

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
 - 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)