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# **The Politics of Need and Politics of Politics: Exploring the Motives of Donative Actors to Social Service Nonprofit Organizations in a Highly Politicized Field**

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This paper explores the capacity of several induced theories of philanthropic behavior to explain foundation grant-making patterns to nonprofit social service organizations working to address teenage pregnancy through counseling on “abortion alternatives”. It argues that theories of nonprofit sector founding which stress that nonprofits will arise as a response to need do not help to explain the presence of such organizations across U.S. states in this field. Instead it argues that grant making patterns in highly politicized fields may best be explained by conceiving of funders as strategic and rational political actors whose grant-making responds to structural opportunity and incentive.

Due to the growing significance of the nonprofit sector within the United States as well as at the global level, nonprofit sector issues have become an important area of focus for researchers who want to better understand the implications of its many dimensions on such issues as social service provision, democratic representation, civic engagement, as well as the quality of the public sphere and the capacity of government. According to Lester Salamon, a central scholar examining the growth of the nonprofit sector on a global scale, “a striking upsurge is underway around the globe in organized voluntary activity and the creation of private, nonprofit or nongovernmental associations” (Salamon 1994). This trend of “non-profitization” is occurring across the developing as well as the developed world, as associations, foundations, and other organizations and institutions are increasingly forming for the purposes of delivering human services as well as promote civil rights, organize grassroots economic development, fight economic degradation and to pursue numerous other objectives (Salamon 1994). In developing countries, such organizations have formed both independently following the collapse of communist and authoritarian governments, as well as via the instruction and efforts of global institutions and transnational NGO’s led by developed country actors. Across advanced industrialized democracies, welfare state reform has been strongly accompanied by an encouragement and celebration of voluntary and nonprofit sector responsibility for by actors on both the left and the right, and questions surrounding both the capacity as well as the effectiveness and legitimacy of the nonprofit sector have become central to these global processes.

Within the United States, nonprofit organizations have been embraced by liberals for the good part of the last century, particularly for their capacity to deliver social service provisions to needy populations, for their value in promoting diverse voices within the public sphere, and for the critical space they provide for developing support for and mobilizing on behalf of progressive policy (Frumkin 2002). For conservatives however, support for the nonprofit sector is more recent. This support coincided primarily with shifts in the national political climate since the

1980s when conservatives first began to air criticism of the nation's War of Poverty and discussions of welfare reform first began enter the public forum. As Frumkin points out, conservatives became attracted to nonprofits for three primary reasons: 1) as an alternative to direct government spending on social programs; 2) for the moral or spiritual component they felt faith-based nonprofits could bring to public assistance programs, something conservatives argued was "perilously missing" from such programs; and 3) for their capacity to represent innovative local solutions to community needs, which they argued to be a superior alternative to national programs and the inflexible bureaucracy of "big government" (Frumkin 2002).

Beginning in the early 1980s, conservatives' rhetorical embrace of the nonprofit sector was couched in the logic of supply-side economics, particularly through the celebration of private sector (rather than governmental) capacity to address public problems. In 1982, following massive cuts in government funds for nonprofit organizations, President Reagan introduced a Presidential Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives, whose purpose he explained would be "to promote private sector leadership and responsibility to solve public needs" (Berger 1986; p.14). As Leslie Lenkowsky explains, this task force was intended to help federal agencies transfer their responsibilities to nonprofit organizations, as well as find ways to facilitate philanthropic efforts in providing operating funds and in "doing more to help the public" (Lenkowsky 2004). In effect, Lenkowsky argues, private individuals and organizations were expected to "pick up the slack" for cuts in government programs (Lenkowsky 2004).

The normative value of private philanthropic funding of nonprofit organizations, the Reagan era logic held, lay in the capacity of the private-nonprofit nexus to address the needs of the nation more efficiently and effectively than government. Reagan's rationale dovetailed nicely with economic theories of nonprofit organizations developed in the 1970s, which proposed that nonprofits would arise as a response to government or market failure to meet social needs.

Reagan's beliefs in the value of the private sector did not rest solely in his faith in private philanthropy and industry, but also in what he viewed as the comparative advantage of private religious groups in addressing public need. In a 1989 speech given to the Knights of Malta, he professed:

I suspect that a dollar that comes from our churches and synagogues goes farther to help those in need than one that comes from the Government. And I don't mean just because the Government's overhead is higher. No, it's that the state's power is, at its root, the power to coerce, for example, to demand taxes. The power of the church is the power of love. And that makes all the difference. (Ronald Reagan 1989).

Over the last two decades, the conservative embrace of religious nonprofits by the Republican Party has evolved to increasingly promote the involvement of religious or faith-based groups as nonprofit service providers. George W. Bush's "compassionate conservatism" was in effect an attempt to formally merge the market logic of privatization to a public perception of religious voluntarism and benevolence based on "traditional" American cultural and religious values. In 1999, as Bush's appointed director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, John Dilulio argued that compassionate conservatism was a form of "subsidiarity conservatism," "derived from a Judeo-Christian religious doctrine about how government should relate to the family and civil society". The principle of subsidiarity, Dilulio argued, was based on Catholic doctrine, which "sets limits for state intervention," understands the family as the "original cell of social life," yet mandates that all people share a concern for "social well-being" and when necessary, take on "the duty of helping" the "needy". Private faith-based organizations, he argued, were not only appropriately benevolent and morally proficient in taking on such duties, they were also innovative, accountable and oriented towards both needs and results. Thus, opening up the social-welfare field to privately-led faith-based organizations, argued Dilulio, would usher in a new era of "results-driven" public administration (Dilulio 1999).

In contrast to the earlier Reagan approach, which celebrated full privatization of provision for public needs, George W. Bush's "compassionate conservatism" has implied a level of defense for government spending on public need, but has justified this through supporting the funding of "private" as opposed to "governmental" actors. This agenda has been met with a high level of criticism, particularly from within the conservative camp itself for suggesting an unmistakable dissonance with free market logic. As Michael Tanner of the Cato Institute argues, government funding for religious and voluntary groups is inherently contradictory to free-market philosophy, which would hold that private charity should be responsible for meeting social need.

Furthermore, these critics claim, providing government funds for groups to provide social services will only bureaucratize and corrupt faith-based and voluntary organizations, shifting them away from their spiritual and voluntary mission (Tanner 1996; 2001).

Numerous other critics have challenged the George W. Bush administration's faith-based agenda for exploiting the emotive voluntary aspect of nonprofit organizations as a persuasive rhetorical device for generating public support for transferring government responsibility for social services to the private and nonprofit sectors. As Frumkin suggests, if the idea that churches, voluntary community groups, and private charities could be sold to the public so that these providers were seen not only as fully capable of taking responsibility for community needs, but also as the more morally appropriate provider of such needs, then, "conservatives believed they could make an effective argument for shrinking government" (Frumkin 2002; p. 18). A variation on this criticism suggests that the Bush administration's compassionate conservative agenda was a mere political maneuver to mollify partisan supporters while further manufacturing an identification of the Republican Party with religious values and voters. This criticism suggests that the administration's underlying agenda is in fact one of full privatization of social service provision, with a strong role for private religious actors in particular in providing for social needs.

Oklahoma Republican Senator Tom Coburn's recent reflection on the state of compassionate conservatism and its "undoing," makes a direct case for its privatization, fully embedded in a Christian doctrinal justification of "true compassion". Coburn asserts, "Compassionate conservatism's next step - its implicit claim that charity or compassion translates into a particular style of activist government involving massive spending increases and entitlement expansion - was its undoing. Common sense and the Scriptures show that true giving and compassion require sacrifice by the giver. This is why Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell his possessions, not his neighbor's possessions. Spending other people's money is not compassionate" (Coburn 2008).

The strongest critics of the conservative agenda argue that its celebration of the capacity of private giving and religious actors to meet public need are in fact a mere ruse, a calculated ploy to increase electoral support from its religious base while incrementally dismantling the welfare state, but without any authentic concern for how social needs are provided for when government protections are gone. These commentators argue that the needs of modern American society are far too complex to be met by the nuclear family and spontaneous acts of communal charity, something that conservatives certainly recognize yet conveniently overlook. They point to the highly competitive market demands which require most men and women to work outside the home and increasing disparities in wealth, as well as the excessively fickle and selective nature of philanthropy, the fact that the overwhelming majority of giving at the individual as well as foundation level takes place within donor's own communities and benefits people with backgrounds similar to the donor, and that foundations are legally entitled to be selective and discriminatory in their grant-making if they so choose (Wolpert 2006). Such factors, these critics argue, bode poorly for the capacity of private actors, philanthropists and nonprofit organizations to meet the needs of the nation, particularly across geographic, socioeconomic and racial lines. In effect, they maintain, public acceptance of the conservative project will likely have harmful consequences for the country's most marginalized populations.

Finally, critics of the conservative project argue that not only has its agenda been disingenuous, its claims have been hypocritical. This critique has arisen in response to conservatives rampant accusations of liberal nonprofits for doing political advocacy. Beginning in the mid-1990s, Republican politicians began calling for revocation of tax exempt status for any organization that does anything other than public charity work (Berry 2001). According to Jeffrey Berry, the conservative movement, led by the Cato and Heritage Foundations, has been working for the last several decades to effectively “defund the left” arguing that the use of federal dollars for political work is illegal and essentially “welfare for lobbyists”, (Berry 2001; p. 81-84). Within this vein of argument, conservative criticism of “liberal” foundations has been especially strong, with conservative columnists such as Heather MacDonald labeling more liberal oriented foundations as “radical,” “activist,” and “laboratories for the federal welfare state” (MacDonald 1996). Philanthropic sector monitoring groups such as the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy argue however that it is actually the conservative philanthropic agenda that has been the more politically aggressive and strategically sly. In particular, they argue that much of the capacity to convince both public officials as well as the American public of the need for massive tax cuts to public spending programs, welfare reform, Social Security privatization, missile defense, school choice and a number of other conservative policy agendas can be traced to the organizations and individuals supported and promoted by conservative philanthropy (Krehely; NCRP 2004). Furthermore, they claim, not only have conservative foundations been funding conservative policy agendas around the shrinking of government, they have also been funding the American culture wars, strategically channeling large amounts of grant dollars to religious organizations advocating extreme socially conservative causes and policies, and funding the issue battlefields of abortion, school prayer, public displays of the Ten Commandments, and opposition to stem-cell research and sex marriage (Russell, NCRP 2005). These critics argue that it is in fact this strategic alliance between economic conservatives and religious conservatives that has

become the critical driving force behind the resurgent strength of the Republican Party, a view that they point out has been corroborated by political scientists (Brennan 1995; Oldfield 1996). Highlighting both conservative grant-making to religious groups as well as Bush's recent faith-based initiatives to fund religious groups for the provision of social services, these critics argue that such actions have not only provoked serious questions over the legitimacy of such wealthy and powerful actors in the democratic process, they also raise critical constitutional issues surrounding the separation of church and state.

## **Part 2: Exploring Motives for Foundation Behavior**

The second part of this paper explores philanthropic foundation grant-making patterns to nonprofit organizations working in pregnancy counseling who maintain identifiable anti-abortion views (commonly referred to as "crisis pregnancy centers") between 2003 and 2006. The first objective of this component of the paper is to examine the effectiveness of this specific "private action" to meet unplanned pregnancy need across U.S. states, in light of conservative rhetorical emphasis on private and religious actor capacity to address public need and provide results as explored in the previous section. While commitment to teen pregnancy reduction has been a bipartisan issue with strong public support, the Republican Party in particular has stressed a specific commitment to teen pregnancy as key electoral issues, proposing such measures as the 1994 Personal Responsibility Act (part of the Party's 1994 Contract with America) which would have prohibited welfare to mothers under 18 years of age as a means of discourage illegitimacy and teen pregnancy, pushing for and securing passage of the abstinence-only-until-marriage education funding to states as part of the 1996 welfare reform bill, and also introducing and pushing for the passage of a number of other provisions within the 1996 welfare reform bill to reduce out of wedlock births. Thus, it is evident that Republicans have provided strong cues on the importance of addressing teen pregnancy as a public need.

The second objective of this part of the paper is to explore how other political and instrumental goals of grant-makers may work to shape the grant-making process in the field of crisis pregnancy. The anti-abortion or “pro-life” social movement has been strongly active at both the state and national levels in the United States since the passage of Roe vs. Wade by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973. Thus one might assume grants in this area to be associated with pro-life beliefs and instrumental anti-abortion goals. Furthermore, research by political scientists has shown that since the 1980s, abortion has shown clear “issue ownership” by the two major U.S. political parties, with the Republican Party sponsoring a firm pro-life position, and the Democratic Party promoting a less vocal but still clear pro-abortion rights orientation (Adams 1997; Abramowitz 1995). For this reason, the relationship between private action on abortion and party politics also provides a clear and relevant entry point for exploring grant-making patterns.

## **Methods**

Data on foundation grant making was collected using The Foundation Center’s Foundation Directory Online searchable database (Professional version). This database includes grant-maker and grant profiles from over 92,000 foundations, corporate giving programs, and grant making public charities in the U.S. Although not fully inclusive of the entire universe of grant-makers and grants operating in the U.S. it is a highly comprehensive source. Grants were searched for 2003-2006 according to relevant pre-determined subject categories, such as “pregnancy centers”, “civil liberties, right to life”, “reproductive rights” and “reproductive rights and health,” as well as a number of logical keywords such as “crisis pregnancy”, “pregnancy counseling”, “pro-life”, etc. Once exhaustive searching produced no new results, all grant data (which included funder, recipient, year awarded and total amount awarded) was downloaded into an Excel file. Then grants were scanned for duplicates and categorized by year, state, recipient and funder. Following the categorization step, all grants included in the sample were verified as going to

organizations with a clear anti-abortion position and a pregnancy need oriented mission. All crisis pregnancy center grants included in this study identified their primary mission as meeting the needs of pregnant women with an unplanned pregnancy by providing counseling on alternatives to abortion. No organizations included in this sample stated a political advocacy role in their missions. In addition, grants were classified as being targeted to state or national level organizations, and only those grants with state level orientation were included for this study.

Rates of teenage pregnancy (age 15-17) was chosen as the primary measure for operationalizing unplanned pregnancy “need” across U.S. states for this study. Teenage pregnancy was chosen over unplanned pregnancy due to measurement problems associated with unplanned pregnancy (noted by Petersen and Moos (1997)) as well as strong consensus across the political spectrum over the identification of teenage pregnancy as a social problem. The importance of reducing rates of teenage pregnancy has been formally recognized in national legislation due to the implications teenage motherhood has been shown to have on the lives of young women as well as their children, in comparison to motherhood experienced in post-teenage years. Such impacts include a higher likelihood of having low birth-weight babies (Wolfe, B. & Perozek, M. 1997.), a much lower likelihood of completing high school for the mother (Maynard, R.A., Ed. 1996), long term socioeconomic implications for mother and child (National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979-1985); as well as a higher risk of abuse and neglect for the child (George, R.M., & Lee, B.J. 1997; Maynard, R.A., Ed. 1996).

### **I. Foundation Response to Need**

In 1999, in his first major public address of his presidential campaign, George W. Bush laid out the Republican Party’s vision for faith-based organization, charities and voluntary action. The Republican agenda he argued would “make a determined attack on need, by promoting the compassionate acts of others”. This path would be taken, first and foremost, “because private and

religious groups are effective. Because they have clear advantages over government”. Such language suggests strong faith in private and religious actor capacity to address public needs. Furthermore, crisis pregnancy centers, as religious and privately driven organizations, provide a valuable test of the validity of such claims. If crisis pregnancy grants are the product of an intention to address greatest unplanned pregnancy need across states, one should expect to find the highest portion of grants to be distributed to those states with the highest rates of unplanned pregnancy.

Table 1 presents a ranked comparison of state level teen pregnancy need relative to state level foundation grant dollars for crisis pregnancy centers for 2003 and 2004 combined (adjusted for state population). This table suggests that addressing teen pregnancy need across the U.S. in general is not a primary funding priority for these grant-makers. For 2003-2004, only one of the top ten neediest states is also top ten funding recipients (Nevada). Of the nine remaining top-ten funding recipients, none are even in the top twenty neediest states. For 2005-2006, not even one of the top ten funding recipients is in the top ten neediest states. Furthermore, a t-test (pooling all grants for both years) shows no relationship between need and crisis pregnancy grant dollars for either set of years. For 2003-2004 the simple bivariate correlation is a miniscule .056, while for 2005-2006 it is solidly negative (-.16). These findings strongly suggest not only that meeting need across states is not a primary factor driving foundation funding preferences, it is not even a consideration. Such results clearly demand greater exploration to identify what factors, if any, are at work across states in shaping these funding patterns.

**Table 1: States ranked by A) Need (source: Guttmacher Institute 2006 (2001 data) and B) Crisis Pregnancy Grant Dollars (relative to population) for 2003-2004 and C) Crisis Pregnancy Grant Dollars (relative to population) for 2005-2006.**

A. States ranked by NEED (Pregnancies per 1000, age 15-17)	B. States ranked by crisis pregnancy grant dollars relative to population for 2003 and 2004 combined (dollars per 1000 people)	States ranked by crisis pregnancy grant dollars relative to population for 2005 and 2006 combined (dollars per 1000)
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				people)
1. Mississippi	64	1. Michigan		1. Wyoming
2. Nevada	64	2. Missouri		2. Montana
3. New Mexico	64	3. Ohio		3. North Dakota
4. Arizona	62	4. Colorado		4. Ohio
5. Delaware	62	5. Indiana		5. Oregon
6. Texas	59	6. Oregon		6. Michigan
7. New York	57	7. Nevada		7. Tennessee
8. South Carolina	57	8. Florida		8. Oklahoma
9. California	55	9. Rhode Island		9. Indiana
10. Florida	55	10. Washington		10. Colorado
11. Georgia	55	11. Minnesota		11. Nebraska
12. Alabama	54	12. Maryland		12. Washington
13. North Carolina	54	13. Texas		13. Texas
14. Illinois	53	14. California		14. Missouri
15. Maryland	53	15. Arizona		15. Delaware
16. New Jersey	52	16. Tennessee		16. Maryland
17. Arkansas	51	17. Delaware		17. South Carolina
18. Hawaii	50	18. Kentucky		18. California
19. Louisiana	50	19. Arkansas		19. Connecticut
20. Tennessee	50	20. Nebraska		20. North Carolina
21. Colorado	48	21. Pennsylvania		21. Massachusetts
22. Oklahoma	48	22. Kansas		22. Nevada
23. Oregon	44	23. Virginia		23. Minnesota
24. Connecticut	42	24. North Carolina		24. Florida
25. Michigan	42	25. Illinois		25. Virginia
26. Washington	42	26. Wisconsin		26. Pennsylvania
27. Wyoming	42	27. Connecticut		27. New York
28. Kentucky	41	28. New York		28. Wisconsin
29. Missouri	40	29. Massachusetts		29. Illinois
30. Ohio	40	30. Utah		30. Mississippi
31. Indiana	39	31. Alabama		31. Kentucky
32. Rhode Island	38	32. Iowa		32. Arizona
33. Virginia	38	33. Georgia		33. Georgia
34. Alaska	37	34. Idaho		34. Louisiana
35. Kansas	36	35. Louisiana		35. Kansas
36. Massachusetts	34	36. Maine		36. Alabama
37. Pennsylvania	34	37. Mississippi		37. Utah
38. West Virginia	34	38. Montana		38. Iowa
39. Montana	33	39. New Hampshire		39. West Virginia
40. Nebraska	32	40. New Jersey		40. New Mexico
41. Idaho	31	41. New Mexico		41. Vermont
42. Iowa	30	42. North Dakota		42. South Dakota
43. Utah	30	43. Oklahoma		43. Rhode Island
44. Wisconsin	30	44. South Carolina		44. New Jersey
45. Maine	27	45. South Dakota		45. New Hampshire
46. South Dakota	27	46. Vermont		46. Maine
47. Minnesota	26	47. West Virginia		47. Idaho
48. Vermont	23	48. Wyoming		48. Arkansas
49. New Hampshire	22	49. Alaska		49. Alaska
50. North Dakota	21	50. Hawaii		50. Hawaii

## II. Political and Instrumental Behavior of Foundations

The second component of this investigation draws on theories and ideas developed through research on abortion politics, social movements, and political theories of nonprofits and applies

these to a multivariate explanatory model of crisis pregnancy grant making in order to explore the political and instrumental explanations for foundation behavior in this field. In order to carry out this analysis, grant dollars were totaled for each state for both 2003 and 2004 separately and then the two years were pooled (n=100). This part of the analysis was intended to capture grant making to crisis pregnancy centers in time period leading up the 2004 U.S. presidential election. In addition, grant dollars were totaled for each state for both 2005 and 2006 separately and then these two years were pooled. This part of the analysis was intended to explore whether differences existed between these two sets of years that could arguably be applied to a theoretical explanation of strategic grant-making behavior.

Because of the relatively small number of observations for each analysis, independent variables were picked selectively to reflect key theoretical entry points drawn from previous research. The first variable is based on Burton Weisbrod's theory on the relationship between population diversity and nonprofit foundings (1977). This theory suggests that nonprofits arise when a group of individuals in a population has needs and/or preferences that deviate from the median voter. This theory would suggest that those places with the greatest number of individuals who oppose legal abortion (the median voter preference) would be the most likely to host anti-abortion nonprofit organizations. The variable used to test this theory is the percent of individuals identifying as pro-life in each state (Source: SurveyUSA 50-State Public Opinion on Abortion Survey, 2005). In addition and interaction variable for pro-life identification and southern state status is explored as well, in order to capture uniqueness in Southern/non-Southern mobilization around abortion that may distinguish these states from the rest of the country (Key 1949; Applebone 1996; Erikson, Wright and McIver 1989; Henshaw 2000; Henshaw and Finer 2003)

Another theory supported by both academic as well as journalistic research on anti-abortion mobilization would suggest that crisis pregnancy center funding might be highest not simply

where pro-life sentiments are strongest, but more specifically, where Protestant Evangelical and Catholic identification is highest. Marx Ferree et al. for example argue that the learned capacity of these two religious groups to strategically work together has been highly instrumental in advancing the anti-abortion movement's agenda in the United States over the last several decades (Marx Ferree et al. 2002). In addition, individuals identifying with these two religious groups make up the primary grassroots base involved in organizing and staffing crisis pregnancy centers across the country (Bazelon 2007). In surveying a large number of Evangelical Protestant churches across the United States, Miller for example found that almost half were involved in crisis pregnancy counseling (Miller 1999). In addition, Catholics have been notably active in organizing and running crisis pregnancy centers as well, through congregation based grassroots organizations such as the Gabriel Project as well as through local Catholic Charities (Sherrod 1995; Catholic Charities 2008). If foundation grants are the expression of strong Evangelical and/or Catholic orientations within states then we might expect higher levels of grants to correspond with the higher levels of either or both of these two groups. Furthermore, it would also make sense for grant-makers with anti-abortion preferences outside of these states to make grants in these states, as such states provide a strong grassroots base for sustaining crisis pregnancy centers. The variable explored here is the total percentage of the state population identifying as either Evangelical Protestant or Catholic (Source: Association of Religious Data Archives).

Another plausible orientation driving crisis pregnancy grant-makers may be the belief that the nonprofit sector should provide alternatives to abortion based on the principles of free market competition and freedom of choice. This variable is drawn from numerous journalistic accounts which show how anti-abortion activist groups have adopted the language of "choice" as their rationale for pregnancy counseling services, both as a strategic counter to the pro-abortion rights movement as well to frame abortion counseling centers as free market alternative to organizations

that provide abortions (Toto 2005; Marcotte 2006; Mathewes-Green 2005; NRLC 2008). This would suggest that foundation grants to crisis pregnancy centers might be highest in states not only with stronger pro-life orientations, but with greater numbers of conservatives in general. The variable used to operationalize the strength of general conservative ideology across states is the percentage of voters voting for George W. Bush in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections (averaged for the 2 election years) (Source: CNN Election Archives for 2000 and 2004).

While a purely expressive orientation of each of the above variables would predict that grant-making activity would be highest within states, a more instrumentalist expression of a pro-life activist or a free-market provision orientation would predict that grants would be strategically targeted to those states with the highest number of abortion providers. Thus, the number of abortion providers per state (relative to population) is explored for explanatory power as well (Source: NARAL Pro-Choice America).

Finally, based on the salience of the abortion issue at both the state and national levels agenda for the last two decades, three variables are explored. The first is intended to capture whether crisis pregnancy grant-makers are behaving as anti-abortion movement actors whose actions are targeted to the state political level. Theories of mobilization drawn from social movement research suggests that if this is the case, resource mobilization will be highest in those states with the most open political opportunity structures (McAdam 1982; Costain 1992; Tarrow 1989). The variable chosen to test this theory is total number of anti abortion policies passed by state legislatures since Roe vs. Wade. (Source: NARAL Pro-Choice America).

The second and third political variables are based on strategic targeting theories developed by political scientists to explain party behavior during elections. According to such arguments, during highly contested elections, political parties and their activists are unlikely to expend effort

contacting those individuals who are likely supporters based on demographic profiles and party identification, and more likely to strategically target undecided or “persuadable” voters (Panangopolous and Weilhouwer 2008; Hillygus and Shields 2007). Wedge issues such as abortion serve as particularly important tools in this process as they allow for strategic targeting not only of undecided voters but of cross-pressured party identifiers as well. As Hillygus and Shields argue, in recent U.S. presidential elections in particular, conflict within parties on moral issues rather than across parties has created particularly high strategic incentives for candidates to exploit a “culture war” as part of a wedge campaign strategy (Hillygus and Shields, p. 51). Because the Democratic party’s pro-choice orientation on abortion has conflicted with more conservative abortion attitudes of numerous voters who otherwise identify with the Democratic party platform (Adams 1997; Abramowitz 1995), it has provided a key wedge issue for Republican candidates and activists to exploit as part of an electoral strategy to build a winning coalition (Hillygus and Shields 2007). Swing states by definition are home to the high numbers of persuadable and cross-partisan voters and also provide critical electoral prizes for political parties during elections. This is of course particularly the case during those elections that are highly contested, such as the 2004 presidential election. By extension, those swing states with the highest levels of electoral votes logically provide the greatest prize for political parties. Strategic targeting arguments applied to crisis pregnancy grant making would suggest that foundations were behaving as strategic political actors during this time period, targeting crisis pregnancy grants to swing states for election mobilization purposes. The variables used to test this theory are a dummy variable for swing states (defined as those states with a Presidential election margin of 6% or less during either the 2000 or 2004 elections) along with an interaction variable for capturing the interaction of swing state status with number of electoral votes in a state (Source: CNN Election Archives for 2000 and 2004).

**Table 2. Effects of Multiple Regression on Crisis Pregnancy Grant Dollars to States for 2003 and 2004 (n = 100)**

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>
Percent identifying as “pro-life”	.15 (.14)	.33 (.22)	.004 (.19)
Percent identifying as “pro-life” + southern state	-.12* (.06)	-.12* (.06)	-.11* (.06)
Percent Evangelical Protestant + Catholic	-.02 (.11)	-.08 (.11)	--
Percent conservative voters	--	-.28 (.23)	--
Number of anti-abortion policies	--	--	.56 (.50)
Number of abortion providers (relative to state population)	--	--	-.03 (.41)
Swing state	7.67*** (2.18)	-2.44 3.37	-.09 3.6
Swing state + electoral vote	--	.85*** .25	.76** .16
R <sup>2</sup>	.07	.28	.29
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.03	.24	.25

Notes: Entries are unstandardized regression coefficients from ordinary least squares (standard errors are in parentheses); \*\*\*=significant at .001; \*\*=significant at .01, \*=significant at .05

**Table 3. Effects of Multiple Regression on Crisis Pregnancy Grant Dollars to States for 2005 and 2006 (n = 100)**

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>
Percent identifying as “pro-life”	.38 (.27)	-.71 (.42)	--
Percent identifying as “pro-life” + southern state	-.24* (.11)	-.18 (.11)	-.25* .10
Percent Evangelical Protestant + Catholic	-.16 (.20)	.13 (.21)	.17 (.23)
Percent conservative voters	--	1.4* (.44)	1.17*** (.35)
Number of anti-abortion policies	--	--	-.26 (1.02)
Number of abortion providers (relative to state population)	--	--	.83 (.78)
Swing state	-2.1	-5.4	--

	(4.2)	(6.5)	
Swing state + electoral vote	--	.84	.56
		(.48)	(.34)
R <sup>2</sup>	.06	.18	.15
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.02	.12	

Notes: Entries are unstandardized regression coefficients from ordinary least squares (standard errors are in parentheses) ; \*\*\*=significant at .001; \*\*=significant at .01, \*=significant at .05; Wyoming 2005 was adjusted to trim outlier status

## Results and Discussion

Results of the multiple regression models for the 2 sets of years provide a number of interesting findings. For the first set of years (2003-2004) three variables are significant. The first two, 1) swing states and 2) the interaction variable between swing states and electoral votes had overwhelmingly strong and positive effects (both at the <.00001 level when tested for separately) (Models 1 and 2 respectively). When tested together (model 3) the effect of swing states in general drops out, indicating that the majority of the effect is coming from high-electoral vote swing states. This finding suggests that during 2003 and 2004, foundations in the crisis pregnancy field were behaving as rational political actors, using their grant-making to target high electoral vote swing states for presidential election mobilization purposes around abortion or perhaps around other conservatively aligned issues as well (possibly same-sex marriage, as same sex marriage was a ballot initiative in several swing states). While perhaps surprising with respect to the rhetorical claims of Republicans, this finding is consistent with a strategic targeting theories developed by political scientists to explain party and party activist behavior during elections. According to Panangopolous and Weilhauer (2008), the 2004 presidential election was one of the most highly contested in decades, and the rate at which money was spent by state parties on voter mobilization and grassroots campaigning in the 2004 election, was more than double that of the three previous presidential elections combined. And according to Center for the Studies of Elections and Democracy, political parties and interest groups dedicated more money to the “ground war” in the 2004 election than in any other election, targeting “a hard

money bonanza into ground war activities and independent expenditures” (CSED 2005). It is also not particularly surprising given the observations of a number of journalists of the grassroots activist and politically driven orientations of crisis pregnancy centers (Marcotte 2006; Edsall 2005; Bazelon 2007) as well as the allegations of National Committee on Responsive Philanthropy regarding conservative philanthropic investment in these groups for mobilization purposes (Russell, NCRP 2005).

The second significant variable from 2003-2004 is interaction variable between pro-life identification and southern state status, which showed a negative affect at the  $<.05$  level. This finding was significant through all three models, even after controlling for swing states and high electoral vote swing states and it implies that between a southern and a non-southern state with equivalent pro-life orientations, a southern state is significantly less likely to receive crisis pregnancy grants. Whether this is due to a low numbers of Southern grant-makers targeting crisis pregnancy or to an avoidance of the South by non-Southern grant-makers who grant in this field outside of their own states deserves further exploration. The finding that conservative grant-makers in this field have generally overlooked this part of the country in their targeting of service provision is particularly concerning when one considers the high levels of teen pregnancy, high rates of poverty, high rural population with lower access to services, high levels of minorities, and the particularly restrictive birth control access and abortion policies (with even greater restrictions for teens) and low rates of health insurance present in most Southern states (Henshaw 2003).

Findings from the 2005-2006 analysis are also quite interesting, particularly when considered relative to the 2003-2004 outcome. This analysis suggested that following the 2004 election, grant-making to states shifted considerably, away from swing states and towards conservative states. The most significant finding in this model is that it appears that crisis pregnancy grant-makers are not targeting those states with the highest levels of pro-life ideology but rather those

states with highest conservative voters in general. The implication of this finding is that grant-makers may be using crisis pregnancy grants to build organizations to strengthen their conservative base in general around the abortion issue, particularly by promoting the abortion counseling as a free choice market alternative to abortion providers, particularly in more individualist and less religious states such as Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota (see Table 1 ranking; column C). Whether the primary funders driving the funding shift to these states are religiously motivated or pro-life activists or just conservatives, perhaps with Republican Party ties is an intriguing question that merits further exploration. Also, the negative pro-life-Southern state effect also shows up here in models 1 and 3 as well, implying that what the impact of southern states on funding is still relevant even following the 2004 election.

## Conclusion

This paper explores the capacity of a form of “private action on behalf of the public good,” in the form of foundation grant-making to address teenage pregnancy needs across U.S. states in the field of crisis pregnancy counseling. It argues that theories of nonprofit sector founding which stress that nonprofits will arise as a response to need do not help to explain the presence of such organizations across U.S. states in this field. Instead it argues that grant making patterns in this field are best explained by conceiving of funders as strategic and rational political actors whose grant-making responds to structural opportunity and incentive, particularly electoral and party mobilization. This finding suggests that conservatives have used crisis pregnancy grant-making not to target greatest unplanned pregnancy need, but to mobilize the abortion issue for strategic political gain. Furthermore, the finding that conservative grant-makers in this field have disregarded certain parts of the country in their grant-making, particularly those with greatest

need, is an especially concerning finding that deserves greater exploration. It may be the case that crisis pregnancy centers have arisen voluntarily in these states, particularly those with pro-life orientations, perhaps through church-based organizing.

In sum, this study reminds us, as Elisabeth Clemens points out, that all nonprofit organizations are political creations (Clemens 2006). In essence, it may be more accurate to say that all nonprofit organizations are political creations of those who provide them with the resources they need to exist and survive. Although the degree to which the politics of funders drives the politics of nonprofit organizations certainly varies across issues and fields, this study suggests the importance of always keeping this relationship in mind.

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