically on state-level races, she notes that state politics “have been overlooked by Democrats for decades, despite being the key to electoral policies such as redistricting and voting rights” (interview with author, 1/26/18). The sentiment was echoed by most groups. Even those groups that report working directly with the Democratic Party pointed out that local infrastructure has “never really been done by the Democratic Party in an effective way...[the Party] would be the logical piece to do this, but again, that’s not what they’re set up to do. Really to do grassroots mobilization, you need to have something people can mobilize behind.”

These Resistance Groups have emerged specifically to fill this perceived gap. For example, from the beginning Indivisible has focused on the kind of local work that its leaders have noted is needed. In the words of Dohl, “Progressives and the Left have really lacked a ground game for a long time. We haven’t had to have one...this concept of really getting people out at home and showing up at congressional district offices to lobby on issues like taxes, that’s something the Democrats really have never had to do before.” Given the number of local elections that have been lost by Democrats in recent years,³⁷ an alternative interpretation is that failure at the local level has had substantial consequences that can be seen clearly in state and local election outcomes throughout the country.

In addition to these comments about the lack of infrastructure and missing ground game, some groups were even more explicit in their critiques of the Democratic Party. One group observed that the Party seems to try to lead the progressive movement rather than follow the citizens and listen to their concerns. The organizing director of MoveOn, Victoria Kaplan, reflected about the Party’s response directly after the 2016 election. “People were so angry and needing to see more direct resistance to Trump and the Republican Party than what the Democratic Party was showing at that time...they were...playing footsie with Trump.” (Interview with author, 2/20/18).

Sustaining an Unlikely Coalition

While the Democratic Party was observed trying to work with the Trump transition team directly after the election,³⁸ its focus changed relatively quickly. In fact, after the Resistance in the Streets started with the Women’s March in January 2017, the Democratic Party began to adopt the language of the Resistance to try to tap into its energy.³⁹ By June 2017, *Newsweek* reported “the DNC Wants to Join the Resistance. Will Activists Allow it?”⁴⁰ The article summarized a number of efforts undertaken by the Party to build on the momentum of the Resistance.

In fact, a few weeks after MoveOn introduced their Resistance Summer program for summer 2017, which was designed as a “12-week volunteer program for emerging community leaders and activists who want to gain organizing skills and be part of an ongoing national network of organizers standing up to Trump's agenda,”⁴¹ the Democratic Party launched their own campaign with the *same* name.⁴² According to Victoria Kaplan, the organizing director at MoveOn. The DNC’s program “was uncoordinated and not related to MoveOn...[it] represented the Democratic Party trying to keep the pace with where the grassroots movement was and was going.” Whatever its motivation, kicking off a program with the same name as one hosted by another group that is working in the same progressive political space can lead to confusion, criticism, and conflicts.

Beyond struggles with the Democratic Party, Resistance Groups are facing other trials. In particular, while many of these groups stress that they have a “distributed” structure, other groups are more top-down. Phil Aroneanu from the ACLU describes distributed structures as “highly localized organizing structures that are sometimes not coordinated very well at the national level.” Organizations that follow a such a participatory structure tend to be more democratic, but research has shown time and again how this structure makes decisionmaking much more difficult.⁴³

The contrast between a distributed structure and one is more very top-down was highlighted in an article in the *New York Times* right before the first anniversary of the Women’s March. The article focused on tensions between the national organizers and those who coordinated sister marches in 2017 and went on to work together as the new group MarchOn. The article discusses the national group’s concerns about the branding of the Women’s March: “The dispute over branding gives a glimpse of how much has changed since *ad hoc* committees of volunteers put together the marches in the weeks after President Trump’s election.”⁴⁴ Vanessa Wruble, who helped coordinate the national Women’s March and now leads MarchOn provides more detail: The Women’s March “talked about organizing horizontally and all that, but ultimately [the other women

I brought on] ended up being enormously top-down.” In many ways, this dispute highlights some of the common tensions that have been found to exist between more informal local groups and the more professionalized national groups, even when they focus on the same progressive issue.⁴⁵

With so many new organizations working in the districts leading up to the midterm elections, there are bound to be tensions. Although leaders of most of the Resistance Groups explicitly mentioned working together at some point, inter-organizational friction is bound to emerge because organizing for the long term is hard; it requires a consistent flow of human and financial resources, both of which are finite. As a result, some level of competition among these groups is inevitable. As time goes on, Resistance Groups with different philosophies and, in some cases, different issue areas and priorities are likely to clash over their positions and tactics. Such conflicts are extremely common among political coalitions over time, especially as they turn to focus on variable policy priorities.⁴⁶

In short, the findings presented in this chapter flesh out the ways that the Resistance is being organized in the districts: groups are maintaining a hyper-local focus that aims to fill what many Resistance Groups have identified as an infrastructural deficit left by the Democratic Party. With an organizational landscape that is densely populated with overlapping interests, constituencies, and funding streams, conflict is assured despite how little conflict has been observed thus far.

Notes

¹ See, for example, Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Harvard University Press, 1995).

² Data extracted from the most recent General Social Survey, available at <https://gssdataexplorer.norc.umd.edu/projects> (Accessed 12 April 2018).

³ Mary Jordan and Scott Clement, “Echoes of Vietnam: Millions of Americans Are Taking to the Streets,” *Washington Post*, April 6, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/national/wp/2018/04/06/feature/in-reaction-to-trump-millions-of-americans-are-joining-protests-and-getting-political/>; For some historical context, see Russell J. Dalton, *The Good Citizen: How a Younger Generation Is Reshaping American Politics* (CQ Press, 2015).

⁴ Neal Caren, Raj Andrew Ghoshal, and Vanesa Ribas, “A Social Movement Generation: Cohort and Period Trends in Protest Attendance and Petition Signing,” *American Sociological Review* 76, no. 1 (February 1, 2011): 127, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122410395369>; For a broader discussion of “lifestyle politics,” see W. Lance Bennett, “The UnCivic Culture: Communication, Identity, and the Rise of Lifestyle Politics,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 31, no. 4 (December 1998): 741–61, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096500053270>.

⁵ James M. Jasper and Jane D. Poulsen, “Recruiting Strangers and Friends: Moral Shocks and Social Networks in Animal Rights and Anti-Nuclear Protests,” *Social Problems* 42, no. 4 (1995): 493–512, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3097043>.

⁶ For example, the role of Facebook in turning out people at different demonstrations ranged from 69% at the 2017 Women’s March to 31% at the People’s Climate March, which built on the momentum of the active climate movement.

⁷ Kenneth T. Andrews, “How Protest Works,” *The New York Times*, October 21, 2017, sec. Opinion, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/21/opinion/sunday/how-protest-works.html>.

⁸ Organizations were initially identified by a review of media coverage and discussions with groups working on the Resistance in the Streets. The list was then expanded to include groups that were mentioned repeatedly by respondents. All data were collected in accordance with the policies of the University of Maryland Institutional Review Board (IRB Protocol # 878998-3). Respondents are directly quoted when they gave formal approval to be named. The first time each representative is quoted, the date of the interview is listed. For quotes that informants did not want directly attributed to them, a general affiliation is listed. Interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Data were analyzed in QSR NVIVO software to identify themes among the respondents.

⁹ Karin Kamp, “The Indivisible Movement Is Fueling Resistance to Trump,” *Salon*, February 15, 2017, https://www.salon.com/2017/02/15/how-the-indivisible-movement-is-fueling-resistance-to-trump_partner/; see also Charles Bethea, “The Crowdsourced Guide to Fighting Trump’s Agenda,” *The New Yorker*, December 16, 2016, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-crowd-sourced-guide-to-fighting-trumps-agenda>.

¹⁰ “Indivisible Annual Report 2017,” accessed April 12, 2018, <https://www.indivisibleannualreport.org/groups/>.

¹¹ <https://townhallproject.com/#ourStory> (accessed April 13, 2018).

¹² Map and details are available at <https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/e/2PACX-1vSorDmXHT4DHFgp6KYH8d4NMT7WtJoP6AGKaRyNY2PHscZibC8oIWu4RUit02y0OB8-4c90ultd-6Ea/pub> (Accessed 21 April 2018).

¹³ <https://swingleft.org/about> (Accessed 17 April 2018).

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- ¹⁴ For details, see Julia Felsenthal, “This Holiday Season, Give the Gift of Impeachment,” *Vogue*, November 16, 2017, <https://www.vogue.com/article/march-on-impeach-trump-vanessa-wruble>; Farah Stockman, “One Year After Women’s March, More Activism but Less Unity,” *The New York Times*, January 15, 2018, sec. U.S., <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/15/us/womens-march-anniversary.html>.
- ¹⁵ <http://www.powertothepolls.com/> Accessed 13 April 2018.
- ¹⁶ <https://www.wearemarchon.org/> Accessed 13 April 2018.
- ¹⁷ Felsenthal, “This Holiday Season, Give the Gift of Impeachment.”
- ¹⁸ <http://respectmyvote.com/hip-hop-caucus/> Accessed 13 April 2018.
- ¹⁹ <http://respectmyvote.com/> (Accessed 13 April 2018).
- ²⁰ <http://hiphopcaucus.org/marchforourlives/> (Accessed 21 April 2018).
- ²¹ <https://front.moveon.org/a-short-history/#.Wts1vW4vzX4> (Accessed 21 April 2018).
- ²² <https://www.womensmarch.com/partners> (Accessed 23 April 2018).
- ²³ Lucy Westcott, “Thousands of Lawyers Descend on U.S. Airports to Fight Trump’s Immigrant Ban,” *Newsweek*, January 29, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/lawyers-volunteer-us-airports-trump-ban-549830>. For a useful timeline, see <https://www.aclu-wa.org/pages/timeline-muslim-ban> (Accessed 23 April 2018).
- ²⁴ Faiz Shakir, “How the ACLU Plans to Engage in the 2018 Midterm Elections,” *American Civil Liberties Union*, January 11, 2018, <https://www.aclu.org/blog/mobilization/how-aclu-plans-engage-2018-midterm-elections>.
- ²⁵ See particularly Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, *Voice and Equality*; Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York, NY: Touchstone Books by Simon & Schuster, 2000); Edward T. Walker, “Privatizing Participation: Civic Change and the Organizational Dynamics of Grassroots Lobbying Firms,” *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 1 (2009): 83–105; Theda Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2013).
- ²⁶ For a full discussion, see Dana R. Fisher, *Activism, Inc.: How the Outsourcing of Grassroots Campaigns Is Strangling Progressive Politics in America*, 1 edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2006).
- ²⁷ Fisher chapter 5.
- ²⁸ Anson Kaye, “50-State Strategy for Dems? How about 15 Instead?,” *The Hill*, March 2, 2017, <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/national-party-news/321998-50-state-strategy-for-dems-how-about-15-instead>; Robert Kuttner, “Q&A: A New 50-State Strategy,” *American Prospect*, January 17, 2017, <http://prospect.org/article/qa-new-50-state-strategy>. For an overview, see <https://www.democrats.org/about/our-party/50-state-strategy> (Accessed 20 April 2018).
- ²⁹ John Sides, “How Democrats Are Dominating Special Elections — in One Graph,” *Washington Post*, December 13, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/12/13/how-democrats-are-dominating-special-elections-in-one-graph/?utm_term=.c9d0c659442d; Joan Walsh, “Here’s Why Democrats Won Big in Virginia,” *The Nation*, November 8, 2017, <https://www.thenation.com/article/heres-why-democrats-won-big-in-virginia/>; For an analysis of turnout for special elections, see Nate Silver, “Another Special Election, Another Really Bad Sign For The GOP,” *FiveThirtyEight*, April 25, 2018, <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/arizona-8-special-election-result/>.
- ³⁰ Lawrence Douglas, “The Democratic Party Is Now Publicly Attacking Progressive Candidates,” *The Guardian*, February 26, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/26/democratic-party-laura-moser-texas>; See also Alana Abramson, “Republicans Are Investing Campaign Cash in the Party. Democrats Are Investing in Candidates,” *Fortune*, February 6, 2018, <http://fortune.com/2018/02/06/campaign-fundraising-2018-election-democrats-republicans/>; Tim Dickinson, “How Progressive Activists Are

Leading the Trump Resistance,” *Rolling Stone*, August 24, 2017, <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/features/how-progressive-activists-are-leading-the-trump-resistance-w499221>; Branco Marcetic, “Here’s Who the Democrats Want You to Vote for This November,” *The Jacobin Magazine*, April 2018, <http://jacobinmag.com/2018/04/democratic-party-red-to-blue-list-candidates>.

³¹ For a discussion of recent efforts, see Aaron Blake, “Analysis | Why Steve Bannon’s Threat to Primary Almost Every GOP Senator Should Frighten Republicans,” *Washington Post*, October 10, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/10/10/why-steve-bannons-targeting-of-incumbent-senators-is-a-serious-threat-to-the-gop/>.

³² For examples in Illinois and California, see David Weigel and Michael Scherer, “The 2018 Midterms Are Fast Approaching. First up: Primary Fights for Both Parties’ Future,” *Washington Post*, January 6, 2018, sec. Powerpost, https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/the-2018-midterms-are-fast-approaching-first-up-primary-fights-for-both-parties-future/2018/01/06/3b3d20fe-f1b0-11e7-b3bf-ab90a706e175_story.html.

³³ Fisher, *Activism, Inc.*, 96; For a more recent discussion, see Lara Putnam and Theda Skocpol, “Middle America Reboots Democracy,” *Democracy Journal*, February 20, 2018, <https://democracyjournal.org/arguments/middle-america-reboots-democracy/>.

³⁴ See for example Carmen Sirianni and Lewis Friedland, *Civic Innovation in America: Community Empowerment, Public Policy, and the Movement for Civic Renewal* (University of California Press, 2001); Harry Chatten Boyte, *Everyday Politics: Reconnecting Citizens and Public Life* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Carmen Sirianni, *Varieties of Civic Innovation: Deliberative, Collaborative, Network, and Narrative Approaches* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2014); Dana R. Fisher, Erika S. Svendsen, and James J. Connolly, *Urban Environmental Stewardship and Civic Engagement* (Routledge, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315857589>; William Yagatich, Anya M. Galli Robertson, and Dana R. Fisher, “How Local Environmental Stewardship Diversifies Democracy,” *Local Environment* 23, no. 4 (April 3, 2018): 431–47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2018.1428187>.

³⁵ Kuttner, “Q&A: A New 50-State Strategy”; For discussion of organizing through the Obama campaign, see Ari Melber, “Year One of Organizing for America,” *TechPresident*, January 2010, 74.

³⁶ See chapter 1; for an overview, see Micah L. Sifry, “Obama’s Lost Army,” *The New Republic*, February 9, 2017, <https://newrepublic.com/article/140245/obamas-lost-army-inside-fall-grassroots-machine>.

³⁷ For a map of what party has control of the state legislatures over time, see <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/2016-pre-and-post-election-state-legislative-control.aspx>; See also <https://flippable.org/our-plan/> (22 April 2018)

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⁴² <https://resistsummer.com/> (Accessed 20 April 2018).

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⁴⁶ Nella Van Dyke and Holly J McCammon, *Strategic Alliances: Coalition Building and Social Movements* (U of Minnesota Press, 2010).