

# Replicating Soft Money: From the FEC to OpenSecrets.org

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## **Abstract**

The Bi-Partisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA) ended the soft money era for the Democratic and Republican federal parties. But scholars are only beginning to make use of available soft money data in understanding why interest groups contributed so much non-federal money. Many questions remain unanswered. For example, do PAC theories for hard dollars travel into the world of soft money? There is an initial data challenge, however. This paper explores the data cleaning procedures of the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP), the most commonly cited source of cleaned FEC data. How accurate are their soft money totals? I find that that the CRP is relatively accurate, except for its decision to include individuals' contributions in interest group totals, which artificially inflates group totals. Given the recent debate over Jack Abramoff, I also include a replication example of CRP's reported donation totals from Abramoff and his associates, finding numerous errors. The results in this paper serve as a reminder to scholars of the importance of sound data collection methods.

# 1 Introduction

The party soft money era may be over, but many questions remain unanswered about the campaign finance politics of federal elections prior to BCRA's passage in 2002. Why did individuals and interest groups donate to non-federal party committees, and in such high amounts?<sup>1</sup> What did contributors hope to secure with either large or small party soft money donations? Scholarship on PACs investigates the access and replacement goals of hard money contributors (Sabato 1984, Wright 1985, Evans 1988, Austen-Smith 1995), and it makes sense to assume that soft money was motivated by the same goals. We need good theory on such questions (Baumgartner & Leech 1998), but only a few papers tackle these and related issues (Apollonio & LaRaja 2004, Dwyre 1996).

One reason scholarship is limited is because the data are hard to come by. The FEC stores raw soft money data in its contributor files for individuals, which most political scientists ignore. Accessing the data require one to download specific election cycle text files from the FEC's ftp cite (`ftp://ftp.fec.gov/FEC/`), read the files into software that can handle over 1 million entries, and clean the files accordingly.

Quick searches for specific information or contributors are easier. The FEC's "Disclosure Data Search" page allows one to search for specific contributions, by recipient or donor. In addition, the Center for Responsive Politics (at `www.opensecrets.org`) maintains an easy to access archive of cleaned FEC data. Visitors can look for contributions of all sorts, from individual contributions to PACs and parties, to PAC contributions to candidates. By most accounts, CRP's search engine is the preferred forum for specific questions relating to campaign finance (i.e., who contributed to Duke Cunningham? Did John Kerry accept donations from pro-choice groups?). Using Lexis-Nexis, for example, I searched in the full text of major papers between June 2004 and June 2006 on "Center for Responsive Politics" or "opensecrets.org." The search returned 957 citations. A re-

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<sup>1</sup>In this paper, I refer to all non-individual contributors as interest groups; that is, any corporation, union, trade association, or ideological group is considered an interest group.

stricted search to the above, adding “AND soft money”, returned 104 citations, and the same search for the last five years returned 444 such mentions.

But what if a scholar is interested in more than donor or contributor-specific searches? To look for contributor patterns across interest groups, for example, one needs the set of raw data. This paper investigates the question of how to obtain accurate soft money data from both the FEC and CRP, and the complications involved in either source. One approach is to download the raw FEC data and recode it yourself. This is wrought with complications, as I explain in the next section of this paper. A second approach is to pay the CRP for data or cut and paste interest group totals directly from the *opensecrets* site. For example, if one chooses the “Who Gives” and “Soft Money” tabs off the Center’s website, and selects “Top Soft Money Donors,” you get a list of large (> \$100,000) interest group soft money contributors. This approach forces the scholar, however, to rely on the data cleaning procedures at CRP. This may be problematic, as the third section of this paper explains. The fourth section of the paper compares FEC data cleaned independently with CRP data, finding both good and bad news. In the concluding section, I attempt to replicate a CRP report on contributions to political parties from Jack Abramoff and his associates. This proves incredibly difficult.

Overall, the goal of this paper is to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of different soft money sources; indeed, such concerns are present in many new and interesting questions relating to the influence of money in American politics. This paper also encourages innovative and bold research on one of the most controversial campaign finance issues in a generation.

## **2 FEC Data**

As described above, FEC soft money data are available from the Commission’s ftp cite (<ftp://ftp.fec.gov/FEC/>), where there is a contributor file for each election cycle.

The files contain contributions greater than \$200 from individuals to candidates, parties, or PACs registered with the FEC. The 1992-2002 files also contain—listed as contribution type “10”—contributions from any entity to non-federal party accounts. These are all contributions to the party’s non-federal accounts, including from corporations, trade associations, PACs, labor unions, and 527s. I selected and saved all contributions of this type from each individual-contributor file back to 1992.

The Federal Election Commission maintains these records of non-federal contributions because of a court challenge by Common Cause in the late 1980s (*Common Cause v. FEC*). Common Cause complained that existing FEC regulations did not mandate federal parties to disclose the source of non-federal funds (like they did for hard funds), thus limiting the extent to which party money was disclosed; they also pressed the FEC to establish more clear regulations on how national parties were to allocate hard and soft money in electioneering efforts that affected federal and non-federal races. The U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. ruled in 1988 that the FEC had to establish regulations on allocation (which the FEC did shortly thereafter), as well as make the source of party soft money public (which the Commission did starting with the 1992 elections). Although the FEC complied with making this information public, they did so by placing the data rather obscurely in the hard money contributor files for individuals.

There are two initial challenges in cleaning the data (see also Clawson, Neustadtl & Scott (1992)). The first challenge comes in identifying contributors as individuals or interest groups. In almost all cases the FEC records individual contributions as `LAST NAME, FIRST NAME`, with a comma in between the last and first names. In contrast, almost all interest group contributors have no comma. As a first cut through the data, which I loaded into SPSS, I separated each contributor with a comma in the string field from contributors with no comma. I created a dummy variable that assigned a 0 to the former and 1 to the latter. I then looked through all comma-based entries to identify interest groups (for example, law firms with multiple partner names separated by a comma), changing the code

from 0 to 1. I saved all interest group contributors into a new file, creating a separate file for each cycle. Early cycles like 1992 and 1994 contain almost 10,000 contributions, but the entries grow to over 50,000 by 2000 and 2002.

The second challenge was that contributors are listed in a string variable with no unique code. This is unlike the PAC databases where the FEC assigns each PAC committee a unique code which can be used to aggregate contributions. Here, data entries might resemble the hypothetical data in Table 1, with different spelling iterations for a single contributor (and even misspellings). Thus, in order to assess contributions from interest groups, one must clean the entries above into a single variable. With over 50,000 entries in the 2002 file, such a project can seem daunting and time-consuming.

[Table 1 here]

There are additional challenges in cleaning entries into one contributor code. Most importantly, how do I separate contributors who are different but have very similar names (AJ's Car Wash in Oakland vs. AJ's Car Wash and Gas Station in St. Louis)? To account for this, I sorted donors on zip code and spelling. This separated the AJ Car Washes in St. Louis and Oakland but kept spelling iterations together within zip code. I made the coding decision that if there were two different companies (like a car wash) with the same name within zip code, I would incorrectly code them as one company (something which should rarely be the case). In addition, there are some groups located in multiple zip codes or multiple states. In circumstances where this was possible (i.e., for larger companies) I did my best to confirm that through a web search.

Contributors could donate to a number of Democratic and Republican non-federal committees, an important point to remember when aggregating FEC data by contributor to each party. The Democrats, for example, maintained non-federal accounts associated with their major national committees—the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign

Committee. The same was true for Republicans, who raised non-federal funds through the Republican National Committee, the National Republican Congressional Committee, and the National Republican Senatorial Committee.

The parties, however, also established a number of other non-federal accounts to raise soft money. These included Democratic and Republican “building funds,” Republican House and Senate “Dinner” committees, and Democratic “Max PAC,” “Labor,” and “Corporation” committees. In Figure 1 I show the number of non-federal committees in each election cycle through which the Republicans and Democrats raised interest group soft money funds (I exclude committees that only raised soft money funds from individuals). As the figure demonstrates, both Republicans and Democrats increased the number of non-federal accounts between 1992 and 2002, from about 20 for the Democrats and 12 for the GOP in 1992 to nearly 50 and 30, respectively, in 2002.

The graph also shows trend lines for “state-specific” party committees. These are non-federal accounts named after states or federal candidates—for example, the “Ashcroft Victory Committee” or the “DSCC Non-Federal-Minnesota” account. The graph shows that both parties developed a non-trivial number of these specific accounts (the Democrats peaked at 11 such committees in 1996), with the Republicans outpacing the Democrats in 2000 and 2002 (jumping from 0 such accounts in 1998). Indeed, proponents of campaign finance reform often noted the presence of these committees (especially the candidate Victory funds) as a sign that soft money had become increasingly specialized and obviously meant to influence elections (Herrnson & Patterson 2002, Magleby 2002).

[Figure 1 here]

All told, the raw FEC data are the ideal source to obtain all soft money contributions back to 1991, but they require considerable data cleaning, whether it be to aggregate up to the level of the unique contributor, or even to separate individuals from interest groups. Additional data collection is needed, of course, to separate donors by issue area or by

type.

### 3 Center for Responsive Politics Data

The Center for Responsive Politics's Open Secrets web site is the preeminent web-based source of cleaned FEC (including soft money) data.<sup>2</sup> There are a number of important upsides to CRP's accessibility. Most importantly, CRP allows viewers to see not only interest group totals in Democratic and Republican soft money contributions, but they also allow you to see the date and amount of each contribution making up the group total. Thus, one can see directly how many contributions were made by Quaker Oats, as well as the dates and amounts of each contribution. By most accounts, the raw search results for any specific contributor almost always match the raw FEC data.

One limitation is that viewers are not allowed to search on and download sets of data (i.e., all union soft money contributions), but are only allowed to view totals one group at a time. You can, however, cut and paste company totals directly from the CRP site, or purchase the data directly. I will expand more on purchasing options below.

There are two more significant limitations, however. First, their soft money search engine goes back only to the 1998 election cycle, despite the availability of soft money data back to 1991-1992. Thus, one's cut and paste options are limited to 1998-2002. On the other hand, their general "Donor Lookup" page does allow you to search for specific contributors (including soft money contributions) back to 1992, but only by entering a specific contributor name.

Second, CRP uses a data-cleaning criteria that includes individual soft money contributions in aggregate interest group totals. Consider the following excerpt from CRP's soft money methodology.

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<sup>2</sup>Common Cause has apparently removed its own searchable web database (which they called the Soft Money Laundromat) following BCRA's passage

For individual donations, the classifications are based on the economic interests of the contributor's employer or line of business. Homemakers, students and other non-income earners are categorized based on the occupation/employer of the wage earner in the family, where that can be determined. Where the family links are not ascertained, non-income earners are classified as "unknown." Contributors whose occupations are vague or not disclosed, or whose employers can not be classified by industry, are also classified as "unknown."

Because of the unclassified contributions, our numbers should be considered conservative. When you read that the tobacco industry, for example, gave \$8.6 million to federal candidates and parties in an election cycle, take that number as the minimum amount the Center positively identified as coming from that industry. Tens of millions of dollars in contributions remain unclassified when the donors fail to fully identify their employer/occupation and Center researchers are unable to obtain further information.

Thus, the Quaker Oats example might look like Table 2, where the two individuals listed are classified as Quaker Oats employees, and where their contributions are included in the Quaker Oats total.

[Table 2 here]

We never take this approach with PAC contribution totals, although in principle we could. That is, individual hard money contributions to candidates and parties could be assigned to the individual's employer. Imagine, in the easy example, including all bundling totals to the interest group that organized the bundling. In such a case, Emily's List or Club for Growth, two groups known for their bundling tactics, would look like much more active hard money donors. Academics do not take this approach for the simple

reason that assigning individuals in the individual contributor file to organizations is exceedingly hard work (especially as there are often over 1,000,000 hard money contributors in each election cycle).

Because CRP choose this approach in soft money totals should not mean that we are beholden to their cleaning and coding criteria. CRP is, after all, aggressive members of the campaign finance reform community. That they include individual contributors in soft money totals—and then claim them as conservative and low estimates (!)—should come as no surprise.<sup>3</sup>

This is principally a problem when you ask for CRP data at the group level, or if you cut and paste their group-level totals from their webpage. Unless scholars go into each group total and cut contributions from employees and employee spouses, using the set of CRP data force us to include some contributions from individuals in the interest group total. In the extreme, some companies are included in CRP's list of soft money contributors, while their totals come **only** from individual employees.

We should consider this issue from a more theoretical perspective. What is an interest group-level investment in parties? Consider the online auction company, eBay. According to CRP, eBay is responsible in 2002 for \$70,000 in contributions to the Republicans and \$30,000 in Democratic soft money. Both totals, however, are the sole result of individual contributions from eBay employees. Are we to believe as a result that the eBay corporation has a Republican preference? Are individual ideologies not distinct from an aggregate philosophy at the company-level? In truth, we never really know, and these concerns are obviously open to considerable debate, but I would argue that we are better served in limiting the analysis to all contributions made in the name of the interest group, as that signals a much more direct intent on the part of the group itself. This is precisely what we do with PAC data.

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<sup>3</sup>There is one additional issue. CRP sometimes totals contributions from subsidiaries into one aggregate total for the parent company. In my cleaning of FEC data, I only grouped contributions by unique company name.

There is one final issue. A virtue of FEC data are that they are free. But one can purchase cleaned FEC data from the CRP. PAC data, for example, costs \$25 per thousand entries. Summary data for soft money costs \$50 per thousand entries. Buying their summary list of top soft money contributors, which contains only the CRP-determined group soft money total (you must buy the raw data separately), would cost someone between \$200 and \$300 (on average, about 1,000 entries for six election cycles). A search of their sample for-sale data, however, indicates that their soft money summaries for interest groups also include contributors who are individuals. Thus, purchasing CRP data over cutting and pasting from their cite does not eliminate the concern noted above.

What are the consequences of including individuals in group-level soft money totals? How many groups are listed in the CRP data but who gave no soft money in the company's name? I explore these questions in the next section.

## 4 FEC/CRP Comparison

I cut and pasted the list of large ( $> \$100,000$ ) interest group soft money contributors from CRP's web site for 1998, 2000, and 2002, and I compared those totals with the cleaned raw FEC data. The first comparison is a scatter plot in Figure 2 of each interest group estimate. I restrict the plot to an xy scale of \$1,000,000, excluding very large donors (I do this for visual ease). I include in each graph a 45 degree line, where if I match CRP perfectly, the plotted point will fall on the line. Any points above the line indicate an underestimate (as compared to CRP), and any points below the line indicate my overestimation.

Since I exclude soft money from individuals in my interest group totals, almost all discrepancies are underestimates. To make this clear, in the Quaker Oats example from above, by excluding the two individual entries (John Wilson and Emily Watson), the Quaker Oats total in my data should be lower, putting the point above the 45 degree line. Some entries are coded as contributing \$0 in my data but considerable soft money in

CRP's list. I expand on that below.

As the plots make clear, there are a considerable number of under-estimates. For example, in 1998, the average discrepancy (excluding groups who are coded as \$0 in my data) is \$41,356. In 2000, it is \$83,332; and in 2002, it is \$95,668. As one example, CRP reports that Koch Industries, in Wichita, Kansas, contributed \$913,359 to Republican non-federal committees in 2002. FEC data only show \$546,794 from Koch Industries directly, with the remainder coming from David Koch, in Wichita.

In some cases I do *overestimate* the CRP total (53 in 1998; 41 in 2000; and 40 in 2002). These are principally explained when I combine contributions from two companies as one. For example, in 2002, I combine contributions from Vulcan Materials with contributions from Vulcan Northwest. A web search indicates that they are two separate companies, indicating an error in my data. As a second example, Rent-a-Center and Rent-a-Car—both located in Plano, Texas—are separate contributors in CRP's list, but are combined in mine. I am unable to confirm which decision is correct.

The overestimates underscore the challenges of coding soft money data into a usable group-level format. The non-standardized approach to recording donors (as compared to FEC PAC codes) forces the researcher to make data cleaning decisions that may introduce non-trivial measurement error. I have attempted to rely mostly on zip code and spelling iterations, but sometimes, as the Vulcan and Rent-a-Center examples make clear, this does not eliminate the problem.

[Figure 2 here]

In Table 3 I report two sets of correlations for each cycle between my data and CRP's data. The correlations in the "reduced" comparison show group totals where both CRP and I have some total above \$0 for the group. In other words, I exclude all groups in CRP's data made up entirely of individual soft money contributions. In the "no exclusions" comparison, I include those groups, but have them coded in my data as giving no soft

money.

As the results demonstrate, the correlations are extremely high, even in the “no exclusions” comparison. For example, in 2000 I correlate with CRP at .804 for all large givers in CRP’s data—with a correlation of .835 for Democratic money and .711 for GOP money. The lowest correlation is in 2002 for the Democratic “no exclusion” comparison, with a correlation of .613. By comparison, my highest correlation is .927 for Republicans in the 2002 “reduced” comparison.

[Table 3 here]

Of course, the biggest concern might be the inclusion of groups into a soft money analysis whose contribution totals are made entirely by individuals. In Table 4 I show a summary of the contribution totals of groups excluded under my conceptualization. In 1998, there are 95 such companies; in 2000 there are 335, and in 2002 there are 204. To underscore the point, if using CRP’s cleaned data, these groups would be included in an analysis of soft money. When using my criteria, they would be excluded.

[Table 4 here]

As the table demonstrates, the average contribution of an “excluded” group in 1998 is \$202,427. In 2000 it is \$233,841, and in 2002, it is \$381,873. The average contribution is highest in 2002 because of the exclusion of some large CRP entries. For example, CRP lists Shangri-La Entertainment as contributing \$6,700,000 to the Democratic Party. The raw data indicate that the entirety of the contribution was made by Stephen Bing, who on some donations lists Shangri-La as his employee, but sometimes lists that he is “Self-Employed.” Propel.com is listed as the source of \$3,288,786 in Democratic soft money in 2002, but Steven Kirsch is the source in the raw data. Not all examples are in the millions. The National Basketball Association is reported in CRP as giving \$300,000 to the Democrats in 2002; but the raw data list Commissioner David Stern as the source. And

Estee Lauder Companies is reported as contributing \$100,000 to the Republican Party in 2002, while the data list Ronald Lauder as the contributor.

All told, reliance on CRP summaries force the researcher to make judgements about the contributing behavior of interest groups that never actually made contributions. And because the summaries are soft money totals, the dollar amounts can be enormous. It behooves the researcher to consider carefully whether these inclusions make theoretical sense.

## 5 Jack Abramoff example

I explored one final FEC/CRP comparison, one involving the Jack Abramoff controversy. CRP's Capital Eye is their online money-in-politics newsletter ([www.capitaleye.org](http://www.capitaleye.org)). In early January 2006 it issued a report on the political contributions of Jack Abramoff and his Indian tribe clients ("Casting off Abramoff"). The report listed all contributions from Abramoff, his associate Michael Scanlon, and client Indian tribes to all party committees, leadership PACs, and members of Congress between 2000-2004. The report lists its data source as the FEC, and given the debate over how much money Abramoff and associates gave to Democrats, I attempted to replicate the report's figures.

I matched 85 party contributions from Abramoff and associates (excluding contributions to leadership PACs and individual members) with two sources: CRP totals from its "Who Gives" tab and FEC data from its Disclosure Data Search page. Because Capital Eye's report is based at the CRP, I expected the correlations to be high (especially when comparing the report's totals with the CRP's own searchable engine).

Unlike the CRP's main search engines, the report does not allow the reader to see the raw data breakdown of each contribution total. So, for example, when the report says that the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians contributed \$25,000 to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and \$33,000 to the National Republican Congressional

Committee in 2004, we do not see the specific dates and amounts of the contributions making up the total.

Of the 85 party contributions, *I could only directly match 21 with FEC data*. CRP did issue a revised report as of May 2006, and changed 16 of the 85 contribution totals, but only 9 of those revised totals resulted in a match with my data. On the other hand, CRP's raw data search engine matched the FEC data with only one exception.

In Figure 3, I show a scatterplot of the report's contribution totals (for all 85 contributions) on FEC totals. Each point is identified as a Democratic or Republican Party contribution. I also include a 45-degree line (again, where perfect matches fall on the line) and a fitted regression line of  $y$  on  $x$ . The figure shows a handful of perfect matches, with most points falling off the line.

For example, the report indicates that the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana contributed \$30,000 to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's non-federal account in 2002; but FEC reports confirm only \$5,000. In addition, the report lists Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians as giving \$143,000 (in hard and soft money) to the National Republican Senatorial Committee in 2002, but the raw FEC data lists only \$93,000. The fitted regression line predicts an over-estimate for smaller contributions. This is because FEC data do not confirm a contribution for some interest groups, or even negative contributions (implying the parties actually refunded money to the contributor).

[Figure 3 here]

The correlation of the Capital Eye's totals and FEC totals is 0.6599, which is quite low for a replication of only 85 contributions. The average Democratic Party contribution is \$17,453 in Capital Eye's report, but only \$5,918 when using FEC data. The average GOP contribution is \$24,026 in the Abramoff report, but only \$14,395 using FEC data. Not only does the report over-estimate the amount of money contributed, it over-estimates the Democratic share of Abramoff's largess.

What explains the disparities? The answer is unclear. Even the report's press release explaining its updated numbers did not outline the source of earlier errors. For journalists, scholars, and political practitioners, the point of this final comparison is to demonstrate the potential challenges in relying on independently cleaned and coded campaign finance data.

## 6 Conclusions

All told, there is good news and bad news. For the good news, I can replicate a lot of the CRP data. Raw data searches using the CRP search engines produce nearly all of the FEC raw data. In addition, FEC interest group totals are highly correlated with CRP-aggregated totals. While my decision to exclude contributions made in the name of individuals may force the group total down, the high correlations indicate that large contributors in either scheme remain large contributors.

This comes with some significant bad news, however. Because I exclude any companies whose CRP-reported totals are made up only of contributions from individuals—which I believe is consistent with how we study PAC contribution behavior—this paper serves as a caution to researchers interested in using CRP's data. Those researchers are forced to rely on a data-cleaning scheme that does not parallel with the way we treat and understand hard money contributions from interest groups; it will, by implication, force researchers—as well as journalists and citizens who rely on CRP totals—to include interest groups who never directly contributed soft money to the Democratic and Republican parties. And this is particularly worrisome, given the number of groups who made no direct soft money contributions.

Overall, this is an important methodological issue, because scholars are only beginning to explore the soft money world. There is considerable scholarship on how much soft money was raised and spent in congressional and presidential campaigns between

1996 and 2002 (Magleby 2001, Magleby 2003, Wayne 1998, LaRaja & Hoffman 2000), but questions at the interest group level remain unanswered. Did the goals of access and replacement travel into the world of soft money? How do we know a replacement soft money contribution when we see it? How do contributors signal an access goal? In addition, were the same determinants of PAC hard money contributions driving interest group soft money donations? To answer these questions, we need both good data and good theory. This paper explores the former.

And it is not an irrelevant question in a post-BCRA world. Inciting the oft-mentioned hydraulic theory of money and politics—albeit with his own twist—Senator Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky), a vocal opponent of campaign finance reform, compared trying to limit money in politics to “putting a rock on jello,” in that “You can squeeze it down, but it just goes in different directions.”<sup>4</sup> In recent years the rise of 527s have compelled scholars to ask questions about the relationship between the soft money era and the 527 era (Weissman & Hassan 2005, Dominguez & Pearson 2005). Data on Section 527 contributions and expenditures are also challenging, however; those data are stored at the IRS, and are arguably more cumbersome to manage and clean.

Not to be lost in the study of interest group electoral behavior is the availability of good data. Scholars have been blessed for the last 25 years with the FEC’s handling of PAC data; and PAC contributions remain highly relevant—the 2004 campaign demonstrated, for example, the way parties responded in a post-soft money world. But to answer questions about soft money, 527s, or even lobbying disclosures, we must pay heed to the challenges of data collection. Many questions can be investigated and answered once such hurdles are overcome.

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<sup>4</sup>“Debate Heated on Campaign Finance,” *The Washington Post*, by Thomas Edsall and Juliet Eilperin, 2/12/2002, p.A4.

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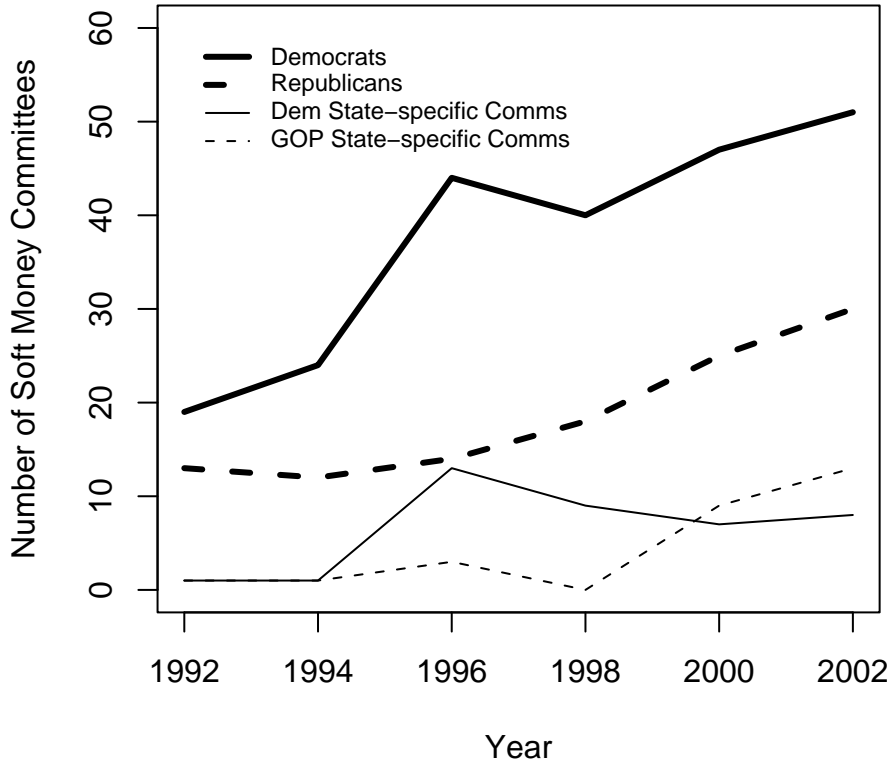
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Table 1: Hypothetical Soft Money Data

<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Employer</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Quaker Oats Co		\$25,000
Quaker Oats Company		\$55,000
Qauker Oats		\$75,000
QuakerOats		\$5,000
Q Oats Company		\$20,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$180,000</b>

Figure 1: Soft Money Committees

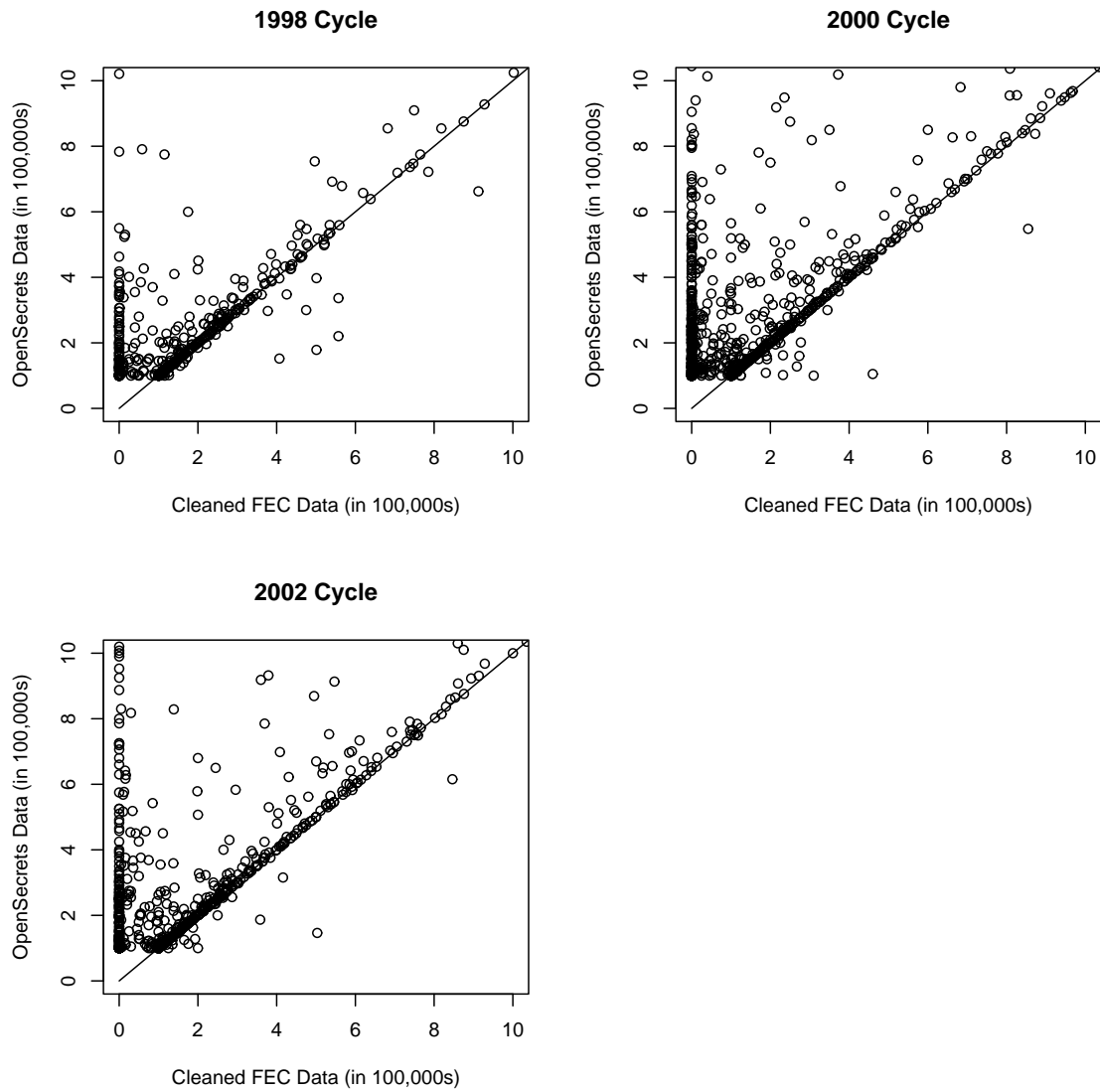


†The lines for “Democrats” and “Republicans” includes the totals for the state-specific trend lines.

Table 2: More Hypothetical Soft Money Data

<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Employer</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Quaker Oats Co		\$25,000
Quaker Oats Company		\$55,000
Qauker Oats		\$75,000
QuakerOats		\$5,000
Q Oats Company		\$20,000
John Wilson	Quaker Oats	\$5,000
Emily Watson	Quaker Oats	\$45,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$230,000</b>

Figure 2: Comparison of Aggregate CRP Totals with FEC totals



†X and Y-axes restricted to \$1 million. Solid line is the 45 degree line

Table 3: Correlation of CRP Data with FEC Data

	1998	2000	2002
<i>Reduced</i>			
Total	.870(354)	.838(640)	.815(514)
Democrat	.907(354)	.895(640)	.788(514)
Republican	.875(354)	.744(640)	.927(514)
<i>No exclusions</i>			
Total	.809(449)	.804(975)	.662(718)
Democrat	.787(449)	.835(975)	.613(718)
Republican	.834(449)	.711(975)	.890(718)

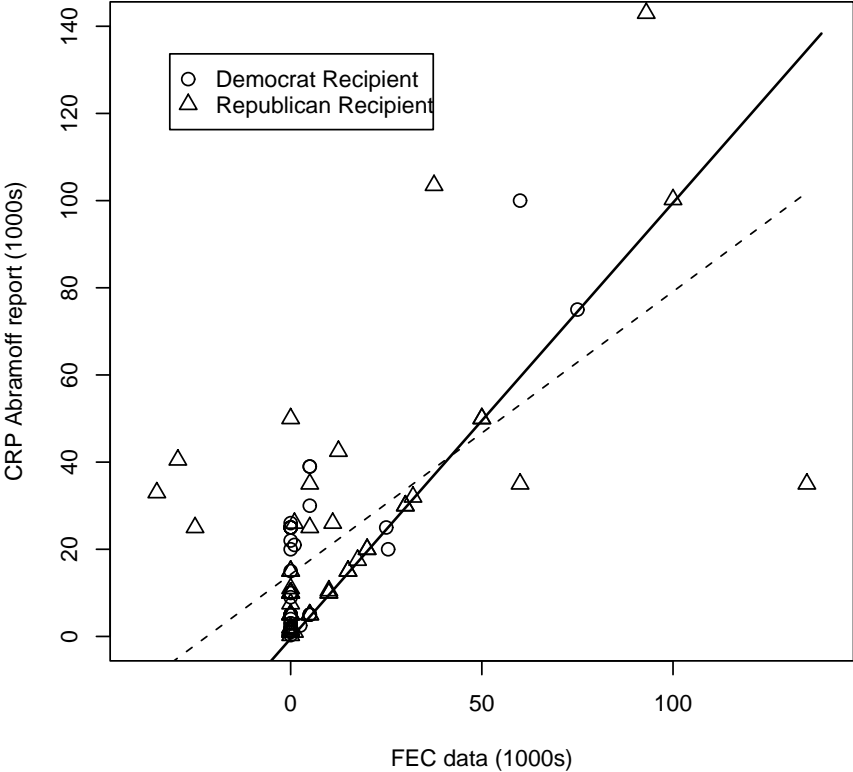
†“Reduced” excludes companies whose totals are comprised solely from individuals. “No exclusions” includes those companies, but lists their totals in FEC data as \$0. Correlations reported are the correlations with FEC data coded independently. N is in parentheses.

Table 4: "Excluded" Groups

	N	Mean	S.D.
<i>1998</i>			
Total	95	\$202,427	142,476
Democrat	95	\$101,206	164,680
Republican	95	\$99,905	104,438
<i>2000</i>			
Total	335	\$233,841	187,340
Democrat	335	\$126,147	199,167
Republican	335	\$105,643	130,922
<i>2002</i>			
Total	204	\$381,873	777,453
Democrat	204	\$257,671	797,692
Republican	204	\$124,202	156,185

†These are interest groups listed in CRP's soft money summary, but whose contribution totals are comprised completely of individuals.

Figure 3: Abramoff Replication



†Solid line is 45-degree line; dashed line is fitted regression line of y on x.