media outlets. News sources that have as their core mission the promotion of an ideology are bound to find themselves at odds with the direction of their party on occasion. More theorizing about the conditions under which ideological considerations are likely to trump party fortunes is warranted.

Questions of empirics and impact also remain. The audience for partisan news sources is small; Limbaugh's regular audience, for example, constitutes less than 10 percent of the public (pp. 46, 254). Given that his audience consists largely of committed partisans who tune in because they enjoy hearing him cheerlead their own team and disparage the other side, what effects does the content of his show have on election outcomes or political discourse writ large? Jamieson and Cappella acknowledge the difficulty of disentangling Limbaugh's effects on his listeners from the effects of selective exposure. But even if we grant that Limbaugh has the power to move his already-conservative audience even further to the right, how much does it matter? This is one of the many questions that can be answered as the media environment continues its evolution.

DANNY HAYES
Syracuse University

Choices and Changes: Interest Groups in the Electoral Process *by Michael M. Franz. Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press, 2008. 240 pp. Cloth, $74.50; paper, $23.95.*

In the wake of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 and its 1974 amendments, group involvement in elections took a dramatic turn. The number of interests attempting to influence elections proliferated, accompanied by spiraling expenditures. At first, the expenditures were largely in the form of "hard money," disclosed and/or limited by Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulations, such as contributions to candidates through political action committees (PACs). Over the past quarter century, but especially since the mid-1990s, groups have begun changing their strategies and influence techniques, spending even greater sums of money and utilizing a broader array of tactics. Various "soft money" tactics such as "issue advocacy electioneering" have become prevalent, where expenditures are unlimited and typically outside of the scrutiny of the FEC. When soft money contributions to national political parties were banned by the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, 527 Committees became in vogue, as some organizations circumvented the intent of the new law.

In *Choices and Changes*, political scientist Michael Franz attempts to uncover why and under what circumstances groups altered their strategies and tactics in order to affect electoral outcomes. The volume is a revised and extended version of a dissertation that received the prestigious E.E. Schattschneider Prize from the American Political Science Association as the outstanding contribution to American politics in 2007. The author tests a series of hypotheses that together suggest that groups are quite rational in choosing specific strategies, adapting to changes in the context of electoral politics, often in creative ways. The data come from a variety of sources, including FEC and Internal Revenue Service statistics on group political contributions/expenditures, data on the extent of campaign advertising using soft money, and content analysis–based information dealing with FEC advisory opinions and court decisions. While the volume represents a well-crafted, theoretically based piece of social science research of use to academic specialists interested in campaign finance, other readers concerned about the impact of money on American politics generally will find the material not overly technical, and very readable and informative.

Franz's primary argument is that shifts in group electoral strategies have been the result of increases in the degree of ideological polarization and competitiveness between the parties at the national level; he supports his position with cautiously interpreted data analysis examining both trends and breakpoints. For example, after the 1994 election, the party balance in Congress became extremely close, while the policy consequences of which party was in control was elevated; the overriding focus of congressional elections now became majority control over each chamber. Overall, both hard and soft money group expenditures became more blatantly partisan. Groups, especially partisan organizations (such as labor or corporate PACs), began to concentrate virtually all their efforts on party-targeted races in competitive districts, rather than merely giving to safe incumbents, the previously dominant strategy. Soft money given to the parties grew as well, and donors were increasingly likely to contribute to only one party. Interest group electioneering clearly reinforced party polarization.

Perhaps Franz's most original contribution to the literature is found in his analysis of how the changing regulatory environment affected a group's choice of electioneering tactics. Early on, the courts and the FEC proved to be major constraints on the tactics groups could utilize, but over time, groups continually tested the boundaries of the regulatory environment, learning in the process; regulatory constraints became less of a burden. By the mid-1990s, the demand for campaign funds in the new political context "combined with increased regulatory openness to create a 'perfect storm' necessary to allow this 'explosion' in interest group electioneering" (p. 11).

Franz is not optimistic that aggressive electioneering by groups will be lessened in the immediate future. Much depends upon whether the political context remains polarized and whether each party continues to believe that majority status is attainable in an election. The regulatory environment is likely to remain permissive and may even become more so.

ALLAN J. CIGLER
University of Kansas