

Center for Responsive Politics. "Interest Groups." *OpenSecrets.org*. Accessed December 16, 2012. <http://www.opensecrets.org/industries/>.

This database, created by the Center for Responsive Politics, provides a list of all the interest groups that donated in the 2012 presidential election. The website also categorizes the interest groups by their field, such as finance, health, and agribusiness. Only three of these categories spent more money on Democratic campaigns/issues than Republican ones. This website also made it easy to see where some candidates were getting money from. For example, Bain Capital, a financial firm formerly owned by Mitt Romney, donated most of its \$ 5,252,302 contributions to Republican or "Independent" sources. These independent sources, however, really just mean Super PACs. They are labeled independent as they do not *directly* fund a campaign or political party.

Eggen, Dan. "Most Independent Ads for 2012 Election Are from Groups That Don't Disclose Donors." *WP Politics*. Accessed December 16, 2012. http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-04-24/politics/35454581_1_crossroads-gps-american-crossroads-secretive-groups.

According to this article, which was written on April 24th (early in the campaign season) almost all of the "independent" advertisements being aired were produced by interest groups that are not required to release the names of their donors. These groups, legally known as 501 (c) groups have spent \$28.5 million on campaign advertisements, or roughly 90 percent of all of the money spent on advertising to that date. The interesting point raised by this article is that these non-profit interest groups are "underscoring" the rise of Super PACs in our political process. With this rise in 501 (c) spending, analysts suggest that more of America's extremely wealthy are donating to interests groups rather than Super PACs in order to retain confidentiality. It is also worthy to note that the \$28.5 million raised for advertising is not all of the money raised by these shadowed campaign forces. One organization alone, the Republican supporting "Crossroads GPS", raised over \$40 million from these anonymous interest groups.

Lichtblau, Eric. "Obama Backers Tied to Lobbies Raise Millions." *The New York Times - Politics*. Accessed December 16, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/28/us/politics/obama-bundlers-have-ties-to-lobbying.html?pagewanted=all>.