

LINKAGE INSTITUTIONS - ALL ABOUT THE POLITICAL PARTY

A political party is an organized group of people with similar political beliefs that work to put people in office who will support their political beliefs, and as damaging and problematic as they are, seem to be a natural response when like minded people interact over time.

A linkage institution is an organization that shines light into the government's doings or provides a platform on which they are able to participate. Other LIs include the media and interest groups.

The primary goals of a political party are as follows (not what the AP test wants - just what I noticed):

- Encourage participation in the political process
 - Robocalling; reminding people to go vote (for the people we believe will further our political interests the most) via telephone.
 - Voter registration drives: people entering an area, walking door to door, handing stuff out to people, reminding voters to register and vote for certain candidates, etc.
 - Driving people to polls.
- Educating the public (subset of encouraging political participation)
 - Publishing information and government doings that either support their cause or shoot at their opponent's cause.
 - Hosting political rallies and events to show off their support for an issue
 - Supporting local community leaders
 - Educating prospective officials on how to build and manage the party.
 - Educating prospective officials on what their constituents want through surveying and polling.
 - Publishing a platform and releasing it to the GP:
 - A platform is a list of beliefs that the party holds to be very important to them (appeal to rational choice voters?)
 - These platforms are created during national conventions, where members of a party will arrive at a location with a draft of the platform. Leading up to nominations and primaries, each prospective official is given input (and even after one is nominated - the others still have input).
 - Parties recognize the use of the party platform as a way to attract voters. An example of this is the Republican Party losing two elections in a row, before subsequently picking out what issues had repelled voters and recommending changes (some of which are to the platform).
- Choosing and supporting candidates:
 - Parties typically want a talented, well known person to run for office. They also want clean records and some form of fundraising ability.
 - They will usually keep track of "safe" and "swing" regions of the United States and monitor them for potential state/Congressional officials (especially in safe states - acc. to the book)

- Once there is a candidate, the party will support their campaign through:
 - Fundraising: some candidates may have already established a “war chest” full of funds to spend for campaigns. However, parties and other donors are still able to give, although the Federal Election Commission (A) requires their registration and (B) limits their contribution (for federal elections, \$5000 per candidate).
 - Support: while the FEC may regulate monetary-based support, parties can still publish information, run ads, etc. to promote a candidate without actually ever involving the candidate, thus bypassing the FEC rules. This also includes the other purposes listed above that target the GP

Note that these goals apply to local and federal government (although party operations differ between the levels of government, they do share some elements)

PARTY LEADERSHIP

The DNC and RNC consist of a large hierarchy of people who will all work towards increasing party influence over the nation. Every 4 years, these two NCs will meet and perform a number of party functions dedicated to increasing influence.

At the top is a national chairperson who is the chief spokesperson and operator of the party, although candidates tend to be the most front facing part of the party.

Then, a number of subcommittees exist underneath with specific purposes, such as comms, recruitment, outreach, etc. Other non-party organizations such as interest groups can also count as a part of the structure, as they are often imperative to the party’s overall operation.

Finally, there is one committee (that is not charged with the power to touch and make legislation) in each chamber for each party that strategizes on how to win seats in that chamber. These committees conduct polls, fundraise, and support the election of incumbents within their chamber. These are: the Natl Rep Senatorial Committee, the Natl Rep Congressional Committee, the Dem Senatorial Campaign Committee, and the Dem Congressional Campaign Committee.

PARTY PRACTICES

There are a number of niche appearing terms that apply to specific parties and incidents:

- That one time when the Democratic Party received criticism for having many older party elites being in control and preventing many young future soldiers getting drafted into Vietnam: in response to that, they established the McGovern-Fraser Commission to examine and rewrite rules regarding nominations and conventions, with the end goal to increase the representation held by minorities and younger people.
- After this and Watergate, Democrats created superdelegates, who are prominent leaders of the party, mayors of big cities, and other high ranking party officials that are not required to vote in the way that their state voted in their primaries; this is in contrast

to those who are bound to their state's vote. No reason is given as to why these are substantial nor why they were created in the first place.

- The use DMTs (data management technologies): these institutions rely on polling and constituent information to make decisions (such as how to advertise during election time). This can even range to hitting people with specific personalities instead of just a demographic (this is called a psychographic).
 - The way candidates are presented also plays a major role in how the people view them: location, time, and personalities of the area can influence things such as the amount of emotion loaded onto speeches, what the candidate wears, where the appearance is slated to be, etc.

PARTY SYSTEMS

TIME	PARTIES
X-1800	Federalists and Anti-Federalists (constitution, no constitution?)
	We all know the story of the Federalists eventually winning over the anti-Federalists and creating a national Constitution.
1800-1824	Democrat-Republicans (Jeffersonians, in opposition to some of the nationalist ideals of the Federalists) and Federalists (still the party left over)
	The Federalists slowly lost their nationwide influence, as they generally failed to accommodate voters after their initial successes and (according to the Internet) support the war efforts of 1812 and instead pushed for peace.
1824-1860	Democrats (Jacksonians, in favor of a less central government power and encourage political participation) and Whigs (in favor of greater spending and a looser interpretation of the Constitution)
	Whigs would eventually become divided over the issue of slavery, resulting in their collapse.
1860-1896	Democrats (Democrats still in support of the South and in support of less involvement from feds) and Republicans (the anti-slavery party, also in favor of national progress and industry)
	With Republicans dominant after the end of slavery, a number of economic crises took place, resulting in realignments along economic lines. Democrats tended to be backed by commoners and working class individuals, and Republicans tended to be backed by immigrants, urbanears, big business and capitalists.
1896-1932	Democrats and Republicans, but there is a shift in ideals (with Democrats supporting worker protections and regulations, and Republicans shooting down these protections).
	The Great Depression happens, and FDR creates the New Deal Coalition,

	which consisted of minorities, unions, small Democratic organizations, blue collar workers, farmers, white Southerners and those in poverty and Republicans in opposition to the New Deal (which looks much like the current political status quo).
1932-X	Democrats (New Dealers) and Republicans (took on a more conservative approach to government and economy)
	<p>A number of shifts have taken place after the New Deal Coalition, resulting in the start of an era of divided govt (one house controls Congress and the other the Executive branch).</p> <p>Issues such as integration, affirmative action and abortion have also drawn some people towards the Republican party (in particular white southerners).</p>

PARTY REALIGNMENT

A party realignment in simple terms is “when groups of people who used to vote for one party start to vote for another one or create new parties, sometimes involving the deaths of former parties.” Elections during which this takes place are flagged as critical elections.

Utter defeat of one party or a crisis that pushes many people to one party in an attempt to solve it are some of the most prevalent ways that parties become realigned.

PARTY DEALIGNMENT

This is similar to realignment, but people are realigning not to another party but away from all major parties. Many people, especially after Watergate and Vietnam, began reducing their loyalty to their party and voting independently, as well as splitting their tickets (voting some of one party and some of another party). This is in contrast to those old voting machines where pulling one lever made you vote for everyone in one party (a somewhat stupid concept to us).

THIRD PARTY POLITICS

A third party or minor party can be defined as a lot of things, but I'll define it as: a party that is not one of the two substantial parties that defines the various party systems throughout American history.

A number of factors result in the creation of these parties in the first place:

- Ideological parties: a party that uses one ideology consistently (i.e. Libertarians are usually fairly conservative in that they oppose most forms of government involvement across all issues)
- Splinter parties: when a party divides into factions, these factions are able to break off and form their own, third party. The parent party can also be screwed over by this detachment; sometimes the parent will work around the demands and interests of the child in order to regain support. This is especially true when a popular candidate breaks

off, or when the new part is expected to split the vote (whereas 60% of people voted Democrat, now 30% vote Democrat and 30% new party).

- Economic protest parties: these parties are formed over a large disagreement over the government's handling of the economy, for instance, if the government were overly lean on trusts, a new party could break out and start pushing with the sole interest of passing antitrust laws.
- Single issue parties: these parties are formed over a single issue and thus are often dismantled over a single issue. An example of this would be the Prohibition Party, whose main interest was the prohibition of alcohol ("main" being one of only few or only one issues).

A number of factors results in these parties' frequent diminished status and lack of victories in comparison to the big two flagship parties that define an era of American voting.

- Winner takes all voting system (and the Electoral College in general): at one point, the Reform Party (a third party) won 20% of the national vote, but due to the Electoral College and its rules, most states granted the first one past the threshold all their votes, meaning the RP won no electoral votes.
- Single member district: in the United States, we don't use proportional representation (i.e. you win 20% of the popular vote, you get 20% of seats). We use a system of "whoever gets the most, regardless if "most" means majority or not": even if you fail to win a majority of the seats, you can still get put in office if you got more than your opponents. "There is no rewarding second, much less third, place."
- Campaign funding: third parties still require money to operate and put people into office. Not only do third parties not have much support, campaign finance laws state that you need to win some number of votes in order to even qualify for government funding.
- Ballot access: in order to appear on a ballot, there are a number of requirements a candidate must check off, of which vary state to state. The general premise is: (A) you must pay a fee, and (B), you must get a certain number of signatures. The big parties can just have party regulars sign off as their networks of supporters are larger, however, doing this as a smaller party is very daunting and difficult.
- Media coverage: the media doesn't usually cover third parties all that much, with third parties stuck having to pay a fuck ton to gain slots in large-scale media and advertising operations.