

Presidents, Patronage, and Turkey Farms

Gabriel Horton

David E. Lewis

Abstract

Recent examples of jobs being offered as a reward to wealthy donors or to induce legislative candidates to abandon challenges against incumbents highlights the persistence of patronage in American politics. The proper role and functioning of patronage in U.S. democracy has been a keen source of interest for political scientists and public administration scholars since the founding of these disciplines. Yet, there is very little current research on this topic, partly due to the belief that the era of patronage is over. In this paper we explain how modern presidents handle patronage pressures and how their choices mean that some agencies become “turkey farms”—agencies that house numerous underqualified but politically valuable executives. We use new data on 1,307 persons appointed to positions in the first six months of the Obama Administration to expand our understanding of patronage practices in the modern presidency. We find that President Obama was more likely to place patronage appointees in agencies off the president’s agenda, agencies that shared Obama’s policy views, and agencies where appointees are least able to hurt agency performance. We conclude that patronage continues to play an important role in American politics with important consequences for campaigns, presidential politics, and governance.

Working Paper: 02-2010

Research Concentration: Executive Politics and Regulatory Policymaking

On June 24, 2009, President Obama nominated John V. Roos to be the ambassador to Japan. Roos helped collect over \$500,000 for Obama's 2008 campaign and had donated at least \$77,500 to Democrats since 1992. *Ambassador Roos's political history includes campaign work for four democratic presidential candidates. His résumé lists no foreign policy experience or expertise in Japanese politics or culture.¹ Ambassador Roos is not alone in receiving a political appointment as a reward for electoral support. He is an example of a larger practice whereby both Democratic and Republican presidents distribute jobs to repay campaign work and donations, seek interest group backing, or build congressional and party support (Hecló 1977; Lewis 2008; Mackenzie 1981; Newland 1987; Pfiffner 1996).²

The proper role and functioning of patronage in U.S. democracy has been a keen source of interest for political scientists and public administration scholars since the founding of these disciplines (see, e.g., Fish 1902; Friedrich 1937; Kaufman 1965; Van Riper 1958; White 1948, 1954; Wilson 1887). The president's involvement with patronage historically has had important consequences for political parties, presidential control of the bureaucracy, and government performance. Despite the subject's historical prominence in political science and importance, there is very little current research on the topic, partly due to the belief that the era of patronage is over (Bearfield 2009; Price 1944; Sorauf 1960). Yet, recent episodes involving job offers to Senate candidates Joseph Sestak and Andrew Romanoff, publicity surrounding Obama ambassadorial appointments, and recent research on the White House Personnel Office suggest otherwise (Lewis 2008; Patterson and Pfiffner 2001; Pfiffner 1996; Weko 1995).³

In this paper we use new data on 1,307 persons appointed to positions in the first six months of the Obama Administration to expand our understanding of patronage practices in the modern presidency. We use appointee biographical data to determine which agencies receive appointees with fewer qualifications and more extensive campaign experience or political

connections. We find that President Obama was more likely to place patronage appointees in agencies off the president's agenda, agencies that shared Obama's policy views, and agencies where appointees are least able to visibly hurt agency performance. We conclude that patronage continues to play an important role in American politics with important consequences for campaigns, presidential politics, and governance.

Researching Presidents and Patronage Appointments

While originally the source of significant academic interest in political science, few studies have directly engaged this topic in the last 50 years. Indeed, by 1960 Frank Sorauf would write, "Very few studies exist of the actual operation of patronage systems across the country...In the absence of specific reports and data, one can only proceed uneasily on a mixture of political folklore, scattered scholarship, professional consensus, and personal judgment." (28) In the 40 years since Sorauf wrote, presidents have augmented their White House personnel operation, focused more on the selection of appointees for loyalty, and increased the number and extent of White House control over appointments throughout the executive branch. In turn, scholars have attentively tracked these important developments (see, e.g., Edwards 2001; Moe 1985; Nathan 1975; Pfiffner 1996; Weko 1995). While scholars have carefully detailed the multiple factors influencing appointments and described how the personnel process handles patronage requests (Hecl 1977; Pfiffner 1996; Weko 1995), systematic evaluations of modern patronage practices in the federal government are rare (Bearfield 2009).

The most recent literature, where it addresses patronage, argues that the White House personnel process is better characterized as two processes rather than one (Lewis 2008; Pfiffner 1996; Weko 1995). The first process involves filling a number of key positions that are essential to the accomplishment of the presidents' electoral and policy making goals. The second process involves finding jobs for thousands of job-seekers in the new administration. Different factors

explain how presidents fill key positions and how they handle patronage demands. While presidents would prefer that all appointees be loyal, competent, and satisfy key political considerations, the pool of available appointees rarely satisfies all three considerations and presidents must make tradeoffs. Parsneau (2007), for example, shows that loyalty plays a more important role and expertise less of an important role in appointments to agencies on the president's agenda. Lewis (2009) argues that presidents put the best qualified appointees into agencies that *do not* share the president's policy views in order to more effectively get control of them. He argues that patronage appointees seek jobs and get placed into agencies that *do* share the president's views about policy (Lewis 2008, 2009).

The difficulty with much of the recent work on patronage is that it rarely relies on actual data about the background and experience of appointees themselves. Lewis (2008), for example, looks at different types of appointees (i.e., Senate-confirmed, Senior Executive Service, Schedule C) and assumes that some are more likely to be patronage appointees than others. When studies do look at actual background data, the samples are too restrictive for meaningful comparisons across types of appointees or multiple departments and agencies. A significant amount of work has surveyed political appointees about their backgrounds and qualifications but the small samples in these surveys make comparisons across agencies or levels difficult (Aberbach and Rockman 2000; Maranto 2005; Maranto and Hult 2004). Parsneau (2007) evaluates the tradeoff between loyalty and expertise for one type of appointee (Senate-confirmed) but excludes other types of appointees central to the patronage process (appointees in the Senior Executive Service, Schedule C).

In total, a small but growing literature references patronage in the modern presidency but these studies have rarely sought to explain patronage directly. Empirical examinations of appointment politics rarely rely on actual appointee data in large enough samples to explain

variation across agencies or levels of appointment. Yet, discovering how presidents handle requests for jobs and discovering where patronage appointees cluster has important implications for presidential politics and government performance as recent examples in the Department of Justice and the Federal Emergency Management Agency suggest.⁴

Which Agencies Does the White House Target for Patronage?

Many presidents have noted with dissatisfaction the tremendous burden placed upon them by job-seekers. The Obama Administration received over 500,000 resumes on their transition website for about 4,000 jobs (Alter 2010). Applicants for government jobs are frequently not suited by expertise, experience, background, or temperament for an appointed position in the administration. Yet, many have a strong claim for a job through work on the campaign, fundraising activities, personal connections to the Obama family, or key political connections. Presidents face the difficulty of finding appointees with the requisite competence, while also rewarding some job-seekers with positions even though these applicants lack the required credentials.

Personnel to Drive Policy Change

Presidents respond to this challenge by first selecting the best qualified people for the key positions they have identified as central to their agenda and success. Each president prioritizes some positions over others. President Kennedy's transition team tried to identify the "pressure points" in government (Mann 1964). President Reagan's personnel operation prioritized the "key 87" positions necessary to his economic policy (Lewis 2008, 28). Presidents need appointees to these positions to both have views compatible with the president and be able to run a large government organization. Appointees need the public management skills necessary to translate presidential mandates into outputs. These positions, because of their visibility and centrality to the success of the president's agenda, are filled carefully, often with much involvement from the

president and his senior staff. As one personnel official explained, “This is not a beauty contest. The goal is to pick the person who has the greatest chance of accomplishing what the principal wants done...”⁵

Presidents also must pay close attention to agencies that are not inclined to follow their directions because of differences in ideology or policy. Agencies vary in their views about policy and their willingness to follow presidential direction. Some agencies are liberal by mission and these agencies naturally attract and retain civil servants who believe in the work that agencies are doing. Other agencies are conservative by mission and tend to attract like-minded employees. For example, liberals and Democrats are more likely to self-select into social welfare and regulatory agencies and conservatives and Republicans are more likely to work in the military services or intelligence agencies (Aberbach and Rockman 1976; Aberbach and Rockman 2000; Maranto and Hult 2004). Where an agency’s main policy goals need to be changed because they are at variance with the president’s goals, presidents select appointees with a similar ideology or loyalty *and* substantial political and managerial skill. As one former Reagan Administration official explained this method of change-management, “We did give more emphasis to those agencies [social welfare agencies] because we expected more bureaucratic resistance from them as a natural result of our agenda... We did not target [agencies concerned with] defense since we knew their bureaucrac[ies] would like what we were doing.”⁶ Given the importance of these positions to the success of the president’s agenda, concerns for competence play a more central role in this part of the personnel process than in the part organized around finding jobs for the president’s political supporters.

Satisfying Patronage Demands

Presidents largely place patronage appointments into the positions that remain, in agencies off the agenda and agencies whose views are similar to those of the president.

Presidents naturally prioritize some agencies because they care more about the policies these agencies implement. Given the premium presidents place on success in these cases, presidents are more likely to select appointees based upon loyalty and demonstrated competence rather than as a reward for political or electoral support.⁷ In the case of agencies off the president's agenda, however, presidents are freer to use agency positions to reward political support or as a form of political exchange.

H1. Presidents are more likely to place appointees selected for patronage reasons in agencies off the president's agenda.

Agencies that attract patronage appointees will often implement the president's agenda without much direction from the White House. Just as some agencies require special presidential attention because they do not share the president's views about policy, other agencies are predisposed to do what the president wants because they share the president's views. When an agency's management team is comprised of experienced career professionals with the "right" views, the agency can operate well even without competent appointee leadership. From the president's perspective, this makes agencies that share the president's policy views ideal places to put less qualified appointees.

This arrangement also works well for job-seekers from the campaign, congressional offices, or the president's party. Job-seekers in a new administration aspire to and are best qualified for jobs in agencies that will advance their career prospects in and around their political party. These jobs tend to be located in agencies that share the president's views about policy (Lewis 2008). Each party has long standing relationships with certain firms, organizations (e.g., labor unions, chamber of commerce, National Rifle Association), and officials based upon work in areas central to the core policy commitments of the party.⁸ Work in some agencies can advance an appointee's career within this constellation of groups more than others, causing

appointees to prefer jobs in certain agencies. One Republican personnel official explained, “Most people [Republicans] do not see Labor in their long term future... You are not going to be able to make a living from that pattern of relationships.”⁹ This implies that conservatives are more likely to prefer jobs in agencies such as those involved in national security, trade, or business. Following suit, liberals are more likely to prefer jobs in traditionally liberal agencies such as social welfare and regulatory agencies.¹⁰ The foregoing discussion suggests the following expectation about patronage appointments:

H2. Presidents are more likely to place appointees selected for patronage reasons in agencies that share the president’s policy views.

Of course, some agencies like the Department of Commerce, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Small Business Administration gain reputations as “turkey farms” across Republican and Democratic Administrations. Features other than their presence on or off the agenda or their ideological leanings explain why they regularly house patronage appointees. The main factor involves whether an agency can house patronage appointees without any visible influence on performance or if it is very sensitive to the skills and qualifications of appointees. In his 1829 inaugural address Andrew Jackson justified the “democratization” of the civil service on the grounds that government work was so simple that any reasonably competent layperson could do it (White 1954, 318). Today, however, the work of government agencies varies from the mundane to the incredibly complex. In agencies where work is simple and straightforward, appointees can manage and conduct it without much harm to performance. In agencies where work is technical or complex, however, skilled appointees are essential and their absence can dramatically influence agency performance. Performance considerations should constrain the patronage choice and lead to the following expectation:

H3. Presidents are more likely to place appointees selected for patronage reasons in agencies performing non-technical tasks.

In total, these three expectations result in clear predictions about the way that President Obama should staff his administration. He should place less qualified but better connected appointees in agencies off the agenda, in liberal agencies, and in agencies with less complex tasks.

Data, Variables, and Methods

To evaluate these claims, we use a new dataset of Obama Administration appointees as of July 22, 2009, or six months into the new administration. Along with the names, titles, and appointment information for each appointee, we collected biographical information from a variety of sources, namely the *Federal Leadership Directory*, *Washington Post's* Head Count and WhoRunsGov.com websites, and the White House website.¹¹ In total there were 1,307 appointees named after six months. There were 370 Senate-confirmed appointees (PAS), 380 non-career assignments in the Senior Executive Service (NA), and 557 schedule C appointees (SC).¹²

Measures of Competence and Connections

We use appointee background information to measure various dimensions of appointee competence and political connections.¹³ To measure variation in appointee competence we coded each appointee according to the following characteristics¹⁴: education level (0-HS, 1-Bachelors, 2-Masters level, 3-MD or DDS, 4-doctorate)¹⁵, whether the appointee was an appointee in the Bush or Clinton administrations (0,1; 17.60%), previous experience in the agency to which they were appointed (0,1; 26.70%), subject area expertise deriving from work outside the agency to which they have been appointed (0,1; 35.88%)¹⁶, previous federal government experience (0,1; 40.86%), and previous public management experience (0,1; 22.95%). Notable among the

features of this set of early appointees is the high number of appointees with previous federal government experience of some type.

To measure political factors in an appointee's background that are related to patronage we coded each appointee on the following characteristics: work on the campaign or transition (0,1; 14.23%), whether the appointee was a major donor (0,1; 2.60%), whether the appointee had a previous personal connection to the Obamas (0,1; 1.45%), and whether the appointee's most recent previous job was in politics (0,1; 27.88%) as compared to work in another sector such as industry, academia, law, etc. Notable among the descriptive statistics here is that 14 percent (186 members) of the appointees who received appointments in the first six months of the new administration worked on the campaign or transition. Interestingly, of the close to 1,300 appointees 28 percent were drawn most immediately from jobs in politics as compared to 34 percent whose last job was in government or the military, 10 percent whose last job was in academia or a think tank, and 13 percent whose last job was in industry.

Some caution should be given to the interpretation of the absolute levels of competence or connections, however, because of potentially incomplete data. Basic information on some appointees, such as education and career history, has not been recorded by our sources, though the highest level positions (PAS) contain very few such instances.¹⁷ The reason for these lapses varies among individual cases. Either our sources are missing information or some appointees actually have had no notable career history. By cross-referencing PAS appointees whose biographical information was available elsewhere, we can tell that the *Federal Leadership Directories Online*, which provided the sole information on NA and SC appointees, contains insufficient information in some cases. For instance, the White House website indicates that Jim Esquea, an appointee in the Department of Health and Human Services, worked as an analyst for the Senate Budget Committee, yet Federal Leadership Directories Online does not list this in his

career history. In other cases, career histories may be complete, but degree information is lacking. While acknowledging the problems with the data, we assume that flaws in the biographical information are more or less random within level of appointee (i.e., PAS, NA, SC), and missing information should be missing uniformly across all agencies. We also note that our coding does not show if an appointee lacks a given criteria; it only indicates positive fulfillment of the criteria.¹⁸

Key Independent Variables

One of the key expectations from the discussion above was that agencies on the president's agenda should be less likely to attract patronage type appointees. In order to determine which agencies are important to achieving President Obama's policy goals, we rely on the president's first televised speech before Congress.¹⁹ We coded all agencies that are responsible for a policy or issue raised in the speech with a 1 and all other agencies with a 0 (0,1; 51.49% of cases).²⁰ For instance, President Obama states that "our survival depends on finding new sources of energy."²¹ This means that the Department of Energy and relevant bureaus within DOE (in this case the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy) are included in the list of agenda agencies. Some agencies coded as being on the agenda were those involved in the economic crisis (Treasury, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, etc.), the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (Defense, military services), and education reform (Education). Some of the larger agencies that did not have programs mentioned in the State of the Union include the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Interior, and Transportation and other agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Small Business Administration.

In Table 1 we summarize appointee background characteristics by whether or not the agency is responsible for an issue on the president's agenda. The data in the table reveal that

agencies on the president's agenda had appointees with more demonstrated competence than agencies that were not on the president's agenda. Specifically, the management teams in these agencies were comprised of a higher proportion of appointees from previous administrations and appointees with more government and management experience across the board. The table also includes information on the patronage aspects of appointee backgrounds. Appointees who worked on the campaign or came from political jobs prior to their work in the administration were less likely to work in agencies managing a key issue area for the president. Agencies on the president's agenda were slightly more likely to attract appointees who were major donors or who had a personal connection to the president. However, there are few cases to draw from in either category. While not entirely consistent across the board, together this evidence suggests that less qualified-patronage-type appointees are placed where they can do the least harm to the president's agenda.

[Insert Table 1 here.]

A second key expectation was that the ideological predisposition of the agency would influence whether or not the agency attracted patronage appointees. To measure the ideology of agencies we code agencies as liberal (0,1; 19.20%), moderate (0,1; 32.21%), or conservative (0,1; 48.81%) using agency preference estimates created by Clinton and Lewis (2008).²² Some prominent liberal agencies include the Departments of Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Labor. Prominent conservative agencies include Treasury and Defense and notable moderate agencies include the departments of Agriculture and State.

[Insert Table 2 here.]

Table 2 includes measures of appointee competence and political experience broken down by agency ideology with significant differences between moderate or conservative agencies and liberal agencies denoted by asterisks. Liberal agencies are significantly less likely

to have appointees who served in earlier administrations and their appointees have lower average levels of education. Appointees in liberal agencies are also less likely to have agency, federal government, or public management experience. There are no competence characteristics on which appointees in liberal agencies have an advantage over both moderate and conservative agencies. By contrast, liberal agencies were more likely to house persons whose last job was in politics, had a personal connection to the president, or who worked on a campaign or transition. Major donors, however, were significantly more likely to work in moderate or conservative agencies. On their face, these simple descriptive statistics generally confirm expectations discussed above about what agencies attract presidential patronage.²³

Of course, the president's personnel choices vary across agencies depending upon a number of factors including the technical complexity of agency tasks. To measure the complexity of agency tasks, we use the percentage of an agency's employees that are scientists, engineers, architects, mathematicians, and statisticians (mean 0.09; SD 0.15, min 0, max 0.83).²⁴ Our assumption is that the proportion of such employees is a measure of agency task complexity and our expectation is that agencies with a higher proportion of such employees attract appointees with more qualifications and fewer connections to the campaign or politics.²⁵ Agencies that have high proportions of such employees include the Department of Energy (0.27), the Environmental Protection Agency (0.40), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (0.65) while those that have low proportions include the Department of Education (0.00), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (0.01) and the Department of Homeland Security (0.03).

Controls and Methods

We control for a number of other agency characteristics including the natural log of agency employment and whether the agency is located in the Executive Office of the President

(0,1;), the cabinet (0,1;), or a commission (0,1;) to capture generic differences in agencies such as agency importance or structure that influence the politics of appointments.²⁶ Since the data are ordinal, we estimate a series of bivariate or ordered logit models of appointee characteristics based upon the characteristics of different agencies.²⁷ The data are arguably not independent because some of the 1,307 appointees are placed into the same agencies and because they are placed into one of three types of appointed positions (PAS, NA, SC).²⁸ As such, we report robust standard errors.

Results

Model estimates, with some exceptions, generally confirm what emerged in simple difference in mean values reported in Tables 1 and 2. Agencies that are not on the president's agenda, liberal agencies, and agencies with low proportions of technical employees tend to attract appointees with fewer qualifications and greater evidence of political connections. Collectively, these results provide evidence of systematic patterns of presidential patronage even in these early stages of the Obama Administration. They help us understand more fully why some administrative agencies become turkey farms in different administrations.

Appointee Competence

To which agencies has Obama appointed more and less qualified appointees? One answer that emerges from estimates in Table 3 is that appointees who work in agencies implementing policies on the president's agenda look different from appointees in other agencies. Agencies responsible for policies on the president's agenda are more likely to have appointees with background characteristics we reasonably associate with competence. The coefficients on the variable for whether or not the agency implements a program mentioned in the president's State of the Union were all positive, indicating that a mention in the State of the Union is positively correlated with an appointee's competence. These coefficients were

significant at the 0.05 level in four of the six models. Substantively, appointees in agencies on the president's agenda were 12-15 percentage points more likely to have agency or federal government experience and they were 6-8 percentage points more likely to have been an appointee in a previous administration or have a master's level degree such as an MBA or a JD.²⁹ Of course, we cannot disentangle whether appointees with these background characteristics are truly more competent or simply credentialed but it is noteworthy that appointees with more background experience and education are more likely to work in agencies on the president's agenda.

[Insert Table 3 here.]

These results add credence to the argument that presidents need appointees who not only support their initiatives but also have the skills to push for and execute new policies. Competent appointees are necessary to spearhead important presidential priorities. While this practice is understandable from the perspective of presidents, the results are troubling for agencies off the president's agenda and particularly troubling for agencies such as FEMA that spend long periods off the president's agenda.

A second feature which influences the qualifications of appointees is the ideological character of the agency and its work.³⁰ Appointees in liberal agencies are significantly less likely to have the background characteristics listed in Table 3. The coefficient on the liberal agency indicator is negative. It is significant at the 0.10 or 0.05 level in three of the six models and close in a fourth. Substantively, appointees in liberal agencies are estimated to be 12-19 percentage points less likely to have agency or federal government experience prior to their appointment. They are 5 to 6 percentage points less likely to have been an appointee in either the Bush or Clinton Administration. This is a large amount given that only 17.6% of appointees in the Obama Administration had served before. Appointees in liberal agencies were also 8 percentage

points less likely to have a master's degree level education. In the first six months, the Obama Administration put the most competent appointees in moderate or conservative agencies. This seems to confirm that when the president confronts an agency that has policy views different from his own, he not only needs an appointee with the "right" views but an appointee that is competent enough to bring change to such an agency. In liberal agencies, however, career professionals are less likely to resist the direction of the Obama administration, making the management task easier and the competence of appointee management less crucial to the president's policy goals. Liberal agencies are also attractive places to put patronage appointees since many aspiring Democratic appointees see work in a liberal agency as a means of enhancing their future career prospects within the party or constellation of groups around the party. These findings are consistent with other work showing that presidents increase the number of patronage-type appointees in agencies that share their views about policy (Lewis 2008).

The estimates in Table 3 provide some evidence that presidents appoint more competent appointees to agencies with the highest proportion of technical employees (scientists, engineers, mathematicians, etc.). The coefficients are all positive, indicating that the higher the proportion of technical employees, the greater the probability that an appointee has one of the background features listed. Only two of the coefficients are significant at the 0.05 level, however. Substantively, they indicate that the average agency with workforces comprised of 9-10 percent technical employees will be 4-6 percentage points less likely to have an appointee with previous agency experience or public management experience than an appointee in an agency with 30 to 40 percent technical employees (e.g., Federal Highway Administration, Environmental Protection Agency). This provides some evidence that appointees with higher skill levels are necessary to manage agencies with complex tasks. Whether or not an appointee is well qualified

arguably can have a much greater impact on performance in agencies such as these than other agencies where the work of the agency is more straightforward.

A few other interesting results emerge from the estimates. Where there was a relationship between the size of the agency and appointee competence it was positive, indicating that appointees with stronger backgrounds are appointed to larger agencies. Appointees were estimated to be significantly more likely to have previous agency experience and subject area expertise in larger agencies. This suggests that presidents are more concerned about getting competent persons into the larger, more important agencies in government. There were also differences among agencies in the Executive Office of the President, the Cabinet, commissions, and other independent agencies (base category). Specifically, appointees in cabinet agencies were significantly less likely to have previous agency or government experience. They were also significantly less likely to have been an appointee in a previous administration or come to their appointment with other subject area expertise. Appointees to commissions were significantly less likely to have had previous public management experience.

Campaign Experience and Connections

The qualification of appointees is only one side of the turkey farms and patronage story. Appointees selected with less competence are selected for another reason, namely campaign experience or connections. Table 4 includes estimates from models of appointee campaign/transition experience and whether the appointee's last job was in politics. We do not report models of whether or not appointees were major donors or have a personal connection because of the paucity of cases (34 major donors and 17 personal connections). Instead we present the raw data in Table 5 and discuss it qualitatively below.

[Insert Table 4 here.]

The results in Table 4 are generally consistent with our expectations about patronage appointees and turkey farms. Appointees who worked on the campaign or transition and those appointees drawn from the political sphere are significantly more likely to work in agencies that implement policies omitted from the president's agenda and liberal agencies. The coefficients on these variables are in the expected direction and significant at or below the 0.10 level.

Appointees who work in moderate or conservative agencies or agencies on the president's agenda are 5 to 8 percentage points less likely to have worked on the campaign or transition, respectively. Agencies that implement policies on the president's agenda or moderate or conservative agencies are 11 to 13 percentage points less likely to get appointees whose last job was in politics, such as work on a congressional staff or electoral campaign. Together, when these results are combined with the results from above, suggest that appointees with the fewest qualifications and greatest connection to the campaign or politics are most likely to work in agencies off the president's agenda and liberal agencies, all else equal.

[Insert Table 5 here.]

The results for appointees who are major donors or who have personal connections to the President are less clear, however. Table 5 lists the number of appointees who were major donors (i.e., bundlers) alongside the number of appointees with prior personal connections to President Obama. On its face, the pattern of major donor appointments does not mesh with our expectations about patronage and appointments to agencies on the agenda, liberal agencies, and agencies with complex tasks. The agency with the most major donors is the State Department (15) with almost half of all the major donors appointed in the first six months. All of these appointments were to ambassadorial positions. The State Department is coded as moderate in our data and it is considered on the president's agenda given its role in important foreign policy decisions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and North Korea. Yet, the ambassadors selected are unlikely to

play a key role in any of those key issues. While Roos arguably had some claim to a role North Korean diplomacy, his portfolio has already been parsed out to other diplomatic actors including former president, Bill Clinton. In general terms it appears that major donors have been appointed to positions where they are likely to do the least damage, as expected.

Other agencies with a noticeable number of major donors were the Departments of Commerce and Justice as well as the Executive Office of the President. The former is a common resting place for major donors as President George W. Bush's appointments of Don Evans and Carlos Gutierrez suggest. More generally, however, Commerce and Justice contain positions that are well paid in the private sector—business, economics, law. It is not terribly surprising that a wealthy businessperson or lawyer would be rewarded with a job in a subject area in which he or she had experience. Major donors often do not look like other patronage-type appointees since the process of making large sums of money often involves a more extensive career history and training than for a typical campaign worker. The raw biographical information confirms that each of the eight major donor appointees in the Department of Justice, such as Attorney General Eric Holder, is among the most qualified appointees in either department.

The appointment patterns of those with personal connections to President Obama look more like what we expected. The three agencies with the largest number of appointees with prior connections to Obama include Education (5), Health and Human Services (3), and Agriculture (2). There is a liberal bent to these appointments. That said, both Education and Health and Human Services are on the president's agenda and some of the agencies include high percentages of technical employees. One explanation for this given that there are only 17 cases and these are the first of the people with connections to Obama appointed. It is possible that these appointees who defy our expectations are justifiably qualified, if only by chance. This being the case, these few personnel decisions might have been guided less by the "do no harm" policy and more by a

policy of placing appointees where their experience makes them the best fit. For example, Margaret Hamburg, the appointed Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration in the Department of Health and Human Services (an agenda agency) who also happens to be on the board of trustees at the Obama children's Chicago school, is entirely qualified: she has an M.D. from Harvard University, experience as the New York City Health Commissioner and was Assistant Secretary in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services during the Clinton Administration. A similar argument could be made for Arne Duncan, a close friend of the president who has had over ten years of experience in the Chicago Public School System and now serves as Secretary of the Department of Education, an agency that is central to carrying out the president's agenda.

Together, the results from the donor and personal connections information are inconsistent with many of our expectations, if only because there are too few instances of each to draw legitimate conclusions. At best, these numbers illustrate precisely how complicated patronage is as an issue, and it may very well be that the rules governing the patronage assignments of donors and those with personal connections are different from the rules for campaign workers or Democratic Party loyalists. For instance, we could interpret these results as evidence that donors and people with personal connections to Obama are placed into comfortable positions (like ambassadorships) or places of their own choosing, rather than in positions where they can do the least harm (liberal agencies and agencies off of the agenda). Plainly, more detailed research is needed to fully understand these results.

In total, however, the results show an overall pattern where appointees with fewer qualifications and more campaign and political experience tend to cluster in certain types of agencies in a predictable pattern. Features such as whether the agency implements an issue on the president's agenda, the ideological disposition of the agency, and the complexity of agency

tasks help explain some of the variance in the types of appointees named but clearly not all of the variance.

Discussion

The findings from our data, with some notable exceptions, support the prediction that the patterns of patronage appointments vary predictably across agencies in the federal government. We found that agencies off the president's agenda and liberal agencies have a greater likelihood of attracting appointees with less competence and more political connections during the first six months of the Obama Administration. Similarly, appointees in the least technical agencies have generally less agency and public management experience. These results suggest that presidents aim to place patronage appointees into agencies where they will do the least damage both to government performance and to the president's own policy goals.

Several implications emerge from this analysis. First, there is still significant variance in patronage appointment politics that remains to be explained. For example, patronage patterns may vary depending upon what interest is to be satisfied. Some senior officials such as Secretary of State Clinton bring subordinate appointees with them. Other appointees get positions because of roles on key congressional committees and relationships with influential members of Congress (Rottinghaus and Bergan 2010). Some positions seem to have their own logic of appointment. For example, positions like the aforementioned ambassadorships may be an example. We know that ambassadorships historically have been and will continue to be prime positions for rewarding large donors, regardless of the ideology of the current president or the State Department's importance to his or her agenda. Similarly appointments to US attorney positions are subject to their own rules.

Second, taking a step back, the findings illustrate the broader significance of patronage's role in personnel decisions even at this early stage in the administration. While one might expect

that presidents save patronage considerations for much later in the process, we find significant patterns already emerging after only six months of President Obama's administration. Patronage arguably plays a larger role in personnel decisions than is widely believed. Appointments not only are driven by concerns for loyalty and competence but also political factors.

This raises the general issue of whether or not these findings are generalizable to other parts of the president's term and other modern presidents. Since this data includes only information on appointees in the first six months of the Obama Administration, 1,307 appointees, it is possible that the findings here are time-bound. While this is possible, the results presented here are consistent with related past research from other presidencies and years within presidential terms. For example, Lewis (2008) reports that presidents increase schedule C appointees in agencies that share their views on policy and that perform less complex tasks. Clearly, however, more research needs to be conducted on the background of appointee teams across presidential administrations (Krause and O'Connell 2010). This research helps build a case for the importance of that work.

Third, these findings highlight the importance of research on the relationship between patronage and government performance. When a president chooses personnel based on their political connectedness rather than their qualifications, we have reason to question this practice's impact on the effectiveness of government. The effects of patronage can influence agency management and the performance of the presidency itself. As one political consultant recalls, President Clinton once complained when faced with internal conflict in the White House over balancing the federal budget, "I spent all my time before I took office choosing my Cabinet... But I didn't spend the time I should have choosing my staff. I just reached out and took the people who had helped me get elected and put them on the staff. It was a mistake."³¹ Where this paper can only assess the extent of patronage, more work must be done to evaluate its consequences.

Conclusion

It is unclear how well John Roos will perform in his new role as ambassador. He has no diplomatic experience and was little known to U.S. or Japanese officials prior to his selection. By all accounts, however, he is an accomplished lawyer and he enjoys strong personal ties to the president. He was chosen over former Harvard Dean and Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph Nye.³² Ambassadorial appointments such as Roos often have deputies who are career foreign service officers to help them avoid missteps. In other agencies, however, appointees are not so fortunate. They are surrounded by other appointees selected for campaign experience or connections more than policy expertise or public management experience.

It was precisely concerns about patronage appointees that led to the creation of the civil service system in the United States. Yet, patronage persists. Presidents have refused to reduce the number of appointees, fill a higher proportion of ambassadorial positions with career foreign service officers, or generally limit their prospects for patronage. Presidents are hesitant to give up this important source of political capital. The careful distribution of government jobs can induce work for the president or party, mollify key interests, and help hold coalitions together. Reducing the president's supply of patronage through a reduction in the number of appointees or by attaching qualification requirements to appointed positions would remove a valuable resource from the president's political arsenal and thereby imperil the president's ability to accomplish the purposes for which they were elected. The debate over presidential patronage, like the debate over the spoils system, highlights the uncomfortable role of bureaucracy in a democracy and the tension between a desire for presidential accountability and administrative performance.

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Table 1. Agency Appointee Characteristics by Mention in State of the Union

Appointee Characteristics	On Agenda	Not on Agenda
<i>Competence</i>		
Education (0-4)	1.23**	1.09
Worked in Clinton or Bush Administration (0,1)	0.19*	0.15
Agency Experience (0,1)	0.29*	0.25
Subject Expertise (outside of government) (0,1)	0.38*	0.33
Federal Government Experience (0,1)	0.43*	0.38
Public Management Experience (0,1)	0.23	0.22
<i>Campaign Experience or Connections</i>		
Campaign or Transition Experience (0,1)	0.13	0.15
Major Donor (0,1)	0.03*	0.02
Personal Connection (0,1)	0.02	0.01
Last Job was in Politics (0,1)	0.25**	0.31

Note: N=1305 (673 work in agencies on the president's agenda). * difference in means is significant at the 0.10 level (two-tailed tests); ** difference of means significant at the 0.05 level. Education: 0-High School, 1-Bachelors, 2-Master's Level, 3-MD or DDS, 4-Doctorate.

Table 2. Agency Appointee Characteristics by Ideology of Agency

Appointee Characteristics	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
<i>Competence</i>			
Education (0-4)	0.98	1.24**	1.19**
Worked in Clinton or Bush Administration (0,1)	0.13	0.20**	0.16
Agency Experience (0,1)	0.17	0.31**	0.28**
Subject Expertise (outside government) (0,1)	0.34	0.33	0.38
Federal Government Experience (0,1)	0.27	0.45**	0.44**
Public Management Experience (0,1)	0.21	0.31**	0.19
<i>Campaign Experience or Connections</i>			
Campaign or Transition Experience (0,1)	0.16	0.14	0.14
Major Donor (0,1)	0.01	0.04**	0.02
Personal Connection (0,1)	0.04	0.01*	0.01**
Last Job in Politics (0,1)	0.36	0.25**	0.27**

Note: N=1307 (248 in liberal agencies, 421 in moderate agencies, and 638 in conservative agencies). * significantly different than liberal agency mean at the 0.10 level (two-tailed test); ** significantly different than liberal agency mean at the 0.05 level (two-tailed test). No difference in means between moderate and conservative agencies is statistically distinguishable at the 0.05 level except public management experience. Education: 0-High School, 1-Bachelors, 2-Master's Level, 3-MD or DDS, 4-Doctorate.

Table 3. Models of Appointee Backgrounds by Agency Characteristics

<i>Agency Characteristics</i>	<i>Appointee Background</i>					
	Previous Agency Experience	Previous Federal Government Experience	Worked in Clinton Admin.	Subject Area Expertise Outside Agency	Public Management Experience	Education Level
<i>Key Variables</i>						
Agency Policy Mentioned in President's Speech (0,1)	0.61** (0.17)	0.65** (0.15)	0.44** (0.19)	0.24 (0.15)	0.04 (0.18)	0.36** (0.13)
Liberal Agency (0,1)	-0.68** (0.21)	-0.83** (0.18)	-0.33 (0.25)	0.08 (0.18)	-0.08 (0.22)	-0.44** (0.17)
% Technical Employees	1.09** (0.48)	0.60 (0.45)	0.12 (0.57)	0.32 (0.45)	1.28** (0.47)	0.38 (0.44)
<i>Controls, Cut Points and Constant</i>						
Ln (Agency Employment)	0.06* (0.03)	0.05 (0.03)	0.04 (0.04)	0.10** (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)
Executive Office of the President (0,1)	-0.36 (1.14)	-0.19 (0.93)	0.03 (1.14)	-0.77 (1.13)	0.07 (1.14)	-0.10 (0.68)
Cabinet Agency (0,1)	-0.59** (0.23)	-0.71** (0.21)	-0.56** (0.26)	-0.51** (0.21)	0.28 (0.24)	-0.21 (0.18)
Commission (0,1)	0.34 (0.27)	0.25 (0.26)	-0.89** (0.38)	-0.29 (0.26)	-0.74** (0.36)	0.16 (0.23)
Constant	-1.39** (0.30)	-0.50* (0.28)	-1.66** (0.35)	-1.23** (0.30)	-1.42** (0.32)	--
N	1292	1292	1292	1292	1292	1292
Number of Appointees w/Characteristic	349	534	220	469	300	--
χ^2 (6 df)	44.42**	58.41**	15.04**	23.91**	23.64**	19.03**

Note: Models estimate probability that an appointee has a specific background characteristic by characteristics of the agency. * significant at the 0.10 level; ** significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed tests). Education: 0-High School, 1-Bachelors, 2-Master's Level, 3-MD or DDS, 4-Doctorate. Cutpoints from the model of education level omitted (-0.09 [0.26]; 0.39 [0.26]; 2.71 [0.28]; 2.85 [0.29]).

Table 4. Models of Appointee Connections by Agency Characteristics

<i>Agency Characteristics</i>	<i>Appointee Connections</i>	
	Campaign or Transition Experience	Previous Job was in Politics
<i>Key Variables</i>		
Agency Policy Mentioned in SOU (0,1)	-0.47** (0.19)	-0.66** (0.20)
Liberal Agency (0,1)	0.40* (0.24)	0.54** (0.22)
% Technical Employees	-0.77 (0.60)	-0.17 (0.51)
<i>Controls, Cut Points and Constant</i>		
Ln (Agency Employment)	0.02 (0.04)	-0.07** (0.03)
Executive Office of the President (0,1)	0.02 (1.14)	0.19 (1.25)
Cabinet Agency (0,1)	-0.16 (0.25)	0.55* (0.26)
Commission (0,1)	-1.83** (0.50)	-0.82** (0.37)
Constant	-1.49** (0.38)	-0.48 (0.33)
N		
	1292	956
Number of Appointees w/Characteristic		
	186	269
χ^2 (7 df)		
	22.18**	28.40**

Note: Models estimate probability that an appointee has a specific background characteristic by characteristics of the agency. * significant at the 0.10 level; ** significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed tests).

Table 5. Location of Major Obama Donors and Personal Connections

Agency	Major Donor	Personal Connection	Agency	Major Donor	Personal Connection
Appalachian Regional Commission	0	0	Federal Labor Relations Authority	0	0
Broadcasting Board of Governors	0	0	Federal Maritime Commission	0	0
Commission on Civil Rights	0	0	Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	0	0
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	0	0	Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Comm.	0	0
Consumer Product Safety Commission	0	0	Federal Reserve System	0	0
Department of Agriculture	1	2	Federal Trade Commission	0	0
Department of Commerce	3	1	General Services Administration	0	1
Department of Defense	1	0	Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation	0	0
Department of Education	1	5	Merit Systems Protection Board	0	0
Department of Energy	1	0	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	0	0
Department of Health and Human Services	0	3	National Credit Union Administration	0	0
Department of Homeland Security	0	0	National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities	1	0
Department of Housing and Urban Development	0	1	National Labor Relations Board	0	0
Department of Justice	5	1	National Mediation Board	0	0
Department of Labor	0	0	National Transportation Safety Board	0	0
Department of State	15	1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission	0	0
Department of Transportation	1	1	Occupational Safety and Health Review Comm.	0	0
Department of Veterans Affairs	0	0	Office of Government Ethics	0	0
Department of the Interior	0	0	Office of Personnel Management	0	1
Department of the Treasury	0	0	Office of the Director of National Intelligence	0	0
Environmental Protection Agency	0	0	Overseas Private Investment Corporation	0	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	0	0	Peace Corps	0	0
Executive Office of the President	3	1	President's Comm. on White House Fellowships	0	0
Export-Import Bank	0	0	Securities and Exchange Commission	0	0
Farm Credit Administration	0	0	Small Business Administration	0	0
Federal Communications Commission	2	1	Social Security Administration	0	0
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	0	0	Trade and Development Agency	0	0
Federal Election Commission	0	0	U.S. Agency for International Development	0	0
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	0	0			

Endnotes

* We thank Camille Burge, Josh Clinton, and Nick Gallo, for valuable assistance and feedback on this project. Paul Quirk and seminar audiences at Vanderbilt University provided very helpful feedback. A previous version of this paper was presented at the 2010 annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 22-25. The errors that remain are our own.

¹ Beckel, Michael. 2009. "Big Donors & Bundlers Among Obama's Ambassador Picks." OpenSecrets.org, May 28, 2009 (<http://www.opensecrets.org/news/2009/05/big-donors-bundlers-among-obam.html>, last accessed July 16, 2009); "John V. Roos: Expanded Biography," Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich, & Rosati. (http://www.wsgr.com/WSGR/DBIndex.aspx?SectionName=attorneys/bios/117_2.htm, last accessed July 16, 2009).

² Krlev, Nicholas. 2009. "Career Diplomats Protest Obama Appointments." *Washington Times*, July 10, 2009, (<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jul/10/career-diplomats-save-share-of-postings/>, last accessed July 17, 2009).

³ Kane, Paul. 2010. "Sestak Says His Brother, White House Met About Alleged Job Offer." *Washington Post*, May 28, 2010 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/27/AR2010052705245.html>, last accessed June 10, 2010); Elliott, Philip. 2010. "Senate Candidate Says White House Discussed 3 Jobs." *Washington Post*, June 3, 2010 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/02/AR2010060203585.html>, last accessed June 10, 2010).

⁴ For details on the Department of Justice see Horton, Scott. 2009. "DOJ Internal Probe Confirms Politicization, Again." *Harper's*, January 13, 2009 (on-line edition,

<http://harpers.org/archive/2009/01/hbc-90004180>, last accessed, March 5, 2009). For details on the Federal Emergency Management Agency see Lewis 2008, chapter 6.

⁵ Clay Johnson, President George W. Bush's first personnel chief, as quoted in Lewis (2008, 27).

⁶ As quoted in Lewis 2008, 67-8.

⁷ Of course, political or electoral support can provide important information about a person's loyalty.

Long work for the candidate during an uncertain time is a costly way to demonstrate personal loyalty.

⁸ Examples of related groups might be a think tank like the Center for American Progress, an insurance company that grew its business working through labor unions, or a large contracting firm that regularly does business with a specific agency like the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

⁹ As quoted in Lewis (2008, 64).

¹⁰ This arrangement is also consistent with the interests of the Presidential Personnel Office (PPO). PPO officials want to place appointees into jobs for which they are defensibly qualified. If appointees have resumes that list experience in business, education, or health, personnel officials will, where possible, try to match their skills with specific departments like Commerce, Education, or Health and Human Services. Since, partisans from each party are also more likely to be qualified for positions in these agencies based upon previous work experience, the patterns of patronage appointments described above where liberals get appointed to liberal agencies and conservatives to conservative agencies are reinforced by the practical necessity of trying to appoint people to positions for which they are arguably qualified. Democrats are more likely to have work experience in a labor union, housing non-profit, or a grass-roots environmental organization while Republicans are more likely to have experience working for the Chamber of Commerce or a defense contractor.

¹¹ For PAS appointees, we used Washington Post's "Head Count" website

(<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/2009/federal-appointments/>), WhoRunsGov.com, *Federal*

Leadership Directory (online at <http://www.leadershipdirectories.com/products/fldo.html>), and the White House website (http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing_room/PressReleases/). Information on NA, SC, and PA appointees was taken solely from the *Federal Leadership Directory* (Online; <http://www.leadershipdirectories.com/products/fldo.html>).

¹² We include all PAS appointees that were announced. Since NA and SC appointees do not require confirmation, announcement is the same as appointment.

¹³ The bulk of the biographical information came from *Federal Leadership Directories Online*, the electronic version of the *Federal Yellow Book* publication. This is a subscription-based electronic portal and available at <http://www.leadershipdirectories.com/products/FLDO.html>. In addition to the characteristics we discuss here, we coded for whether the appointee worked in Congress, private and not-for profit management experience, and a connection to Harvard. We chose to exclude a discussion of work in Congress and a Harvard connection because these characteristics could indicate either competence or political connections. Other management experience was excluded since it was less relevant to public management roles.

¹⁴ After the initial collection, we coded the biographical information with a team of two other researchers. Each of the researchers was given a subset of appointee biographical entries to code. One researcher was responsible for all PAS and PA appointees. Another was responsible for all NA appointees. The final researcher was responsible for all SC appointees. Coders agreed upon coding rules prior to the start of coding. When problems arose regarding the proper coding of certain biographical information, researchers quickly discussed and made a decision as a group, so that the coding was executed as uniformly as possible. One example of such a question might be whether to categorize an appointee's last job as a congressional staffer as "politics" or "other." As soon as a questionable instance arose, we agreed to classify this as "politics," and proceeded to correct any

misclassifications in our individual lists. After coding was complete, the researcher who compiled the initial list randomly selected 10 entries from each researcher's coded entries to ensure the coding was conducted consistently. When systemic discrepancies were found, the researcher adjusted the coding to be uniform across the lists.

¹⁵ The percentages for education are 0 (43%), 1 (12%), 2 (38%), 3 (1%), 4 (7%).

¹⁶ This variable is coded with a 1 if the appointee has previous work or educational experience (graduate degree) in the same subject area as the core policy mission of the agency to which they are appointed. This may include experience in other government agencies (not their current agency), but excludes work in relevant congressional committees. For example, appointees in the Department of Labor would receive a '1' here if their biography included experience in any of the following: a labor union, a state-level labor department, the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (or similar agency), or teaching position in a relevant area. The coding is agency based rather than task based so that someone appointed to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management, and Budget would be coded with a 1 not for a management degree or management experience but rather subject area expertise in an area covered by the Department of the Interior such as national parks, Land Management, or Indian Affairs.

¹⁷ Of the entire list, 245 of the 558 SC appointees, 67 of the 381 NA appointees, and only 2 of the 370 PAS appointees have no biographical information available

¹⁸ When assigning an appointee a '0' for a given variable, this does not mean the individual has not fulfilled the criteria, it simply means we have found no positive indication that this is true. We have also estimated the models that follow only with cases where biographical information was listed and the results confirm what is reported here with a few exceptions (N=956). First, in the models of agency or federal government experience the coefficient on proportion technical employees is smaller and

becomes marginally significant or loses significance ($p < 0.09$, 0.49). In the model of subject area expertise the coefficient on liberal agency is marginally significant ($p < 0.13$) in the wrong direction. In models of education level the coefficient on agenda agencies is noticeably larger. In models of education level and campaign or transition experience, the coefficient on liberal agencies is smaller and loses significance ($p < 0.21$, 0.25). All results are available upon request from the authors.

¹⁹Source: Obama 2009. The process for categorizing agencies according to their significance to the president's agenda proceeded in two steps. First, we each read the address independently and formed unique lists of all issues mentioned, as well as the relevant agencies and bureaus. After consultation we excluded a few cases that were obviously incorrect. We code all agencies on either list with a 1 and all other agencies a 0.

²⁰ We have also estimated models using a measure where we code for whether *bureaus* rather than *departments* are on the agenda. The results differ somewhat from the models here. In models of agency experience the coefficients on agenda and liberal agency are smaller but still significant at the 0.05 level. The coefficient on proportion of technical employees, however, is noticeably smaller and no longer significant. In models of federal government experience the agenda measure is larger and the liberal agency measure is smaller and both are still significant. In models of previous work for the Clinton or Bush Administration, the measure of agenda is smaller and no longer significant. In the models of subject area expertise and public management experience, the coefficient on the agenda measure is substantially larger and significant at the 0.05 and 0.10 level, respectively. In models of education level, the coefficient on liberal agency is only significant at the 0.10 level. In the models of campaign or transition experience and work in politics, however, the coefficients on agenda and liberal agency are estimated less precisely ($p < 0.26$, 0.42; 0.14, 0.21).

²¹ Obama 2009, 1.

²² All agencies whose estimates were negative and statistically distinguishable from 0 were classified as liberal and all agencies whose estimates were positive and statistically distinguishable from 0 were classified as conservative. The remainder is coded as moderate. We have also used a different cutoff for liberal, coding those agencies in the bottom quartile of the data as liberal. The results are virtually identical to what is reported here.

²³ The influence of an agency's presence on the president's agenda on the probability that an appointee has competence or connections may be influenced by whether or not an agency is liberal or conservative or vice versa. For example, whether or not an agency is on the president's agenda may matter less if the agency has different policy views than the president. Or, it is possible that agency ideology becomes even more important if it is on the president's agenda. To examine this possibility we estimated the models in Tables 3 and 4 with an interaction term. In half of the models we could not reject the null that the inclusion of the interaction term did not improve the fit of the models. In two cases where the interaction improved the fit of the model, the inclusion of the term suggested that being on the president's agenda mattered less if the agency was also liberal (i.e., previous government experience; last job in politics). In two other models the influence of agency ideology on competence or connections was only consistent with what is reported in Tables 3 and 4 when the agency is on the president's agenda (i.e., Clinton Administration experience; campaign or transition experience). These results are available upon request from the authors.

²⁴ Source: fedscope.opm.gov. Specifically we count the number of employees in September 2008 in the following categories in the White Collar Group classification (under the *Occupation* pull down menu): natural resources management and biological sciences, engineering and architecture, physical sciences, mathematics and statistics.

²⁵ We have also used the percentage of agency employees that are professionals as a measure of task complexity (source: fedscope.opm.gov). The results are generally stronger than the results presented in the paper. This measure is close to significant or significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed tests) in models of agency experience, federal government experience, work in a previous Administration, public management experience, education level, work on the campaign or transition, and last job in politics ($p < 0.01$; 0.12; 0.13; 0.19; 0.00; 0.01; 0.07). The other changes of note are that the coefficient indicating that the agency implements a policy on the president's agenda becomes smaller, though still significant at the 0.05 level in several models. In one model this variable becomes significant at only the 0.08 level. In the model of work on the campaign or transition the standard errors on the liberal agency variable are smaller and the coefficient becomes significant at the 0.05 level.

²⁶ Other aspects of agency importance may influence the likelihood that agency appointees have competence or connections. We have also estimated models including a control for whether or not the agency was on President Bush's agenda at the end of his term as another way of measuring agency importance. We use data from Bush's 2007 State of the Union speech and December 2006 *New York Times* review of Bush's agenda. The results confirm what is reported here.

²⁷ Another way to model the relationship between appointees and agencies is to use features of the agency as the dependent variable (e.g., presence on the agenda; liberal agency vs. conservative agency; degree of technical complexity) and appointee characteristics as the independent variable. There are two difficulties with this modeling strategy. First, it does not allow us to explain which agencies attract patronage appointees directly. Second, and more importantly, other features of agencies such as size are correlated with presence on or off the president's agenda and ideology. This makes disentangling the relationship between appointee background characteristics and where they are eventually appointed difficult. For example, if an appointee with high qualifications is more likely to be appointed to a

conservative agency is this because the agency is conservative or because it is larger than other agencies?

²⁸ We have also estimated models on the type of appointees separately. Estimating these models was complicated by the fact that some variables perfectly predicted outcomes such as appointment in the Executive Office of the President. For example, no NA or Schedule C appointees served in the Clinton Administration and worked in Obama's Executive Office of the President. In addition, as one might expect, the standard errors in these models are generally larger since the models are estimated on fewer cases. For models of competence estimated only using PAS appointees the coefficients on agenda agencies and proportion technical employees were often significantly larger while the coefficients on liberal agencies were smaller and not significant. In models of subject area expertise, working in a liberal agency was estimated to *increase* the likelihood that an appointee had subject area expertise. In models of education level, the coefficient on the proportion technical employees was significant and large. The models of campaign experience and politics, the coefficient on agenda agencies was still negative but smaller and no longer significant. The coefficient on liberal agencies was still positive but smaller and no longer significant. The coefficient on proportion technical, however, was larger and marginally significant. For models of NA and Schedule C appointees, the coefficient on agenda agencies could not be distinguished from zero in models of agency, government, and subject area experience or expertise. The coefficient on agenda agencies, however, was negative and significant in models of public management experience and education level, contrary to what is included in Tables 3 and 4. The coefficients on liberal agencies was often larger and estimated more precisely than in Tables 3 and 4. The coefficient on the proportion technical was estimated less precisely and we could not reject the null of no effect in any of the 8 models. In total, breaking up the analysis by appointee type weakened the results by decreasing the precision of the estimates. It made some results stronger

and some weaker than what is reported in the main text. These results are available upon request from the authors.

²⁹ Simulations are calculated holding all values at their means or modal values (if the variables are indicators).

³⁰ What is less clear in the model estimates is that statistically distinguishable differences also emerge between conservative and moderate agencies in some cases. This is somewhat surprising given that there was only one statistically distinguishable case between moderate and conservative agencies in the bivariate analyses in Table 1 and Table 2. So, while our general expectations with regard to the differences between liberal and non-liberal agencies emerged as expected, there were some cases where a difference exists between conservative and moderate agencies such that very conservative agencies got more patronage-type appointees than moderate agencies. One possible explanation is that these results are driven by a few influential cases such as the State Department were many appointees, ambassadors aside, have significant State Department and foreign policy experience and expertise prior to appointment. When models are estimated excluding the state department, the statistically distinguishable differences between moderate and conservative agencies disappears. We have also estimated the models in Tables 3 and 4 excluding ambassadors. The results generally mirror the results in Tables 3 and 4. The coefficients on agenda agencies are slightly smaller in models of previous Clinton or Bush administration experience and education but still significant or close to significance. This variable is larger and marginally significant ($p < 0.07$) in the model of subject area expertise. The coefficients for liberal agency mirror those in Tables 3 and 4 although they were slightly smaller and estimated less precisely. The results are available upon request from the authors.

³¹ Morris, Dick. 1997. *Behind the Oval Office: Winning the Presidency in the Nineties*. 97-98.

³² Weisman, Jonathan, and Yuka Hayashi. 2009. "Donors Find a Home in Obama's Ambassador Corps." *Wall Street Journal*, July 6, 2009 (on-line at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124658149328689699.html>, last accessed August 5, 2009).