



12-15-1984

That Thing Called Politics

Pat Kourt

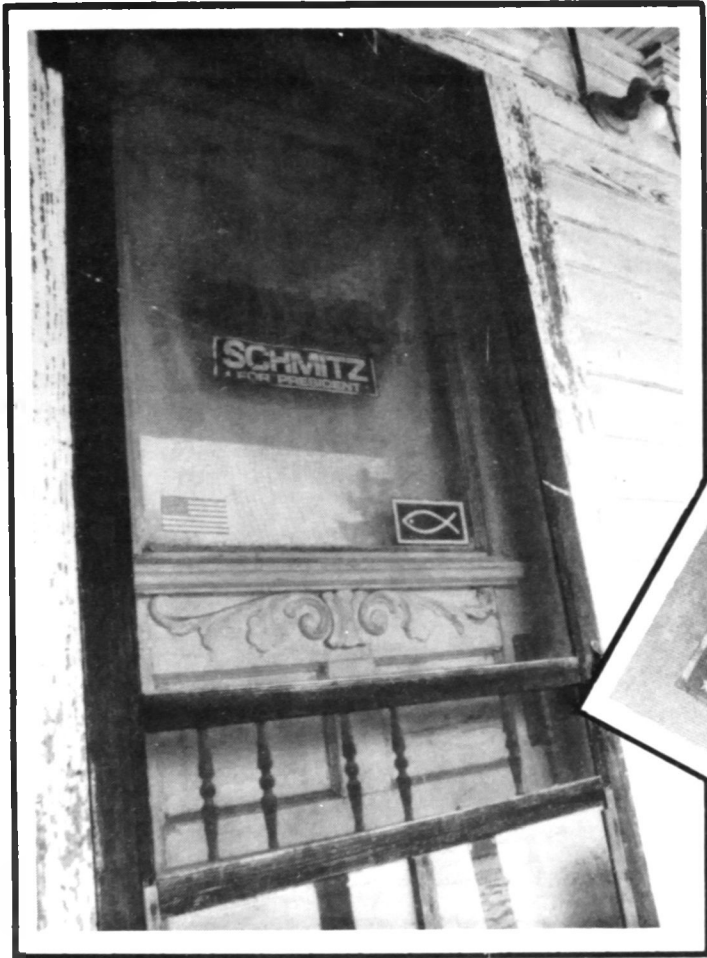
Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

Recommended Citation

Kourt, Pat (1984) "That Thing Called Politics," *Westview*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 2 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol4/iss2/5>

This Nonfiction is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.





THAT THING CALLED POLITICS

— by Pat Kourt



In the 1950's, Tuesday-evening-in-town watch night excitement gave us Western Oklahoma farm families a special feeling that we were part of the changes taking place in our county, state, and federal government.

Yes, I remember that the year when I was twelve, those moments of guessing, wondering, and waiting were fun times! Not really understanding what "watch night" meant, I mingled with sun-dress-clad girl friends, overalled farmers, and elderly cynics. We lined up in front of Sentinel's social center of that time, the Rex Theater, with American flags waving on each corner and from most buildings, and watched as a city official put up mismatched letters on the old theater marquee. Sometimes totals were just called out. New results announced winning and los-

ing candidates whenever another rural precinct was added.

"I think ol' Ike'll make it next November!"

"Yep. But Wickersham's not such a safe bet this time."

"Aw, Victor's a die-hard! He's a good feller--shook 'is hand last week over't McClung's Store."

As the county and state ballots trickled in, our young feet grew restless and sought pleasure in the cool, fan-breeze of the Boone Rexall Drug Store across the street. Icy cherry cokes and chocolate ice cream cones added a touch of celebration to the evening. A vanilla aroma hovered over the busy marble fountain as teenage soda jerks filled impatient orders.

Sultry Oklahoma night air clung to us as we returned to the waiting crowd in front of the theater. An

occasional squeal of tires brought frowns to disapproving mothers. Whispers spoke of a special late show starring Julie Addams in the newest horror film, *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*.. It began immediately after the final election results were all posted.

"Daddy, can I go, please?"

It was a night to stay up late and to forget the work of chopping cotton the next day.

The excuse-to-go-into-town evening ended with toddlers asleep on mothers' laps and with farmers worrying about higher taxes. In spite of mild pessimism about newly-elected men, I remember the fifties as a happy, especially prosperous, time for most of Washita County.

Do you suppose--was it that thing called "politics?"