far-right (or far-left) bill out of committee. Any moderate on the committee could remind the majority that such a bill faced certain death on the floor, where the minority's votes are constitutionally protected. He or she could seek out the relevant members of the minority's shadow committee, strike deals with them, credibly threaten his or her troglodyte colleagues with floor retribution, and otherwise enjoy all the prerogatives of a centrist deal maker. Thus, Groseclose and King's argument that moderates need the formal presence of the minority on each committee to maintain their pivotal status does not hold water.

We think the presence of minority-party members on committees is consistent with party theory, along the lines indicated in our discussion of the distribution of legislative resources in the previous chapter. Given that a final floor vote must be taken and that the minority party's votes are constitutionally protected at that stage, the majority party knows all legislation must pass a hurdle at which the minority is fully represented. Thus, having minority-party members on committees does not much constrain what the majority can pass. Moreover, by allowing such members the majority avoids the appearance of unfairness that the minority would otherwise exploit. The only remaining question is "How many?" We cannot provide a precise response to this question, but there is one clear prediction from our theory: the greater the agenda power conferred on a particular committee, the smaller the share of seats the minority should get. Committees with privileged access to the floor on important matters could significantly damage (or benefit) the majority party's reputation. Thus, the majority wishes to ensure a larger "working majority" on such committees – both because this affects what it can prevent from appearing on the floor agenda and because this affects what it can ultimately pass on the floor.

It is not actually the case, moreover, that minority party members *are* always included. For example, under the Republicans since 1995, many bills have been referred not to regular committees but instead to partisan task forces, specifically to avoid allowing minority-party members to have a say in prefloor decision making (Sinclair 1997, 16–17; Oleszek 2001, 102–6). Going back a bit further in time to the New Deal, we find that the legislative agenda was often set by the "kitchen cabinet," an informal gathering of Democratic congressional leaders, along with FDR, to decide what policies would be pursued (Sala 1994).

7

Party Loyalty and Committee Assignments

The evidence presented in Chapter 2 led us to question whether the committee assignment process in the postwar House has been mostly an exercise in self-selection, as is often asserted. There seems ample room in the process for discretion and, in particular, for partisan discretion. In this chapter we investigate whether partisan criteria enter the assignment process in a statistically discernible fashion. This issue is important because it relates to one of the key structural powers that party leaders might exercise. If they do not in fact use this power, then our view of how parties operate will need revision.

We are interested in particular in whether *party leaders* are able to affect committee assignment decisions. Certainly, the power of party leaders during the 1950s and 1960s was not what it once was.[1] Until the revolt against "Boss" Cannon in 1910, the Speaker made all majority-party assignments (and, before the turn of the century, all minority-party assignments as well).[2] Since the revolt, both parties have resorted to a system in which a party CC recommends all assignments, with the caucus ratifying (or rejecting) the committee's recommendations. No one, however, has argued that party leaders have had no influence over the appointments made by the parties' CCs. Indeed, there are many anecdotes illustrating the ability of party leaders to secure committee assignments for those they favor (thereby denying them to others less favored).[3] Moreover, there is widespread agreement that the "interest-advocacy-accommodation syndrome" does not fully apply to what Goodwin (1970) termed the control committees: Appropriations, Rules, and Ways and Means.

[1] Again, in studying the ability of the majority party to keep items it does not favor off the agenda, we do not find much variation in this form of agenda power since the institution of Reed's Rules (Cox and McCubbins 2005, Chapter 4).

[2] See Shepsle (1978) for a historical survey.

[3] Some of the best are reviewed by Shepsle (1978), Smith and Deering (1990), Hinckley (1983), Gertzog (1976), and Rohde (1991).

In this chapter we reassess the role of party leaders in determining committee assignments. Specifically, we analyze the hypothesis that loyalty to the party leadership leads to more favorable initial committee assignments and a greater satisfaction of transfer requests for members of the majority party. To do this, we first review the literature on assignments to the control committees of the House. We then examine committee transfers, testing the null hypothesis that loyalty to the party leadership has no effect on the success of a member's transfer requests, against our alternative hypothesis that loyalty leads to greater request fulfillment. Finally, we test a similar null hypothesis for the assignments received by first-term members.

1. ASSIGNMENTS TO CONTROL COMMITTEES

The special nature of appointments to the control committees has long been appreciated. Masters (1961, 352), for example, writing of the early postwar House, noted that "the three exclusive committees . . . are regarded by all in both parties as being of special importance." As a consequence, appointments to these committees were made differently from those to other committees:

> [Members are] selected by the party leadership in consultation with the members of the committee on committees, rather than the other way around. A nominee's name may be first brought up by the party leaders, a committee member, or even by someone not involved with the mechanics, but whatever the technical circumstances surrounding the introduction of his name, if the nominee is assigned, he bears the party leaders' stamp of approval. This is true in both parties.

In his study of Ways and Means, Manley (1970, 24) stressed that its membership was of special importance to the Democratic leadership:

> Year in and year out the Committee handles legislation that is vital to the administration's foreign and domestic policy, and it is the party leader's job to get this legislation through the House. . . . The jurisdiction of Ways and Means, then, is enough to generate leadership concern about who is recruited to the committee. But there is another reason too. . . . The Speaker, if he is to exert any influence over the vital committee assignment process, has to work through and with the Ways and Means Democrats.

Manley's interviews seem to indicate active and purposive intervention by the Democratic leadership in assignments to Ways and Means in the 1950s and 1960s. All of the Ways and Means Committee members Manley interviewed affirmed this special interest by the Democratic leadership, and

> thirteen of the eighteen [Ways and Means] Democrats interviewed mentioned the leadership as playing an important part in their successful candidacies. In at least six known cases . . . the leadership took the initiative by asking the members to go on Ways and Means, and in the others the members made a call on the leadership first or second priority in their campaign for the Committee. (Manley 1970, 25)

Similarly, in his analysis of the Ways and Means Committee in the 1960s and 1970s, Shepsle (1978, 145) finds that "leadership endorsement . . . is an important, though not always decisive, element in recruitment to the Ways and Means Committee. . . . As one current member of the committee remarked, 'We are elected by the *party* as you know. You have to be acceptable to get on Ways and Means.'" Shepsle also notes that special attention was given to the other control committees and, indeed, that the assignment process accorded them a certain pride of place. In the meetings of the Democratic CC, Shepsle reports: "the usual practice is to take up Appropriations and Rules first, along with one or two semiexclusive committees, e.g. Interstate, for which there is considerable competition. After disposing of these, the remaining semiexclusive committees are taken in alphabetical order, followed by the nonexclusive committees in alphabetical order" (p. 179).

In summarizing the evidence on Democratic assignments to control committees in the 1960s and 1970s, Shepsle notes that

> assignments to the exclusive committees (Appropriations, Rules, Ways and Means) constitute a unique subprocess of the committee assignment process in which the interest-request-assignment pattern that dominates assignments to the substantive legislative committees does not have as much force. Only for Appropriations may it be said that the request/assignment linkage is a strong one, and even here a substantial number of assignments are prearranged, bypassing normal request channels. Ways and Means assignments, of course, are determined by Caucus election, and Rules assignments are dominated by the preferences of the Speaker. (p. 228)

In the 1980s, Hinckley (1983, 149) reports that party loyalty has been an overt criterion for assignment to a variety of "important" committees:

> On the committees the leadership considers most critical, party loyalty is an important assignment criterion. During the sessions of the Steering and Policy Committee in the Ninety-sixth Congress, members reportedly brought in various measures of party loyalty and wrote these on a blackboard next to the nominee's name. As one of the leaders commented: "we tried to put reasonable people on the [important] committees. Some members who wanted new assignments didn't get what they wanted. Members who never go with the leadership – never help out. It's not only [the other leaders] and I who did this. The other Steering and Policy members – the elected ones – feel the same way."

2. PARTY LOYALTY AND TRANSFERS TO HOUSE COMMITTEES

There is substantial interview-based evidence, reviewed in the previous section, that party leaders have influenced appointments to the control committees – and that they have done so with an eye to putting those loyal to the party in key positions. There is also consistent evidence from interviews (Masters 1961; Smith and Ray 1983) that members of the Democratic committee on committees use party loyalty as one of many criteria in allocating

assignments. In this section, we consider what *statistical* evidence there is that party loyalty correlates with success in securing desirable transfers. We first review some previous findings regarding transfer success in the Eighty-sixth through Ninety-seventh Congresses and then provide new results, some of which are pertinent to the entire postwar period.

2.1. Previous Research

Rohde and Shepsle (1973) investigated the success of nonfreshman Democrats in securing requested transfers in the Eighty-sixth, Eighty-seventh, Eighty-eighth, and Ninetieth Congresses. Comparing those whose party support scores surpassed "the mean for the party in the previous Congress with those who gave the party less than the mean support,"[4] they found that "in each of the four Congresses, high party supporters were more successful in securing assignments . . . than low party supporters" (p. 904). The number of requests in their sample was not sufficiently large, however, for the differences they found to attain conventional levels of statistical significance (even when all four Congresses were pooled).[5]

Smith and Ray (1983) also examined the committee assignment process, estimating six probit equations in which the dependent variable was whether or not a nonfreshman Democrat received an assignment for which he or she was nominated.[6] They included a measure of party loyalty – the member's *Congressional Quarterly* party unity score in the previous Congress – as one of the regressors in two of these specifications. In the first specification including party loyalty, where the only other regressors measured characteristics of the member requesting transfer, loyalty had a positive but statistically insignificant effect.[7] In their fully specified probit, with no fewer than twenty-four regressors, party loyalty's impact was both positive and significant.

Rohde and Shepsle's and Smith and Ray's results support the notion that members who are more loyal to their parties are more likely to be granted transfers that they request.[8] However, these studies have substantial

[4] The support scores used were those given in the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*.

[5] The appropriate test is a chi-square test of independence in the two-by-two tables they present. For their Table E this turns out to be about 3.55, not significant at the .05 level.

[6] The Democratic committee on committees requires that members be nominated for a position on a committee before voting on the issue. See Smith and Ray (1983) for details.

[7] The other regressors were vote percentage garnered in last election to Congress, region, and number of committees to which a transfer was requested.

[8] Also supportive is a study by Ripley (1967) in which he investigated the success of twenty-one Democrats who requested transfer in the Eighty-eighth Congress. Of these twenty-one, he found that eleven succeeded and ten failed in getting the transfers that they requested. He then averaged "party loyalty scores for the two groups in the previous Congress," finding that "the eleven 'successes' had a score of 67 and the ten 'failures' had a score of 34" (Ripley 1967, 60). The party loyalty score used was computed by subtracting the *Congressional Quarterly*'s party opposition score from its party unity score. No significance tests were reported. Robinson (1963, 104–5) also has some supportive data regarding the Rules Committee. Bullock (1985, 804) reports a contrary result for U.S. Senate committee assignments.

limitations from the point of view of assessing the impact of party leaders on assignments in the postwar period.

First, neither of them is designed specifically to address the issue of leadership impact: both use party loyalty as a control variable in analyses constructed primarily to assess self-selection; and they both measure loyalty not to party *leaders* but to party *majorities*. Smith and Ray (1983, 224) do note that the Democratic committee on committees has used party loyalty scores provided by the leadership in its deliberations, but they opine that the impact of these scores on assignment decisions "cannot be determined."

Second, even if Rohde and Shepsle's and Smith and Ray's studies were directly focused on the issue of leadership influence, their data are limited in several ways. Both cover only Democratic assignments. Both cover only transfers made at the beginning of Congresses, thereby excluding about a fourth of all transfers. Both investigate the importance of party loyalty only as it pertains to improving a member's chances of being granted a *written request* for transfer. And the two studies together cover fewer than half of the postwar Congresses.

Finally, the results they present are statistically mixed, with only one analysis in which the party loyalty coefficient attains conventional levels of significance. Moreover, Shepsle's later work (1978) is sometimes cited as showing that party loyalty has little impact on committee assignments. Waldman (1980, 377–8), for example, writes (citing Shepsle) that "work on the committee assignment process has shown that general party loyalty has . . . failed to affect assignments to most House committees." Although we cannot see that Shepsle's research supports such an inference in any straightforward way,[9] it does contribute to a perception that party loyalty matters little in the allocation of committee assignments.

2.2. Who Transfers?

In this section, we consider the extent to which past loyalty to the party leadership determines who transfers and who does not. In so doing, we

[9] Shepsle (1978) estimated a probit equation predicting the success of nonfreshman transfer requests during the Eighty-seventh through Ninety-third Congresses. He included, as one of several regressors, a "party support differential" variable. This variable, however, was defined as the absolute value of the difference between the requesting member's *Congressional Quarterly* party support score and that of his or her zone representative on the Democratic CC. Thus, high scores on this variable could reflect either low party support scores (relative to the zone representative's) or high party support scores (again, relative to the zone representative's). This variable does not, therefore, test the importance of loyalty to the leadership in any straightforward way.

attempt to overcome some of the limitations just alluded to in the previous literature. Thus, the study is designed specifically with an eye to assessing the impact of party leaders and, accordingly, measures party loyalty in terms of loyalty to leaders rather than majorities. Previous studies of committee assignments, as noted earlier, have measured party loyalty using published *Congressional Quarterly* party unity scores. These scores give the proportion of times a member votes with a majority of his or her party on "party votes," defined as those in which majorities of the two parties are in opposition. However, not all "party votes" are ones on which we should expect the leadership to be active. We therefore use a score (explained below) defined directly in terms of support for the party leadership.

The present study also includes a larger array of data than have previous studies. In some of the analyses we include Republican assignments. We also include transfers made *during* a Congress as well as at its beginning; transfers made pursuant to informal requests or no requests at all, as well as those made pursuant to formal written requests; and, in some of the analyses, transfers from all of the postwar Congresses (up to and including the Hundredth Congress).

The previous literature has not marshaled any systematic statistical evidence on whether loyalty has varied in importance over the postwar era. To the extent that this issue is addressed at all, the consensus seems to be that in the 1970s there was less and less room for loyalty to play a role. For example, Smith and Ray (1983, 238) speculate that "the process has become even more a routine effort to accommodate the requests of as many members as possible." Waldman (1980, 375), writing of the late 1970s, argues that "members do not need or depend on party leadership . . . to get desirable committee assignments as they did in the 1960s and early 1970s." Shepsle (1978, 160) sees Speakers McCormack and Albert as being "decidedly less activist" in the committee assignment process than was Speaker Rayburn. We explicitly take into account the important reforms of the 1970s, addressing for the first time in a systematic fashion whether these reforms changed the relationship between loyalty and assignment success.

2.3. Data and Methods

Our analysis begins with a test of the hypothesis that the likelihood of transferring between committees increases with a member's loyalty to the party leadership, all else being constant. To test this expectation, we tracked the assignment history of each member in every Congress from the Eightieth to the Hundredth. The unit of observation is thus a member of Congress.[10]

[10] Each member from each Congress appears in the analysis once. Party leaders, however, were excluded because they typically are not eligible for committee assignments. Also excluded were freshmen and superfreshmen (those returning to Congress after an absence of one or more Congresses) because we have no data on loyalty in the previous term for such members.

For each member of Congress, the dependent variable is whether or not the member transferred onto a new committee in that Congress.

Of course, not all committees are created equal. Therefore, we looked separately at transfers to four different categories of committee – all committees, control or exclusive committees, semiexclusive committees, and nonexclusive committees.[11] In other words, we defined not just one, but four dependent variables:

1. ANYTRANS, equal to one if the member transferred to *any* committee in the Congress, zero otherwise
2. CONTRANS, equal to one if the member transferred to a *control* committee in the Congress, zero otherwise
3. SEMTRANS, equal to one if the member transferred to a *semiexclusive* committee in the Congress, zero otherwise
4. NONTRANS, equal to one if the member transferred to a *nonexclusive* committee in the Congress, zero otherwise

By defining our dependent variables in this way, we are pooling transfers within categories of committee, rather than investigating transfers committee by committee. Some such pooling is useful both from a statistical standpoint (because it increases the number of cases to examine) and from an interpretational standpoint (because it obviates the necessity to look at twenty different equations). The pooling categories we use reflect the distinctions made by House Democrats in assigning members and are well known in the literature (Masters 1961, 351).

For each dependent variable, we estimated a probit equation with the following independent variables:[12]

1. LOYALTY – *Party loyalty*, as we use the term here, is loyalty to the leadership, defined as the percentage of times in the previous Congress that a member voted with his party leader and party whip, in opposition to the party leader and whip of the opposing party.[13] Each Democratic member has a raw loyalty score computed as follows. First, all roll calls from the previous Congress in which the Democratic leader and whip voted together against the Republican leader and whip are identified. These roll calls are called *party leadership votes*. Second, the number

[11] See Chapter 1, note 3, for a discussion of control, exclusive, semiexclusive, and nonexclusive committees.

[12] The literature on seniority argues that members have enjoyed security of tenure on standing committees since shortly after the revolt against Cannon, which would imply that any changes in a member's assignments must reflect the member's preferences. Although we registered some qualms with this view in Chapter 3, here we take this meaning of seniority at face value. Thus, in interpreting the probits to follow, we assume that all transfers are voluntary, hence desirable.

[13] For simplicity, we use only a member's loyalty in the previous Congress, rather than his or her entire record of loyalty over several Congresses. To use the record over several Congresses would of course reduce the number of cases available for analysis.

of times that a given member votes *with* his or her party leaders on party leadership votes is divided by the total number of times that that member votes at all on party leadership votes (counting pairs as votes). This yields the member's raw loyalty score. The next step is to standardize these raw scores. We did this by first computing the average loyalty score for both Democrats and Republicans in each Congress, along with the standard deviations for both groups. The raw loyalty scores were then standardized for both parties in the usual fashion, yielding the variable we call LOYALTY in Tables 7.1–7.4.[14] Thus, we measure the loyalty of members by how many standard deviations above or below the mean loyalty for their party they were, in the previous Congress. The purpose of this standardization by Congress and party is to allow us to focus on the relative loyalty of MCs, controlling for over-time trends and cross-party differences in the overall level of discipline. We expect a positive relationship between LOYALTY and the probability of transfer.

2. SOUTHERN – For Democrats, this variable takes on a value of 1 if the member is from the South and 0 otherwise. Numerous studies have examined the differences between northern and southern Democrats in Congress (see, for example, Rohde 1991). Though we have no explicit theory about how such differences should affect committee assignments, we include it for the sake of completeness and comparability with the previous literature.
3. TERMS – Previous studies of transfers have also found that chamber seniority matters. The greater an MC's seniority, the higher the likelihood that he or she will receive a transfer, all else being constant. But the longer a member has been on a given committee the less likely he or she is to want a transfer because of accrued committee seniority. Thus, we expect a curvilinear relationship between chamber seniority and transfers. Accordingly, we include both TERMS (equal to the number of terms a member has served) and TERMSQ (equal to the square of TERMS) in our equation, with the expectation that the coefficient on TERMS will be negative, the coefficient on TERMSQ positive. (However, we expect less of an effect for transfers to control committees because members are likely to want promotion to a control committee almost any time they can get it.)
4. VACANCIES – This variable gives the number of party vacancies to be filled on the committees included in each category. We measure vacancies on a committee after the fact – as the size of the party contingent

[14] The standardized variable, LOYALTY, is simply (1) the difference between a member's party loyalty score and the mean party loyalty score for his or her party in a given Congress, quantity divided by (2) the standard deviation of the party loyalty scores of the member's party in a given Congress.

on the committee in the current Congress minus the number of carryovers from the previous Congress.[15] In the probits for ANYTRANS, all Democratic (or all Republican) vacancies for all House committees (except Budget, Small Business, and Official Conduct) for each Congress are counted; in the probits for CONTRANS, only vacancies on the control committees are counted; similarly, for SEMTRANS and NONTRANS, only vacancies for semiexclusive and nonexclusive committees, respectively, are counted. We expect the coefficient on VACANCIES to be positive for semiexclusive and exclusive committees, since there typically is excess demand for these committees. For nonexclusive committees, however, vacancies sometimes greatly exceed formal requests (and, we assume, total requests), indicating that there is excess supply of seats; for these committees, then, the coefficient on VACANCIES will probably be smaller.[16]

5. POST-REFORM – Last, many scholars have noted that the committee reforms of the 1970s expanded the formal role of the majority-party leadership in assignment decisions. One might wonder whether this increased formal role translated into an increase in the importance of loyalty as a criterion in allocating transfers. To investigate this possibility, we included an interactive term LOYALTY*POST-REFORM, where POST-REFORM is a dummy variable that takes on a value of 1 for the Ninety-fourth through Hundredth Congresses, and zero otherwise.[17]

[15] We measure vacancies as follows: $V_{jt} = N_{jt} - R_{jt}$, where V_{jt} = the number of party assignments to be made on committee j at time t; N_{jt} = the number of party seats on committee j at time t; and R_{jt} = the number of party members on committee j at time $t-1$ who remain on the committee at time t. V_{jt}, however, can be rewritten. $V_{jt} = O_{jt} + T_{jt} + DS_{jt}$, where O_{jt} = number of party members of committee j at time $t-1$ who do not return to Congress at time t; T_{jt} = number of party members on committee j at time $t-1$ who transferred off the committee at time t; and DS_{jt} = the change in the size of the party contingent on committee j from time $t-1$ to time t (positive or negative). The number of vacancies, thus, is partly endogenous to the transfer decision (see footnote 16).

[16] The number of vacancies on a committee depends in part on how many members decide to transfer off that committee; there is thus some simultaneous interaction between VACANCIES and our dependent variable. (This point is ignored in the literature and probably cannot be addressed within the limits of current data.) For the most part, however, committee vacancies are determined prior to transfer decisions – by the retirement or electoral defeat of previously sitting members and by the decisions of party leaders to expand or contract the size of committees – and thus we agree with the previous literature in treating that total as predetermined.

[17] Those familiar with the previous literature may wonder why we do not include variables tapping the amount of competition for a given committee or class of committees. Both Shepsle (1978) and Smith and Ray (1983) find a few such variables to be important in explaining the success of those who request transfer. We expect, however, that MCs will apply a logic reminiscent of Jacobson and Kernell's (1983) Strategy and Choice model for electoral competition. Jacobson and Kernell argue that prospective candidates for House seats choose strategically whether or not to run for office, depending on the quality of the competition. An inexperienced candidate is unlikely to do well against a field of experienced

TABLE 7.1. *Party Loyalty and Democratic Committee Transfers, Eightieth to Hundredth Congresses*

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
	ANYTRANS	CONTRANS	SEMTRANS	NONTRANS
Constant	−0.000	−1.604*	−0.255*	−0.958*
LOYALTY	0.100*	0.150*	−0.015	0.121*
LOYALTY*POST-REFORM	−0.054	−0.015	−0.020	−0.088
TERMS	0.090	0.161	−0.037	−0.034
TERMSQ	0.012*	−0.004	0.015*	0.009*
VACANCIES	0.005*	0.034*	0.001	0.013*
N	4,407	4,407	4,407	4,407
Percentage correctly predicted	83.96	96.23	93.26	93.24
Log likelihood ratio	1.87	4.87	3.30	3.14

* Significant at the .05 level.

In the first set of probits reported in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, we do not include a variable identifying members who requested a transfer, for the simple reason that member requests are unknown for the Eightieth to Eighty-fifth, Ninety-first, and Ninety-eighth to Hundredth Congresses. In Section 2.5, we reestimate the probits reported in Table 7.1 for those Congresses for which Democratic transfer requests are known. In that section we also discuss the possibility of simultaneous interaction between requests and transfers.

2.4. Results

2.4.1. Democratic Transfers

The results of the four probit regressions described earlier – with dependent variables ANYTRANS, CONTRANS, SEMTRANS, and NONTRANS – are presented in Table 7.1 (Democrats only). Looking first at the control variables, we see that the coefficient on SOUTHERN is insignificant in all four probits: southern Democrats were neither more nor less likely to transfer than their nonsouthern colleagues. The coefficient on the VACANCIES variable, not surprisingly, is positive for all categories of Democratic transfers (though it is insignificant in the equation for transfers to semiexclusive committees). This indicates simply that more available committee slots mean a better chance of landing a transfer. Finally, the coefficients on TERMS and TERMSQ were as predicted (negative and positive, respectively) in all but the probit for transfers to

candidates, all else equal. Similarly, we argue that the less loyal anticipate failure if they request a spot for which there is lots of high-quality (i.e., more loyal) competition, hence they request things for which there is less competition. Further, competition is clearly endogenous to both the request decision and the assignment decision.

TABLE 7.2. *Party Loyalty and Republican Committee Transfers, Eightieth to Hundredth Congresses*

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
	ANYTRANS	CONTRANS	SEMTRANS	NONTRANS
Constant	−0.087	−1.120	−0.426*	−0.866*
LOYALTY	0.086*	0.311*	−0.023	0.060
LOYALTY*POST-REFORM	−0.149*	−0.100	−0.083	−0.192
TERMS	−0.435*	−0.263*	−0.415*	−0.223
TERMSQ	0.019*	−0.010*	0.019*	0.008
VACANCIES	0.007*	0.043*	0.011*	0.004
N	3,036	3,036	3,036	3,036
% correctly predicted	81.42	95.03	90.61	94.05
Log likelihood ratio	1.63	3.98	2.53	3.34

* Significant at the .05 level.

control committees. This is largely as we expected. Whereas members are less eager to move as they accumulate seniority (and approach positions of leadership within their original committees), many members will accept a transfer to a control committee from a noncontrol committee at any time.

Turning now to the main focus of the analysis – the impact of party loyalty on the probability of transfer – we see that the coefficient on LOYALTY was positive and significant in the ANYTRANS equation. That is, if one asks what distinguishes those who transfer from those who do not (regardless of where they transfer), one factor is loyalty to the party leadership.[18] The effect is such that an increase in a member's loyalty ranking from the 50th to 67th percentile would increase that member's probability of receiving a transfer by as much as 3.3 percent, while an increase in a member's loyalty ranking from the 50th to the 95th percentile would yield up to a 6.4 percent increase in his or her likelihood of transferring.[19]

The effect of party loyalty on Democratic transfers to control and nonexclusive committees is also positive and significant. In the case of transfers to control committees, a drop in loyalty from the 95th to the 50th percentile would yield a drop of as much as 11.1 percent in the likelihood of getting

[18] If we exclude returning members of control committees (on the grounds that they are not really in the pool of potential transferors), the coefficient on our loyalty variable is even larger and more significant.

[19] We say "as much as" and "up to" because probit coefficients do not translate as straightforwardly as OLS coefficients into statements of the kind "A one unit change in the independent variable will produce an x unit change in the dependent variable." In the case at hand, how much a given change in loyalty affects the probability of transfer depends on the initial or base probability. For example, a member whose characteristics yield a .999 probability of transfer could not improve his or her chances much by an increase in loyalty, whereas one whose characteristics yield a .7 probability of transfer could.

these highly coveted transfers. The same drop in loyalty would yield a decline of up to 9 percent in the likelihood of a transfer to a nonexclusive committee. Party loyalty is insignificant, however, in the probit equation we report for transfers to semiexclusive committees. The problem with this last result is that we are in part comparing apples and oranges. The average loyalty of Democrats who receive transfers to semiexclusive committees is in fact slightly above the mean loyalty of Democrats as a whole (standardized to equal zero), even though this whole includes members already sitting on or just transferring to a control committee. But these members are, first, much more loyal than the average Democrat and, second, extremely unlikely to seek or receive a transfer to a semiexclusive committee. When we compare apples with apples (i.e., those who might have transferred to a semiexclusive committee to those who actually did), we get a somewhat different picture. We excluded those already on or just transferring to control committees from the analysis, leaving a pool of those who might transfer to semiexclusive committees. A probit equation on this subset of Democrats (not reported here) produced coefficients for our loyalty measure that were of the right sign, though insignificant.

We sought to test the effect of the committee reforms in the Ninety-second and Ninety-third Congresses with the interactive term, LOYALTY*POST-REFORM. A positive coefficient for this variable would show that party loyalty became more important after the committee reforms; a negative coefficient would show that loyalty became less important. As can be seen, the interactive term was insignificant in all four probits.[20] The lack of any significant coefficient says simply that there was little or no change in the degree to which those more loyal to the leadership were advantaged in the competition for desirable transfers.

2.4.2. Republican Transfers

The results for the Republicans, given in Table 7.2, are similar to those just described for the Democrats. The party loyalty term is positive and significant as a predictor of transfers to any committee and to control committees, but it is not significant for transfers to semiexclusive or nonexclusive committees. The estimated effect in the overall equation (with dependent variable ANYTRANS) was such that a decline in a Republican's loyalty from the 95th to the 50th percentile would yield a decline of as much as 6.2 percent in the likelihood of transferring.[21]

[20] Indeed, dropping the LOYALTY*POST-REFORM variable from our probits has almost no effect on the error structure of the regression. The removal of this variable from the four probits in Table 7.1, moreover, has no effect on the level of significance of the other included variables.

[21] The coefficients on the control variables – TERMS, TERMSQ, and VACANCIES – were as predicted in all four probits, almost all of them significant.

We included the interactive term, LOYALTY*POST-REFORM, in the equations for the Republicans as we had for the Democrats. The formal role of the Republican leadership in the committee assignment process changed little, but the variable is still useful as a crude test of whether there was any change over time in the importance of loyalty as a criterion in the allocation of Republican transfers. The estimated coefficient on LOYALTY*POST-REFORM turned out to be negative, significant, and larger in magnitude than the coefficient on LOYALTY, in both the ANYTRANS and NONTRANS probits. For some reason, the statistical association between loyalty to the Republican leadership and transfer among committees was significantly weaker (even negative) in the later Congresses. This finding merits further investigation, but we do not pursue the matter here.

2.5. Democratic Assignment Requests and Transfers

In this section we respecify the probits in Table 7.1 to include a variable identifying those Democratic members who requested a transfer. Since information on members' requests for transfer is available only for the Eighty-sixth to Ninetieth and Ninety-second to Ninety-seventh Congresses, the analysis is confined to these Congresses.

Naturally, the precise definition of the variable identifying whether or not a member submitted a formal request for transfer differs depending on the dependent variable. In the probit for ANYTRANS, the variable (labeled REQUEST) is defined to be one if the member filed a written request for any transfer in that Congress, and zero otherwise; in the probit for CONTRANS, REQUEST is defined to be one if the member filed a written request for transfer to a control committee (Appropriations, Rules, or Ways and Means), and zero otherwise; and so on. Several points should be kept in mind before we turn to the results of our reestimation. First, as discussed in Chapter 2, we can observe only those requests submitted in writing to the Democratic committee on committees (and subsequently collected by Shepsle and Smith/Deering). But it seems likely that a substantial number of members for whom we have no data may have requested transfer through other, more informal, channels. If these informal requesters enjoyed a higher likelihood of success, then the estimated coefficient on REQUEST in the probits in Table 7.3 will underestimate the true relationship between requests (defined broadly) and transfers.

Second, and more seriously, requests are probably simultaneously determined with transfers. That is, asking for a transfer may increase one's chances of getting it, but one's anticipation of success may affect whether or not one asks to begin with. If requests and transfer decisions are simultaneously determined, then it is difficult to say – based on the kind of estimation procedure used here – how much influence requests actually have on transfer decisions. For, if requests are made only when the likelihood of transferring

TABLE 7.3. *Democratic Transfers and Requests, Eighty-sixth to Ninetieth and Ninety-second to Ninety-seventh Congresses*

	Dependent Variables			
Independent Variables	ANYTRANS	CONTRANS	SEMTRANS	NONTRANS
Constant	−0.255*	−2.058*	−.446	−1.201
LOYALTY	0.122	0.214*	.009	0.118*
LOYALTY*POST-REFORM	−0.056	−0.014	0.003	−0.066
SOUTHERN	0.138*	0.234*	0.065	−0.009
TERMS	−0.322*	0.023	−0.307*	−0.237*
TERMSQ	0.011*	−0.0o11	0.010*	0.008*
VACANCIES	0.004*	0.027*	−0.000	0.016*
REQUEST	0.965*	1.634*	1.759*	1.730*
N	4,407	4,407	4,407	4,407
% correctly predicted	85.14	96.42	93.94	93.62
Log likelihood ratio	1.96	5.51	3.60	3.39

* Significant at the .05 level.

is high, then the coefficient on REQUEST reflects not simply the accommodation of requests, but rather the joint decision to grant a transfer and to file a request.

The two problems just identified – that we can observe only a fraction of all requests and that requests and transfers are simultaneously determined – suggest that the interpretation of the coefficient on REQUEST in the respecified equation is far from straightforward. More worrisome for our purposes is the possibility that these problems, especially the second, may bias the estimation of the impact of LOYALTY (both in Table 7.3 and in Tables 7.1 and 7.2).

One might ask why we do not simply specify and estimate a full system of simultaneous equations, one for transfers and one for requests. The answer is partly lack of data: we do not have a very promising set of exogenous variables for the REQUEST equation.[22] But it is also true that the estimates we do provide are largely sufficient for the points we wish to make.

If there is a simultaneity problem, then the results to be presented in Table 7.3 can be interpreted as those that one gets from running OLS on one of the reduced-form equations.[23] There are some general arguments for using OLS in this fashion, even on underidentified equations. Maddala (1988, 322–3), for example, discusses conditions under which OLS will be consistent "for all practical purposes," and Bartels (1985) contains some discussions in a

[22] This means both that we would get pretty lousy first-stage instruments in any attempted two-stage least squares regression estimation and that we might have trouble identifying the system to begin with.

[23] If some exogenous variables from the REQUEST equation were not included in the TRANSFER equation, then the specification in Table 7.1 would not quite be the reduced form.

similar vein. Moreover, if one adapts the formulae for OLS bias to the present context (a technical exercise that we confine to a footnote), one can at least put some bounds on what can go wrong. Reassuringly, it seems unlikely that the true structural relationship between loyalty and probability of transfer could be negative, if the OLS estimates in Table 7.3 turn out to be positive: we at least will get the sign of the relationship right, even if there is (upward or downward) bias.[24]

As it turns out, the results in Table 7.3 are virtually identical to those presented in Table 7.1. As before, the coefficient on LOYALTY is positive and significant in the ANYTRANS, CONTRANS, and NONTRANS probits and positive but insignificant in the SEMTRANS equation. In each case, the coefficient on LOYALTY is greater in Table 7.3 than in Table 7.1. The coefficients for most of the other exogenous variables – LOYALTY*POST-REFORM, TERMS, TERMSQ, and VACANCIES – were also virtually identical to the results reported earlier. The one difference between the two sets of probits regards the coefficient on the dummy variable SOUTHERN. The probits for ANYTRANS and CONTRANS produced positive and significant coefficients on SOUTHERN, whereas previously these coefficients, though positive, were not significant. This indicates that, other things equal, southerners were more likely to transfer.

2.6. Democratic Request Success and Failure

One interesting topic not yet addressed concerns request success and request failure. That is, among those who request a committee transfer, who succeeds and who fails? Presumably, loyalty to the party leadership should increase the likelihood of receiving a requested committee transfer. One obvious way to address this topic would be to examine a new dependent variable – the probability of getting a requested transfer – and assess the importance of loyalty and other independent variables in another probit equation.

This, however, is not an attractive estimation procedure. As was pointed out in Chapter 4, only about 20 percent of all committee transfers are

[24] The (quick and dirty) argument goes as follows. Suppose we model the process as a pair of OLS regressions: $T = \tilde{A}R + \tilde{S}L + w$ and $R = \acute{A}T + v$, where $T = 1$ if the member transferred, zero else; $R = 1$ if the member formally requested transfer, zero else; L is the member's standardized loyalty score; and w and v are stochastic disturbance terms. Since these are linear probability models, one certainly hopes that $\acute{A}$ will lie between zero and one, and it seems likely that $\acute{a}$ will not be far from this range either. The OLS estimator of $\tilde{S}$, d, will equal (assuming the covariance between w and v is zero; cf. Maddala 1977, 246) $\tilde{S}[1 + (\acute{A} - \tilde{A})\acute{I}_w^2/(\acute{I}_w^2 + \acute{I}_v^2)]$, where $\acute{I}_w$ is the standard deviation of w and $\acute{I}_v$ is the standard deviation of v. If $\tilde{S}$ is less than zero, then d can be greater than zero if and only if the term in square brackets is less than zero, which is equivalent to $\tilde{A} > \acute{A} + (\acute{I}_w^2 + \acute{I}_v^2)/\acute{I}_w^2$. Thus, the only way that we can get the sign wrong, in this simplified example, is if the effect of R on T is greater than the effect of T on R plus a term greater than one. Because $\tilde{A}$ is not likely to be much greater than one, it seems unlikely that d could be positive when $\tilde{S}$ was negative.

requested formally. Yet it seems likely that a substantial proportion of the remaining transfers, for which we have no record of a request in the Shepsle and Smith/Deering data set, were nonetheless requested through informal channels. What this implies – for any study of request accommodation – is that most requests are censored from our analysis: we cannot observe the dependent variable for some unknown but probably large proportion of the cases.

Censoring would not be an insurmountable problem if the observed sample of formal requests were a random draw from the set of all requests. We suspect, however, that formal requests differ systematically from informal requests. Members' requests for transfer depend on their estimates of the probability that they will be granted. It may be that the formal requests of which we have record in the Shepsle and Smith/Deering data set are made by members who lack the clout to obtain transfer through informal channels (the analogy between academics who apply for an advertised position and those who are specifically asked to apply comes to mind). If so, then any analysis of request success and failure (such as that of Smith and Ray 1983) faces very serious problems, of the kind explained at length in any of the standard sources (e.g., Achen 1982).[25] As a consequence, we do not attempt such an analysis here.

This does not mean, however, that what information we have on members' requests for transfer cannot be utilized. We can place Democrats into four categories:

1. DO-NOTHINGS, defined as those members in each Congress who neither formally requested nor received a committee transfer
2. REQUEST-FAILURES, defined as those who formally requested a transfer and received either no transfer or one different from any they requested[26]
3. REQUEST-SUCCESSES, defined as those who received a formally requested transfer
4. DRAFTEES, defined as those for whom there is no written request, but who nonetheless transferred to a new committee

We can estimate the effect of loyalty and our other independent variables on the likelihood that members fall into one of these four categories. In estimating these likelihoods, however, once three of the likelihoods are known we, of course, know the fourth. Thus, if we were to estimate parameters

[25] In particular, such an analysis would certainly run the risk of downward bias in estimating the impact of party loyalty on request success.

[26] Members submit ranked lists of committees to which they would like to transfer. Often these lists consist of only one committee, but sometimes they have two or more. We count a member as failing only if he or she gets none of the committees requested.

defining all four likelihoods, the parameters of the first three would define the fourth. The problem is similar to multicollinearity: the independent variables defining the first three likelihoods are perfectly correlated with the variables defining the fourth.

Thus, we estimate, by means of a categorical logit, the determinants of the odds of a member's placement into three of these four categories relative to an excluded fourth category. The excluded comparison group in our analysis consists of those members in each Congress who neither formally requested nor received a transfer – the DO-NOTHINGS. In a sense, then, we really have three dependent variables: the odds of a member falling into each of REQUEST-FAILURE, REQUEST-SUCCESS, or DRAFTEE categories, rather than the DO-NOTHING category. The estimated coefficients from the categorical logit procedure tell us how important party loyalty is in determining the odds of being a REQUEST-SUCCESS (or REQUEST-FAILURE, DRAFTEE) rather than a DO-NOTHING.

The results (Table 7.4) support our suspicion that there are differences between those who formally requested a committee transfer and those who transferred without a written request: the coefficients on LOYALTY, TERMSQ, and VACANCIES differed across all three categories. Interestingly, in comparison to those who neither requested nor received a transfer (DO-NOTHINGS), those members who requested but failed to get a transfer (REQUEST-FAILURE) were significantly *less* loyal. On the other hand, there was no significant difference between the comparison group, the DO-NOTHINGS, and those members who received a requested transfer, REQUEST-SUCCESS, in terms of party loyalty. But, the coefficient on LOYALTY in the comparison between DRAFTEES and DO-NOTHINGS is positive and significant.

These results are consistent with our expectations that written transfer requests are used largely by those who fail to gain a desired transfer informally. They also show that only those from the pool of formal requesters who are at least of average loyalty are granted their request. For transfers made through informal channels (i.e., for the bulk of them), party loyalty is an important determinant of transfer success.[27]

Last, the number of Democratic committee vacancies is significant only for the comparison between DRAFTEES and DO-NOTHINGS. This indicates that request success does not depend on vacancies.

[27] As Fenno (1973, 19–20) points out, written transfer requests are often made at the behest of party leaders. A member will apply for a particular committee slot, especially to a control, when asked to do so by his or her party's leadership. Fenno referred to this procedure as "cooptation" and noted that it was used fairly frequently to pick members for control committees, but that "it is a method never used" for the other committees in his study. In this case, we assume that members issue a formal, written request because of the structural separation between the party leadership and the CC. Cooptation may be one reason that members make formal requests for committee assignments, but it is distinct from the motivation we believe pertains here.

TABLE 7.4. *Multinomial Analysis of Democratic Transfers and Requests, Eighty-sixth to Ninetieth and Ninety-second to Ninety-seventh Congresses*

Independent Variables	Log Odds of Request Failure (Request-Failure) Coefficients	Log Odds of Request Success (Request-Success) Coefficients	Log Odds of Being Drafted (Draftee) Coefficients
Constant	0.432	0.389	−0.627
LOYALTY	−0.331*	0.127	0.227*
LOYALTY*POST-REFORM	0.344*	−0.190	−0.053
SOUTHERN	−0.342	0.167	0.180
TERMS	−0.731*	−0.921*	−0.555*
TERMSQ	0.025*	0.030*	0.018*
VACANCIES	0.001	0.004	0.008*
Percentage of sample $N = 2{,}450$	6.78	6.16	9.47
Percentage correctly predicted = 77.592			
Log likelihood ratio = 2.10			

* Significant at the .05 level.

2.7. Summary

Putting together the various findings reported in this section, we can confidently reject the null hypothesis that party loyalty has no effect on committee transfers. In fact, party loyalty seems to be a criterion in making assignment decisions to most House committees. Thus, whether or not party leaders are directly involved in assignment decisions, the process produces results whereby those whose roll call votes demonstrate loyalty to the leadership are rewarded with committee transfers. This of course makes committees and their members more responsive to both the party's leadership and goals.

Heberlig (2003), using incumbents' contributions to the party and to designated party candidates as a proxy for party loyalty, tests to see whether such "financial party loyalty" has an effect on committee transfers in the 102nd through the 107th Congresses. He finds that transfers in general are sensitive to financial party loyalty, with assignments to control committees especially sensitive.

3. LOYALTY, THE REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION, AND THE GREAT PURGE OF 1995

As noted in Chapter 1, Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) instituted a series of changes to the committee assignment process, all of which had the effect of bringing House committee assignments for the Republican majority under the control of its leadership. By disregarding the seniority norm when assigning chairmanships, as well as awarding himself almost a quarter of the total votes on the Steering Committee, Gingrich ensured that members knew to whom they owed their assignments. As a staffer for Majority Leader Richard Armey (R-TX) explained, "[the decision to bypass more senior members for three committee chairmanships] was a strategic position, and I think it ended up sending a very clear signal that you don't just rely on seniority: you've got to prove yourself as someone willing to pursue your agenda – or our agenda" (Owens 1997, 250). Then Deputy Whip Dennis Hastert (R-IL) stated this point quite succinctly: "The chairs will deliver on the leadership's agenda, because they know that if they fail, they won't be chairs anymore" (Cohen 1995, 531).

Gingrich used committee assignments and committee leadership positions to enforce party discipline. In one example, Larry Combest (R-TX) and Bill Emerson (R-MO) sought to defect from the leadership's agenda regarding farm subsidies. In a memo Gingrich threatened to strip Combest of his Intelligence Committee chairmanship and to bypass Emerson (the second-ranking Republican) for the Agriculture Committee's chairmanship upon the current chair's anticipated retirement, if the "rebels" did not toe the line (Koszczuk 1995, 3049). Through these actions, the Republican leadership made it clear that loyalty to them and to the Contract with America and the Republican platform were prime considerations in committee assignment decisions.

Further, Speaker Gingrich ensured the loyalty of his Republican members by requesting a letter of fidelity from them. Specifically, he required all of the Republican Appropriations members to sign a letter binding them to follow Gingrich's plan of budget cutting (Evans and Oleszek 1997, 120). Committee assignments had become more conditional on the promise of loyalty to the majority-party leadership.

Last, the importance of loyalty was equally clear in freshman committee assignments. Gingrich gave an unprecedented number of plum assignments to freshmen (Chapter 1, see also, Killian, 1998; Gimpel 1996; Hook 1994; Aldrich and Rohde, 1997–8). Having spearheaded GOPAC, Gingrich knew that freshmen had run on the Contract with America and, therefore, that these members were most likely to be loyal to the leadership's agenda. Further, in bypassing more senior members for committee assignments, Gingrich ensured that members not only owed their assignments to him, but that their placements were contingent upon, not seniority, but their willingness to implement his agenda (Killian, 1998). It is to a closer examination of freshman assignments that we now turn.

4. ASSIGNMENT SUCCESS OF FRESHMEN

In this section, we ask whether postwar freshmen who were more loyal to their respective leaders in their first term were also more likely to do well in terms of their initial committee assignments. Because committee assignments

TABLE 7.5. *Loyalty and First-Choice Assignments*

Independent Variables	Coefficients (Standard Errors)	
Constant	.312	(2.47)
LOYALTY	.485	(2.97)
CONTROL	−.769	(−3.90)
MAJOR	.089	(.59)
SOUTHERN	−.016	(−.11)
LOYALTY*CONTROL	−.228	(−1.02)
LOYALTY*MAJOR	−.472	(−2.73)
LOYALTY*SOUTHERN	−.216	(−1.51)
$N = 408$		
Percentage correctly predicted = 66.4		

Note: Dependent variable equal to 1 if Democratic freshman got first-choice assignment, 0 else.

are made at the beginning of the term, before a freshman has had an opportunity to establish a voting record, the causal relationship in the analyses to follow is less clear than in the case of transfer requests. A positive correlation between first-term loyalty and assignment success might arise because each party's CC is able to *predict* how loyal a member will be – and rewards anticipated loyalty. On the other hand, such a correlation might also arise because those given more desirable assignments respond with gratitude in the form of higher levels of support. As long as this response was anticipated, however, the story is not much different. Because both these causal paths rely on anticipations of future loyalty rather than assessments of past loyalty, one expects the evidence relating to the initial assignment requests of new members to be weaker than that relating to the transfer requests of returning members.

Nonetheless, the evidence turns out to be generally positive. This can be seen in three different analyses, one involving the probability that an entering Democrat will get his or her first-choice assignment, one involving those appointed to control committees in their first year, and one involving the seniority rank that entering members receive.

Consider first the probability that a freshman Democrat will be granted his or her first choice.[28] Table 7.5 presents the estimates from a probit equation predicting this probability as a function of the following variables: (a) LOYALTY – the standardized loyalty score described in Section 2.3; (b) CONTROL – whether the request was for a control committee or not; (c) MAJOR – whether the request was for a "major" noncontrol committee

[28] Note that because almost all freshmen submit requests, this analysis does not face the same kind of simultaneity problems that confront similar analyses of transfers.

or not;[29] (d) SOUTHERN – whether the requester was from the South or not; and (e) interaction terms involving LOYALTY and the other three regressors.

The rationale for this specification is straightforward. The probability that a request is granted ought plausibly to depend on the kind of committee requested. Our first two dummy variables, CONTROL and MAJOR, are an attempt to capture this notion by dividing committees into three groups – control, major noncontrol, and the rest. The coefficients on CONTROL and MAJOR will indicate whether those requesting control and major noncontrol committees were more or less likely to be successful than those requesting a committee in the residual category of committees. The SOUTHERN dummy variable is included to see if southern Democrats had any advantage or suffered any disadvantage in the committee assignment process. The various interaction terms involving LOYALTY are included to allow for the possibility that loyalty to the leadership might matter less for some committee requests than for others (LOYALTY*CONTROL, LOYALTY*MAJOR) or might matter less for some members than for others (LOYALTY*SOUTHERN). If, for example, it is especially important to be loyal in order to get on a control committee, then perhaps the slope coefficient on LOYALTY will be larger for those requesting control committees than it is for those requesting run-of-the-mill committees.

The actual results show that not all of the possible effects for which we allow turn out to be significant. Nonetheless, the variable of primary interest – LOYALTY – has a positive and significant coefficient. This indicates that among those *northern* Democratic freshmen requesting a residual committee, those who were more loyal in their first term were more likely to be granted their first choice. The insignificant coefficient on LOYALTY*SOUTHERN shows that we cannot reject the hypothesis that the same basic relationship holds among southern Democratic freshmen – although it appears to be a bit less pronounced. The insignificant coefficient on LOYALTY*CONTROL similarly indicates that the story is not much different for those few freshmen who requested control committees: the more loyal ones are more likely to have their request granted. There is a difference, however, for those requesting the second tier of committees. The estimated coefficient on the LOYALTY*MAJOR interaction term is negative and only slightly smaller in magnitude than is the coefficient on LOYALTY. Thus, the relationship between first-term loyalty and request success for those requesting major noncontrol committees is, albeit positive, nearly zero. The Democratic CC apparently does not use anticipated first-term loyalty as a criterion to distinguish among those seeking appointment to such committees.

Altering the definition of what is a "major" noncontrol committee does not change the results much. Two committees, Armed Services and

[29] The variable MAJOR was equal to one for the following committees: Commerce, Armed Services, Public Works, Banking, and Agriculture.

Commerce, stand out as different from the rest, however. In particular, these two committees do not pool with the rest for purposes of estimating the coefficient on LOYALTY: whereas the estimated coefficient on LOYALTY is positive and significant when considering all committees except these two, it is negative and significant for these two considered alone. This result makes some sense for Armed Services, which has traditionally been a conservative committee, but we do not know why the results for the Commerce Committee are similar.

In any event, the bottom line is clear. Higher first-term loyalty scores correlate positively with higher probabilities of receiving requested assignments, for most categories of freshmen and committees.

A second way of assessing whether first-term loyalty is anticipated and rewarded in the appointment process is to examine those who were appointed to a control committee in their first year (regardless of whether they requested the appointment or not): Were they significantly more loyal in their first term than the rest of their cohort? The answer is positive for both the Republicans and the Democrats, although the number of Republican freshmen appointed to control committees in the postwar era (twelve) is sufficiently small so that the effect does not attain conventional levels of statistical significance.

A final bit of evidence that first-term loyalty matters is that committee seniority rank among freshmen correlates positively and significantly, albeit modestly, with committee loyalty rank. We looked, for each Congress from the Eightieth to the Hundredth, at each committee to which more than one freshman Democrat was assigned. For each such committee, we coded the committee seniority rank among the freshmen as well as how they ranked in loyalty in their first term. The (Spearman) correlation was .32, significant at the .0001 level. The results were similar for the Republicans (a correlation of .29, also significant at the .0001 level).[30]

5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have asked whether those members who are more loyal to their party's leadership have a statistically discernible edge in the committee assignment process. Although there was considerable anecdotal evidence indicating that loyalists are rewarded, especially when it comes to assignment to the control committees, there is a surprisingly scanty body of corroborating statistical evidence as of the early 1990s. The impact of party loyalty either had not been investigated at all (in the case of freshman assignments) or had been investigated only with limited data and mixed results (in the case of nonfreshman transfers).

[30] The results are similar if one splits the postwar period into two subperiods, from the Eightieth to the Ninetieth and from the Ninety-first to the Hundredth Congress.

Our results, based on a substantially larger data set than previously available, indicate that loyalty to the party leadership is a statistically and substantively important determinant of who gets what assignment. The effect is particularly strong in determining who transfers but is even noticeable in determining the initial assignment of freshmen.

Our motivation for marshaling the statistical evidence showing that loyalists are rewarded was – when we first wrote – to counterbalance the then-growing tendency in the literature to view the committee assignment process as a neutral, nondiscretionary, or routine one in which members' preferences are the primary determinant of where they end up. We certainly do not deny that members' preferences for assignment are important and determine much of the pattern of actual assignment. But this does not make the process one of "self-selection" pure and simple, where member requests are neutrally processed. The statistical evidence is clear: more loyal members are more likely to transfer (and more likely to get better assignments as freshmen). Because there are almost always more members who *want* assignment to a committee (at least if it ranks relatively high in the pecking order) than there are available slots on that committee, there is a standing incentive to become more loyal. More recently, both Maltzman (1997) and Deering and Smith (1997) find evidence that members' party loyalty influences their committee assignments. Specifically, Deering and Smith argue that the demand for prestige, or control, committee assignments is far greater than the supply; therefore, the leadership has the most discretion in awarding these seats. Maltzman (1997) finds that Democrats displaying party loyalty on committee-specific votes were more likely to receive their requested committee assignment. Further, he marshals evidence that assignment to prestige committees is particularly sensitive to party loyalty. The assignment process seems to us inherently discretionary. This discretion, moreover, is consequential in that it provides a route by which the collective goals of the party, as internalized by the party leadership, are represented in the composition of committees.