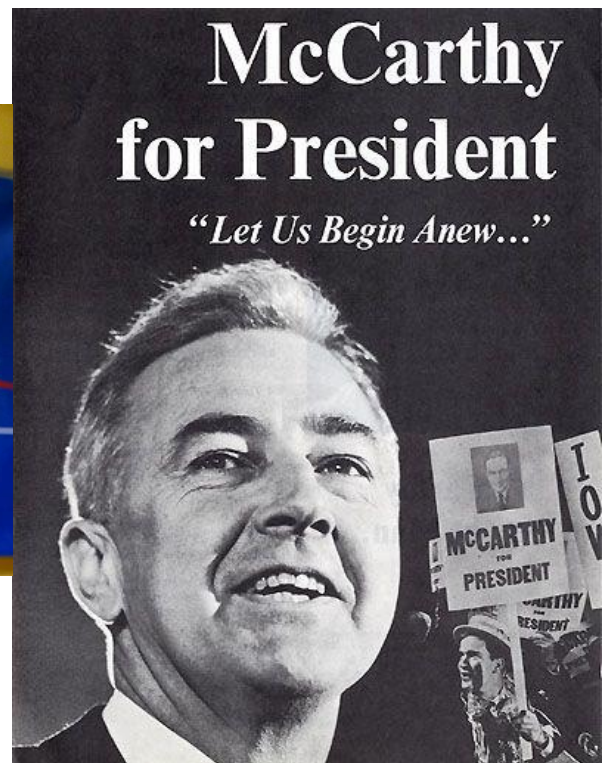# Feel the Bern and Clean for Gene

A comparison between the intra-party insurgency campaigns

of Eugene McCarthy in 1968 and Bernie Sanders in 2016

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Introduction

Topic description and orientation

> "What I am referring to is the need to do more than just win the next election. It's about creating a situation where we are involving millions of people in the process who are not now involved . . . It's about helping to educate people, organize people. If we can do that, we can change the dynamic of politics for years and years to come."[1] – Bernie Sanders, March 6, 2014

On April 30, 2015, Bernie Sanders announced his plans for running for President of the United States of America by seeking the nomination for the Democratic Party. Sanders, an independent senator from Vermont, self-proclaimed democratic socialist, and Jew, was generally seen as an outsider in the political system.[2] His radical plans to combat economic equality, to raise the minimum wage, to make college tuition-free, and to minimize the role of money in politics and the power of Wall Street were met with disdain by the Democratic Party's establishment.[3] He faced Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primaries, who was expected to easily win the nomination after her loss to Barack Obama in 2008. Not only did she take over campaign personnel from Obama's 2012 campaign, she also faced a relatively unknown candidate, and was described as "looking like an incumbent president running for re-election."[4] But despite Sanders's role as a political outsider, he has triumphed over Clinton in twenty-three primaries, often with large margins. Sanders's success is largely built on young, white Americans: "Voters under age 30 were the fuel behind Mr. Sanders's campaign. He won more than 70% of them— a bigger share than Barack Obama claimed in 2008."[5] However, eventually Clinton won the nomination with three and a half million more votes than Sanders: 55 percent for Clinton, while Sanders received 44 percent of the vote.[6]

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[1] John Nichols, "Bernie Sanders: 'I Am Prepared to Run for President of the United States,'" *The Nation*, March 6, 2014.

[2] Peter Weber, "Bernie Sanders Becomes First Jewish, Non-Christian Candidate to Win U.S. Primary," *The Week*, February 9, 2016.

[3] Samantha Lachman, "A Democratic Socialist Just Won The New Hampshire Primary," *The Huffington Post*, February 9, 2016.

[4] Chuck Todd, Mark Murray, and Carrie Dann, "Obama's Critics - and Some Supporters - Ask 'What National Security Strategy?,'" *NBC News*, February 6, 2015.

[5] Aaron Zitner, Dante Chinni, and Brian McGill, "How Hillary Clinton Won the Democratic Nomination Over Bernie Sanders," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 8, 2016.

[6] "Democratic Convention 2016," *The Green Papers: United States Presidential Election 2016*, accessed October 4, 2016.

In the media, his relative success in the primaries, but eventual defeat to Clinton, has been compared to earlier outsider presidential candidates in the United States to explain Sanders's popularity. The campaign of Sanders is particularly reminiscent of Eugene McCarthy's 1968 run for the Democratic nomination. A relatively unknown senator from Minnesota, McCarthy ran on an anti-Vietnam War platform, thereby challenging the Democratic president Lyndon B. Johnson. Just like Sanders, McCarthy was seen as the outsider in the primaries, but in New Hampshire he came very close to defeating the incumbent Johnson. During the tumultuous primaries (Robert Kennedy was shot after winning California), McCarthy gained the most votes, but Hubert Humphrey, Vice President under Johnson, was nominated at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.[7]

Just like Sanders, McCarthy received lackluster support from the party's establishment. Moreover, both Sanders and McCarthy appealed to a young, mainly white liberal, voter base. Sanders has explicitly stated that he wants to increase voter turnout and political awareness (see quote at top), and McCarthy voiced a similar goal when he announced his candidacy: "I am hopeful that a challenge may alleviate the sense of political helplessness and restore to many people a belief in the process of American politics and of American government."[8] Both candidates sought to shake the political system and make it more accessible from within their own parties. McCarthy's campaign is often regarded as an intra-party insurgency.[9] Does the campaign of Bernie Sanders fit the same label? V.O. Key, an influential political scientist in the nineteen-forties and fifties, defined political insurgencies as "insurgencies both inside and outside major parties as kindred methods for those disenchanted with the party establishment to champion reform."[10] The choice between the two major parties is apparently not enough, which is why insurgency campaigns have at times sprung up during American elections. According to Tichenor and Fuerstman, successful insurgencies have three central elements: channeling citizen frustration, raising new issues, and transforming the political process, with the latter being the most defining aspect.[11]

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[7] Dominic Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy: The Rise and Fall of Postwar American Liberalism*, Ebook (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 7-8.

[8] Eugene J. McCarthy, *The Year of the People* (New York: Doubleday, 1969), 265–267.

[9] Daniel Tichenor and Daniel Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns and the Quest for Popular Democracy: Theodore Roosevelt, Eugene McCarthy, and Party Monopolies," *Polity* 40, no. 1 (January 2008): 49–69, 51.

[10] Ibid., 51.

[11] Ibid., 52, 53, 68.

In this thesis, I want to analyze the extent of these similarities to understand the dynamics of the Sanders's campaign and place it in a wider context and framework of intra-party insurgencies. Both McCarthy and Sanders ran within the Democratic Party, which is why the focus lies on intra-party insurgencies. By analyzing how they hooked into larger movements to channel citizen frustration, how they were able to raise new issues, and how they were able to leave their mark on the political process, this thesis will argue to what extent the campaign of Bernie Sanders fits the framework of intra-party insurgencies within the Democratic Party. By doing so, this thesis will place the campaign of Bernie Sanders in its rightful context. Through analyzing and comparing the elements of insurgency from McCarthy's campaign with the Sanders campaign, this thesis will expand on the insurgency theory by focusing on the interplay between the three aforementioned elements.

Overview of academic discussion

Why has there been, and is there still, a tendency for insurgency campaigns to spring up during elections and demand change, both within and outside the major parties? The two-party system in American politics has been the subject of numerous discussions about its success, sustainability, and viability. On the one hand, the two-party system provides political stability. The Democratic and Republican Party have virtually dominated the political spectrum since 1860: John F. Bibby argues that "two-party politics is highly compatible with American society, culture, and governmental structures."[12] According to Bibby, America's political system has "operated within the context of stability, consensus, and incremental policy change."[13] Even when dissent and opposition against party policy rises, the major parties are usually able to incorporate the alternative ideas into their own policies, according to David McKay: "The Democrats and Republicans adapted to the demands, or the movements themselves were reincorporated into the mainstream once the protest had been made."[14]

On the other hand, there have also been occasions when the two main parties were unresponsive to protest. This was already observed in the 1950s, when V.O. Key described the weakness of the two-party system: "(…) the tendency of major-party leaders to evade significant national problems and public discontent rather than confront them openly and

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[12] John F. Bibby, "In Defense of the Two-Party System," in *Multiparty Politics in America: Prospects and Performance*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson and John Clifford Green, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 45–58, 46.

[13] Ibid., 49.

[14] David H. McKay, *American Politics and Society*, Eighth Edition (Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2013), 92.

decisively."[15] Even though the Democratic and Republican Party have provided stability and consensus, they have also been known to evade certain issues and, due to bipartisan opposition, have failed to be highly effective. David Gillespie examines that, over the last two decades, the two-party system and its "interparty relationships" can be described as "zero-sum thinking and the filibuster threat, intractability on health care and other issues, a policy process swerving sharply away from bipartisan comity, paralysis and virtual gridlock."[16] The two-party system is thus both cherished and detested. The ineffectiveness of the two-party system and its perceived evading of important issues has been linked to the status quo that both parties try to uphold. Gillespie argues that the

> American party system is a duopoly, an enforced two-party system. (…) These two major parties fight over many things, but they have long been aware of their shared interest in mutual self-protection, in taking steps to shut out challengers to their exclusive places inside that center ring [of American party politics].[17]

Despite the institutional and procedural barriers for challengers to the political system, there are a number of different possibilities to shift the status quo, promote alternative plans and possibly achieve reform.

Thus, to oppose the status quo of the two-party system, Key suggested a number of strategies for change: "First, reformers may form a pressure group or mobilize a large popular following to lobby the existing set of elected representatives of both major parties. Second, reformers may organize an insurgent electoral campaign that either promotes reform goals inside one of the dominant major parties or challenges the establishment by forming a third party."[18] The first option of lobbying and pressure groups has come under great scrutiny over time. Anthony Nownes analyzed the paradox of interest groups in American politics, juxtaposing that one the hand, "most Americans support interest groups by joining, identifying, or sympathizing with them; yet on the other, most Americans hate interest groups and think

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[15] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 52.
[16] J. David Gillespie, *Challengers to Duopoly: Why Third Parties Matter in American Two-Party Politics*, 1st ed. (Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 2012), 3.
[17] Ibid., 1.
[18] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 52.

they are too powerful."[19] This ties in with a general feeling among Americans that the rich have too much influence on politics and the role of money in politics should be restricted, as shown by Cigler and Loomis: "The poor and the middle class are indeed represented by interest groups, they are not as *effectively* represented by interest groups as wealthy people are."[20] Additionally, the influence of interest groups and lobbying is only limited: "In cases in which interest groups want one thing and a majority of citizens want another, government decision-makers tend to go with the citizens rather than the interest groups."[21]

With the first option being highly unpopular, the second option of an electoral campaign for the highest office of the United States seems more effective. However, people opposed to the status quo of the two-party system face a dilemma in choosing between running a third-party campaign or a campaign within one of the major parties. As a result of this dilemma, third-party and intra-party insurgencies are inextricably linked as ways to shake up the political status quo. By running a third-party campaign, a candidate can much easier define his campaign independent from official party policy and set him or herself apart from the two major parties.[22] But the third-party route also has its disadvantages, as Bernie Sanders explained himself:

> Given the nature of the political system, given the nature of media in America, it would be much more difficult to get adequate coverage from the mainstream media running outside of the two-party system. (…) It would require building an entire political infrastructure outside of the two-party system: to get on the ballot, to do all the things that would be required for a serious campaign.[23]

Additionally, it is extremely hard for third-party candidates to participate in the presidential debates: they must receive "the support of at least 15 percent of the respondents in five recent national opinion polls."[24] But running within a major party also has its disadvantages, especially when both parties are regarded with much contempt: "There is today more and more alienation from the Republican and Democratic parties than we have seen in the modern history

[19] Anthony J. Nownes, *Interest Groups in American Politics: Pressure and Power* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 247.

[20] Ibid., 256.

[21] Ibid., 252.

[22] Tom Gallagher, *The Primary Route: How the 99% Takes On the Military Industrial Complex*, Ebook (Coast to Coast Publications, 2015), 34.

[23] Nichols, "Bernie Sanders: 'I Am Prepared to Run for President of the United States.'"

[24] Gillespie, *Challengers to Duopoly*, 31.

of this country. And the number of people who identify as Democrats or Republicans is at a historically low point."[25] But the third-party route has proven to be a tough one: the last third-party candidate to win electoral votes was George Wallace in 1968 under the banner of the American Independent Party, winning five Southern states with a segregationist campaign.[26]

Another disadvantage of running a third-party campaign, and a recurring narrative in political science, is the "capacity of outsider challenges to play the role of spoiler."[27] Due to the nature of the American two-party system, voting for a third party might increase the chances of the party at the other side of the political spectrum: "[If] a candidate of a party of the left were to win votes that would otherwise have gone to the Democrat (because the Democrat might have been deemed the "lesser of two evils"), (...) that candidate's vote would enhance the prospects of electing a Republican president."[28] The best example of a spoiler campaign is Theodore Roosevelt's 1912 Progressive Party campaign. Roosevelt won the majority of the Republican primaries, but incumbent Taft eventually secured the nomination. This resulted in "Roosevelt launching a third-party campaign that split the GOP and handed the election to Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson."[29] Roosevelt finished in second place, pushing Taft in third place: "Roosevelt came in second with eighty-eight electoral votes from six states. It was the best showing of any third party up to that time, and his electoral total has never since been exceeded by a third-party candidate."[30]

Intra-party insurgencies and their effects on the political system have not received as much scholarly attention as third-party insurgencies, according to Tichenor and Fuerstman. "Equally striking is the general neglect of how insurgent campaigns both within major parties and as third-party challenges have influenced not only electoral outcomes and the policy agenda, but also their efforts to transform the political processes that underpin U.S. parties and elections."[31] Most scholarly attention has gone to independent or third-party campaigns and the effects they have had on the electoral map during presidential elections, such as being a spoiler. Instead, Tichenor and Fuerstman focused on the larger aims of insurgency campaigns:

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[25] Nichols, "Bernie Sanders: 'I Am Prepared to Run for President of the United States.'"
[26] James T. Bennett, *Not Invited to the Party* (New York, NY: Springer New York, 2010), 49.
[27] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 53.
[28] Gallagher, *The Primary Route,* 29.
[29] Allan J. Lichtman, "Presidency, 1860–1932," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of American Political History*, ed. Michael Kazin, Rebecca Edwards, and Adam Rothman (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2010), 592–596, 595.
[30] Lewis L. Gould, *Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 63.
[31] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 51.

while insurgents aimed for the presidency as the most direct way to change the system and bring forward new ideas, this was usually an unrealistic objective against the opposition of the establishment. Electoral reform was the larger aim: "(…) these campaigns derive meaning and energy from process-oriented challenges to the power of the major-party establishment."[32]

For example, Theodore Roosevelt in 1912, "first within the Republican Party and then as the Progressive standard-bearer," and Eugene McCarthy within the Democratic Party, altered the political process in the United States by promoting popular democracy and striving for the expansion of primary voting. Tichenor and Fuerstman's explanation for Roosevelt's and McCarthy's relative success comes from the political context of their respective times: "both campaigns drew their lifeblood from broader political movements agitating for greater popular democracy."[33] Roosevelt was empowered by the Progressive Movement in the 1910s and "championed significant electoral and constitutional reforms in the name of direct democracy," while McCarthy was strengthened by the anti-Vietnam War movement and New Politics.[34] Tichenor and Fuerstman concluded that "the 1912 insurgency emerges as a foundation stone for the primary system and the 1968 insurgency as a consolidation of this reform agenda attacking traditional party organization and governance."[35]

However, in their focus on the electoral transformation aims of insurgency campaigns, they overlook the importance of raising new issues. While they mention it in passing, it is still one of the most defining aspects of insurgency campaigns. Ronald Rapoport and Walter Stone, in their analysis of third-party dynamics, describe how the major parties are able to diminish "the push away from the major-party system" by "shifting its positions so that [the major parties] are attractive to supporters of the third party," which in turn should produce declining support for the insurgent candidate."[36] The fear major parties have for insurgency campaigns, both inside and outside the two major parties, thus stems largely from the new issues they raised.

Another option for political renewal can be found within the current political system too. The two major parties consist out of different factions, split on ideology and strategy.

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[32] Ibid., 67.
[33] Ibid., 68.
[34] Ibid., 60.
[35] Ibid., 69.
[36] Ronald Rapoport and Walter J Stone, *Three's a Crowd: The Dynamic of Third Parties, Ross Perot, & Republican Resurgence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 45.

"What splits parties, though, are rifts between ideologically pure, less compromising members, and more pragmatic, moderate ones. This is a difference not about policy ends but about political means. Not about issues but about strategy."[37] In the Republican Party, the emergence of the Tea Party has already influenced the direction of the party by winning local election, at times spreading to the national level.[38] On the Democratic side, progressives like Elizabeth Warren, and Sanders as an Independent within the Democratic Party, represent the progressive, ideologically strong faction of the Democrats.[39] These separate factions also return in Congress, such as the Congressional Progressive Caucus. However, they are not particularly influential during the primaries: they have a more direct impact on politics after the presidential elections.

Thus, the academic debate about political renewal largely revolves around the strengths and weaknesses of the two-party system. To break through the status quo and change the system, a number of possibilities are available. A run for the presidency within one of the major parties elevates insurgents to national prominence, a sharp contrast with the lack of media attention for either a third-party campaign, or the backroom lobbying of interest groups. Ultimately, insurgencies are most successful when they are supported by larger movements in society and are therefore capable of transforming the political system. This thesis will explore the recent outsider challenge of Bernie Sanders and place it in the academic debate about political renewal and insurgency campaigns by directly comparing it to Eugene McCarthy's campaign.

Eugene McCarthy was long seen as an anti-Vietnam War martyr by scholars and was often regarded as a minor character in the vibrant election year of 1968: "The public associates McCarthy's candidacy with the radical peace movement and the riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. His campaign is thus identified with radicals, violence, riots, the counterculture, the New Left, the Yippie party, and the Chicago Seven."[40] But one of McCarthy's reasons for running was to "defuse these radical movements by directing them through his campaign into electoral channels."[41] In 2006, Dominic Sandbrook placed McCarthy's campaign in a larger political framework. "His presidential challenge is (...)

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[37] Hans Noel, "Ideological Factions in the Republican and Democratic Parties," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 667 (September 2016): 166–188, 167.
[38] Ibid., 179.
[39] Ibid., 182.
[40] George Rising, *Clean for Gene: Eugene McCarthy's 1968 Presidential Campaign* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1997), 49.
[41] Ibid., xiii.

frequently misunderstood: rather than the doomed odyssey of a gallant martyr, it was instead the resurgence of an old tradition of progressive reform and middle-class activism based on issues of conscience."[42]

Most scholars acknowledge the influence of McCarthy's campaign on the political system. During and after the primaries, McCarthy raised questions about the weight of the primaries. "McCarthy had tallied more overall primary votes but (...) delegates were not chosen in primaries. (...) Although antiwar candidates had taken nearly 70% of the primary vote, the pro-war Humphrey had over two-thirds of the delegates on the first ballot."[43] At the Democratic National Convention, McCarthy proposed changes to raise the importance of the primary vote, of which one was accepted: the selection rules for party delegates were changed. This led to "the number of delegates chosen in primaries shooting up to 65% in 1972, then to 72% in 1980. It has since never dropped below 60%, a level never reached before 1972."[44]

Although Bernie Sanders's presidential campaign has not yet been widely covered by scholars, Tom Gallagher has already analyzed his campaign pre-Super Tuesday. He placed Sanders in the political and socioeconomic context of recent years, describing how the 2008 recession and ensuing Occupy Movement created the right mood for a candidate who wants to combat economic inequality and limit the influence of Wall Street on the political process. Gallagher explains Sanders's appeal by quoting a *Times*/CBS poll, which showed that Americans were becoming increasingly frustrated by the widening wealth gap:

> Sixty-seven percent of Americans thought the gap between the rich and the poor in the United States was getting larger; 74 percent of Democrats believed this. Sixty-five percent of Americans thought this gap was a problem that needed to be addressed now; 83 percent of Democrats thought so. Fifty-seven percent thought the government should do more to reduce that gap; 81 percent of Democrats thought that.[45]

For Sanders these were reasons enough (and potential voters) to make a run for the Democratic nomination, even though he has always positioned himself as an Independent in politics. He

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[42] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 10.
[43] Gallagher, *The Primary Route*, 86.
[44] Ibid., 87.
[45] Tom Gallagher, "Feeling the Bern: An Analysis of the Sanders Phenomenon," *New Labor Forum* 25, no. 2 (May 2016): 18–26, 24.

could have run as an Independent, but decided against this to make use of the organizational structure of the Democratic Party. After all, after the 2000 election, Ralph Nader's third-party campaign was largely seen as a spoiler to the chances of Democratic candidate Al Gore: "the third-party option had never recovered from the perception that Nader's run had enabled George W. Bush's election in 2000."[46] Nader himself commented on Sanders's campaign, calling his decision to run on the Democratic ticket justified: "The two-party system suffocates independent challengers. I would know."[47]

Thus, the academic discussion on insurgency campaigns, Sanders, and McCarthy can be combined into a larger framework. Tichenor and Fuerstman stressed the importance of transforming the political process for insurgency campaigns, but this was impossible without hooking into larger movements and raising new issues. By combining these three elements, instead of focusing on one aspect, a framework to analyze the success of intra-party insurgencies can be established. This thesis will thus add to the academic discussion by showing how Bernie Sanders's campaign fits within this framework.

Research question

By comparing Bernie Sanders's campaign and Eugene McCarthy's campaign within the framework of intra-party insurgencies, this thesis will explore the significance of McCarthy's campaign in relation to Sanders's campaign and the fate of insurgency campaigns, thereby providing a new perspective on Sanders's campaign. The central thesis question will be: *To what extent does the 2016 presidential campaign of Bernie Sanders fit the framework of intra-party insurgencies as established by Eugene McCarthy's 1968 campaign*? Several sub-questions flow from this research question. How did both candidates channel American's frustration with society into their political campaigns? To what extent were their campaigns successful in putting new issues on the party and national agenda? How exactly were the campaigns of McCarthy and Sanders able to transform the political process? These three questions will be answered in three separate chapters, each discussing one of the elements of insurgency campaigns.

By answering these questions, the relevance of Sanders's presidential campaign for American politics will be established. Understanding how political outsiders attract large

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[46] Ibid., 23.

[47] Ralph Nader, "Ralph Nader: Why Bernie Sanders Was Right to Run as a Democrat," *The Washington Post*, March 25, 2016.

numbers of young voters is also essential for understanding future American politics: "[Sanders's] campaign is crystallizing the political emergence of the massive Millennial Generation, which is poised to pass the Baby Boom by 2020 as the electorate's largest voting block."[48] Sanders did not win this election year, but his ideals and plans might play an important role in the next election cycle: by analyzing the historical precedent set by McCarthy's campaign, the elements of survival needed for Sanders's political movement can be identified. Additionally, placing Sanders in the conceptual framework of intra-party insurgencies will show that Sanders was not just a fringe candidate, but had ideas that were widely shared by many voters, mainly by running an issue-centered campaign and by having broader aims than just the presidency.

Methodology

The research question for this thesis entails a historical comparison, spanning almost fifty years. The United States in 1968 is different from the United States in 2016, but in spite of the differences in historical contexts, I will look for (dis)continuities in the campaigns of Sanders and McCarthy, taking into account that a number of factors were different. The Vietnam War had a huge influence on society in 1968; 2016 does not have a comparable war. Meanwhile, Sanders's campaign was largely focused on the power of social media and the internet, which was not available in McCarthy's time. But, despite these differences, political comparisons can certainly be drawn by acknowledging the changed contexts.

This thesis will focus on Bernie Sanders and Eugene McCarthy, two outsiders within the Democratic Party who ran a fairly successful primary campaign, but did not manage to claim the nomination. The term outsider is ambivalent within politics. Sanders and McCarthy were both long-seated Senators, but they were still regarded as political outsiders. Hans Noel defines "people who have held no elective office at all" as "*ultra outsiders*," such as Donald Trump. Sanders and McCarthy are outsiders in the sense that they both are "a politician who is merely not powerful in the party."[49] This definition will be used when discussing outsiders.

They are relevant for research for a number of reasons. First, McCarthy's 1968 campaign was part of an important election year. 1968 is regarded as "a watershed year in U.S. political history" by many scholars: it set the political scene for decades to come:

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[48] Ronald Brownstein, "Bernie Sanders's Successful Insurgency," *The Atlantic*, April 7, 2016.
[49] Noel, "Ideological Factions," 171.

The critical examination (...) of a limitless Cold War foreign policy; the condemnation of an "imperial presidency;" the reform of Democratic party nominating procedures; the breakup of the New Deal coalition (...); and the backlash to the perceived failure of Cold War liberalism that helped revive conservative ideology and the Republican party and led to the rise of the New Right, which set much of the political agenda of the 1980s and 1990s.[50]

Second, McCarthy's campaign is seen as the spark that started the eventful political year in 1968:

Eugene McCarthy's presidential campaign served as a critical catalyst for the events of 1968. The announcement of McCarthy's candidacy allowed Democratic critics of the Johnson administration to express themselves electorally, and his subsequent near upset of the incumbent in the first presidential primary in New Hampshire showed dramatically the divisions within the Democratic party.[51]

Third, it looks like 2016 will be another landmark in the political history of the United States. The presidential nominees of the Republican and Democratic Party, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, are the most unfavorable candidates in history: "Clinton and Trump are both more strongly disliked than any nominee at this point in the past 10 presidential cycles."[52] Not only the candidates are despised: the complete political system and the two main parties are part of citizens' disenchantment with American politics. A recent national poll by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research showed that "nine in ten Americans lack confidence in the country's political system, and four in ten say the two-party system is seriously broken."[53] According to annual Gallup polls, over forty percent of Americans expressed very little confidence in Congress since 2010, with the number reaching fifty-two percent in 2016.[54] Taken together, these trends explain the rise of anti-establishment candidates in both parties: Donald Trump on the Republican side and Bernie Sanders on the Democratic

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[50] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, xii.

[51] Ibid., xii-xiii.

[52] Harry Enten, "Americans' Distaste For Both Trump And Clinton Is Record-Breaking," *FiveThirtyEight*, May 5, 2016.

[53] "The Frustrated Public: Views of the 2016 Campaign, the Parties, and the Electoral Process Issue Brief," *The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research*, accessed June 1, 2016.

[54] "Confidence in Institutions," *Gallup*, accessed October 21, 2016.

side. It looks like the mood in the nation makes it easier for non-traditional candidates to be successful in the presidential primaries and change the system from within the party.

Fourth, as an Independent, Sanders embodies the rise of outsider candidates into the mainstream of American politics by joining the Democratic Party and by bringing attention to issues that used to be fringe ideas. He is currently one of the most popular senators, having an approval rating of eighty-seven percent among his own constituents.[55] Sanders drew record-breaking crowds during his rallies and he received a huge number of small donations, breaking the record for most money raised in a single month.[56] He attracted the youngest demographic, who will play an important role in future elections. Additionally, the media have compared McCarthy and Sanders to each other. Article titles such as "What Bernie Sanders Should Learn From Eugene McCarthy," "Bernie Sanders is today's version of Eugene McCarthy," and "What if Bernie Sanders Pulls A Eugene McCarthy?" show the relevance of comparing the two candidates: to achieve a better understanding of the Sanders's phenomenon by placing it in the chronology of Democratic insurgencies.[57]

In both the left- and right-leaning media, Sanders has been compared to other candidates who either had radical ideas or were political outsiders. In July 2015, *The Telegraph* (a right-leaning news site) placed Sanders in line with Eugene McCarthy, George McGovern, and Ralph Nader.[58] These are the candidates that Sanders was being compared to most frequently. Other notable examples are socialist Eugene V. Debs, Jesse Jackson, and Dennis Kucinich.[59] Nader and Debs will not be discussed due to the fact that they ran as third-party candidates. McGovern managed to get the nomination from the Democratic Party, so his campaign does not meet the criteria of not falling short in the primaries. The campaigns of Democrats Jackson and Kucinich are also mentioned in comparison with Sanders, but they are not insurgent campaigns. Jackson's National Rainbow Coalition was not a grassroots campaign and was aimed at securing Jackson's place in the Democratic Party: "That was the whole aim

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[55] Felice Belman, "Sanders' Constituents Give Him an 87 Percent Approval Rating," *The Boston Globe*, September 15, 2016.

[56] Danny Freeman, "Sanders Campaign Claims Record-Breaking Crowd at New York Rally," *NBC News*, April 18, 2016; Tessa Berenson, "Bernie Sanders Just Broke His Latest Fundraising Record," *Time*, April 1, 2016.

[57] Julian E. Zelizer, "What Bernie Sanders Should Learn From Eugene McCarthy," *POLITICO Magazine*, April 21, 2016; Harold Jackson, "Bernie Sanders Is Today's Version of Eugene McCarthy," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 27, 2016; Emily Greenhouse, "What If Bernie Sanders Pulls A Eugene McCarthy?," *Bloomberg*, June 16, 2015.

[58] David Millward, "How Radical Left-Wing US Presidential Candidates Have Fared," *The Telegraph*, July 8, 2015.

[59] Lance Selfa, "The Ghost of Liberal Democrats Past," *SocialistWorker.org*, May 11, 2015.

of the operation: Jackson traded his delegates for his own acceptance into the party's inner circle."[60] His campaigns in 1984 and 1988 were not a voice of dissent against the Democratic establishment: "From the start, the NRC only succeeded in binding activists to the big business interests that really control the Democratic Party." Dennis Kucinich' 2004 and 2008 campaigns are regarded in the same way:

> All liberal intra-party challenges, from Jackson's to Kucinich's, ended with their leaders delivering their supporters over to the more conservative Democrats against whom they had mounted their challenges in the first place. Indeed, for politicians committed to Democrats like Jackson and Kucinich, this was the effective aim of their campaigns.[61]

Additionally, Kucinich dropped out during the primaries, while McCarthy and Sanders stayed in the race until the Democratic National Conventions.

The bulk of the sources used for this thesis are media articles. The presidential campaign of Sanders has not received much scholarly attention, but by interpreting how the media tried to make sense of Sanders's popularity as a political outsider, these media articles can still be viable for academic research. The online articles are from a mix of relatively unbiased ("either they don't show much bias at all, or their bias leans to the left and right equally at different times") and left-leaning sources: from the *Huffington Post* and *the Nation* on the far left, to slightly left-leaning news outlets like *Vox*, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times*, towards more neutral and nonpartisan sources like *Politico* and *The Hill*.[62] Most of these sources will be mined for direct quotes by the candidates or facts, in which an author's preference does not strongly reflect. Nonetheless, a slight bias might be present in the quoted material, which is why most of the analysis will be supported by a large variety of sources to present a critical argument.

Other important source material used for this thesis are primary sources from the candidates themselves. Sanders has been politically active for more than thirty years, making his presidential campaign an extension of his political life so far. Sanders's 1997 biography *Outsider in the House*, which was updated in 2015 with a new preface by Sanders himself and renamed *Outsider in the White House*, will provide insight into the political life of Sanders and

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[60] Lance Selfa, *The Democrats: A Critical History* (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2012), 215, 217.
[61] Ibid., 219.
[62] "AllSides Bias Ratings," *AllSides*, 2016, accessed October 8, 2016.

his ideals throughout the years. Additionally, Sanders's campaign speeches and speeches he made in the Senate will be used as primary sources, together with prepared remarks posted on his campaign website.

Literature on Eugene McCarthy is abundant: although he is generally remembered as a minor character during the election of 1968, his influence on the withdrawal of President Johnson and the changes in the primary process his campaign set in motion have been acknowledged by most scholars. The 2006 biography of McCarthy will also provide an overview of how McCarthy shaped his political ideals and his subsequent campaign for the presidency. Additionally, McCarthy himself released a political memoir in 1969, *The Year of the People*, in which he reflects on his campaign, his decision to run, his hopes, and the eventual outcomes of his campaign, which provides a valuable source of information.

However, using political (auto)biographies and memoirs as historical source material has its limitations. As these sources are usually written by the subject himself, the authenticity and veracity of the narrative becomes questionable. The author might choose to present a better image of himself: the narrative is not a complete recreation of the life of the historical "I". Rather, the narrated "I" is "the version of the self that the narrating 'I' chooses to constitute through recollection for the reader."[63] The content of the narrative itself might also change over time, because people are unable to remember everything exactly as it happened: "Narrated memory is an interpretation of a past that can never be fully recovered. (...) What is remembered and what is forgotten, and why, change over time."[64] I am aware of the limitations of these sources, but despite the shortcomings, (auto)biographies are essential in understanding how the candidates saw themselves in their respective historical contexts. These narratives also give insight in the way the candidates managed to communicate their ideals, which helps in explaining how they attracted voters to their respective campaigns.

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[63] Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 2nd ed., Ebook (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 49.
[64] Ibid., 38, 41.

Chapter 1 - Channeling citizen frustration

"I am hopeful that a challenge may alleviate the sense of political helplessness and restore to many people a belief in the processes of American politics and of American government."[65]

- Eugene McCarthy

"It will take all the energy of the new movements of this new time to make the change that is needed. These movements began on the outside, but even now they are beginning to be heard on the inside - changing our politics, changing America."[66] - Bernie Sanders

To fully understand and analyze the presidential campaigns of Eugene McCarthy in 1968 and Bernie Sanders in 2016, it is important to place the candidates in their historical context. Each campaign started against the backdrop of vital issues in society, from socioeconomic problems to issues of party politics and war. This is also one of the three key elements of insurgency campaigns: "channeling citizen frustrations."[67] After all, insurgency campaigns are most successful in their goals when they tap into "the lifeblood from broader political movements agitating for greater popular democracy."[68] These campaigns give citizens a path to voicing their disenchantment with the president's policies and the party establishment: "they base the challenge on principles not fully subscribed to by the existing elite."[69] The main political movement of 1968 was the anti-Vietnam war movement, while Sanders's campaign can be regarded as an extension of the Occupy-movement and an effort to rebuild America's disappearing middle class. How then did the campaigns of Eugene McCarthy in 1968 and Bernie Sanders in 2016 channel American's frustration with society into their political campaigns?

This chapter will analyze the main issues preceding the presidential campaign cycles of 1968 and 2016, how the candidates hooked into larger movements and were able to channel anger and frustration into enthusiasm for their political campaigns. The Vietnam War defined the 1968 election, together with political movements like the New Left and the Dump Johnson-

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[65] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 265.
[66] Bernie Sanders and Huck Gutman, *Outsider in the White House*, Ebook (London: Verso, 2015), 11.
[67] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 52.
[68] Ibid., 68.
[69] John R. Petrocik and Dwaine Marvick, "Explaining Party Elite Transformation: Institutional Changes and Insurgent Politics," *The Western Political Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (September 1983): 345–363, 355.

movement. Central to the 2016 elections were the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008 and the mounting frustration of Americans with their political system.

1.1 - The New Left and Vietnam

The most important issue during the 1968 election was the Vietnam War: since President Johnson's escalation of the war in 1964 after the Gulf of Tonkin incident, a huge anti-war movement had grown. These protests did not erupt out of nowhere: they are embedded in the developments of the 1960s, specifically the New Left, which will be discussed first. From there, the Dump Johnson movement sprang up, mostly in response to the dwindling course of American involvement in Southeast Asia.[70] However, the movement needed a prominent leader to challenge Johnson, preferably from within the Democratic Party: after asking Robert Kennedy and George McGovern, Eugene McCarthy was the only candidate who dared to take up the challenge, which will be discussed second.[71] Finally, this subchapter will explain how exactly McCarthy was able to guide the energy of the New Left and Dump Johnson movement into his insurgency campaign.

But first, what exactly is the New Left? According to McMillian and Buhle, the New Left can be defined as "a loosely organized, mostly white student movement that promoted participatory democracy, crusaded for civil rights and various types of university reforms, and protested against the Vietnam War."[72] The ideals of the New Left were mainly voiced by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), who in June 1962 released their political manifesto, the Port Huron Statement. Described by some as the ideology of the left, its main critique of American society was aimed at "the two most glaring symbols of an America gone wrong."[73] These symbols were racism ("the permeating and victimizing fact of human degradation, symbolized by the Southern struggle against racial bigotry") and Cold War militarism ("the Cold War, symbolized by the presence of the Bomb").[74]

According to Sale, the manifesto was more than just a set of ideas for SDS. It defined the overall student generation of the 1960s. It

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[70] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, xii.

[71] Jonathan Bell and Timothy Stanley, eds., *Making Sense of American Liberalism*, Ebook (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 100.

[72] John McMillian and Paul Buhle, eds., *The New Left Revisited* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2003), 5.

[73] Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 31.

[74] Students for a Democratic Society, "Port Huron Statement," 1962, *Wikisource*, accessed May 31, 2016.

so thoroughly plumbed and analyzed the conditions of mid-century American society, and so successfully captured and shaped the spirit of the new student mood, that it became not only a statement of principles for the few hundred students around SDS, not only a political expression for the hundreds who were to come into the organization in succeeding years, but even more a summary of beliefs for much of the student generation as a whole, then and for several years to come.[75]

The Port Huron Statement captured the mood and frustration of the student generation and the New Left of the early 1960s, and it suggested "social goals and values" to promote the New Left's vision of society.[76] The central tenet of the Statement was the call for participatory democracy, "in which people take part in the decisions that shape their lives."[77] Specifically, it was aimed at political organization from the grassroots by drawing more people into politics: "Politics has the function of bringing people out of isolation and into community, thus being a necessary, though not sufficient, means of finding meaning in personal life."[78] Until the escalation of the Vietnam War at the end of 1964, the New Left hoped to achieve "nonviolent electoral reform" to correct "what it viewed as the failings of the liberal Kennedy and Johnson administrations through direct action in the civil-rights, antipoverty, college student, and, most notably, anti–Vietnam War movements" by promoting participatory democracy from the grassroots.[79] This phase of the New Left has also been called the "early New Left" and spans the period from the publication of the Port Huron Statement in 1962 to the first protests against the Vietnam War in 1965.[80]

When President Johnson escalated the Vietnam War at the end of 1964 with the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, the movement entered its second phase, the phase of resistance: "Opposition to the Vietnam War led SDS to resist and attempt to impede the American 'war machine' through draft resistance, disruptive demonstrations, and the occupation of government and university buildings."[81] With the Tonkin Resolution, Johnson was able to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attacks against the forces of the United States

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[75] Sale, *SDS*, 30.

[76] SDS, "Port Huron Statement."

[77] McMillian and Buhle, *The New Left Revisited*, 93.

[78] Students for a Democratic Society, "Port Huron Statement."

[79] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 19.

[80] Sale, *SDS*, 132.

[81] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 22.

and to prevent further aggression."[82] However, in the passing of the resolution, the Johnson administration "deliberately deceived Congress and the American people."[83] Every study on the origin of the resolution claims that the supposed act of aggression by the North Vietnamese "was largely a fabrication of the Pentagon and the Johnson administration."[84] This increased the already prevalent frustration of the American Left with the Johnson administration.

Following attacks from the North Vietnamese, Johnson first started Operation Flaming Dart on February 7, 1965. The bombing of North Vietnamese territory was increased, and additionally, Johnson decided to draft soldiers "from the ranks of the young rather than from the rolls of the Reserves and National Guard in the population at large."[85] In return, the New Left's SDS decided to hold a protest march in the capital of the United States in April 1965: on the doorstep of the Johnson administration. The increasing disenchantment with the war and the administration increased the number of protesters extensively: between fifteen thousand and twenty-five thousand people marched with SDS in Washington on April 17, five to ten times as much as had been the SDS's expectation.[86] This was the first big anti-war march of the 1960s and it propelled the anti-Vietnam camp to the national stage and made the SDS larger than before: "Lyndon Johnson became the most successful recruiter SDS was ever to have."[87] Through the anti-war movement, the SDS and New Left grew enormously. "It was no longer SDS and Port Huron people and Tom Hayden and those folks. It became a mainstream student movement . . . that went straight into the 'Dump Johnson' movement."[88]

This is when Eugene McCarthy became involved in the antiwar movement as well and became a key player for the early New Left. Throughout 1965, the senator from Minnesota, who was also a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, started to question American involvement in Vietnam. In private, McCarthy concluded that he "could no longer approve the Administration's course or support additional American commitment to the conflict in Vietnam. I was convinced that every effort must be made to begin negotiations which would enable us to extricate ourselves from Vietnam."[89] A mission report to the Foreign Relations Committee was filed on January 8, 1966, which described the Vietnam War as being "open

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[82] George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 4th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 144.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Selfa, *The Democrats*, 178.

[85] Sale, *SDS*, 115.

[86] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 42.

[87] Sale, *SDS*, 115.

[88] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 53.

[89] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 19.

ended" with "all of mainland Southeast Asia as a potential battlefield."[90] Together with a number of other Democratic senators, McCarthy hoped that the holiday truce to discontinue bombing of North Vietnam could be extended, but at the end of January, a continuation of the bombing looked more likely. On January 27, McCarthy, with fourteen other Democratic senators, "signed a public letter to the President urging him not to resume bombing."[91] But Johnson only escalated the war further: by mid-1967, the United States had nearly half a million troops in Vietnam. Despite these efforts, it became clear to many observers that "the hopes of a quick and relatively inexpensive military victory had been misplaced."[92]

Many liberals feared that Johnson would seek reelection in 1968. Allard Lowenstein was one of them and he founded the National Conference of Concerned Democrats in 1967, which soon became known as the Dump Johnson movement. He believed that Johnson "must be replaced as the next Democratic nominee by a liberal candidate who would end the war in Vietnam."[93] It was not only the disapproval of the war that fueled the Dump Johnson movement. Many Democrats also feared that the war effort would significantly hurt their party in the next elections. Lowenstein made this explicitly clear in his speeches: "The Dump Johnson movement represented an effort by mainstream Democrats who believed Johnson's policies harmed their party."[94] Lowenstein tried to find a political leader for the movement, but his attempts to recruit George McGovern or Robert Kennedy failed. McGovern, however, suggested another senator: "There were only two 'doves' worth Lowenstein's consideration, as McGovern saw it. (...) 'My eye fell on Metcalf and McCarthy. I didn't honestly think either of them would run.'"[95] But, to the surprise of many, McCarthy decided that he would run in the primaries to challenge Johnson.

However, this was not a big surprise at all. In June 1967, McCarthy published a book, *The Limits of Power: America's Role in the World*, in which he heavily criticized Johnson's Vietnam policy. The book fell completely in line with the aims of the Dump Johnson movement: withdraw American troops from Vietnam and negotiate peace.[96] Moreover, McCarthy hoped to contain the resistance phase of the New Left and SDS. He feared that

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[90] Ibid., 20.

[91] Ibid., 21.

[92] Herring, *America's Longest War*, 191.

[93] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 248.

[94] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 54.

[95] Lewis Chester, Godfrey Hodgson, and Bruce Page, *An American Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968* (New York: Viking Press, 1969), 67.

[96] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 55-56.

"young people would choose the radical, extrapolitical philosophy of the New Left peace movement."[97] McCarthy hoped to "defuse these radical movements by directing them through his campaign into electoral channels."[98] This thought links up with the ideology of the early New Left. McCarthy saw the student generation's potential in politics and wanted to give them a voice, which was conform the ideal of participatory democracy. Looking ahead to McCarthy's campaign of New Politics, "the political and social ideals of SDS and the early New Left are similar to the campaign of McCarthy. Both (...) called for moral improvement, participatory democracy, grass-roots organizing, student leadership, and an anti–Cold War, pro–civil-rights philosophy."[99] According to one of his aides, McCarthy's motive to enter the race "was as much to assert the utility of the political process to the young people. He really was trying to provide a political outlet for a deep dissatisfaction, a deep alienation on the part of a lot of people who were not traditionally participants in the political process."[100]

In his speeches, McCarthy did his best to keep the energy and frustration of the anti-Vietnam War movement contained and to channel their frustrations into enthusiasm for his campaign. This already became apparent in his announcement speech on November 30, 1967, in which he mostly focused on the Vietnam War, but placed his challenge in a wider context of frustration with the Johnson administration.

> I am hopeful that a challenge may alleviate the sense of political helplessness and restore to many people a belief in the processes of American politics and of American government. On college campuses especially, but among other thoughtful adult Americans, it may counter the growing sense of alienation from politics which is currently reflected in a tendency to withdraw in either frustration or cynicism, to talk of nonparticipation and to make threats of support for a third party or fourth party or other irregular political movements.[101]

By addressing the alienation from politics felt by many Americans at the time, he was already diverting these 'threats of support for irregular political movements' into support for his own campaign. By representing the voice of discontent, McCarthy provided a political direction for the anti-Vietnam War movement. At the Conference of Concerned Democrats, which "was aimed at finding an alternative to President Johnson's Vietnam policy," McCarthy was

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[97] Ibid., 57.
[98] Ibid., xiii.
[99] Ibid., 22.
[100] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 253-254.
[101] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 265.

endorsed by the organization.[102] In his speech, he contrasted the message of the administration with his view of how America should be. He objected the "message of apprehension, (...) fear, (...) even a message of fear of fear" as "not the real spirit of America."[103] Instead, McCarthy valued "trust, right judgment, integrity, dedication of purpose, and hope" over America's current state: "doubt, expediency, incredibility, disunity, and near despair."[104] The clearest example of McCarthy addressing the larger social movements of his time returned in a speech given in Wisconsin on March 23, 1968. It also symbolizes the centrality of the ideal of participatory democracy in McCarthy's campaign:

> In a free country such as ours, in an election year, people not only have an opportunity to demonstrate their position and to exercise choice, but they have a clear responsibility to pass judgment on existing programs and policies, to make decisions, and to indicate what they consider to be the priorities of this nation. It is to this end that I am (...) your candidate for the presidency of the United States of America. This movement of which you are a part, and which I, in a limited way, personify now, (...) is laying down a challenge to control the presidency of the United States of America.[105]

Thus, McCarthy was able to channel the frustrations of the student generation into his campaign, as their ideals and goals were largely similar: he provided a political option to help the anti-war movements achieve their goals. This proved to be an important factor during his insurgent campaign: McCarthy tapped into the "the lifeblood from broader political movements agitating for popular democracy."[106] By enabling the anti-war movement, the student generation, and the American Left to vote for a candidate similar to their thinking, McCarthy drew a large demographic group into politics and into his own campaign, a campaign striving for participatory democracy.

1.2 - Economic crisis and Occupy Wall Street

With the end of President Obama's eight-year term in sight, the 2016 presidential primaries were deemed by many on both the left and the right as the best road forward to champion reform and address new issues. One of the main concerns during Obama's tenure was the

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[102] "Conference of Concerned Democrats Back McCarthy," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, December 2, 1967.
[103] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 289.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., 293.
[106] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 68.

aftermath of the economic and financial crisis of 2008. Not surprisingly, most Democrats praised Obama's work, while almost all Republicans hoped to reverse Obama's policies. Meanwhile, many American citizens were (and still are) frustrated with both the political and financial establishment. This is the frustration that Sanders's campaign tapped into during his campaign. This anger already emerged in the Occupy Movement in September 2011, who left behind "a concept that stuck: the 99 percent and the one percent."[107] This concept is important in understanding Sanders's popularity, as one of his central campaign positions was aimed at battling economic inequality. How was Sanders able to channel the anger and frustration of many Americans with Wall Street and the political establishment into his campaign and why were so many people angry at the political and economic system in the first place?

According to an official White House report, the economic crisis of 2008 led to a collapse of the middle class. Between November 2008 and April 2009, close to a million people per month lost their job and middle-class families also suffered from a major drop in house prices.[108] Bernie Sanders already hooked into this narrative during a speech in December 2010, in which he claimed that "middle-income households made less in 2008, when adjusted for inflation, than they did in 1999."[109] Meanwhile, Sanders explained that the "wealthiest 400 Americans saw their income more than double while their income tax rates dropped almost in half from 1995 to 2007."[110] This discordance made a lot of Americans lose belief in the fairness of the political and economic system. Especially painful for many Americans was the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), which pumped $430 billion into "financial institutions to prevent a 'melt down' of banks."[111] While economists described TARP as "one of the most effective policies in modern economic histories," the general public generally found TARP to be one of the most hated and misunderstood policies: while the banking world was saved, many ordinary citizens lost their jobs, savings, and houses.[112]

Within this context of rising economic inequality, the Occupy Wall Street movement emerged on September 17, 2011 in New York's Zuccotti Park. The movement not only protested against the increasing social and economic inequality in the United States, but also

[107] Gallagher, "Feeling the Bern," 20.

[108] National Economic Council et al., "The Financial Crisis: Five Years Later" (Executive Office of the President, September 2013).

[109] Bernie Sanders, *The Speech: A Historic Filibuster on Corporate Greed and the Decline of Our Middle Class*, Ebook (New York: Nation Books, 2011), 52.

[110] Ibid., 50.

[111] McKay, *American Politics and Society*, 383.

[112] Michael E.S. Hoffman, "The Political Economy of TARP: A Public Opinion Approach," *SSRN Electronic Journal* (January 2012): 1-21, 3.

against the perceived greediness of banks and politicians, and it eventually grew into an international Occupy movement: it "rapidly spread to thousands of locations worldwide."[113] Through Occupy, the concept of the ninety-nine percent versus the one percent was introduced in society and became generally accepted to discuss the distribution of wealth. It brought attention to the "plight of those without resources, those without a voice, those without access to power, those traditionally ignored," and by doing so, Occupy created a narrative of ordinary working citizens being under the thumb of the rich establishment.[114]

Although the Occupy movement was short lived, as it "ceased to be widely recognized as a political force after April 2012," its ideas persisted in American society.[115] According to Noam Chomsky, one of the key thinkers behind Occupy, the movement "changed the national conversation" and unleashed both pent-up economic and political frustration: "The population is angry, frustrated, bitter - and for good reasons. For the past generation, policies have been initiated that have led to an extremely sharp concentration of wealth in a tiny sector of the population."[116] This political frustration is explicitly explained in Occupy's first pamphlet:

> Occupy's tenacity and spread as a movement demonstrate the degree to which huge numbers of people no longer believe the system listens or responds to ordinary people. The economic recession is linked to a recession of democracy. (...) Politicians' open abandonment of the public interest, accountability and commitment to real democracy is precisely what drives people from all walks of life to take direct action, to organize, to commit civil disobedience, and face tear gas, pepper spray, stun grenades, handcuffs and jail time. People are waking up and coming out: (...) an evolving public insurgency with openness, democracy and non-violent direct action as its primary weapons.[117]

These ideas have been explicitly endorsed by Bernie Sanders in 2011. At the annual Take Back America conference, organized by the progressive organization Campaign for America's Future, Sanders voiced his support: "We have the crooks on Wall Street, (...) whose greed, whose recklessness, whose illegal behavior caused this terrible recession. (...) I applaud those protesters out there, who are focusing attention on Wall Street. We've got to make demands on

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[113] Noam Chomsky, *Occupy*, Ebook (Brooklyn, New York: Zuccotti Park Press, 2012), 6.

[114] Ibid., 7.

[115] Michael T. Heaney, "Bernie Sanders and the Occupy Wall Street Wing of the Democratic Party," *University of Michigan* (June 2, 2016): 1–13, 4.

[116] Chomsky, *Occupy*, 6, 30.

[117] Ibid., 9-10.

Wall Street [and] break those institutions up."[118] Sanders clearly hooked into the rhetoric of the Occupy movement by targeting Wall Street and addressing economic inequality.

The popularity of Occupy in 2011 had a profound impact on the elections of 2012, in which the incumbent Obama faced Republican Mitt Romney. According to Selfa, the Democrats feared a tough re-election, so Obama hoped to draw in the same people as Occupy appealed to: "(…) working people, youth, African-Americans, and others whom the Occupy movement had engaged."[119] Obama used the Occupy rhetoric in a number of his campaign speeches, particularly the imagery of the ninety-nine percent. During a speech in Kansas, Obama described economic inequality as "the defining issue of our time" and the 2012 elections "a make-or-break moment for the middle class, and for all those who are fighting to get into the middle class."[120]

Obama had to fight hard to draw people from Occupy to his campaign: a 2011 poll showed that "sixty percent of surveyed [Occupy Wall Street protesters in New York] said they voted for Barack Obama in 2008, and about three-quarters now disapprove of Mr. Obama's performance as president."[121] Eventually, Obama won the election with more than fifty-one percent of the popular vote, largely based on the new voter coalition he formed in 2008: "His victory in 2012 confirmed the strength of this new coalition. For, in spite of continuing economic problems, very large numbers of ethnic minorities, women and blue-collar workers (...) continued to support him."[122] This voting bloc overlaps to some degree with the demographic layout of the Occupy movement, which shows that despite their disapproval of Obama, he was still seen as the lesser of two evils.

However, in the next four years, it became clear that the Obama administration failed to take up Occupy's challenge, mainly due to difficulties with a divided, ineffective and often gridlocked Congress. Party loyalty and loyalty to Obama were an important issue during the Democratic primaries: "Democratic voters who think that Obama betrayed them were in favor of Sanders, whereas those who were happy with Obama's performance preferred Clinton."[123] Obama's failure to act was already addressed by Sanders during his time in the Senate. With Hillary Clinton presenting her presidential campaign as a third Obama term and preserving his

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[118] Sanders and Gutman, *Outsider in the White House*, 294.
[119] Selfa, *Democrats*, 119.
[120] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President on the Economy in Osawatomie, Kansas" (Speech, Osawatomie, Kansas, December 6, 2011).
[121] Marjorie Connelly, "Occupy Protesters Down on Obama, Survey Finds," *The New York Times*, October 28, 2011.
[122] McKay, *American Politics and Society*, 104.
[123] Noel, "Ideological Factions in the Republican and Democratic Parties," 184.

legacy, Sanders's voting record and loyalty to the Democrats became a central topic in the primary debates with Clinton. A *CQ Weekly* vote study discovered that "on issues where the White House stated a position, Sanders opposed Obama 17.5% of the time last year."[124] Most of these issues concerned taxes or trade agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, one of Obama's priorities. Sanders's criticism of Obama mainly stemmed from concerns about the lack of government action to support America's middle class. Sanders's media strategist juxtaposed Sanders' and Clinton's position on the Obama administration as follows: "What she's saying is, 'Let's stay in the lane.' What Bernie is saying is, 'We're in a slow lane, we need to get in a fast lane.'"[125]

Sanders, as an Independent, has often criticized the increasing bipartisan nature of American politics. In response to threats of a government shutdown in 2015, he voiced his concerns: "We know shutting the government down will disrupt the economy and cost us jobs – it did in 2013 and it will if Republicans do it again."[126] Not only Sanders became increasingly frustrated with the way American politics was being run at the federal level, a large number of Americans had bitter feelings about the state of politics. A Gallup poll showed that since 2010, the approval rating of Congress only averaged sixteen percent.[127] Meanwhile, both political parties were not very popular either: "44% of Americans hold a favorable view of the Democratic Party, (...) just over a third (36%) of Americans have a favorable view of the Republican Party."[128] Sanders, as a newcomer in the Democratic Party, provided an alternative to Clinton and politics-as-usual by running in the primaries: Sanders's message "that the elites and the 'status quo' are what's wrong with Washington" clearly resonates with people's dissatisfaction.[129]

After his appointment as ranking minority member of the Senate Budget Committee in 2015, Sanders introduced a plan to rebuild the disappearing middle class. In this plan, Sanders addressed issues such as the jobs deficit, the income deficit, and the equality deficit, while he proposed an increase of taxes on the rich, investments in infrastructure, and "a major federal jobs program." The language he used to discuss this issue closely resembles the narrative of

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[124] Nicole Gaudiano, "Sen. Bernie Sanders Has Opposed Obama on Variety of Issues," *USA TODAY*, February 18, 2016.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Bernie Sanders, "Sanders Statement on Shutdown Threat," *Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont*, September 24, 2015.

[127] Justin McCarthy, "U.S. Approval of Congress Improves, but Still Low at 18%," *Gallup*, August 18, 2016.

[128] Zac Auter, "Views of U.S. Political Parties Unchanged After Conventions," *Gallup*, August 10, 2016.

[129] Domenico Montanaro, "Clinton Has 45-To-1 'Superdelegate' Advantage Over Sanders," *NPR*, November 13, 2015.

the Occupy movement: "Today, the top 0.1 percent own almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent, and one family owns more wealth than the bottom 40 percent of Americans. Since the Wall Street crash of 2008, 95 percent of all new income has gone to the top one percent."[130] Sanders employed the same rhetoric as Occupy: the inequality in wealth between the top one percent and the rest of Americans was his key concern and one of the factors which eventually pulled people into his campaign.

But despite these plans, Sanders had a hard time implementing his policies due to a Republican-controlled Congress. "Sanders (...) expects 'there are going to be some fundamental disagreements.' The seven-point plan is unlikely to be converted into Republican-backed legislation."[131] This eventually led Sanders to consider a run for the presidency. Already in 2013, Sanders hinted at the possibility of a campaign, again making use of the same language: "The great moral and economic and political crisis facing this country (...) is the growing disparity in income and wealth that exists in America."[132] In the same interview, Sanders mentioned the success of Occupy and the potential in running a campaign on the issues raised by the movement:

> I think you saw that the Occupy Wall Street movement that spread around the country attracted a lot of attention and a lot of support. I think the issues that they raised about the power, the incredible power of Wall Street, the greed of Wall Street, the illegal behavior on Wall Street and also about the issues of income inequality and wealth inequality — that really struck a chord in many people.[133]

By hinting at a presidential run as an extension of the issues raised by Occupy, Sanders hooked into the larger movement and enlarged the appeal and possibilities of Occupy by providing a political outlet in which the frustrations of the bottom ninety percent would be addressed.

A year later, Sanders expanded on his plans by describing the coalition needed to win: "We've got to bring together trade unionists and working families, our minority communities, environmentalists, young people, the women's community, the gay community, seniors,

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[130] Bernie Sanders, "Rebuilding the Disappearing Middle Class" (Senate Budget Committee Report, January 24, 2015).

[131] Gregory Wallace, "Bernie Sanders: 7-Point Plan for Saving 'the Disappearing Middle Class,'" *CNNMoney*, January 25, 2015.

[132] Josh Eidelson, "Bernie Sanders: Why I Might Run in 2016," *Salon*, November 27, 2013.

[133] Ibid.

veterans, the people who in fact are the vast majority of the American population."[134] By aiming his discourse at a large and diverse group of people, Sanders hoped to be as successful as he had been in previous elections in Vermont, in which he brought together a similar "progressive coalition" of "workers, family farmers, women's advocates, low-income people, veterans, senior citizens, environmentalists, and small businesspeople."[135] He knew that by addressing the inequality issues that were of great concern to working people, he had a real chance of winning. Despite being unaffiliated with either the Democratic or the Republican Party, his victories in Burlington and Vermont proved that outsiders could make a difference. Looking back on his first mayoral win in Burlington in 1980, Sanders saw opportunities for future progressive grassroots movements: "If an independent progressive movement could win in America's most rural state - and until recently, one of America's most Republican - then it might be possible for progressives to do likewise anywhere in the nation."[136]

After Sanders announced his presidential candidacy, a group of Occupy Wall Street activists endorsed his run and praised him for providing a political outlet for the movement.[137] According to Charles Lenchner, co-founder of People for Bernie, Sanders and the Occupy movement are inextricably linked: "Sanders' rise in this election season is inconceivable without Occupy Wall Street having elevated the conversation around inequality and the way that the 1% are ravaging this country. You just can't imagine one without the other."[138] While Occupy was leaderless, many Occupy protesters now see Sanders as their leader. Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs, who was part of the Des Moines Occupy movement, describes the political campaign of Sanders as a clear continuation of the movement:

> We went from this moment in Occupy where we were just beginning to shed a light on these issues in a profound way on the national stage to the moment we're in now, where we actually have a candidate for the highest public office in the country who has a platform that is addressing all of the issues that Occupy raised.[139]

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[134] Nichols, "Bernie Sanders: 'I Am Prepared to Run for President of the United States.'"

[135] Sanders and Gutman, *Outsider in the White House*, 61.

[136] Ibid., 58.

[137] Kate Linthicum, "Occupy Movement Protesters Fight on — Now in Support of Bernie Sanders," *Los Angeles Times*, February 1, 2016.

[138] Adam Gabbatt, "Former Occupy Wall Street Protesters Rally around Bernie Sanders Campaign," *The Guardian*, September 17, 2015.

[139] Linthicum, "Occupy Movement Protesters Fight on."

This clearly shows that Sanders appealed to the same people involved with Occupy and that he was able to hook into their movement and narrative by raising the same issues, in turn channeling their frustration and energy into his campaign.

Thus, by first taking over the rhetoric and ideas of the Occupy movement, Sanders was able to attract a large and diverse base of support. By addressing economic inequality and the power of the political elite, Sanders appealed directly to the feelings of many Americans regarding the state of American politics. Additionally, Sanders's campaign was largely inspired by his earlier political campaigns and victories, and he appealed to the same kind of coalition as he had done earlier: by bringing attention to the concerns of many working Americans with the rhetoric and ideas of the Occupy movement, he was able to channel citizens' frustrations into his political campaign.

1.3 - Conclusion

Overall, this chapter has shown that the similarities between the McCarthy and Sanders campaigns regarding larger movements in society are evident, in turn providing an opportunity for an insurgent to run a successful campaign. Both candidates were able to channel Americans' frustration into their respective campaigns by addressing the issues raised by the movements, and consequently providing a political outlet to possibly change the course of American politics. Both campaigns were clearly extensions of these larger social movements, but they differed in how they were able to specifically channel citizen's frustrations.

McCarthy's campaign can be seen as the political extension of the New Left, Dump Johnson movement, and anti-Vietnam War movement. The popularity of his campaign came mostly from people associated with these movements, who shared the same anger and frustration with the establishment and the Vietnam War. McCarthy already voiced his concerns with the direction the Johnson administration was taking before these movements became huge, which strengthened McCarthy's appeal and credibility. Thus, when these movements achieved their full potential and needed a leader, McCarthy stepped in as political candidate and was able to profit from the grassroots organization of the movements. In challenging the President and opposing the war, McCarthy represented the views of the protest movements and the people who felt alienated from politics, and thus channeled their frustrations into his political campaign.

Sanders's campaign was based more on the ideas of the Occupy movement than on its organizational structure. Although Sanders talked about economic inequality long before the rise of Occupy in 2011, it was only after the movement introduced the concept of the one

percent versus the ninety percent that Sanders's ideas became attractive and popular. Being an outsider in the bipartisan American system, Sanders not only voiced the concerns of many Americans with politics, he was also able to attract people who felt alienated from politics. By using the same rhetoric as the Occupy movement, Sanders attracted many former protesters into his campaign and channeled not only their frustration, but also their energy, into his grassroots campaign.

Chapter 2 - Raising new issues

"It was new politics in every aspect: the new kind of people who were involved; the new ways that were opened for raising a challenge; and new in the substance of the challenge itself."[140] - Eugene McCarthy

"Thanks to the millions of people across the country who got involved in the political process – many for the first time – we now have the most progressive platform in the history of the Democratic Party."[141] - Bernie Sanders

The second key feature of insurgency campaigns is their ability to raise new political issues and reshape either the respective party's policy agenda or the country's issues at stake. This feature applies to insurgency campaigns in general: both third-party insurgencies and intra-party insurgencies usually set out on the campaign trail to fight for issues that do not play a large role at the national stage. Ross Perot's Reform Party campaign in 1992, which was characterized as "ultimately successful by placing new policy items on the public agenda," shows the importance of raising new issues for insurgency campaigns.[142] While this is an example of a third-party insurgency, both the McCarthy and the Sanders campaign can be analyzed within this framework of reshaping both the party's agenda and the important national issues. To what extent then were the campaigns of McCarthy in 1968 and Sanders in 2016 successful in putting new issues on the party and national agenda?

This question will be answered by specifically analyzing the courses of the McCarthy and Sanders campaigns. Where did their ideas and proposals originate? What were the circumstances which made their ideas popular, especially with the country's youth? How successful were they in getting their plans in the Democratic Party platform? Central to McCarthy's campaign was finding a solution for the Vietnam War within the framework of a New Politics campaign. For Sanders, driving national attention towards the plight of the middle- and working class was central to his campaign, mostly inspired by democratic socialism. Additionally, both campaigns worked hard to include their positions on the party's platform at the Democratic National Conventions.

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[140] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 248-249.
[141] "Democrats Adopt Most Progressive Platform in Party History," *Bernie Sanders 2016*, July 10, 2016.
[142] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 53.

2.1 - New Politics

In the first place, McCarthy's campaign was aimed at raising the issue of ending American involvement in the Vietnam War. But this was not the only issue in his campaign. President Lyndon B. Johnson was McCarthy's prime target, but when the incumbent president dropped out of the race, the aim and rhetoric of McCarthy's campaign changed accordingly. By analyzing the course of McCarthy's campaign and looking at his personal remarks and how his campaign has been interpreted by other politicians, the media, and voters, it will become clear to what extent his insurgency campaign was successful in bringing forward new issues against the Democratic Party's establishment.

On November 30, 1967, Eugene McCarthy announced that he would run in the Democratic primaries in Wisconsin, Oregon, California, and Nebraska (with the possibility of running in Massachusetts and New Hampshire) to challenge the President. McCarthy immediately emphasized his main issue, the Vietnam War, but described it as part of a larger problem: "I thought the issue of Vietnam and other related issues should be raised in the primaries. (...) The issue of the war in Vietnam is not a separate issue but is one which must be dealt with in the configuration of problems in which it occurs. It is within this context that I intend to take the case to the people of the United States."[143]

McCarthy knew that his decision to run an anti-war campaign would lead to negative reactions, especially from his colleagues in Congress. After he announced his candidacy, he reflected on his future in politics: "They say I'm committing political suicide. Well, I'd rather do that and face up to the wrongness of the war than die of political old age."[144] This looked to be an accurate prediction: in the winter of 1967, McCarthy was described as "the most friendless figure in the United States Congress," and his Democratic colleagues were hesitant to throw their support behind McCarthy, afraid that "backing an outsider against an incumbent president [would] jeopardize their own careers."[145] Meanwhile, the American population was still heavily divided about American involvement in Vietnam. The last Gallup poll before McCarthy's campaign announcement showed forty-five percent of Americans believing that sending American troops to Vietnam was a mistake, against forty-six percent seeing it as the right choice. The last poll before the first primary, in New Hampshire, showed a trend against

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[143] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 265-267.
[144] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 300.
[145] Ibid.

American involvement: forty-nine percent considered it as a mistake, while forty-one percent did not find it a mistake.[146]

From the start, McCarthy tried to balance the character of his campaign from being too Vietnam-centric. He did not want to be described as a single-issue candidate, and he often varied in the explanations and reasoning behind his campaign. In a *Look* magazine article titled "Why I'm Battling LBJ," Vietnam was the only issue mentioned.[147] Still, other issues important to McCarthy were inextricably linked to the Vietnam War. His other big concern was the Great Society, a large set of domestic plans introduced by Johnson, aimed at "promoting the general welfare" and eradicating poverty.[148] The Vietnam War cost the United States an enormous amount of money, and money spent in Vietnam could not be spent domestically. McCarthy argued that "money was being diverted to the war from programs to rebuild the cities," and he proposed drastic and expensive plans to reform domestic expenditure.[149] The United States should get their "moral and financial priorities" straight, according to McCarthy.[150] This was both an attack at the war in Vietnam and the priorities of the Johnson administration regarding federal spending. For instance, on March 23, 1968, McCarthy spoke out against the ambiguity of the administration:

> Not long ago, he said we could fight two wars and win them both. But now the call is for an austerity program. It is after all the poor and the sick and the distressed who are being called upon to pay the price of the war in Vietnam. (...) First the war was no strain on our economy and no strain on our budget. Now the strain is so great that the whole nation must embark on an austerity program.[151]

At other times, McCarhty downplayed the importance of the Vietnam War and gave more weight to the question of leadership: is President Johnson the right man to lead the United States in these tumultuous times? This was a central element in the first phase of McCarthy's campaign: questioning the President. After the Tet Offensive in January 1968, which exposed American weaknesses in Vietnam and made a victory there seem hopeless, Johnson's approval

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[146] Lydia Saad, "Gallup Vault: Hawks vs. Doves on Vietnam," *Gallup.com*, May 24, 2016.

[147] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 264.

[148] Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*, Seagull 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2012), 971.

[149] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 267.

[150] Ibid.

[151] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 292.

rating plummeted: "(…) the president's approval rating fell by 12 percentage points [and] the proportion of Americans supporting the bombing dropped by 19 points."[152] In an interview McCarthy elaborated on this: "The question in this campaign is not Vietnam and not national priority, but really something more basic. It's the question of national leadership."[153] By focusing on Johnson's character, McCarthy was able to take advantage of Johnson's high disapproval rating and attract voters regardless of their view on the war.

No matter how McCarthy promoted his campaign, its central issue was undeniably the war in Vietnam, with the question of leadership and domestic spending closely linked to it. The centrality of the Vietnam War in McCarthy's campaign gave it an issue-oriented character, consistent with the ideas of New Politics. Although the definitions of New Politics were not widely agreed on at the time, they were similar to the ideals of the New Left mentioned earlier: moral improvement, participatory democracy, grassroots organizing, student leadership, and an anti–Cold War, pro–civil-rights philosophy.[154] New Politics was a strategy "based on issues rather than on strict party discipline. (...) Most important to [New Politicians] were policies, such as the support for labor and civil-rights issues, rather than partisan patronage."[155] It was a critique at the corrupt political establishment: New Politicians judged those colleagues only interested in patronage, most of which stayed "loyal to President Johnson and his Vietnam War policies."[156] As a result, the New Left, New Politicians, and the peace movement all followed the same basic ideals: more power to the people through participatory democracy. New Politics was the strategy for combatting "the corrupt political machine, represented by President Lyndon Johnson's administration."[157]

McCarthy explicitly voiced these ideals in his explanation of New Politics. By questioning American involvement in Vietnam and the president, McCarthy was able to promote his ideas about getting more people involved in politics. This became clear in McCarthy's view of the presidency in general, which contrasted with the way Johnson held office:

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[152] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 265.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 22.

[155] Ibid., 49.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid., 6.

He should understand that this country does not so much need leadership, because the potential for leadership in a free country must exist in every man and every woman. He must be prepared to be a kind of channel for those desires and those aspirations, perhaps giving some direction to the movement of the country largely by the way of setting people free.[158]

Later in his campaign, McCarthy characterized 1968 as a year "of the people of this country so far as politics is concerned, not of political leadership, not of organized politics, but a politics of participation and a politics of personal response on the part of the citizens of this country."[159] McCarthy was able to successfully raise this issue by profiting from Johnson's low approval ratings and by embedding his rhetoric in broader movements such as the New Left and the anti-war movement.

This first phase of his campaign, closely aimed at Johnson's leadership, culminated in the New Hampshire primary, held on March 12, 1968, where McCarthy came unexpectedly close to defeating Johnson. The run-up to the primary is a prime example of McCarthy's campaign up until then: he involved mostly young people in his campaign who had not been involved in politics before, while McCarthy himself was targeting Johnson without being explicit about his stance on the Vietnam War. Pat Morris, who was an activist in the New Hampshire civil rights and peace movement, called the "presence of incredible young people one of the defining features of the McCarthy campaign."[160] This is how the campaign slogan 'Be Neat and Clean for Gene' originated: it illustrated the campaign's belief of rejecting "radical tactics in favor of a socially 'respectable' presentation of its liberal peace program."[161] Consistent with the ideas of the New Left and New Politics, McCarthy characterized his campaign as a grassroots movement: "My campaign may not be organized at the top, but it is certainly tightly organized at the bottom."[162] This became clear in the months leading up to the primary: "Using thousands of student volunteers, he flooded the streets with canvassers. (...) It represented the first-ever statewide political canvass."[163] McCarthy's showing in New Hampshire again showed the power of grassroots organizing in the face of low expectations.

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[158] McCarthy, *The Year of the People,* 295.
[159] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 71.
[160] Dante J. Scala, *Stormy Weather: The New Hampshire Primary and Presidential Politics*, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 78.
[161] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, xii-xiv.
[162] Scala, *Stormy Weather*, 78.
[163] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 63.

Moreover, McCarthy was successful in New Hampshire because most voters had no idea what his stance on the war was. New Hampshire was always seen as a hawkish, conservative state, which is why the state was not included in McCarthy's initial plans. According to historian Charles Brereton, expert on the New Hampshire primaries, McCarthy's "dovish crusade" was unlikely to attract many voters: "The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, the Pease Air Base near Portsmouth and Sanders Associates pumped tens of millions of dollars into the New Hampshire economy. Any anti-Vietnam crusade could be construed by many of the state's workers as a threat to job security."[164] But, according to exit polls, McCarthy's stance on the war was not well-known to many voters. This, together with the irony that "three out of every five McCarthy supporters thought that Johnson was mishandling the war in Vietnam because he was not being aggressive enough," made McCarthy's focus on Johnson's leadership a success. A vote for McCarthy was an anti-Johnson, but not an anti-war vote.[165] In doing so, McCarthy was able to not only attract Democrats and Independents, but also Republican voters in New Hampshire: "He won an unexpected 5,500 Republican votes, evidence of his appeal to more conservative middle-class voters."[166]

McCarthy came within 230 votes of defeating Johnson in New Hampshire (after Republican write-in votes were taken into account), an unexpected and upsetting result for a relatively unknown senator from Minnesota against the incumbent.[167] McCarthy described his second-place finish in New Hampshire "very satisfying and encouraging, especially to the students and to the people to whom politics was new."[168] But the elections took a dramatic turn when President Johnson announced he would not seek re-election on March 30. Additionally, Johnson called for a "near-total bombing halt" and proposed new peace negotiations, in turn disregarding "McCarthy's most compelling campaign issues." This is one of the historic trends seen when insurgency campaigns spring up: "The tendency of major parties to steal the policy reform fire of effective insurgent candidates and movements."[169] Despite this, McCarthy had shown the weaknesses of the Johnson administration and demonstrated the strength of the peace movement. Without Johnson as a target, the issue of leadership lost its relevance. The March 31 primary in Wisconsin, which McCarthy was expected to win with sixty-two percent of the vote, eventually lost its grandeur after the withdrawal of Johnson a day earlier: "[It] made

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[164] Scala, *Stormy Weather*, 76.

[165] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 274.

[166] Ibid., 276.

[167] Chester, Hodgson, and Page, *An American Melodrama*, 79.

[168] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 87.

[169] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 53.

the Wisconsin primary anticlimactic because much of the enthusiasm for McCarthy in the state resulted from opposition to Johnson."[170] Eventually, McCarthy received only fifty-four percent of the vote, beating Johnson by twenty-one percent.[171]

Thus the second phase of McCarthy's campaign commenced, in which he not only had to refigure his campaign, but also had to deal with Robert Kennedy, who entered the race four days after the New Hampshire primary but who also ran an explicit anti-Vietnam War campaign. McCarthy's result in New Hampshire, and the national attention he received from that upset, already led him to declare his new intentions: "We are not really out trying to raise an issue any longer for the attention of the people of this nation because the issue has been raised and the people of this nation are aware of what that issue is and that whole complex of issues."[172] Still, Johnson stepping out of the race was regarded as a victory for McCarthy: it gave a sense of belief that the anti-Vietnam movement was unstoppable. However, the race for the Democratic nomination drastically changed: with two anti-Vietnam candidates remaining, discussing the Vietnam War was no longer a viable topic.

Instead, McCarthy's campaign focused on "the interrelated questions of race and the inner cities," which largely corresponded with what American voters found most important after the Vietnam War: "(…) race relations, crime and the cost of living."[173] McCarthy came with an entirely new proposal, one which had never before been raised in a presidential campaign: the establishment of a guaranteed national income. It contained a program to "distribute free food stamps," raise the minimum wage, and the "creation of a new 'income distribution system.'"[174] However, his plans were largely overlooked by the national press, which "was focusing on his image as the quixotic outsider and ignoring his proposals on employment, health, housing and the like."[175] Much to the dislike of McCarthy, the two-man contest would now be focused on their personalities and voting records: "Once he (Kennedy) came in it was old politics, pretty much. It wasn't really the challenge to the Johnson position, it got into the question of what's your record on civil rights, and why is your attendance record bad. And all these side issues that Bobby raised."[176]

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[170] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 75.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 281.
[173] Ibid., 291.
[174] Ibid., 293-294.
[175] Ibid., 295.
[176] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 75.

Ultimately, McCarthy reshaped the issues at stake during the election year. By channeling the anti-Vietnam movement through a New Politics framework, McCarthy was able to surprise the United States by finishing second place in New Hampshire and winning overwhelmingly in Wisconsin. The first phase of his campaign, which was most successful, was not only centered on Vietnam, but also on related issues such as Johnson's leadership and domestic spending regarding the Great Society programs. Johnson's approval ratings were low, and by focusing on specific issues, McCarthy put further pressure on the position of the president. Eventually, Johnson dropped out of the race and Robert Kennedy, another peace candidate, joined the slate. The primaries lost its issue-oriented character and became more focused on the personalities of the candidates, even though McCarthy introduced an entirely new proposal, aimed at raising the welfare standard in the United States.

But despite the great number of votes in the primaries for Kennedy and McCarthy, the anti-war candidates, the Democratic Party did not adopt a peace plank in the party platform. Vice-president Humphrey had to clear it with President Johnson, who immediately shot the peace plank down: "This plank just undercuts our whole policy and, by God, the Democratic party ought not to be doing that to me."[177] In the end, the pro-war plank was adopted by a margin of five-hundred votes. Even though the anti-war candidates had a combined total of almost seventy percent of the vote in the primaries (38.7 percent for McCarthy, 30.6 percent for Kennedy), Humphrey had the most delegates. Only fifteen states used the primary system in 1968: "Of the 2,600 delegates to the national convention, a mere 900 would be selected by the primary system."[178] Anti-war delegates were enraged and both inside and outside the convention, chaos ensued. In response to the unrest, commissions were set up by delegates: "One of these, the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection (generally known as the McGovern-Fraser Commission after its chairmen), was created to recommend changes in nominating practices."[179] As this deals with transforming the political process, it will be discussed in chapter three.

2.2 - Economic inequality

The presidential campaign of Bernie Sanders can be characterized as an intra-party insurgency due to its ability to bring new, progressive issues forward during the primaries. Even before

[177] Ibid., 83.
[178] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 315-316.
[179] Alexandra L. Cooper, "Nominating Presidential Candidates: The Primary Season Compared to Two Alternatives," *Political Research Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (December 2001): 771–793, 772.

Sanders ran in the Democratic primaries he was already a long-time advocate for progressive policies as an Independent, describing himself as a democratic socialist. By joining the Democrats, Sanders was able to reach a larger audience to raise new issues and shift the course of the Democratic Party. This choice was cheered on by many progressive groups, such as Progressive Democrats of America, who "had urged Sanders to run inside the party and move the debate left from there."[180] Not only did he push his opponent, Hillary Clinton, further to the left, Sanders's campaign also led to "the most progressive platform in the history of the Democratic Party" to be accepted at the Democratic National Convention.[181]

As leaked emails have shown, the Democratic National Committee was not completely neutral during the primaries, but favored Hillary Clinton instead: "Many of the most damaging emails suggest the committee was actively trying to undermine Bernie Sanders's presidential campaign."[182] Despite this opposition, how did Sanders manage to push for a progressive platform as an outsider within the Democratic Party? This question will be answered by analyzing the issues raised by Sanders and how he convinced large groups of voters to belief in his plans. Second, the new issues will be compared with Clinton's campaign issues. Finally, the ultimate success of raising new issues by Sanders will be determined by analyzing the Democratic Party's platform in the context of Sanders's earlier campaign issues.

One of Sanders's strengths has been his long-time conviction and strong belief in the ideas he proposes: ever since he joined politics, he has worked not only for the people, but also with the people. This "politics of struggle, (...) rooted in values and vision, and above all trust," has been the basis of his political career, in which the plight of working people has been his main focus.[183] As a self-described Democratic socialist ("Democratic socialism means that we must create an economy that works for all, not just the very wealthy"), he often mentions presidents Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Lyndon B. Johnson, who passed 'socialist' programs, including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, a minimum wage and the forty-hour work week.[184] Sanders's socialist beliefs have been criticized in the United States, as socialism was long associated with communism and the Soviet Union. In a speech, Sanders placed democratic socialism in an American context, again in regards to Roosevelt and Johnson: "Actions to strengthen the social safety net were decried by conservatives at the time, Sanders

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[180] Sanders and Gutman, *Outsider in the White House*, 304.

[181] "Democrats Adopt Most Progressive Platform in Party History."

[182] Aaron Blake, "Here Are the Latest, Most Damaging Things in the DNC's Leaked Emails," *The Washington Post*, July 25, 2016.

[183] Sanders and Gutman, *Outsider in the White House*, 8-9.

[184] Clare Foran, "Bernie Sanders Makes His Pitch for Socialism," *The Atlantic*, November 20, 2015.

said, but today make up 'the fabric of our nation and the foundation of the middle class.'"[185] Despite the critique, Sanders's life-time commitment to these ideas has increased his authenticity: "The fact that Bernie Sanders actually told people what he really thought, specifically that he called himself a socialist, was long considered a limiting factor in his career. Yet it was clearly the widespread perception of his genuineness that thrust him to the fore in the presidential race."[186]

In his campaign for the presidency, Sanders brought a number of key issues to the fore, most of which are directly related to economic inequality. In his biography's preface, Sanders summarized his main campaign issues: a fifteen dollar minimum wage, battling structural unemployment, single-payer health care, free college education, the renewal of cities and investing in infrastructure to create jobs, "just and humane reform of a broken and racist criminal justice system," and immigration reform.[187] A number of these plans are inspired by Sanders's admiration for Scandinavian countries and their so-called Nordic Model of social democratic policies:

> In those countries, health care is the right of all people. And in those countries, college education, graduate school is free. In those countries, retirement benefits, child care are stronger than in the United States of America, and in those countries, by and large, government works for ordinary people in the middle class, rather than, as is the case right now in our country, for the billionaire class.[188]

Sanders's appreciation for the Scandinavian system has, however, been criticized by both Democrats and Republicans. During the first Democratic primary debate, Hillary Clinton questioned the extent to which the Nordic Model can be applied to the United States: "I love Denmark. But we are not Denmark. We are the United States of America."[189] Senator McCaskill of Missouri, who supports Clinton, has also placed doubts at Sanders's political vision: "Having somebody who is identified more as a socialist in many decades of public service than as a Democrat makes it impossible for Democrats in a state like Missouri."[190]

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[185] Ibid.
[186] Gallagher, "Feeling the Bern," 21.
[187] Sanders and Gutman, *Outsider in the White House*, 11.
[188] "What Is a Democratic Socialist?," *Bernie Sanders Connecticut Team*, May 3, 2015.
[189] Foran, "Bernie Sanders Makes His Pitch for Socialism."
[190] Jonathan Martin, "Alarmed Clinton Supporters Begin Focusing on Sanders's Socialist Edge," *The New York Times*, January 19, 2016.

Additionally, Governor Nixon of Missouri explained why the state will most likely not warm up to Sanders: "Here in the heartland, we like our politicians in the mainstream, and he is not - he is a socialist."[191]

Sanders countered these critiques by explaining democratic socialism as not only the aforementioned continuation of policies introduced by Presidents Roosevelt and Johnson, but also as an inherently democratic endeavor: "In most of those countries the voter turnout is a lot higher than it is in the United States. They are pretty vigorous democracies."[192] Despite the critique from both Missouri's senator and governor, Sanders was able to come very close to beating Clinton in the state's primary: Clinton won by a fifteen hundred vote margin, a difference of only 0.2 percentage points.[193] The fact that Sanders, as an outspoken democratic socialist, almost managed to win, indicates a more general shift in the United States regarding the term socialism. Socialism used to be closely associated with the Cold War and anti-Soviet sentiments, but many young voters do not have these negative connotations. A 2015 Gallup poll showed sixty-nine percent of the respondents from the eighteen to twenty-nine age group willing to vote for a socialist candidate. "Older Americans, however, were less sure, with only 47 percent of respondents of all ages saying they would vote for a socialist."[194] According to University of Massachusetts economics professor Richard Wolff, the socialist label is not relevant to the younger generation: "For people 30 years of age and younger, saying, 'Bernie Sanders is a socialist' cuts exactly no ice. It's useless. It doesn't persuade anyone. Those [Cold War] battles are now two or three decades old. For young people, this is barely known history." After the primaries, Sanders reflected on his choice to label himself a socialist: "It is one of the reasons that I may have been hurt among senior citizens. (...) Some seniors, they remember the 'evil empire' of the Soviet Union. They conflated the term 'democratic socialism' with communism. Among young people, no, I don't think it hurt at all."[195]

These millennials made up the largest demographic of Sanders's voters during the primaries. Overall, Sanders won 71.6 percent of the voters aged between seventeen and twenty-nine, "a bigger share than Barack Obama claimed in 2008."[196] In New Hampshire, he even

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[191] Ibid.

[192] William Gallo, "Bernie Sanders Surge Reflects US Shift on Socialism," *Voice of America*, September 8, 2015.

[193] "Missouri Primary Election Results," *The New York Times*, June 17, 2016.

[194] Gallo, "Bernie Sanders Surge Reflects US Shift on Socialism."

[195] Katrina vanden Heuvel and John Nichols, "Bernie Sanders: The 'Nation' Interview," *The Nation*, September 20, 2016.

[196] Zitner, Chinni, and McGill, "How Hillary Clinton Won."

received eighty-three percent of the youth's vote. What is so appealing about the 'un-American' issues Sanders raised and the way he presented them that makes him attract such a large number of young voters? Sanders's main issues are directly related to the economy, and for America's millennials, this is their main concern too: "The top issue by far for millennials is the economy, including concerns about jobs, the minimum wage and paid leave."[197] These issues were central to the campaign of Sanders, and are one of the main reasons why he is so popular among America's youth. Noam Chomsky predicted the success of Sanders's campaign and its ability to push the Democratic Party further to the left: "His campaign opens up questions and issues that are otherwise marginalized, and will probably press the Democrats toward somewhat more progressive positions."[198]

Raising the minimum wage has been one of the highest priorities of the Sanders campaign, both during the primaries and the drafting of the Democratic Party platform. Sanders called for an unconditional rise of the federal minimum wage to fifteen dollars per hour, which currently stands at seven dollar fifty per hour. Meanwhile, Clinton's position was more nuanced and has shifted over the course of the primaries: at the start of her campaign, she supported a federal minimum wage of twelve dollars with the possibility of "higher minimum wages in places like New York and California."[199] But due to Sanders's popularity, she changed her stance on the issue. Sanders's challenge clearly impacted the race, as professor of politics Stephen Zunes remarked: "Clinton, who has traditionally sided with the more center-right of the Democratic Party, has shifted her rhetoric to a much more populist kind of tone, which is clearly a reaction to Bernie Sanders and his growing popularity."[200]

In the end, Sanders's position on the minimum wage was adopted in the Democratic Party platform: "We should raise the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour over time and index it."[201] The specification of the *federal* minimum wage, instead of just the minimum wage, was perhaps Sanders's biggest victory regarding the platform. Earlier platform drafts only included language that "Americans should earn at least $15 an hour," with no specific mention of the federal minimum wage.[202] Compared to the 2012 Democratic Party platform, the contrast

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[197] Susan Page and Paul Singer, "USA TODAY/Rock the Vote Poll: Millennials' Agenda for the next President," *USA TODAY*, January 11, 2016.

[198] Gallo, "Bernie Sanders Surge Reflects US Shift on Socialism."

[199] Dave Jamieson, "Hillary Clinton Clarifies Her Stance On $15 Minimum Wage," *The Huffington Post*, April 17, 2016.

[200] Gallo, "Bernie Sanders Surge Reflects US Shift on Socialism."

[201] "2016 Democratic Party Platform," *Democratic Platform Committee*, July 21, 2016.

[202] Jeff Stein, "Bernie Sanders Moved Democrats to the Left. The Platform Is Proof.," *Vox*, July 26, 2016.

regarding the minimum wage is apparent. It only mentioned the raising of the minimum wage in a very general way: "We will raise the minimum wage, and index it to inflation."[203]

Making public colleges and universities tuition free was another of Sanders's main campaign issues, one which was largely inspired by the Nordic Model, as his campaign website explains: "Finland, Norway, Sweden and many other countries around the world also offer free college to all of their citizens. If other countries can take this action, so can the United States of America."[204] This proposal is relevant for America's youth, because after the economy, "their second-ranking issue is (...) college affordability and student debt."[205] This is probably one of the main reasons for Clinton to embrace Sanders's proposal: to win in November, she hopes to gain more votes from millennials. Thus, on July 6, after the primaries but before the convention, Clinton announced a proposal "to eliminate tuition at in-state public colleges and universities," but only for families with a yearly income up to 125,000 dollar.[206] Sanders's presence in the presidential race has clearly moved Clinton to a more leftist position, and he praised Clinton for adopting his plan: "This proposal combines some of the strongest ideas which she fought for during the campaign with some of the principles that I fought for."[207] The same sentiment has been adopted in the party platform: "Democrats are unified in their strong belief that every student should be able to go to college debt-free, and working families should not have to pay any tuition to go to public colleges and universities."[208]

However, other issues Sanders raised were not fully implemented in the platform. According to Sanders's policy director, the campaign got "at least 80 percent" of what it came for: "I think if you read the platform right now, you will understand that the political revolution is alive and kicking."[209] Despite the celebratory tone of the progressive party platform, Sanders himself is disappointed in other important issues not making the platform, specifically opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership and proposals to ban fracking. The TPP, an enormous trade agreement between twelve countries around the Pacific Ocean, has been under great scrutiny by both Democrats and Republicans, and Sanders already voiced his concern

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[203] "2012 Democratic Party Platform," *Democrats.org*, accessed August 8, 2016.

[204] "On the Issues: It's Time to Make College Tuition Free and Debt Free," *Bernie Sanders 2016*, accessed August 8, 2016.

[205] Page and Singer, "USA TODAY/Rock the Vote Poll."

[206] Stephanie Saul and Matt Flegenheimer, "Hillary Clinton Embraces Ideas From Bernie Sanders's College Tuition Plan," *The New York Times*, July 6, 2016.

[207] Ibid.

[208] "2016 Democratic Party Platform."

[209] Alex Seitz-Wald, "Democrats Advance Most Progressive Platform in Party History," *NBC News*, July 10, 2016.

about the deal in 2014: "The Trans-Pacific Partnership is a disastrous trade agreement designed to protect the interests of the largest multi-national corporations at the expense of workers, consumers, the environment and the foundations of American democracy."[210] During the primaries, Clinton stated that she opposes the deal even though she called it "the golden standard of trade agreements" in 2012.[211] But despite this seeming agreement between Clinton and Sanders on the issue, the party platform does not include language opposing the trade deal. In a way, this is an understandable position from Clinton's perspective, as the bulk of her campaign issues are aimed at preserving or improving Obama's legacy. "As a result, the party avoided an awkward scenario that would have put the platform at odds with President Barack Obama."[212]

Overall, Bernie Sanders's campaign was fairly successful in placing a number of alternative ideas and proposals in the spotlight, most of which were inspired by the Nordic Model. As Sanders's plans were influenced by past social liberal programs of Presidents Roosevelt and Johnson, they were not entirely new. However, they can still be regarded as influential issues that were not present in recent presidential campaigns. The popularity and success of his ideas have not only pulled Hillary Clinton to the left during the primaries, but have also pulled the Democratic Party further to the left as well. This became apparent in the acceptance of the party platform, which now calls for a federal raise of the minimum wage and making colleges and universities tuition free. Even though some of his issues, such as opposition to TPP and fracking, were not adopted in the party platform, Sanders still called attention to these matters.

Still, it remains to be seen if the proposals in the party platform will be honored: "Party platforms are unenforceable message documents that are generally ignored almost as quickly as they're written."[213] Clinton might have given Sanders loyalists "some concessions on the platform (...) to ensure that they come aboard for November."[214] However, others do identify the party platform as an important document, describing it as "a reflection of the party written on paper." In his speech at the Democratic National Convention, Sanders emphasized the

[210] Bernie Sanders, "Sanders: TPP Trade Deal a 'Disaster,'" *Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont*, December 29, 2014.

[211] Jake Tapper, "45 Times Clinton Pushed the Trade Bill She Now Opposes," *CNN*, June 15, 2015.

[212] Ken Thomas, "Draft of Dems' Policy Positions Reflects Sanders' Influence," *AP: The Big Story*, June 25, 2016.

[213] Seitz-Wald, "Democrats Advance Most Progressive Platform in Party History,"

[214] Jeff Stein, "We Asked 8 Political Scientists If Party Platforms Matter. Here's What We Learned," *Vox*, July 12, 2016.

importance of the platform: "Our job now is to see that platform implemented by a Democratic Senate, a Democratic House and a Hillary Clinton presidency – and I am going to do everything I can to make that happen."[215] Additionally, Sanders launched a new group, Our Revolution, at the end of his campaign. Its aim is to continue the political revolution and keep fighting for all the issues he raised during his campaign for the presidency. This will be discussed in chapter three.

2.3 - Conclusion

All in all, this chapter showed how both McCarthy and Sanders were able to successfully raise new issues in the race for the presidency. Both campaigns reshaped the direction of the Democratic Party by bringing forward the main concerns of the American people, which were not raised in earlier elections. Eugene McCarthy provided a political outlet to the anti-Vietnam War movement through a New Politics campaign: heavily centered on specific issues. By first focusing on President's Johnson leadership and the ambiguity of the Vietnam War in relation to domestic economic issues, McCarthy was able to put opposition to the Vietnam War at the forefront of national politics. After Johnson withdrew and Kennedy entered the race, the Vietnam War was no longer relevant in the race for the nomination, but McCarthy had achieved his main goal: raise the issue of the Vietnam War.

Sanders's campaign showed a similar course. Just like McCarthy, he brought attention to the issue of most concern to young Americans: rising economic inequality and how he wants to battle it. Inspired by the success of Scandinavian countries, Sanders promoted leftist programs, and he attracted a large number of voters, especially millennials. Just like McCarthy, Sanders's campaign was issue-centered and in doing so, Sanders was able to go even further than McCarthy. He pulled his opponent with him to the left, and eventually, the majority of Sanders's plans were implemented in the Democratic Party platform. Despite this, only time will tell if Sanders's programs will actually be realized.

Additionally, the success of both campaigns to raise new issues was demonstrated by the actions of the party establishment. McCarthy's plans for a temporary bombing halt and new peace negotiations were adopted by the party "to steal the policy reform fire."[216] Similarly, a number of Sanders's plans have been adopted by Clinton and the Democratic Party, such as raising the minimum wage and tuition free colleges and universities. This embrace of new

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[215] Bernie Sanders, "Sanders Prepared Remarks for the Democratic National Convention," *Bernie Sanders 2016*, July 25, 2016.

[216] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 53.

issues by the Democratic Party only strengthened the success of the insurgencies. Even though the Vietnam War would go on for another seven years after the 1968 election, and a number of Sanders's issues have been blocked by the Democratic Party, they were both still able to impact the issues at stake during the elections, in turn proving the legitimacy of insurgency campaigns in offering new and alternative visions.

Chapter 3 – Transforming the political process

"Our aim was to change the political process - to make it more responsive to the people's wishes."[217] - Eugene McCarthy

"We have to enact the kinds of reforms to the Democratic Party and to the electoral process that will provide us the tools to elect progressive candidates, to allow new voices and new energy into the Party, and to break up the excessive power that the economic and political elites in the Party currently have."[218] - Bernie Sanders

The third key feature of successful insurgency campaigns is their capacity to transform the political process. Compared to the two other features, transforming the political process can have a long-lasting influence on both the Democratic and Republican Party and elections in general, and is thus one of "their most elemental qualities."[219] Efforts to change the political process can already start during the primaries, but are usually most visible after the primaries have ended and the impact of the insurgency can be established. This is also the moment where the dynamic between the insurgent and the party establishment is the most obvious, as the insurgency usually tries to break through the status quo. The campaign of McCarthy eventually led to "an unprecedented expansion of direct primary reforms in the presidential selection process," and Sanders has, throughout his campaign, spoken about the same aims: getting more people involved in politics, decreasing the power of superdelegates, and changing the procedural rules of the nomination process.[220] Some changes are asked for or already set in motion even before the eventual candidate is nominated, such as Sanders denouncing the system of superdelegates as "absurd" two weeks before the final primary in California.[221] How exactly were the campaigns of McCarthy and Sanders able to transform the political process?

This question will be answered by analyzing how the campaigns introduced plans to open up the political process and tried to make the primary system more responsive to the will of American voters instead of the preferences of the party establishment. Both McCarthy and Sanders wanted to change the delegate selection process, and they set out to do so from both a

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[217] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 106.
[218] Bernie Sanders, "Forever Forward," *Bernie Sanders's Facebook*, July 12, 2016.
[219] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 63.
[220] Ibid., 51.
[221] Jason Easley, "Both Bernie Sanders And Obama Agree: The Role Of Superdelegates Must Be Changed," *Politicus USA*, May 22, 2016.

top-down and bottom-up organizational effort. Both candidates also tried to extend the popularity of their campaigns by supporting other progressive-minded campaigns in all levels of American politics. Additionally, Sanders's presidential campaign was not only aimed at reaching the White House, but it was part of political revolution to transform American society.

3.1 - Participatory democracy

The final phase of Eugene McCarthy's campaign was aimed at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, where McCarthy set out to transform the political process by opening up the system of delegate selection to the people, and not leave it in the hands of party bosses. Even though it could be argued that McCarthy ran a fairly successful primary campaign, in which he won six of the fifteen primary states, he was unable the clinch the Democratic Party's nomination for the presidency. Instead, Hubert Humphrey won the nomination, as he had convinced state party leaders and other delegates to support him.[222] From the start of his campaign, McCarthy hinted at his larger aims for the convention: "The campaign was never planned simply as a delegate-gathering effort. Our aim was to change the political process - to make it more responsive to the people's wishes."[223]

McCarthy did not win the nomination, but his legacy and influence on the Democratic Party's political process was strong. The inability of McCarthy to win, even with the majority of the popular vote during the primaries, shows the power of the party establishment and their aims of keeping the status quo intact. Even more striking is the fact that the Democratic Party nominated Humphrey, a pro-Vietnam War candidate, and thereby disregarded the popularity of the two anti-war candidates, McCarthy and Kennedy. To combat the strength of the party establishment and change the war-faring course of the United States, McCarthy hoped to attract as many people as he could to win democratically, and thereby oppose the patronage of the establishment. In this subchapter, McCarthy's efforts to transform the political process will be analyzed from a bottom-up and top-down perspective to fully understand the effectiveness of his intra-party insurgency.

Central to McCarthy's motivation to open up and transform the political process was his firm belief in the strength of participatory democracy. This was "the heart of the New Politics" strategy, which sought to "reform the institutional procedures of the Democratic Party and open up the party organization to racial minorities, the young, and middle-class pressure

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[222] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 80.
[223] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 106.

groups, principally through the presidential primary system."[224] McCarthy described his aim of "improving the political processes of this country" as one aimed at reshaping the Democratic Party.[225] In doing so, he hoped to prevent "another Chicago" and have a more "representative convention, (...) a convention in which the Democratic party sets an example and does not run behind the nation but ahead in its trust in peoples' judgment."

But before McCarthy proposed new plans for the delegate selection process at the convention, a top-down measure, he also used a bottom-up, grassroots strategy to open up the political process during the primaries. A prime example of opposition to the patronage of the Democratic Party happened in Connecticut. John Bailey had almost all political power in the state as chairman of the Democratic Party from 1948 until 1975, in addition to being the Democratic National Chairman from 1960 until 1968. His power was based on "patronage (...) and control of the funds raised at enormous dinners," and he was "one of the great magnates of the old feudal politics."[226] McCarthy described the "usual procedure" for the selection of delegates to the national convention: "The state party [selected] a slate of national delegates and then binds them to a unit rule. The entire state delegation of 44 faithful party members, selected by John Bailey, would then vote at the national convention as Bailey directed."[227] Primary elections were not held in Connecticut: Bailey controlled the selection of delegates. In January 1968, eight months before the Democratic National Convention was held, Bailey already stated that it would be a useless convention: "The [convention] is as good as over. It will be Lyndon Johnson again, and that's that."[228]

However, McCarthy's campaign discovered that Connecticut could actually hold a primary election. Geoff Cowan, a Yale Law School student, studied the election laws of the state and discovered that "a new system for selecting convention delegates had been introduced in 1955 but never used."[229] Small towns already held caucuses, but by setting up a rival slate and getting "five percent of the registered Democrats to sign a petition supporting the slate, then these larger towns too would have caucuses."[230] Eventually, the McCarthy campaign was able to change the selection procedure in thirty cities. By being aware of the state rules and organizing an early effort to win delegates, McCarthy won forty-four percent of the Democratic

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[224] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 326.

[225] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 233.

[226] Chester, Hodgson, and Page, *An American Melodrama*, 394.

[227] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 109.

[228] Ibid., 108.

[229] Chester, Hodgson, and Page, *An American Melodrama*, 396.

[230] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 64.

primary votes in these towns: "(…) primaries that most residents of the state had never realized they could have."[231] One of the leaflets for the McCarthy campaign in Connecticut was accurately titled "The System: You Have to Know It to Beat It."[232] Eventually, Bailey agreed to open up nine seats in the delegation to McCarthy supporters. McCarthy had succeeded in opposing the usual procedures of the Connecticut party boss, and he raised similar efforts in other states with a closed primary system.[233]

Bailey was not the only party boss who, at an early stage during the primaries, called McCarthy's insurgency campaign futile. In his autobiography, McCarthy recalls an article which mentioned large opposition from the White House against his campaign:

> The article expressed an Administration official's opinion that they would not only defeat me but that at the same time the President's position for the general election campaign would be strengthened. The anonymous official, quoted in the unsigned article, said that everyone in the Administration would campaign against me and that there would be a massive organizational effort by Democratic state officials coordinated through the Democratic National Committee.[234]

Even though Bailey chaired the DNC at the time, the plan was not put into effect in Connecticut, only in New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and California. While McCarthy was able to win in Wisconsin and clinched strong second-places in the other states, he later complained that "'the party regulars sewed up' the nomination and defied the popular will by handing it to his opponent," Hubert Humphrey.[235]

On the one hand, McCarthy had a point: only fifteen states held primaries to select a candidate of their choice. In these states, McCarthy and Kennedy received the majority of the votes: "The voters in the Democratic primaries had cast 38.7 percent of their ballots for McCarthy, 30.6 percent for Kennedy, 7.3 percent for Johnson and only 2.2 percent for Hubert Humphrey."[236] The anti-war candidates thus were the most popular in the primaries. However, a large share of the delegates had already been selected years before the convention: the candidates who entered at a later moment consequently had a large disadvantage. "Of the 3,099

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[231] Chester, Hodgson, and Page, *An American Melodrama*, 395.
[232] Ibid., 397.
[233] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 65.
[234] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 65.
[235] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 315.
[236] Ibid.

delegates at the Democratic national convention in 1968, approximately 600 had been chosen prior to New Hampshire and 600 had been chosen by party organizations; the vast bulk of these went to Humphrey."[237] It seemed as though the system was rigged against candidates like McCarthy.

But on the other hand, McCarthy could have known he would not get a majority of the delegates if he only participated in the primaries. Only nine hundred delegates would be chosen through the primary system: "(…) the other thirty-five [states] relied on closed conventions of party regulars."[238] Although McCarthy planned from the beginning to join the hunt for delegates in nonprimary states, his campaign failed to understand the workings of the system. Ben Stavis, McCarthy's key campaign organizer, explained how they underestimated the precise workings of the system: "As the primary campaigns ended, we became more aware of the actual power structure of the Democratic Party. The primaries were crucial for establishing McCarthy as a national political figure. But (...) the number of delegate votes determined by these contests was actually quite low, perhaps only a quarter."[239] In the end, McCarthy won the primaries but lost the nomination due to the fact that "Humphrey won 76 percent of the nonprimary delegates to McCarthy's 16 percent."[240]

McCarthy was wrong regarding the supposed rigged election, but he had a point about the small number of primary states and the lack of participatory democracy. McCarthy's strength lay in grassroots campaigning in open primaries, but this method fell short in having a lasting impact on the political process. Thus, in addition to the bottom-up efforts in Connecticut and other states, he devised a number of plans to introduce at the Democratic National Convention: he hoped to change the nomination process from the top down. Apart from securing a platform plank to change the policy on Vietnam and making "the best possible challenge for the nomination," reform was another of his central issues: "To make clear the need for reform or processes within the Democratic party, both along the way to a convention and at conventions themselves, and to prepare the way for reform."[241]

To make the political process more open and responsive to the will of the people, McCarthy's campaign proposed a number of plans inspired by New Politics and participatory democracy at the Democratic National Convention. The first proposal was a challenge to the

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[237] Andrew Busch, *Outsiders and Openness in the Presidential Nominating System* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 85.
[238] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 316.
[239] Busch, *Outsiders and Openness*, 84.
[240] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 316.
[241] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 198

unit rule: an "undemocratic edict," according to McCarthy.[242] The unit rule, which "allowed all the votes of a state's delegation to be cast according to the preferences of the majority of the delegation," negatively impacted the representation of minority groups.[243] This meant that even though McCarthy had won a number of state delegates, his ideas would not be represented at the convention floor. Eventually, the unit rule was abolished for the 1968 convention, although this did not impact the final result: "(...) in most states the minority, or opposing groups, had been eliminated at the county or state levels."[244] Still, this was a major victory for New Politicians and supporters of participatory democracy. The delegates would not be voting as they usually did for the party regulars, but could express their own views and opinions: "(…) the minority position was at least represented in debate and in discussion."[245]

This challenge to the delegate selection process was followed up by the creation of a special commission, which would examine the rules for the 1972 convention and make recommendations for adjustments if they did not give fair representation to minority groups.[246] The Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection, better known as the McGovern-Fraser Commission, eventually led to three key changes. First, all delegates to the convention had to be chosen through "procedures open to public participation."[247] This led to two changes in the state delegate selection process: "(...) the transformation of party caucuses from closed to open events and the related increase in the number of binding presidential primaries."[248] As a result, the number of primary voters in 1972 had doubled in comparison to 1968, and it "eliminat[ed] the old processes that were often manipulated by state party leaders."[249] Second, delegates had to be selected "within the calendar year of the convention," to again prevent the influence of party leaders and their patronage on the delegate selection process.[250] A large number of delegates had already been selected prior to all candidates entering the presidential race, which gave an unfair advantage to the party regulars. And third, the unit rule was abolished at all "levels of the delegate selection process down to the county or precinct level,"

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[242] Ibid.

[243] Elaine C. Kamarck, *Primary Politics: How Presidential Candidates Have Shaped the Modern Nominating System* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2009), 5.

[244] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 199.

[245] Ibid.

[246] Ibid., 201.

[247] Ibid.

[248] Kamarck, *Primary Politics*, 14-15.

[249] Steven S. Smith and Melanie J. Springer, eds., *Reforming the Presidential Nomination Process* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2009), 5.

[250] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 201; Smith and Springer, *Reforming the Presidential Nomination Process*, 5.

in addition to a new rule that "that blacks, women, and young people be represented 'in reasonable relation to their presence in the population of the state' on all delegate slates."[251]

While his campaign fueled the challenges to the nomination process, McCarthy himself "refused a formal role in reforming the Democratic Party."[252] He did, however, throw his support behind like-minded liberal candidates for the Senate in October and November 1968, hoping to help them win their elections.[253] He also testified for the McGovern-Fraser Commission in April 1969 in support of procedural reform in the party. McCarthy hoped that "it adopted fundamental reform to ensure that it became 'truly representative of the people who choose the Democratic party as their instrument for political action.'"[254] In the end, the changes set in motion by McCarthy had a long-lasting impact on the presidential nomination process: the power of the party elites had been diminished and the power of the people had increased. Not only the Democratic Party enjoyed these transformations, they also impacted the Republican Party: "Since Democrats controlled most state legislatures, (...) these new rules required them to enact new primary laws to conform to national rules. And, because these laws usually covered both parties, the Republican nomination process in those states received reform as well."[255]

Overall, the McCarthy campaign was successful in changing the political process, specifically the rules for the selection of delegates. While his grassroots campaign in states like Connecticut already opened the political system, the top-down measures introduced at the Democratic National Convention had the most impact on American politics. Party bosses could no longer pick the majority of the delegates, and with the abolishment of the unit rule, minority groups had a larger say at all election levels. "The reforms opened the nomination process to popular participation while ensuring that the results of primary elections be binding on delegates."[256] McCarthy followed up on his ideal of participatory democracy: he set in motion changes in the political process to "make it more responsive to the people's wishes."[257]

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[251] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 201; Smith and Springer, *Reforming the Presidential Nomination Process*, 5.
[252] Rising, *Clean for Gene*. 90.
[253] Sandbrook, *Eugene McCarthy*, 332.
[254] Rising, *Clean for Gene*, 91.
[255] Ibid., 93-94.
[256] Cooper, "Nominating Presidential Candidates," 772.
[257] McCarthy, *The Year of the People*, 106.

3.2 - Sanders's political revolution

Just like Eugene McCarthy in 1968, Bernie Sanders had larger aims than just campaigning for the presidency of the United States. As an unconventional candidate in the Democratic primaries, he was able to lead a relatively successful outsider campaign promoting progressive issues, hoping to transform American society. When Sanders announced his run for the presidency, he explicitly stated these larger aims of transforming America through a political revolution: "Today, (...) we begin a political revolution to transform our country economically, politically, socially and environmentally."[258] Even though he was unable to clinch the nomination, Sanders was able to raise awareness about the primary procedures, and eventually, after the Democratic National Convention, he set up an organization to further extend his plans to make the political process more open.

This subchapter will analyze two aspects of Sanders's presidential campaign in order to fully understand to what extent Sanders was successful in achieving an insurgency campaign's main quality: transforming the political process. First, the issue of superdelegates, their role in the nomination process, and how Sanders proposed plans to change their power will be discussed. Second, Sanders attracted a large share of young voters by raising issues close to their hearts, in turn strengthening their political awareness. This can be linked directly to Our Revolution, the organization Sanders established to maintain the excitement of his campaign and to support like-minded progressive candidates. These two aspects showcase, just like McCarthy did, Sanders's top-down and bottom-up efforts to impact the political process and change it towards a more open and transparent system.

Before a single vote was cast in the primaries, Sanders already faced Hillary Clinton's almost insurmountable lead of four hundred superdelegates. *AP* reported in November 2015 that Clinton already had the support of 359 superdelegates, a stark contrast with Sanders's eight superdelegates. In total, there are 712 superdelegates, making up almost fifteen percent of the total number of delegates to the National Convention. These delegates are officially known as unpledged delegates: "Superdelegates are convention delegates who can support any candidate, no matter whom voters choose in the primaries and caucuses."[259] Superdelegates are "the embodiment of the institutional Democratic Party:" members of the Democratic National Committee, governors, senators, representatives and distinguished party leaders.[260] Almost all

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[258] Bernie Sanders, "Bernie's Announcement," *Bernie Sanders 2016*, May 26, 2015.

[259] Steven Ohlemacher and Hope Yen, "Big Nomination Lead for Clinton: Pocketing 'Superdelegates,'" *AP: The Big Story*, November 13, 2015.

[260] Drew DeSilver, "Who Are the Democratic Superdelegates?," *Pew Research Center*, May 5, 2016.

delegate counts during the primary season included the number of superdelegates, which created "the impression of an inevitable Clinton nomination," even though they could still change their preference for a candidate.[261]

Even though McCarthy's efforts to transform the political process and shift the power of party bosses to the people regarding the selection of delegates was fairly successful, it seems as though the party establishment still had a huge say in who will be selected as delegate and ultimately as nominee for the party in 2016. In the 1980s, most of the reforms introduced by the McGovern-Fraser Commission were reversed to prevent insurgency candidates from clinching the nomination. The Democratic Party suffered landslides losses in 1972 (McGovern) and 1980 (Carter), and the democratic reforms were blamed: "By bringing the process 'to the people,' the Democratic Party has lost its leadership, collective vision and ties to its past."[262] Thus, the Hunt Commission introduced superdelegates: "The [Hunt] Commission doesn't want a system that lends itself to a McGovern or Carter."[263] The chair of the commission, James Hunt, hoped that the introduction of superdelegates would help the party regain its strength: "Our decisions will make the convention more representative of the mainstream of the party."[264]

However, it seems as though the 2016 election cycle will change the position of superdelegates. Sanders heavily criticized their influence on the nomination process, denouncing them as undemocratic:

> We also need obviously to get rid of superdelegates. The idea that we had 400 superdelegates pledged to a candidate some eight months or more before the first ballot was cast is to my mind absurd. And we need to also make sure that superdelegates do not live in a world of their own but reflect, reflect, the views of the people of their own state.[265]

Sanders's main objection to superdelegates was that they are not bound to the will of the people. The primary in New Hampshire showcased this. Despite receiving sixty percent of the vote to Clinton's thirty-eight percent, both candidates added fifteen delegates to their total. Sanders's win awarded him fifteen pledged delegates, while Clinton's nine pledged delegates were joined

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[261] Branko Marcetic, "The Secret History of Superdelegates," *In These Times*, May 16, 2016.
[262] Ibid.
[263] Ibid.
[264] Ibid.
[265] Daniel Strauss and Seung Min Kim, "Sanders Demands Democratic Party Reforms," *POLITICO*, June 14, 2016.

by six superdelegates.[266] The controversy that erupted after Hubert Humphrey was nominated in 1968, despite McCarthy winning the majority of the popular vote, is similar to the upheaval about the influence of superdelegates on the nomination process in 2016. Even though Sanders's supporters have called the election rigged, Clinton got three million more votes than Sanders.[267] The critique against the nomination process again shows similarities with McCarthy's campaign, but both insurgents were beaten according to the rules.

However, Sanders had a point when he characterized superdelegates as undemocratic: a senator or governor could vote for the candidate who did not win in their respective state's primary, thereby opposing the will of the voters in the state they should represent. Thus, Sanders proposed a top-down plan to transform the political process and make superdelegates less influential. Before the Democratic National Convention, Sanders and Clinton supporters negotiated about the extent to which changes to the superdelegate system would be implemented. In the end, they decided that a unity commission would be created to give recommendations for the 2020 elections, "review[ing] the entire nominating process."[268]

In addition to this reflection on the procedural rules, the role of superdelegates will be limited, "binding roughly two-thirds of them to the results of state primaries and caucuses."[269] The other third of the superdelegates can still decide for themselves who they want to support, much to the dislike of Sanders: "[The reforms] maintained the power of senators, governors and members of the House to endorse whenever they chose, and for their endorsements to be counted in delegate totals — something Sanders blamed for creating the early impression that he could not win."[270] However, a Sanders-backed plan to make it easier for Independent voters to vote in the Democratic primaries was implemented: the guidelines for the commission encourage "the involvement in all elections of unaffiliated or new voters who seek to join the Democratic Party through same-day registration and re-registration."[271] Sanders's campaign manager described the proposals as a success: "This is a tremendous victory for Senator

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[266] Ian Swanson, "Clinton likely to leave NH with same number of delegates as Sanders," *The Hill*, February 10, 2016.

[267] Clare Foran, "Is the Democratic Primary Really Rigged?," *The Atlantic*, May 17, 2016.

[268] Daniel Strauss, "Sanders, Clinton Teams Create 'Unity Commission' to Examine Overhauling Superdelegates," *POLITICO*, July 23, 2016.

[269] David Weigel, "Democrats Vote to Bind Most Superdelegates to State Primary Results," *The Washington Post*, July 23, 2016.

[270] Ibid.

[271] Ibid.

Sanders' fight to democratize the Democratic Party and reform the Democratic nominating process."[272]

But Sanders's efforts to transform the political process did not stop here. While the implementation of these top-down initiatives might take some time, he learned from his earlier campaigns that the efforts of grassroots organizing can have a more direct impact. The enthusiasm about Sanders's presidential campaign, mainly among young voters, resulted in an increase in political awareness and pulled many people into the political system. For example, in Vermont, Sanders's home state, "many young people ran for Vermont Legislature in this year's primary contests. Several say they were inspired by Bernie Sanders' run for president."[273] One of them was Nick Clark, a 28-year old who had never voted until Sanders ran for president. "Bernie Sanders turned around my belief in government. (...) So I decided to run for state representative as a way to sort of make government more accessible to a demographic that felt very disconnected."[274] Another example was Ashley Andreas: the 23-year old ran for a seat in the House after being inspired by Sanders, but eventually lost by just forty votes. Still, she remained optimistic about the political possibilities: "Being a state representative is a great honor and way to serve the public and community. But there are lots of other avenues for change and lots of other things you can do politically that can benefit your community."[275]

This political consciousness is exactly what Sanders has tried to spread around the country: if you vote, you can make a difference. At the start of his campaign, he spoke about the need for a political revolution: "Essentially, what a political revolution means is that we organize and educate and create grassroots movements, which we certainly do not have right now."[276] After the primaries and the convention ended, Sanders reflected on what he beliefs the Democratic Party should do:

> The Democrats have got to open the door to young people. Welcome them in and understand that it will be messy, that many young people are not professional politicians. The Democratic Party is going to have to adjust itself to their reality, rather than force young people to be adjusted to the Democratic leadership's reality.[277]

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[272] Strauss, "Sanders, Clinton Teams Create 'Unity Commission.'"

[273] Rebecca Sananes, "Vermont Primary Saw Bids By Young People Inspired By Bernie Sanders," *Vermont Public Radio*, August 12, 2016.

[274] Ibid.

[275] Ibid.

[276] Nichols, "Bernie Sanders."

[277] Heuvel and Nichols, "Bernie Sanders."

Sanders encouraged a strategy to change the party from the inside out, just like he tried to do with his presidential campaign. Not money, but the grassroots are more important to Sanders: "I know political parties need money, but it is more important that we have energy, that we have young people, that we have working class people who are going to participate in the political process and fight for their kids and for their parents."[278]

Thus, to maintain the enthusiasm and energy of his primary campaign and to keep educating and inspiring people beyond his own campaign, Our Revolution was established, an organization to prolong Sanders's momentum and popularity, and to promote progressive ideas to transform American society from the bottom up. Sanders defined the three focus points of the organization as follows:

> Revitalizing American democracy by bringing millions of working people and young people into the political system.
> Empowering the next generation of progressive leaders by inspiring, recruiting and supporting progressive candidates across the entire spectrum of government - from school board to the U.S. Senate.
> Doing what the corporate media does not do: elevating political consciousness by educating the public about the most pressing issues confronting our nation and the bold solutions needed to address them.[279]

Our Revolution is thus a direct continuation of Sanders's presidential campaign. Not only did it "inherit the apparatus of the campaign," it also has the same goal: "Our goal will be the same as in our campaign: we must work to transform American society by making our political and economic systems work for all of us, not just the 1 percent."[280]

Our Revolution clearly tries to transform the political system by working within the existing system. Its most direct impact is the support of progressive candidates in all levels of American politics. The organization's website explains how this will help to transform the political process:

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[278] Nicole Gaudiano, "Bernie Sanders Calls for 'Fundamental Transformation' of Democratic Party," *USA TODAY*, June 14, 2016.

[279] Bernie Sanders, "Let's Get Started," *Bernie Sanders's Facebook*, August 3, 2016.

[280] Heuvel and Nichols, "Bernie Sanders"; Sanders, "Let's Get Started."

> From school boards to congressional seats, a new generation of political leaders, dedicated to transforming America's corrupt campaign finance system and rigged economy, will become involved. Our Revolution will provide leaders inspired by the 'political revolution' with the unparalleled digital tools, organizing knowledge and grassroots support successfully utilized throughout Senator Sanders' campaign.[281]

According to Sanders, the organization has already been successful in helping to elect progressive candidates. "In Massachusetts, with the support of Our Revolution, a young attorney, a very progressive guy, beat a long-term incumbent. In Rhode Island, the majority leader in the House got knocked off."[282] Sanders's campaign has thus not only increased the political consciousness of many Americans, it has also led to electoral successes.

But despite these positive signs, it is too early to call the organization a success or failure. In the relatively short period of time after the primaries, enthusiasm for Sanders is still high: it remains to be seen what will happen to his movement after Election Day. Before Our Revolution was announced, professor of political science Eric Davis, already expressed his concerns about the long-term viability of the Sanders movement. He believes that the young people's awareness and interest in politics could continue if "concrete policy either with the Clinton Administration or with Sanders in the Senate Committee Chair as a result from this movement" will be implemented. Otherwise, he warns, "then you have to worry about lack of motivation, cynicism returning and all those sorts of things."[283]

Overall, Sanders has, throughout the primary season, greatly stressed the importance of transforming the political process. By questioning the power of superdelegates, he has led the effort in the creation of a committee to make a top-down impact on the nomination process. His aims of getting more people involved in politics and educating them about the issues close to his heart were followed up by the creation of Our Revolution, a grassroots organization to expand on his primary campaign and maintain the popularity of his progressive ideas. However, it remains to be seen if Sanders's campaign will have a lasting influence on the Democratic Party. For now, the early signs show Sanders's campaign already having an impact through the early changes implemented through his campaign.

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[281] "Our Revolution - About," *Our Revolution*, 2016, accessed October 1, 2016.
[282] Heuvel and Nichols, "Bernie Sanders."
[283] Sananes, "Vermont Primary."

3.3 - Conclusion

Overall, this chapter has shown how both Eugene McCarthy and Bernie Sanders have, through their presidential campaigns, transformed the political process. Both candidates were able to make the nomination process fairer and more open by both pushing top-down changes and organizing a grassroots movement to get more people involved in politics. As a result, the political process became more democratic in 1968 and 2016.

McCarthy's campaign was largely aimed at open primaries. It openly denounced the small number of states in which primaries were held, and opposed the large number of delegates who were not directly chosen by the people, but rather through patronage of party bosses. Through organizing large groups of (mainly young) voters, McCarthy was nonetheless able to transform the nomination process in states like Connecticut. In addition to this, McCarthy also pushed for reform at the convention. Inspired by the ideal of participatory democracy, McCarthy led the fight against the unit rule, and eventually a Committee was created to critically analyze the procedural rules of the selection of presidential nominees. In the end, this led to a large increase in open primaries for both the Democratic and Republican Party.

The reforms pressed on by McCarthy were implemented for the next election, but eight years later, new changes to the nomination process were made with the introduction of superdelegates, which largely reversed the revisions introduced by the McGovern-Fraser Commission and gave the Democratic Party more power back. Superdelegates would keep the Democratic Party in the mainstream, the Hunt Commission argued. But in 2016, the superdelegates were placed under scrutiny, when Bernie Sanders attacked their influence on the nomination process. Most of them do not represent the view of the people, but rather do what is best for the party establishment. Thus, Sanders pushed for procedural reforms: he wanted to abolish superdelegates altogether, in addition to making the primaries more open to Independents. In the end, Sanders and Clinton agreed to set up a Committee which would examine the rules of the primary system and make recommendations for the next elections. Two-thirds of the superdelegates will also be bound to the state primary results.

Besides these top-down efforts, Sanders also set up an organization to extend his political campaign beyond the general election. In his earlier political life, and during the primaries again, he had enormous grassroots support. Through Our Revolution, Sanders hopes to maintain the momentum and popularity of his ideas by supporting down-ticket progressive candidates and educating people in politics. However, the extent of the long-term success of Sanders's reforms to transform the political system cannot be defined yet. Its success will most likely be determined by the outcome of the general election: if Clinton wins the general election

and the Democrats win a majority in the Senate, Sanders might be appointed to chair an important committee where he can promote his progressive ideas and have a more direct influence on the system. If the Republicans win, however, Sanders's ideas might not be implemented at all. Only time will tell.

Conclusion

In this thesis, Bernie Sanders's 2016 presidential campaign has been compared to the framework of insurgency campaigns as established by Eugene McCarthy's 1968 campaign. By analyzing both campaigns and focusing on the three central elements of insurgency campaigns, this thesis argued that both Sanders (for the time being) and McCarthy were successful in their aims of transforming the political process. They achieved this by hooking into larger movements in society to channel citizens' frustration into their campaigns, and by raising new issues. Ultimately, the similarities between the campaigns are striking: despite not winning in the primaries, they had an impact on the nomination process for presidential primaries, and through this effort, changed the workings of American politics or set in motion changes to the transform the political system. As a result, Sanders's campaign can be regarded as an intra-party insurgency, just like McCarthy's campaign.

As the first chapter showed, McCarthy's campaign originated in the anti-Vietnam War movement, the Dump Johnson movement, and the New Left. By addressing the frustration many American felt towards the Johnson administration, McCarthy appealed to a large segment of American society. He gave a political voice to the movements in society opposed to the President by using the same rhetoric and addressing issues close to their heart. In 2016, Sanders represented the same ideals as the Occupy movement had brought up years earlier. By using the same rhetoric as Occupy, Sanders's ideas gained popularity in American society. The support of these larger movements in society were vital for Sanders and McCarthy: without them, their ideas would be seen as radical and unconventional.

In chapter two, the new issues both candidates raised came to the fore. McCarthy was able to profit from opposition to the President by not only focusing on the Vietnam War, but also by questioning the leadership of Johnson and the intertwined issue of domestic spending. New Politicians believed strongly in focusing on the issues, which is exactly what McCarthy did in his campaign and made him successful. Sanders has, largely inspired by the Nordic Model, promoted democratic socialism to fight the issues at stake in 2016. In the end, he was able to push his opponent to the left, which led to the adoption of the most progressive party platform in the history of the Democratic Party.

Both Sanders and McCarthy specifically addressed the issues that most people were concerned about in their respective times. However, as usually happens with insurgency campaigns, the party eventually adopted the plans of the insurgent candidates to "steal their

reform fire."[284] Johnson took over McCarthy's stance by announcing to stop bombing Vietnam, while Sanders saw Clinton adopting a number of his proposals in the party platform. Nonetheless, this can still be regarded as a victory for the insurgent: they aimed to raise specific issues, and they eventually succeeded in doing so.

The third chapter addressed one of the most central qualities of insurgency campaigns: transforming the political process. Both Sanders and McCarthy wanted to open up the nomination process and give more weight to the votes of the American people, instead of the influence and power of the party establishment. Inspired by the ideal of participatory democracy, McCarthy organized the grassroots to open up states like Connecticut. At the Democratic National Convention, he also set in motion changes in the number of primary states and the abolishment of the unit rule. Sanders has in his campaign focused much attention on the power of superdelegates, denouncing them as undemocratic. He has also triggered changes in the delegate selection process, with two thirds of superdelegates now being bound to the results in a state's primary. Additionally, with the creation of Our Revolution, Sanders has clear aims to continue his progressive campaign beyond Election Day.

Both candidates were ultimately successful in transforming the political process. This was one the key aims of their campaign: open up the nomination process, give the people a larger say to prevent party bosses from controlling the process and keeping the status quo intact. By raising new issues on the political stage, both McCarthy and Sanders hooked into larger movements in society, which inspired them and gave them the support and energy of mainly young people. In the end, this fueled major changes in the political system.

By comparing the two candidates within the framework of insurgency campaigns, this thesis has shown the interplay between the three elements. All three are necessary to ultimately run a successful insurgency, and they mutually reinforce each other. Sanders and McCarthy were able to transform the political process, because they had the support of larger movements in society. To appeal to these movement and channel their energy into political campaigns, Sanders and McCarthy had to raise new issues on the political stage, thereby representing a political outlet for the Occupy movement and anti-war movement. Tichenor and Fuerstman already described McCarthy's campaign as being able "to win major procedural reforms fueled by prominent, broader political movements dedicated to popular democratic ideologies and

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[284] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 53.

equipped with their own army of elite and grassroots devotees."[285] For Bernie Sanders's insurgency, exactly the same conclusion can be drawn.

In the end, this thesis has also shown that when frustration and disenchantment with the administration is high, it becomes relatively easy for insurgency candidates to be successful. This could be further explored in future research, in which a more comprehensive overview and comparison can be made by taking multiple election years in consideration. Sanders's campaign can also be analyzed by crossing party lines and taking Donald Trump into consideration. The Republicans also saw an (ultra) outsider attracting a lot of people with a controversial campaign, and in turn even winning the party nomination. What are the explanations for the rise of outsiders in both parties? Is there an historical precedent? Additionally, Sanders's campaign happened only recently. When new material is available and the success of Our Revolution can be established, in addition to measures taken to reform the nomination process for the 2020 election, definitive conclusions can be drawn regarding the achievements of Sanders's political revolution. But for now, he has laid the foundation to remain influential in politics.

All in all, Sanders's insurgency campaign fits the framework as established by McCarthy: through grassroots support from larger movements in society, he was able to raise new, relevant issues. In doing so, and through the support he received throughout his campaign, Sanders was eventually able to transform the political process. Thereby, his presidential campaign can be placed in the chronology of intra-party insurgencies. The political revolution he announced in 2015 has started, but how far will it go?

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[285] Tichenor and Fuerstman, "Insurgency Campaigns," 68.

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