

Study Outline

Chapter 7: Political Parties

- I. Parties here and abroad
 - A. Decentralization
 - 1. A party is a group that seeks to elect candidates to public office by supplying them with a label.
 - 2. Arenas
 - a. A label in the minds of the voters
 - b. Set of leaders in government
 - c. Organization recruiting and campaigning
 - 3. American parties have become weaker in all three arenas
 - a. As labels: more independents
 - b. As organizations: much weaker since the 1960s
 - c. As sets of leaders: the organization of Congress less under their control
 - B. Reasons for differences from European parties
 - 1. Federal system decentralizes power
 - a. Early on, most people with political jobs worked for state and local government.
 - b. National parties were coalitions of local parties.
 - c. As political power becomes more centralized, parties become weaker still
 - 2. Parties closely regulated by state and federal laws
 - 3. Candidates chosen through primaries, not by party leaders
 - 4. President elected separately from Congress
 - 5. Political culture
 - a. Parties unimportant in life; Americans do not join or pay dues
 - b. Parties separate from other aspects of life
- II. The rise and decline of the political party
 - A. The Founding (to the 1820s)
 - 1. Founders' dislike of factions
 - 2. Emergence of Republicans, Federalists: Jefferson versus Hamilton
 - a. Loose caucuses of political notables
 - b. Republicans' success and Federalists' demise
 - 3. No representation of clear economic interests
 - B. The Jacksonians (to the Civil War)
 - 1. Political participation a mass phenomenon
 - a. More voters to reach
 - b. Party built from the bottom up
 - c. Abandonment of presidential caucuses
 - d. Beginning of national conventions to allow local control
 - C. The Civil War and sectionalism
 - 1. Jacksonian system unable to survive slavery issue
 - 2. New Republicans become dominant because of
 - a. Civil War and Republicans on Union side
 - b. Bryan's alienation of northern Democrats in 1896
 - 3. In most states one party predominates
 - a. Party professionals, or "stalwarts," one faction in GOP
 - b. Mugwumps, Progressives, or "reformers" another faction
 - 1. Balance of power at first
 - 2. Diminished role later
 - D. The era of reform
 - 1. Progressive push measures to curtail parties
 - a. Primary elections
 - b. Nonpartisan elections
 - c. No party-business alliances
 - d. Strict voter registration requirements
 - e. Civil service reform
 - f. Initiative and referendum elections
 - 2. Effects

- a. Reduction in worst forms of political corruption
 - b. Weakening of all political parties
- III. Party realignments
 - A. Definition: sharp, lasting shift in the popular coalition supporting one or both parties
 - B. Occurrences: change in issues
 - 1.) 1800: Jeffersonians defeated Federalists
 - 2.) 1828: Jacksonian Democrats came to power
 - 3.) 1860: Whigs collapsed; Republicans won
 - 4.) 1896: Republicans defeated Bryan
 - 5.) 1932: FDR Democrats came to power
 - C. Kinds of realignments
 - 1.) Major party disappears and is replaced (1800, 1860)
 - 2.) Voters shift from one party to another (1896, 1932)
 - D. Clearest cases
 - 1.) 1860: slavery
 - 2.) 1896: economics
 - 3.) 1932: depression
 - E. 1980 not a realignment
 - 1.) Expressed dissatisfaction with Carter
 - 2.) Also left Congress Democratic
 - F. 1972-1988: shift in presidential voting patterns in the South
 - 1.) Fewer Democrats, more Republicans, more independents
 - 2.) Independents vote Republican
 - 3.) Now close to fifty-fifty Democratic, Republican
 - 4.) Party dealignment, not realignment
 - G. Party decline; evidence for it
 - 1. Fewer people identify with either party
 - 2. Increase in ticket splitting
- IV. The national party structure today
 - A. Parties similar on paper
 - 1. National convention ultimate power; nominates presidential candidate
 - 2. National committee composed of delegates from states
 - 3. Congressional campaign committees
 - 4. National chair manages daily work
 - B. Party structure diverges in the late 1960s
 - 1. RNC moves to bureaucratic structure; a well-financed party devoted to electing its candidates
 - 2. Democrats move to factionalized structure to distribute power
 - 3. RNC uses computerized mailing lists to raise money
 - a. Money used to run political consulting firm
 - b. Democrats still manage to outspend GOP
 - c. Public opinion polls used to find issues and to get voter response to issues and candidates
 - 4. RNC now tries to help state and local organizations
 - 5. Democrats remain a collection of feuding factions
 - C. National conventions
 - 1. National committee sets time and place; issues call setting number of delegates for each state
 - 2. Formulas used to allocate delegates
 - a. Democrats shift the formula away from the South to the North and West
 - b. Republicans shift the formula away from the East to the South and Southwest
 - c. Result: Democrats move left, Republicans right
 - 3. Democratic formula rewards large states and Republican-loyal states
 - 4. Democrats set new rules
 - a. In the 1970s the rules changed to weaken party leaders and increase the influence of special interests.
 - b. Hunt commission in 1981 reverses 1970s rules by increasing the influence of elected officials and by making convention more deliberative
 - 5. Consequence of reforms: parties represent different set of upper-middle-class voters

- a. Republicans represent traditional middle class
 - b. Democrats represent the "new class"
 - c. Democrats hurt because the traditional middle class closer in opinions to most citizens
 - 6. To become more competitive, Democrats adopt rule changes
 - a. In 1988 the number of superdelegates increased and special interests decreased.
 - b. In 1992 three rules: winner-reward system, proportional representation, and states that violate rules are penalized
 - 7. Conventions today only ratify choices made in primaries.
- V. State and local parties
 - A. The machine
 - 1. Recruitment via tangible incentives
 - 2. High degree of leadership control
 - 3. Abuses
 - a. Gradually controlled by reforms
 - b. But machines continued
 - 4. Both self-serving and public regarding
 - 5. Winning above all else
 - B. Ideological parties
 - 1. Principle above all else
 - 2. Usually outside Democrats and Republicans
 - 3. But some local reform clubs
 - 4. Reform clubs replaced by social movements
 - C. Solidary groups
 - 1. Most common form of party organization
 - 2. Members motivated by solidary incentives
 - 3. Advantage: neither corrupt nor inflexible
 - 4. Disadvantage: not very hard working
 - D. Sponsored parties
 - 1. Created or sustained by another organization
 - 2. Example: Detroit Democrats controlled by UAW
 - 3. Not very common
 - E. Personal following
 - 1. Examples: Kennedys, Curley, Talmadges, Longs
 - 2. Viability today affected by TV and radio
 - 3. Advantage: vote for the person
 - 4. Disadvantage: takes time to know the person
- VI. The two-party system
 - A. Rarity among nations today
 - B. Evenly balanced nationally, not locally
 - C. Why such a permanent feature?
 - 1. Electoral system: winner-take-all and plurality system
 - 2. Opinions of voters: two broad coalitions
 - VII. Minor parties
 - D. Ideological parties: comprehensive, radical view; most enduring
Examples: Socialist, Communist, Libertarian
 - E. One-issue parties: address one concern, avoid others
Examples: Free Soil, Know-Nothing, Prohibition
 - F. Economic protest parties: regional, oppose depressions
Examples: Greenback, Populist
 - G. Factional parties: from split in a major party
Examples: Bull Moose, Henry Wallace, American Independent
 - H. Movements *not* producing parties; either slim chance of success or major parties accommodate
Examples: civil rights, antiwar, labor
 - I. Factional parties have had greatest influence
- VII. Nominating a president
 - A. Two contrary forces: party's desire to win motivates it to seek an appealing candidate, but its desire to keep dissidents in party forces a compromise to more extreme views
 - B. Are the delegates representative of the voters?
 - 1. Democratic delegates much more liberal

2. Republican delegates much more conservative
 3. Explanation of this disparity not quota rules: quota groups have greater diversity of opinion than do the delegates
- C. Who votes in primaries?
1. Primaries now more numerous and more decisive
 - a. Stevenson and Humphrey never entered a primary
 - b. By 1992: forty primaries and twenty caucuses
 2. Little ideological difference between primary voters and rank-and-file party voters
 3. Caucus: meeting of party followers at which delegates are picked
 - a. Only most-dedicated partisans attend
 - b. Often choose most ideological candidate: Jackson, Robertson in 1988
- D. Who are the new delegates?
1. However chosen, today's delegates a new breed unlikely to resemble average citizen: issue-oriented activists
 2. Advantages of new system
 - a. Increased chance for activists within party
 - b. Decreased probability of their bolting the party
 3. Disadvantage: may nominate presidential candidates unacceptable to voters or rank and file
- VIII. Parties versus voters
- A. Democrats: win congressional elections but lose presidential contests
1. Candidates are out of step with average voters on social and tax issues
 2. So are delegates, and there's a connection
- B. Republicans had the same problem with Goldwater (1964)
- C. Rank-and-file Democrats and Republicans differ on many political issues, but the differences are usually small
- D. Delegates from two parties differ widely on these same issues
1. 1996 conventions
 - a. Few conservatives at Democratic convention
 - b. Few liberals at Republican convention
 2. Formula for winning president
 - a. Nominate candidates with views closer to the average citizen (e.g., 1996 election)
 - b. Fight campaign over issues agreed on by delegates and voters (e.g., 1992 election)