



Slingshot: The Slaying of Eric Cantor and the Limits of Incumbency Advantage

By Lauren Cohen Bell

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In this book, the authors take advantage of exceptional behind-the-scenes access to the Brat campaign to explain the challenger's victory. They examine the essential need for elected officials to maintain strong support in their home districts and just how Cantor's focus on climbing the party ranks in Washington contributed to his loss. They also show how local "rules of the game" - particularly voter mobilization in this case-affect elections, and they explore the continuing impact of the Tea Party and its role in the factionalism of current Southern politics.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is a book that needed to be written. Eric Cantor's defeat was not only shocking but it runs against everything we teach in our election courses. By extracting the lessons from Cantor's defeat, *Slingshot* helps to inform our more general understanding of campaigns and elections. Bell, Meyer, and Gaddie skillfully walk us through the campaign explaining first why the Cantor defeat never should have happened and then why-seemingly against all odds-it did. The story powerfully captures the dynamic tension between policy-making and representation, and is a reminder than even in an age of polarized politics and nationalized election campaigns 'all politics is local.'" -- Professor Kirby Goidel "This book does a great job of taking a remarkable incumbent defeat and embedding it into the greater framework of congressional elections scholarship. Its strengths are twofold: (1) greatly detailing an important, highly unusual, and historic incumbent defeat, and (2) placing this remarkable event within a body of scholarship that clearly explains why such an unlikely event was in fact very likely to occur. This book differentiates itself from other books because of the unique case study it evaluates." -- Professor Seth McKee "The book is well written, easy to read, and will certainly hold your attention. The authors display considerable knowledge of the political science literature and a keen awareness of modern American politics." -- Professor Gibbs Knotts

About the Author

Lauren C. Bell is Professor of Political Science and Dean of Academic Affairs at Randolph-Macon College, in Ashland, Virginia. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of Wooster and Masters of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from the Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center at The University of Oklahoma. Bell previously served as an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow on the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary and a United States Supreme Court fellow at the United States Sentencing Commission in Washington, DC. Dr. Bell is the author of *Filibustering in the U.S. Senate* (Cambria Press, 2011), *Warring Factions: Interest Groups, Money, and the New Politics of Senate Confirmation* (The Ohio State University Press, 2002) and *The U.S. Congress, A Simulation for Students* (Thomson/Wadsworth, 2005) as well as co-author of *Perspectives on Political Communication: A Case Approach* (Allyn & Bacon, 2008). In addition to these books, she has published single- and co-authored articles in several peer-reviewed journals, including *The Journal of Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, *The Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, and *Judicature*. David Elliot Meyer serves as a Special Assistant in the Office of Governor Terence R. McAuliffe. He graduated from Randolph-Macon College with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Political Science. Elliot participated in the 2014 Schapiro Undergraduate Research Fellowship and presented his research paper, *Crashing the Tea Party: The Effects of the Tea Party on U.S. House of Representative Elections* at the 2015 Southern Political Science Association Conference. Ronald Keith Gaddie is President's Associates Presidential Professor & Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Oklahoma, associate director of the OU Center for Intelligence and National Security, and editor of *Social Science Quarterly*. He previously taught at Tulane University and Centre College. Keith received his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia (1993) and his undergraduate degree from Florida State University (1987). He has published over 20 books on campaign politics, election law, sports, and fiction, including *The Rise and Fall of the Voting Rights Act* (2016); *The Three Governors Controversy: Skullduggery, Machinations, and the Decline of Georgia's Progressive Politics* (2015); *Politics in America*, 10th & 11th eds (2014, 2016); *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*, 1st & 2d eds. (2009, 2013); *Ghosts on Vintners Landing: A Novel* (2010); *The Triumph of Voting Rights in the South* (2009, winner of the V. O. Key Award); and *University of Georgia Football* (2008).

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