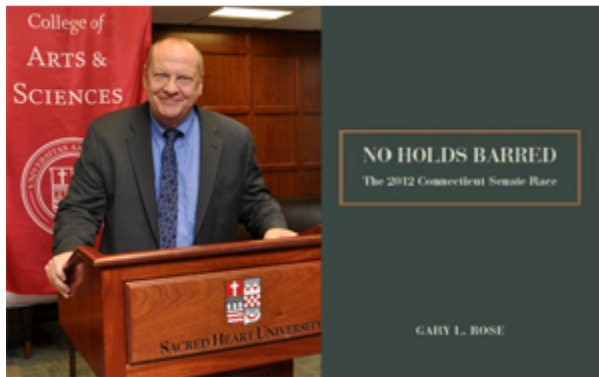


October 10, 2013

Professor Rose Publishes Book on 2012 Senate Race

Gary L. Rose, *Sacred Heart University*

Professor Rose Publishes Book on 2012 Senate Race



Professor Gary Rose

News Story: October 10, 2013

Noted political mind and chairman of Sacred Heart University's department of Government and Politics, Professor Gary L. Rose, tackles the partisan and pricey 2012 election for one of Connecticut's Senate seats in his latest book, *No Holds Barred: The 2012 Connecticut Senate Race*.

The book, which was released in August by Academica Press, chronicles the bitter and protracted race between former WWE executive Linda McMahon and three-term congressman Chris Murphy. Rose brings the reader to the forefront of the heated contest from examining all the candidates who initially dipped into the race and the nominating conventions to the run-up of the general election and a thoughtful analysis of the election results.

Rose, a prolific writer, penned the book, in part, because the race for the seat garnered an unprecedented amount of national attention, and the candidates fed the curiosity of political onlookers with scores of self-lauding testimonials and a barrage of negative campaign advertisements, along with their loyal and outspoken supporters and intense debates.

Rose says the race appeared to be anyone's to win as it was an open seat after Senator Joseph Lieberman, an Independent who caucused with Democrats, announced that he wouldn't run again in 2012, a decision surprising to many.

"I decided to focus on this particular election, because I thought it deserved a laser type of analysis," Rose says. "There was talk of the Grand Old Party reclaiming the Senate in 2012. There was a great deal of national attention on this race. Linda McMahon, who has star power, had previously run for the Senate (against now Senator Richard Blumenthal in 2010), and Chris Murphy seemed like the heir apparent. It was very competitive." At times, McMahon and Murphy were just mere single-digit points apart, and Rose closely looks at the polls week by week leading up to the general election.

John White, a professor at Catholic University of America, calls Rose's scholarly book on the

2012 Senate race “a fascinating tale of partisan wrangling.” Indeed, while the book is being used as a case study by political science students, political junkies and Connecticut history buffs will also find Rose’s book captivating.

Rose, who is using the book during his fall semester’s class on congressional politics, says McMahon, a Republican, failed in the end because of several factors that no one could ever overcome. He pointed to President Obama’s political coattails during the 2012 presidential election, the increasing liberal culture of Connecticut and Murphy’s larger political base.

According to Rose, Connecticut has shifted to the label “blue state” in the last several years, which is evidenced in the state’s democratic governor, the Democratic makeup of both chambers of the legislature and that the state’s four Constitutional officers and the entire Congressional delegation are all Democrats.

Recalling a conversation with McMahon about why she failed to win the 2010 race against Blumenthal, Rose writes that it would take a herculean effort on the part of any Republican candidate for a statewide office to overcome what has now become an inherent political advantage for the Democratic Party.

The rise of the Hispanic population in Connecticut has been a benefit to the Democrats, too, Rose contends. While some say McMahon’s immense wealth and connection to the WWE hurt her, Rose shows data to the contrary. He cites a Quinnipiac University poll that asked likely voters how concerned they were over the amount of money McMahon was spending on the race. A total of 52 percent said they were not concerned at all, 18 percent said they were very concerned and another 14 percent were only slightly concerned.

“Her money was not really an issue in 2012,” writes Rose.

He also says that despite McMahon’s attempt to win over women, a key constituency, that segment of voters also contributed to her defeat on Election Day. Rose believes the Republican Party in the state is becoming an endangered species—another factor in McMahon’s loss.

“For a party to survive, it must have an electoral base that allows it to compete at virtually every level of the polity,” Rose writes. “The dominance of one party over another is not in the interest of good government.”

While it stands to reason that the voting population seems to yearn for “outside-the-beltway” political leaders who have accomplishments in the private sector and an individual who is more independent and objective, McMahon possessed those very qualities, Rose notes. Conversely, the Democratic label “still carried sufficient weight” in Connecticut. “This is due to the liberal political culture of our state and the pro-government posture of so many voters,” says Rose.

He says it is too early to speculate whether Connecticut’s new junior senator will live up to voter’s expectations. However, Murphy’s opposition to a strike on Syria in September as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee “squared” with the views of his constituents.

“I suspect that throughout his first term in the Senate he will vote in a manner that pleases his political base,” Rose says. “Murphy is an experienced and shrewd politician, and although I can't prove it, I am sure he carefully tests the wind before he makes bold pronouncements and casts a vote.”