

**“Tin Cans and String”: Democratic Party Attempts to Challenge  
Conservative Talk Radio from 1994 to 1996**

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In the mid-1990s, Democrats attempted to counter the popularity of Rush Limbaugh and other conservative talk radio hosts following the Republican sweep of the 1994 midterm elections. The Clinton White House experimented with a radio outreach initiative, and some congressional Democrats tried going on popular shows such as the one hosted by Don Imus. Meanwhile, former Senator Gary Hart of Colorado and former governors Mario Cuomo of New York and L. Douglas Wilder of Virginia launched their own talk radio shows. This study examines the reasons behind these Democratic broadcast efforts between 1994 and 1996, the content and style of the different shows, and why they ultimately failed to overcome the Republican advantage in talk radio.