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*A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties**

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The rational choice tradition has generated three models of competitive political party behavior: the vote-seeking party, the office-seeking party, and the policy-seeking party. Despite their usefulness in the analysis of interparty electoral competition and coalitional behavior, these models suffer from various theoretical and empirical limitations, and the conditions under which each model applies are not well specified. This article discusses the relationships between vote-seeking, office-seeking, and policy-seeking party behavior and develops a unified theory of the organizational and institutional factors that constrain party behavior in parliamentary democracies. Vote-seeking, office-seeking, and policy-seeking parties emerge as special cases of competitive party behavior under specific organizational and institutional conditions.

Since Downs (1957), rational choice theories have come to play an increasingly important role in the study of competitive political parties. Efforts to develop such models of political parties have been of tremendous benefit to political science. Theories based on simple assumptions of party and voter objectives have generated influential (though often controversial) results. But even though rational choice models of political parties have been both powerful and suggestive, they have failed to generate any single, coherent theory of competitive party behavior or to produce robust results that apply under a variety of environmental conditions. There is little theory to help us choose between existing models, and where their assumptions fail, we are often left in the dark.

Arguably the defining characteristic and virtue of rational choice theory is precisely its resistance to ad hoc explanation and its quest for equilibrium results independent of structural peculiarities. However, neoinstitutionalists, both within and outside the rational choice tradition, have recently challenged this conception of "pure theory" (March and Olsen 1984; Schlesinger 1984; Shepsle 1979). Moreover, the reluctance of many rational choice theorists to apply their models of electoral competition beyond individual candidates in simple institutional contexts has limited their influence on the empirical study of parties.

My objective in this article is to provide a framework in which to explain

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the behavior of competitive political parties in advanced parliamentary democracies.[1] In so doing, I retain the assumption that party leaders are rational agents, but stress the constraints imposed by their organizational and institutional environments. One aim is to show that existing models depend on different, generally implicit, organizational and institutional assumptions. Another objective is to identify the conditions under which different forms of party behavior occur and thus to *endogenize* this variable.

The article has six parts. In the first section, I identify three models of party behavior developed in the rational choice literature. In the following part, these models are critiqued. Part 3 begins to construct a theory of how the three objectives specified in these models are interrelated. I next proceed to develop an organizational conception of political parties and to discuss how organizational properties affect party behavior. In the fifth section, I broaden the analysis to the institutions within which parties operate; then I relate features of this environment to party objectives. Finally, I synthesize the discussion of organizational and institutional constraints, so as to specify more fully the conditions under which different models of party behavior best apply. The objective is not only to integrate these various models but also to improve our understanding of party behavior under less stylized conditions.

Three Models of Party Behavior

Rational choice theorists have developed a set of theories of competitive party behavior. According to the stipulated objectives of political parties, we can distinguish between (1) vote-seeking, (2) office-seeking, and (3) policy-seeking models of party behavior. These models, which may be further subdivided, have been developed for a variety of theoretical purposes and have influenced the study of parties far beyond the formal literature. Let us consider them successively.

1. The Vote-Seeking Party

This model derives from Downs's (1957) original work on electoral competition, in which parties are "teams of men" seeking to maximize their electoral support for the purpose of controlling government. Thus Downsian parties are not only vote seekers but *vote maximizers*. This is the only objective that Downs attributes to political parties, and it is the basis of his theory of electoral com-

[1] The theory developed here is intended to apply neither to parties in authoritarian or single-party states nor to organizations in democratic societies for which electoral contestation or office-holding is of minor importance. Moreover, the arguments presented here presume a minimum of political stability. These restrictions are based on two fundamental assumptions made in the analysis: (1) that the benefits pursued by political parties can most efficiently be pursued through elections and the related institutions discussed here and (2) that party leaders can have reasonable expectations concerning future payoffs. Note also that the theory applies especially to parties in parliamentary regimes, though most of the arguments could be generalized.

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petition. However, Downs's justification of the vote-seeking assumption remains underdeveloped. Partly because of this neglect, subsequent theorists have amended Downs in a variety of ways. If turnout is variable and vote seeking ultimately serves office ambitions, then in a single district, it makes more sense to maximize pluralities than votes (Hinich and Ordeshook 1970). And in multidistrict contests, the rational party leader maximizes his (or her) probability of winning a majority of the contested seats (Robertson 1976). However, these alternative models all belong to the family of *vote-seeking* parties. Their implications have been explored extensively in spatial models of electoral competition (Enelow and Hinich 1984; Ordeshook 1986).

2. The Office-Seeking Party

Office-seeking parties seek to maximize, not their votes, but their control over political office. In this article office benefits refer to private goods bestowed on recipients of politically discretionary governmental and subgovernmental appointments. Office-seeking behavior consists in the pursuit of such goods, over and above their electoral or policy value. Political office may well contribute to electoral success or policy effectiveness, but for present purposes behavior motivated by such expectations is not considered office seeking (Budge and Laver 1986). Whereas the vote-seeking party is familiar from work on electoral competition, the office-seeking party has been developed mainly in the study of government coalitions in parliamentary democracies. The office-seeking party, as described by such coalition theorists as Riker (1962) and Leiserson (1968), aims to maximize its control of elected office, often operationally defined in terms of government portfolios.

3. The Policy-Seeking Party

The policy-seeking party maximizes its effect on public policy. Like its office-seeking counterpart, the policy-seeking model is mainly derived from coalition studies. A smaller literature on policy-seeking parties has emerged within theories of electoral competition (Chappell and Keech 1986; Hanson and Stuart 1984; Petry 1982; Wittman 1973, 1983). This model was developed in response to the "policy-blind" axioms of the first generation of game theoretic studies of government formation and specifically the assumption that all admissible coalitions are equally feasible. Policy-based coalition theory instead assumes that coalitions will be made by parties that are "connected" (Axelrod 1970), or at least close to each other, in policy space. However, policy pursuit is typically presented as a supplement to, rather than a substitute for, office motivation (Axelrod 1970; Browne 1973; De Swaan 1973; Lijphart 1984; Luebbert 1986). Policy-oriented coalition theory typically assumes that parties also pursue office at least instrumentally, as elective office is taken to be a precondition for policy influence. Thus the policy-seeking party is concerned about government portfolios,

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as well as about the ideological disposition of the coalition in which it participates (Budge and Laver 1986). Since the trade-off between these objectives has never been resolved, the policy-seeking party remains the least adequately developed model of competitive party behavior.

A Critique of the Three Models

One can easily find fault with each model of party behavior. Several shortcomings are common to all three models, whereas others are peculiar to one specific theory. I shall review this critique briefly, beginning with the empirical fit of each model and proceeding to more general issues.

1. The Vote-Seeking Party

Criticism of the assumption of vote maximization is easy and commonplace. The assumptions and logic of the basic Downsian model have been widely criticized (e.g., Barry 1970; Riker 1962; Robertson 1976; Stokes 1963). Critics of the vote-seeking model have pointed to the desertion of the median voter by both major British parties after the mid-1970s as disconfirming evidence. Consider, for example, the electorally suicidal platform adopted by the British Labour party in 1983. In multiparty systems a host of parties catering to small and declining social groups, such as the Swedish People's party in Finland, similarly defy the logic of "catch-all" competition (Kirchheimer 1966). So do a number of spectacularly unsuccessful hard-line Stalinist parties across the Western world. Even relaxed versions of vote seeking (plurality maximization, vote satisficing) fit these cases very poorly.

2. The Office-Seeking Party

This model has been widely criticized by proponents of policy-oriented coalition theory (see above). Evidently, many parties willingly forgo the benefits of holding office. Participants in coalition governments frequently resign in the middle of a parliamentary term, even when there is no chance of joining an alternative government. The lay centrist parties in Italy, for example, have often engaged in such behavior (Marradi 1982). More generally, the high incidence of minority governments in many parliamentary democracies indicates office-shyness. Protocoalitions often remain "undersized" because marginal parties decline invitations to participate in majority coalitions (Luebbert 1986; Strom 1984).

3. The Policy-Seeking Party

Since this model of party behavior is less well developed than the other two, it is also more difficult to refute. However, no party should join a government without effecting policy change in its favor. In his analysis of recent Irish coalition politics, Laver (1990) finds that Fine Gael has received minimal policy pay-

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offs in its electoral and governmental coalitions with the Labour party. In a broader sense, absent strong expectations of partisan advantage, policy motivation is difficult to reconcile with delegation of broad jurisdictions to subnational governments, interest groups, or the citizens at large. Political systems with policy-oriented political parties should exhibit high degrees of party government (Castles and Wildenmann 1986; Katz 1986). A pure policy-seeking party should not condone, much less promote, the institutionalization of corporatism, disaggregated pluralism, or referendum democracy (Katz 1987), as these practices generally reduce the policy influence of parties.[2] The postwar proliferation of such practices hence testifies against this model of party behavior.

However, the problems with the three models of party behavior extend beyond empirical fit. In their basic forms, they share three unrealistic and consequential assumptions:

1. Except for some promising recent work (Austen-Smith and Banks 1988; Laver and Shepsle 1989; Schlesinger 1985), models of party behavior are generally *static*. Each election and each process of government formation is analyzed separately, as if parties had no history and no future (see Laver and Budge 1990). Moreover, government formations are commonly modeled as though, at the end of the day, each party simply "took its benefits and went home." But surely party leaders are neither amnesiac nor myopic. Their strategies in elections and coalitional bargaining are typically conditioned by past events, as well as by the anticipation of future benefits.

2. All three basic models treat parties as *unitary* and *unconstrained* actors.[3] In fact, parties are complex organizations that impose various constraints on the behavior of their leaders. For example, party leaders often operate under self-imposed constraints due to "contracts" they have made with members of their organization or with other party leaders. Thus a dynamic model of party competition may also help us understand limitations on a party's freedom of action. Constraints may also be exogenous, as in the case where certain coalitions or electoral strategies are prohibited by the constitution or by foreign powers.

3. Finally, most theories ignore the institutional environment as a determi-

[2] Arguably, policy-seeking parties may willingly delegate authority to other institutions in cases where they expect these alternative institutions to be more efficient at reaching their own policy objectives. However, the proliferation of alternative policymaking structures across the postwar Western world appears much too great and too widely supported for this explanation. It seems unlikely that so many parties could have such high expectations for such a large range of alternative institutions.

[3] It is only fair to add that many models of the policy-seeking party at least implicitly recognize the importance of intraparty politics. This seems to be what frequently motivates the assumption of policy motivation. But there have been few attempts to develop such arguments explicitly. See Laver and Schofield (1990) for a thorough critique of the assumption that parties are unitary actors. Formal work that relaxes this assumption is still in its infancy. See Luebbert (1986) for an intriguing informal discussion of intraparty politics and Laver and Shepsle (1989) for an innovative formal analysis.

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nant of behavior. Party behavior is viewed strictly from a *demand-side* perspective, as if behavior were determined by the preferences of party leaders alone. In reality, however, the *supply* of political goods such as policy influence and office benefits varies between political systems according to institutional characteristics. The actual behavior of political parties may depend as much on supply factors as on demand (Harmel and Janda 1982). To put it simply, there must be spoils for parties to be spoils oriented.

Obviously, the three party models are by design simplifications, which certainly is no reason for summary dismissal. Note also that they are less models of party behavior than of electoral competition and coalition formation. Their principal value lies in the deductive results they generate (see Cyert and March 1963 for a similar argument concerning the theory of the firm). This is a very substantial virtue. However, since the scope conditions of the models are not well defined, we do not know under what conditions we can expect each model to generate good behavioral predictions. And while some modifications of basic assumptions have been made, there have been curiously few attempts to interrelate the three posited party objectives (see, however, Austen-Smith and Banks 1988; Bueno de Mesquita 1975; Laver 1989; Schlesinger 1985; Sjöblom 1968).

As we proceed to develop a more comprehensive theory of competitive party behavior, the aim is to specify the conditions under which the various models apply. Thus each model becomes a special case (or set of cases) under specific institutional and organizational circumstances, and party behavior becomes endogenous. This theory will thus supplement, rather than supplant, existing models of party behavior.

A Unified Model of Party Behavior

A more general behavioral theory of competitive political parties requires an understanding of the interrelations and trade-offs between different objectives. We can begin by thinking of political parties as "going concerns," whose objectives include all three goals discussed above: votes, office, and policy. Pure vote seekers, office seekers, or policy seekers are unlikely to exist. We can empirically identify party objectives, or mixes of objectives, through manifest party behavior. But the best way to understand the relationships between office-seeking, policy-seeking, and vote-seeking behavior is to develop a unified theory of party competition.

Constructing a Behavioral Space

Let us first consider the range of possible behaviors that political parties can exhibit. Let us also retain each of the three models that we have examined as an extreme (or limiting) case of party behavior. We can fruitfully think of vote seeking, office seeking, and policy seeking as three independent and mu-

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tually conflicting forms of behavior in which political parties can engage.[4] Figure 1 illustrates these assumptions by constructing a three-dimensional behavioral space, where each form of behavior is one dimension. We thus can locate any form of party behavior in this three-dimensional space. Let us further assume that we can represent each case of party behavior as a linear, additive function of these three dimensions in the following manner:

$$B = w_1V + w_2O + w_3P \tag{1}$$

where

B = position in behavioral space,
V = vote-seeking behavior,
O = office-seeking behavior,
P = policy-seeking behavior, and
w_1 through w_3 are coefficients representing the weights of each form of behavior.

Let us further normalize the weights as follows:

$$w_1 + w_2 + w_3 = 1 \tag{2}$$

That is to say, we constrain the weights to sum to 1.[5] Under these assumptions, all feasible forms of party behavior fall in the triangle *ABC* in Figure 1. A pure vote-seeking party would be located at point *A*, a pure office seeker at *B*, and a pure policy seeker at *C*. Parties that place no value on any one of the three objectives fall on one of the sides of the triangle. Thus, for example, parties that disregard votes fall somewhere on the line *BC*. Parties that pursue all three objectives fall somewhere in the interior of the triangle. If, for example, a party places some value on votes and more on office than on policy, it will fall inside the area *ABD*.

Algebraically, we could identify each party's position in this triangle by two equations: one giving its vertical and one its horizontal position. This article will suggest a partial specification of these two equations. In other words, I shall propose some factors that systematically affect the trade-offs between votes, office, and policy. One set of factors is to be found in the organizational properties of political parties and especially the constraints on party leaders. Electoral, legislative, and governmental institutions constitute the second set of variables that help us understand party behavior.

[4] Vote-seeking, office-seeking, and policy-seeking behavior need not be mutually conflicting. For example, a party may by coincidence sincerely prefer the policy position that is also electorally optimal. In this analysis, however, I shall concentrate on the more general and interesting case where party objectives do conflict. The discussion that follows identifies situations in which goal conflicts are particularly likely to arise.

[5] We also assume these weights to be nonnegative: $0 \leq w_1, w_2, w_3 \leq 1$.

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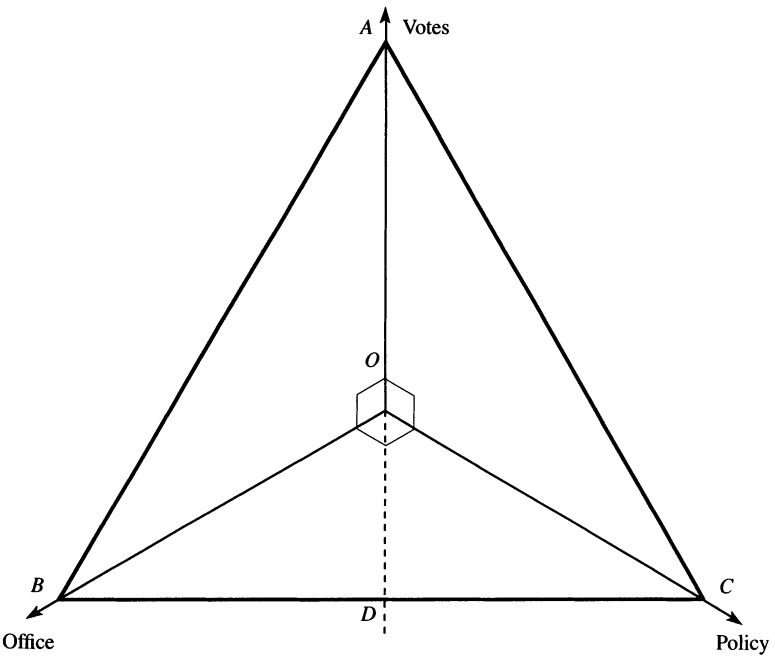
Figure 1. Range of Feasible Party Behaviors



Trade-Offs between Different Objectives

In order to specify the relative weights that parties give to vote, office, and policy pursuits, we need to understand the conflicts and trade-offs between these objectives. One such trade-off, between policy influence and office benefits, relates to the horizontal dimension in Figure 1. Institutionally, policy influence and office benefits are often compatible goals, since government incumbency promotes both. However, *within* government coalitions, parties often bargain separately over policy and portfolios.[6] In such situations parties may trade spoils for policy influence, or vice versa. Thus the trade-off between policy and office benefits arises mainly for governing parties. However, parties engaged in *legislative* coalitions (e.g., in support of a minority government) may face similar choices.

A second conflict that political parties face is between vote seeking, on the one hand, and more immediate policy and office seeking, on the other. This

[6]Most of the literature on government formation does in fact treat negotiations over policy and portfolios as separable. However, see Laver and Shepsle (1989) for an interesting argument to the contrary.

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contradiction, which is represented by the vertical dimension in Figure 1, can only be understood in dynamic terms (see Laver 1989). Party behavior in office affects subsequent performance at the polls. Parties go through cycles of electoral competition, legislative bargaining, and government formation. In this process votes are translated into office benefits and policy influence. Votes have no intrinsic value to party leaders. They are simply a means, and in democratic societies an important one, toward office or policy benefits. Hence, votes are valued for their contribution to these benefits. This instrumentality is recognized even in Downs's original formulation of the vote-seeking party: "[Party] members are motivated by their personal desire for the income, prestige, and power which come from holding office. . . . Since none of the appurtenances of office can be obtained without being elected, the main goal of every party is the winning of elections. Thus, all its actions are aimed at maximizing votes" (Downs 1957, 34–35).

Office-seeking (and policy-seeking) behavior may conflict with vote maximization to the extent that government incumbency is likely to have subsequent electoral costs. This relationship, which is well supported empirically (Rose and Mackie 1983; Strom 1985), can be explained within the Downsian model of retrospective voting. According to Downs, parties will maintain relatively stable policy positions over time. This is because voters seek to minimize their uncertainty about future policies and therefore, everything else being equal, prefer *reliable* and *responsible* parties. That is to say, voters reward parties whose policy positions are consistent over time and whose behavior in office matches their programmatic promises (Downs 1957, 103–09). Governing parties have their reliability (consistency between promise and performance) more severely tested than the opposition. In addition, opposition parties can pursue coalition-of-minorities strategies against the incumbents (Downs 1957, 55–60), whose electoral strategies are more constrained by their very incumbency.

Since votes are valued instrumentally only, the conflict between present office (and policy) seeking and future vote seeking boils down to a trade-off between short-term and longer-term benefits.[7] In other words, it is a question of how steeply parties discount future benefits. Organizational properties of political parties can help us understand this discount function, but the institutional process by which policies, office benefits, and votes are related is equally crucial.

Given these conflicts between different objectives, we next need to analyze the circumstances that cause parties to commit themselves to a particular mix of objectives. The analysis that follows addresses two key questions: (1) how parties weigh policy influence against office benefits and (2) how short-term realization of these goals is weighed against longer-term objectives. We shall first consider organizational determinants of these choices and then institutional ones.

[7] In this context, I define the short term as the current electoral period and the longer term as anything beyond that.

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Political Parties as Organizations

Prevailing definitions of political parties give us little guidance as to their organizational properties. With a slight twist on Downs, we can define a political party as an organization that seeks benefits derived from public office by gaining representation in duly constituted elections (Downs 1957, 25; see also Epstein 1967; Sartori 1976; for broader definitions, see Janda 1980; Lawson 1976). It may be useful to approach parties by focusing initially on party leaders, whom we can think of as teams of individuals in the Downsian sense, that is, as unitary and rational actors. We can then see organizational design and its behavioral consequences through the eyes of these leaders.

The Entrepreneurial Perspective

Let us more specifically think of party leaders as *entrepreneurs* (Frohlich, Oppenheimer, and Young 1971; Salisbury 1969). Party leaders organize political parties that supply public policies demanded by the electorate. New entrepreneurs of this kind emerge through replacement of existing party leaders or through the creation of new parties. Individuals get into the business of party leadership out of self-interest rather than altruism. That is to say, they become party leaders because they expect to benefit from this activity.

As entrepreneurs, party leaders are primarily motivated by their expected office benefits, which can be converted into private goods. Votes have no intrinsic value to such entrepreneurs, and the value they place on public policy outcomes is unlikely to suffice as a reward for their efforts in organizing political parties. Therefore, office benefits must figure prominently in the utility calculations of the individuals who become party leaders. Left to their own devices, then, party leaders should pursue office benefits rather than votes or policy (Laver 1981). The pure case of a party led by a dictatorial, unconstrained leader with no electoral competitors should be located at B in Figure 1.

However, this predominance of office motivation is not absolute. After all, voters are presumed to be policy seekers, and party leaders are no *less* concerned with policy than ordinary voters. On the contrary, party leaders are typically more policy motivated than the average voter, since only policy-oriented individuals will hold leadership positions in the first place. This is because leaders tend to be recruited from the ranks of party officers and activists, who have been self-selected on the basis of policy motivation.

The Organizational Imperative

Party leaders, however, are neither dictatorial nor unconstrained. Regardless of their own preferences, leaders are constrained by the organizational properties of their parties. That is to say, they have to take into account the preferences of other individuals in their party organization, and their hands may also

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be tied to varying degrees by the institutional environment in which their parties operate.

In order to win the prize of government, entrepreneurial politicians need extraparliamentary party organizations. Successful political parties require extensive organizational capabilities. Such organizations are designed to meet the different needs faced by aspiring politicians under competitive circumstances. Three needs are particularly pressing: (1) information about the electorate and its preferences, (2) campaign mobilization of supporters, and (3) implementation of party policy in the various institutions to which the party gains access. Party leaders therefore build organizations to help them compete electorally by securing information, mobilizing voters, and implementing policy.

Such organizations can be constructed in various ways. We can think of *capital* (e.g., in the form of advertising technology) and *labor* (activists of various sorts) as the inputs that define the production function of political parties. To some extent these inputs are mutually substitutable. Parties vary in their labor or capital intensiveness, and the relative efficiency of labor intensive ("contagion from the left") versus capital intensive ("contagion from the right") organizations is a matter of scholarly controversy (Duverger 1954; Epstein 1967). In recent years capital intensive parties seem to enjoy an advantage over their more labor intensive competitors, and shifts toward greater reliance on capital and technology are evident even in social democratic parties, which traditionally have relied heavily on low-cost labor. As rational entrepreneurs, party leaders build up organizations to the point where the expected marginal returns equal the marginal costs. They choose the ratio of labor to capital according to similar calculations.

Activists

The costs to party leaders of extraparliamentary party organization are very tangible. Parties of any consequence need considerable resources to compensate activists and professionals such as pollsters and advertising agencies. Party leaders are often financially strapped and prefer followers whose support is inexpensive. Campaign professionals generally require direct monetary compensation. Activists, on the other hand, can often be satisfied by nonmonetary compensation such as public policy and spoils. In monetary terms, therefore, activists are generally cheap labor. However, activists may vary in their preferences over policy and office benefits. For most party leaders, the ideal activist is highly policy motivated and is similar to the typical voter in that support can be exchanged for promises of future public policy (see Aldrich 1983a, 1983b). In other words, party leaders prefer to offer activists *purposive incentives* (Wilson 1973).

However, policy compensation is unlikely to suffice for demanding organizational tasks and professional services. Hence, activists who perform such ser-

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vices, or many services, are at least partly compensated in private benefits. Typically, most of the private benefits that parties can dispense are derived from the control of public office. The mix of office and policy influence benefits offered to party activists affects the balance between *amateur* and *professional* politicians recruited (Clark and Wilson 1961; Wilson 1962. Also Soule and Clarke 1970; Hofstetter 1971; De Felice 1981; Sorauf and Beck 1988). The greater the proportion of office to policy influence benefits, the larger the ratio of professionals to amateurs.

Incentive Problems

Labor intensive party organizations commonly face the problem of motivating their activists to exert their best effort on the party's behalf. This problem can be illuminated by a simple application of concepts developed in the "new economics of organization" (Moe 1984). Because party resources typically depend so heavily on elective office, compensation tends to be *prospective*. Activists perform various services for the party in exchange for promises of future benefits to be delivered if and when the party wins office. Since so many of the rewards to activists cannot be delivered at the time their services are required, party organizations face the problems of *nonsimultaneous exchange* (see Weingast and Marshall 1988).

Since the services of the activists have already been performed at the time of compensation, leaders have an incentive to renege on their promises. If activists recognize this problem and doubt that they will be appropriately rewarded, their campaign efforts may be undersupplied. This problem is particularly likely to arise in (1) labor intensive parties which are (2) not frequently in office. Parties that rely on professional (capital intensive) services are generally required to pay up front or to enter binding contracts and are hence less likely to be faced with this problem. Governing parties control larger resources and hence have greater capacities for immediate compensation.

This incentive problem is a threat to any party that relies heavily on activists for its campaign efforts. In many circumstances the problem may be mitigated by the concern of party leaders for their reputation (see Kreps 1984; Calvert 1987). Party leaders anticipate future campaigns in which they will again need activists. Hence, they cannot afford a reputation for reneging on their promises. However, the incentive problem is exacerbated in situations where the performance of activists is not *observable* or *verifiable* (see Holmstrom and Tirole 1989). Party leaders might then, without loss of reputation, renege and blame the activists for not delivering on their part of the deal. But the anticipation of such leadership behavior might again cause campaign labor to be undersupplied.

Hence, leaders and activists have a mutual interest in mechanisms that allow party leaders to make credible compensation commitments to their activists. A

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decision in favor of a labor intensive party typically goes hand in hand with a strategy of integrating these workers within the party. Party leaders seek to prevent activists from shirking by giving them a stake ("equity") in the party. One way in which leaders can make their commitments more credible is by relinquishing their own control of their parties. They can offer followers whole or partial control over *policy* or *office* decisions within the party. Three prominent strategies are (1) decentralization of intraparty policy decisions, (2) restriction of recruitment to party offices in favor of existing activists and officers, and (3) personnel accountability of leaders to activists and members. The first of these strategies offers activists policy influence, whereas strategies 2 and 3 involve office concessions. Indirectly, the latter two strategies may entail policy concessions as well. Moreover, each of these strategies imposes behavioral constraints on party leaders.

1. Decentralization of policy decisions ("intraparty democracy") is a strategy of particular appeal to policy-motivated activists (amateurs). Such individuals may be recruited more easily if they are given a direct voice in policy decisions. Decentralization may consist in transferring decision-making authority from the party leadership or the parliamentary caucus to the annual conference or other broad extraparliamentary bodies. The ideal-typical party, where leaders care only about office and activists care strictly about policy, might be perfectly decentralized. However, this strategy clearly has costs to party leaders. If policy-making is decentralized, it will be more difficult to trade policy for votes or office benefits. The decentralized party may be saddled with electorally suboptimal policy platforms, and its leaders may be constrained in coalitional bargaining with other parties. The more policy decisions are decentralized, the more policy oriented the party becomes at the expense of office and vote seeking. The conflict between vote maximization and policy decentralization has in recent years (especially since 1981) been felt very acutely by the British Labour party (see, e.g., Kavanagh 1985; McKenzie 1982; Newman 1987; Tsebelis 1988).

2. Party leaders may instead, or in addition, focus on internal office-related strategies, such as (1) enhancing the prospects of upward organizational mobility for activists and officers or (2) giving such members a monopoly on promotion to higher ranks of the organization by creating *impermeable recruitment channels* (Putnam 1976). Such incentives are particularly likely to appeal to party professionals. Yet the main long-term effect of impermeability is to increase the policy orientation of party leaders. This may seem paradoxical, since impermeable recruitment channels heighten the incentives for office seekers within the organization by enhancing their upward mobility. The key is that this rigidity in recruitment limits the entrance of pure office seekers. Many such individuals will find a party career attractive only if they can enter at a high organizational rank.

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If such entry is barred, only individuals who put a high value on policy are recruited to prominence in the party, since only such leaders come up through the activists' ranks. However, narrowly constrained promotion practices may leave a party with unattractive candidates for office, and the promotion of amateurs over professionals easily entails electoral costs (see Schlesinger 1965; Steel and Tsurutani 1986). Thus impermeable recruitment channels in the long run drive parties away from *A* and *B* and toward *C* in Figure 1.

3. Personnel (leadership) accountability is a third factor that party leaders can manipulate in order to attract followers. Accountability refers to the ease with which, at the desire of activists and members, party officers can be replaced on the grounds of their performance in office. Amateurs are "vitally interested in mechanisms to ensure the intraparty accountability of officeholders and party leaders" (Wilson 1973, 107). An organization with a high degree of leadership accountability therefore attracts amateur activists at lower cost than organizations with less accountability. Party leaders, however, presumably offer accountability concessions only as a last resort. To the extent that party members are authorized to replace their superiors, party leaders are rendered vulnerable, and their expected long-term surplus jeopardized. Under these circumstances, leaders discount future benefits more heavily and show less concern about future elections. Where elites are vulnerable and expected turnover rates within the party high, such as in the Mexican PRI, leaders tend to "grab the money and run" (Putnam 1976, 67). Secondarily, leadership accountability may promote a greater extent of policy orientation at the expense of office benefits, since leaders must show greater concern with the policy preferences of their followers.

The argument above generates a number of propositions about the relationship between party organization and behavior. Recall that vote seeking is purely instrumental toward office or policy benefits. The ideal-typical party leader is predominantly office motivated. An entrepreneurial and unconstrained party leader therefore pursues vote and policy influence only to the extent that these contribute to his or her private office rewards. But party leaders are rarely unconstrained, and under constraints, different party behavior results. When leaders sacrifice organizational power or policy influence, myopic and electorally inefficient party behavior follows.[8] Leadership concessions are particularly likely in labor intensive party organizations. In sum, the mix of policy and office benefits pursued by constrained party leaders depends on these organizational characteristics:

[8] Leadership concessions to the party rank and file are also difficult to reverse (except when the party manifestly performs very poorly), largely due to effects of bureaucratization (see Cotter et al. 1984). Therefore, established parties are more likely than new ones to have constrained leaders. Not having advanced from lower ranks of the party, leaders of new parties are also more likely to be pure office seekers. Leaders of new parties may, of course, previously have served in other parties. But quite frequently they have gained the requisite experience and visibility in other walks of life, such as the media, the arts, the military, sports, or academia.

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1. *Decentralization of policy decisions* enhances the degree of policy pursuit at the expense of votes and office.
2. *Impermeable recruitment structures* (where all higher-level officers and candidates are recruited from lower levels within the party) similarly makes the party more likely to pursue policy goals.
3. *Personnel accountability* primarily fosters high discount rates for future benefits. This implies a lessened concern for votes. Secondarily, office benefits will tend to be traded off for policy.

Parties and Political Institutions

We now turn to the effects of political institutions on party behavior. The relevant political institutions are in a broad sense what Schlesinger (1985, 1154) calls the "structure of political opportunities," that is to say, the offices that parties seek, the rules for attaining them, and the general patterns of behavior surrounding their attainment. Political institutions affect party behavior in two different ways. One form of influence is *direct,* in that parties, regardless of their organizational characteristics, face different incentives in different institutional settings. A second consequence is the *indirect* effect of institutions through different types of party organization. The latter effects can be identified through examination of the causes of organizational properties that affect party behavior, such as intraparty democracy, recruitment patterns, and leadership accountability. The focus in this section will be on direct effects, but let us first briefly dwell on one especially important indirect link between institutions and party behavior. This factor is public financing of political parties.[9]

Public subsidies have dramatically changed the environment of many parliamentary party systems since the 1950s. Of course, public party finance comes in various forms, with differing consequences for party behavior. Subsidies to legislative representatives and caucuses presumably have modest effects on extraparliamentary party behavior. Grants to local associations on the basis of votes or membership (as in Scandinavia) may even enhance labor intensiveness. But the most significant subsidies tend to be tied to national campaigns. Free or easy access to television and other media coverage, as well as financial aid to partisan media and publications, which are among the most important forms of subsidies, have the effect of lessening constraints on party leaders.

The autonomy of party leaders is thus enhanced by generous public subsidies, especially if these are channeled to central party organizations. Their pri-

[9]Public party finance clearly is not the only institutional factor that may significantly affect party organization and thereby indirectly party behavior. Other factors—such as, for example, federalism (for an empirical example, see Luther 1989), separation of powers, and franchise restrictions—may have similarly important ramifications. However, public party subsidies distinguish themselves by having consistent and observable effects, which lend themselves to fairly straightforward theoretical explanation.

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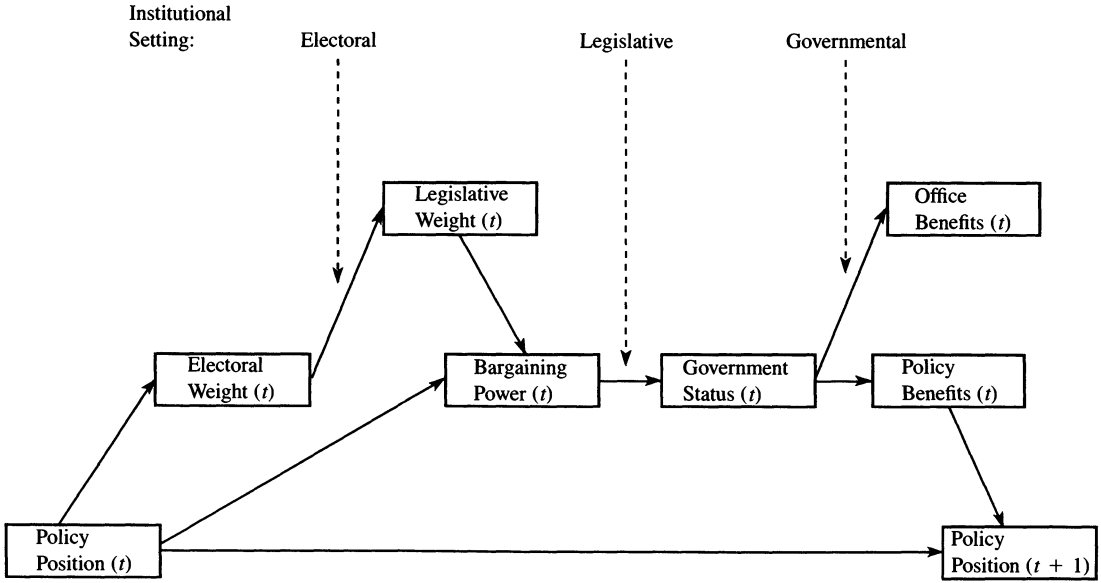
Figure 2. The Institutional Framework of Interparty Competition in Parliamentary Democracies



Note: t and $t + 1$ denote successive electoral terms.

mary effect is to reduce the cost to party leaders of different inputs. Specifically, public financing tends to subsidize *capital* inputs, for example, by facilitating media-focused campaigns. Also, direct financial subsidies can be used more easily in capital intensive campaigns. Consequently, party leaders may substitute capital for labor inputs. Consider the fact that over the last 30 years public financing of political parties has become increasingly prevalent across the Western world (Paltiel 1981; von Beyme 1985). This trend has coincided with a growing capitalization and professionalization of electoral campaigns. Thus, public party finance generally enhances capital intensiveness, with the effects on party behavior discussed above. In brief, public party finance diminishes incentives for the previously discussed commitment strategies common in labor intensive organizations. Thus public finance reduces the intensity of policy-seeking party behavior.

However, our main focus here is on the *direct* effects of institutions on party behavior. For this purpose we need to examine the conversion of votes into the goods that party leaders intrinsically desire. Electoral exchange provides parties with votes, which can be cashed in for policy or office benefits. The process by which votes get translated into spoils and policy influence is shaped by a variety of political institutions. Figure 2 gives a schematic overview of these conversion processes in three institutional settings, here labeled (1) electoral, (2) legislative, and (3) governmental (see Schlesinger 1985 for a related framework applied to U.S. parties).[10] Figure 2 illustrates the complexity of party competition as well as its dynamic character. Party behavior at one point in time affects future payoffs and is determined in light of these expectations.

Electoral competition is the process by which parties exchange benefits (or promises thereof) derived from their control of political institutions for electoral support. I assume for simplicity that the benefits that parties provide for voters are policy benefits. For one thing, policy promises are generally the least costly way for parties to secure electoral support.[11] In accordance with Downs's argument that parties are driven to maintain consistent policy positions over time (Downs 1957, 103–09), policy position in one election is determined partly by previous policy positions, including, for incumbents, government policy. Voting

[10] In his account of the "New American Political Party," Schlesinger (1985) distinguishes between (1) the structure of political opportunities, (2) the party system, and (3) party organization. By the structure of political opportunities, Schlesinger means much the same as is discussed in the sections on electoral and governmental institutions below. His concept of the party system hinges on electoral competitiveness, which is the topic of the next section of this article. Party organization, of course, has already been discussed. Since Schlesinger understandably is less concerned with *interparty coalitions,* he devotes little attention to the questions discussed under the heading of "Legislative Institutions" in this article. Otherwise our concerns and approaches are in many ways similar.

[11] Many political parties in clientelistic societies trade various private goods for votes. However, this form of exchange is clearly an expensive one for parties and depends on their ability to extract resources other than votes from their clients.

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decisions, as illustrated in Figure 2, are assumed to be a function of the past and present policy positions of the various parties.[12]

Electoral competitiveness is the aggregate uncertainty of electoral contests as perceived by party leaders. Specifically, competitiveness is the degree to which electoral results are expected to vary across the set of feasible policy positions. The more electoral outcomes are expected to vary across policy positions, the more competitive the election. And the greater the electoral competitiveness, the more keenly parties pursue votes. As Schlesinger (1965) notes, the greater the competitiveness, the more parties are forced to focus on fundamental objectives (electoral survival).

Electoral Institutions

If votes were indeed pursued for their intrinsic value to party leaders, there would be no reason to extend this discussion of political institutions. But of course they are not. Votes are first of all converted into parliamentary seats, or legislative weights. This purely mechanical process is defined by the electoral laws. In most democracies, this process yields strong positive correlations between electoral and legislative weights. However, this correlation is nowhere perfect, and distortions are often significant (on electoral laws and their effects, see Bogdanor and Butler 1983; Carstairs 1980; Duverger 1954; Greenberg and Shepsle 1987; Grofman and Lijphart 1986; Rae 1971; Riker 1982b).

Generally speaking, distortions are larger in single-member districts than in proportional representation (PR) systems. In the latter setting, they further depend on district magnitude, electoral thresholds, supplementary seats, and the particular PR formula applied. In most cases, distortionary effects predictably favor large parties and disadvantage small ones. However, more perverse and unpredictable effects are not uncommon. In the 1950 elections, the Conservatives trailed the British Labour party in the popular vote, yet won a majority in the House of Commons. Similarly the New Zealand National party in 1978 captured a comfortable majority of 11 seats in the House of Representatives despite running second to Labour among the voters. In the Irish elections of 1987, Fianna Fáil gained six seats and captured the government, despite slipping in first preference votes. In the Australian elections the same year, the Labour party experienced a similar fortune. Similar examples abound.[13] Distortions produced by the electoral system can, at least in extreme cases, affect party behavior. The

[12]In Figure 2 the electoral influence of past policy positions is, for simplicity, represented as indirect. Past positions constrain present policies because of the electoral cost of inconsistency. But past policy positions may also have a direct effect in the sense that voters may recall them or have built their party identification on them (see Fiorina 1981).

[13]In the Irish and Australian cases, the results were at least partly due to their preferential voting systems, which reward party preferences beyond the first.

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more unpredictable the relationship between electoral and legislative weights, the less incentive for parties to maximize votes.

Legislative Institutions

But legislative weights are less interesting than legislative bargaining power, which in turn must be converted into governmental office. The latter process may be affected by a variety of mechanical structural features (see Laver and Schofield 1990; Strom 1990). Constitutional provisions such as investiture requirements and the employment of coalitional *formateurs* or *informateurs* in the government formation process may favor certain parties or coalitions. In situations where no party has a majority, the process by which coalitions are formed and premiers are designated may make much or little of legislative pluralities. The partisan preferences of an influential head of state (such as in Finland) may similarly structure the coalition formation process and the prospects of different political parties (see Luebbert 1986, 221–31; Nousiainen 1988). These are issues of *agenda control,* which deserve more attention than they have typically received in coalition theoretic studies of government formation.

However, the focus here will be on the conversion of legislative representation into bargaining power. Except in pure two-party systems, bargaining power is no simple function of legislative weights. Whereas the translation of votes into seats is purely mechanical, the further conversion of legislative weights into bargaining power depends on the much more complex logic of interparty strategic behavior. There have been several influential attempts to formalize the discussion of bargaining power through the construction of power indices (see especially Banzhaf 1965; Shapley and Shubik 1954; also Holler 1982). These indices have the practical disadvantages of (1) requiring the specification of a fixed decision rule (normally operationalized as simple majority [50% + 1]) and (2) a priori assuming all coalitions to be equally feasible. Applied to government formation, the former assumption is untenable where minority governments are feasible (Strom 1984); the latter, more generally where policy positions affect the likelihood of coalitions.[14] Nevertheless, power indices are at least heuristically valuable in the study of coalition formation.

Table 1 presents Shapley-Shubik power index values for a hypothetical four-party system under two different electoral results, as well as a modified index based on the assumption that governments require *policy viability* but not necessarily majority size. A policy viable coalition is one that cannot be defeated by any spatially connected coalition (see Budge and Laver 1986). The modi-

[14] The assumption that policy positions affect the likelihood of coalitions need not be based on any presumption that parties are *intrinsically* policy seekers. In a dynamic model, parties may prefer policy consistent (e.g., spatially connected) coalitions in order to be reliable and responsible and thereby to avoid punishment by the voters in the next election (Downs 1957, 103–09).

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Table 1. Power Indices in a Hypothetical Party System

	Scenario 1				Scenario 2	
Party	Legislative Weight	Shapley-Shubik Value	Modified One-Dimensional Shapley-Shubik Value	Modified Two-Dimensional Shapley-Shubik Value	Legislative Weight	Shapley-Shubik Value
A	.40	.50	.25	.42	.26	.33
B	.16	.17	.58	.25	.22	0
C	.22	.17	.08	.25	.26	.33
D	.22	.17	.08	.08	.26	.33

Note: Modified Shapley-Shubik Value = proportion of policy viable coalitions in which party is pivotal. In calculations of this value in one dimension, parties are assumed to be ordered spatially in the same way they are listed. In the second dimension, parties are ordered *D*, *B*, *C*, *A*.

Source: Adapted from Laver (1989).

fied Shapley-Shubik values presented here represent the proportion of policy viable coalitions in which a given party is pivotal (Laver and Budge 1990).[15] They should be considered as a rough indicator only of the impact of policy considerations.

Several things stand out from Table 1. First, even the regular Shapley-Shubik values in scenario 1 indicate that no party has a bargaining power equal to its legislative weight. When policy viability is considered, paradoxically the smallest party carries by far the greatest power. Note also that if scenarios 1 and 2 are two consecutive elections, party *B* gains seats but loses all its bargaining power between these two elections. Finally, legislative weights are considerably more distorted in unidimensional policy space than under higher dimensionality. Even our two-dimensional example yields bargaining weights much closer to numerical proportionality, despite the fact that in our example the same parties are at the extremes of both dimensions. The regular Shapley-Shubik index, which is equivalent to unrestricted spatial dimensionality, exhibits the least distortion. The distortion of legislative weights into bargaining power appears to decrease with the number of spatial dimensions relative to the number of parties.

Let us elaborate. Consider the spatial dimensionality of the interparty game as a set of constraints on the set of feasible coalitions. If every possible ordering of parties is connected along some spatial dimension and hence feasible,[16] then there are no spatial constraints on coalition formation, and policy considerations eliminate no options. Conventional power indices reflect this assumption. If, at the other extreme, only connected coalitions along a single dimension are permissible, then the feasible set is drastically reduced. This restriction of the set of feasible coalitions particularly disfavors parties at the extremes of the existing dimension. As we move from unrestricted spatial domain to a single dimension, greater and greater distortions are imposed on the bargaining weights of parties near the extremes of the still-permissible dimensions. The dimensionality of unrestricted domain increases sharply with the number of parties.[17] Hence, the distortion of bargaining weights (relative to legislative weights) is a decreasing

[15] A *viable* coalition is here defined as any coalition that cannot be defeated by any majority coalition that is spatially connected in any admissible dimension. Whereas the majority criterion is a very restrictive requirement, viability is clearly a much more permissive one. However, it may be more reflective of the institutional rules under which parliamentary governments typically operate. The juxtaposition of the two bargaining indices should give a good intuitive sense of the potential effects of institutional constraints.

[16] Policy-seeking behavior need not imply that only connected coalitions will form. The requirement of connectedness is, in fact, based on a crude ordinal measure of policy distance. However, thinking in terms of connectedness helps us simplify the argument.

[17] I assume for simplicity that the number of parties and the dimensionality of the policy space are given exogenously and independently. In reality these variables may be mutually interdependent. On the one hand, the number of policy dimensions may constrain the number of parties. On the other hand, parties may strategically seek to expand the number of policy dimensions (see Riker 1982a).

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function of the number of spatial dimensions relative to the number of parties.[18] The greater this distortion, the lower the incentives for vote maximization. In other words, vote-seeking behavior relates positively to the number of spatial dimensions relative to the number of parties.

Thus the instrumental value of votes is further conditionalized. The more that strategic interaction enters into the picture, the less predictable the benefits of electoral strength. However, if any party wins a parliamentary majority (or a qualified majority if that is required) on its own, the element of strategic interaction collapses. In pure two-party systems, of course, majorities always emerge. As the number of political parties increases, the probability of single-party majorities dwindles, and the complexities of strategic interaction multiply.

Governmental Institutions

The third and final stage in the conversion of votes into office and policy benefits depends on control of elected office. Formal theories of party behavior typically assume that government incumbency is at least a necessary, and possibly a sufficient, condition for both policy and office payoffs. However, this assumption clearly oversimplifies political institutions. Parties not represented in government often have a significant impact on policy and may even share in office payoffs (Laver and Budge 1990; Strom 1984). Of course, control of the executive branch *is* conducive to such benefits. Under most conceivable circumstances, governing parties have greater access to policy influence and office benefits than the opposition. But the degree to which incumbents are favored varies.

These differentials are determined partly by properties of the particular government and partly by the political system as a whole. A minority government likely has to share policy influence (and perhaps spoils) with the opposition to a greater extent than a majority government under otherwise identical circumstances. There are also systematic cross-national differences in the distribution of these benefits. Some institutional arrangements favor governing parties more than others. Let us think of each polity as having a modal distribution of office and policy influence between government and opposition. Thus we can speak of systemic *office benefit differentials* and *policy influence differentials* between governing and opposition parties. Let us allow these two types of benefits to vary independently of each other. Assume further that both types of benefits are constant-sum in the short term.[19]

Figure 3 shows a hypothetical distribution of policy influence and office

[18] If the number of parties is very small, this constraint is unlikely to bind.

[19] The latter assumption is eminently plausible for office benefits, perhaps somewhat less so for policy influence. In the long run, the sum of both types of benefits may change (most often increase). Indeed, in situations of low electoral competitiveness, rational political parties may collude in efforts to increase total benefits. Italian postwar politics appears singularly interpretable in such terms.

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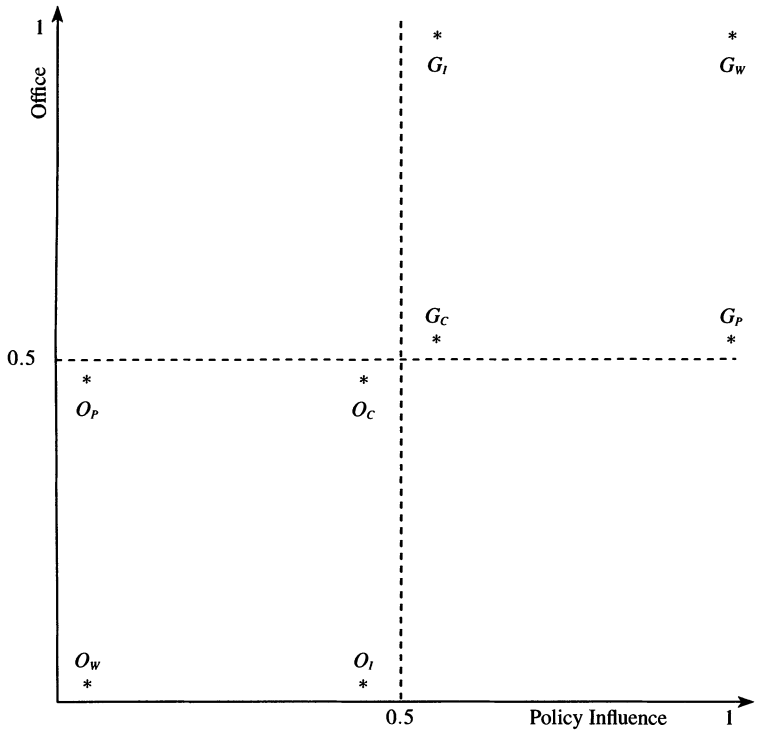
Figure 3. Benefit Distribution in Four Types of Political Regimes



Legend:
G = Government
O = Opposition

Subscripts represent regime types:
W = Westminster
C = Consensus
I = Inclusionary
P = Proportional

benefits between government and opposition in four regime types. For simplicity, the sums of policy influence and office benefits have each been set to one. The benefits controlled by governing parties are represented by points labeled G, those of the opposition by the letter O. The subscripts w, c, i, and p represent regime types. These represent ideal types derived from the comparative literature on political institutions. Two of these concepts have been borrowed from Lijphart (1984). In the *Westminster* model (w), approximated by Great Britain and New Zealand, the government controls the lion's share of both policy influence

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and office benefits. The contrary case is the *Consensus* model (*c*), exemplified by the consociational democracies of Switzerland or Belgium, where both types of benefits are much more equally shared between government and opposition (Lijphart 1977). The "off-diagonal" entries are mixed cases. In *Proportional* (or *Proporz*) (*p*) regimes the office benefits are much more equally shared than policy influence (Lehmbruch 1967). Empirical examples of this type of regime are more difficult to identify, though Austria between 1945 and 1966 is a possibility.[20] The fourth and last regime type is labeled *Inclusionary* (*i*) and is characterized by a large office benefit differential and a small policy influence differential. Norway and Sweden, with their corporatist power-sharing arrangements, may approximate this model (Kvavik 1976; Martin 1984; Olsen 1983).

Note that in all four regime types, the government enjoys a positive benefit differential along both dimensions. However, the relative size of this differential varies. So does the overall volume of benefits. Party behavior varies accordingly. In Westminster democracies, parties have greater incentives to govern than in Consensus systems. This is true whether these parties are office or policy seekers. Furthermore, expected changes in the distribution of benefits may affect party behavior. If parties expect benefit differentials to increase in the future, they will be more likely to maximize over the long run, whereas the opposite expectation would lead to steep discounts of the utility of future officeholding.

We can now summarize the principal effects of institutional features on competitive party behavior. Institutions, or rather party expectations concerning their effects, influence party behavior in a variety of ways. More specifically:

1. The greater the degree of electoral competitiveness (the uncertainty of electoral contests), the more parties will pursue votes.

2. The greater the certainty that votes will be accurately converted into legislative weights (seats), the more value parties will place on electoral objectives.

3. The greater the correlation between legislative weights and bargaining weights, the lower the discount of future votes. The extreme case here is the two-party system, where bargaining weights are a positive step function of legislative weights, and where strategic party interaction collapses. Hence, parties in competitive two-party systems will be vote seekers par excellence.

4. Even in multiparty systems, a majority party monopolizes bargaining power (assuming simple majority decision rules). Therefore, the greater the probability of a single-party legislative majority, the more parties in multiparty systems value votes. Since this probability decreases with the fragmentation of the party system, so do incentives for vote-seeking behavior.

5. The higher the dimensionality of the political space relative to the number of parties, the lesser the distortion of legislative weights in bargaining weights.

[20] I owe this example to Wolfgang C. Müller.

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Therefore, the greater the number of spatial dimensions, the greater the valuation of votes. Also, the lower the number of parties, the higher the value of votes (see point 4 above).

6. The greater the relative availability of office benefits compared to policy influence, the greater the propensity toward office-seeking behavior.

7. The greater the office benefit differential between government and opposition relative to the policy influence differential, the greater the propensity of political parties toward office-seeking behavior.

We can now summarize the discussion of the organizational and institutional determinants of competitive party behavior. Figures 4 and 5 provide theoretical models of the relationships discussed above. Each figure represents the argument as it relates to one relationship between the three party objectives of interest. Together these models help us locate each party in the behavioral space in Figure 1. We can also represent these functions algebraically as follows:[21]

$$w_1 = a_1 + b_1D + b_2R + b_3L + b_4C + b_5E + b_6S + b_7N + e_1 \quad (3)$$

$$w_3/w_2 = a_2 + b_8D + b_9R + b_{10}L + b_{11}B + b_{12}I + e_2 \quad (4)$$

where

D = intraparty democracy,
R = recruitment permeability,
L = leadership accountability,
C = electoral competitiveness,
E = electoral system distortion,
S = spatial dimensionality,
N = number of parties,
B = office benefit differential,
I = policy influence differential,
a_1 and a_2 are constants,
b_1 through b_{12} are coefficients, and
e_1 and e_2 are error terms.

Table 2 presents the expected signs of the coefficients in equations (3) and (4). Equation (3) pertains to the vertical dimension in Figure 1 and equation (4) to the horizontal one. These formulations allow us to move closer to empirical testing of the propositions advanced in this article. Note that the intertemporal

[21] The algebraic formulation in equation (4) assumes that parties engage in some minimal extent of office-seeking behavior (i.e., that w_2 is greater than zero).

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Figure 4. Determinants of the Propensity of Political Parties to Pursue Votes Rather Than Short-term Policy Influence or Office Benefits

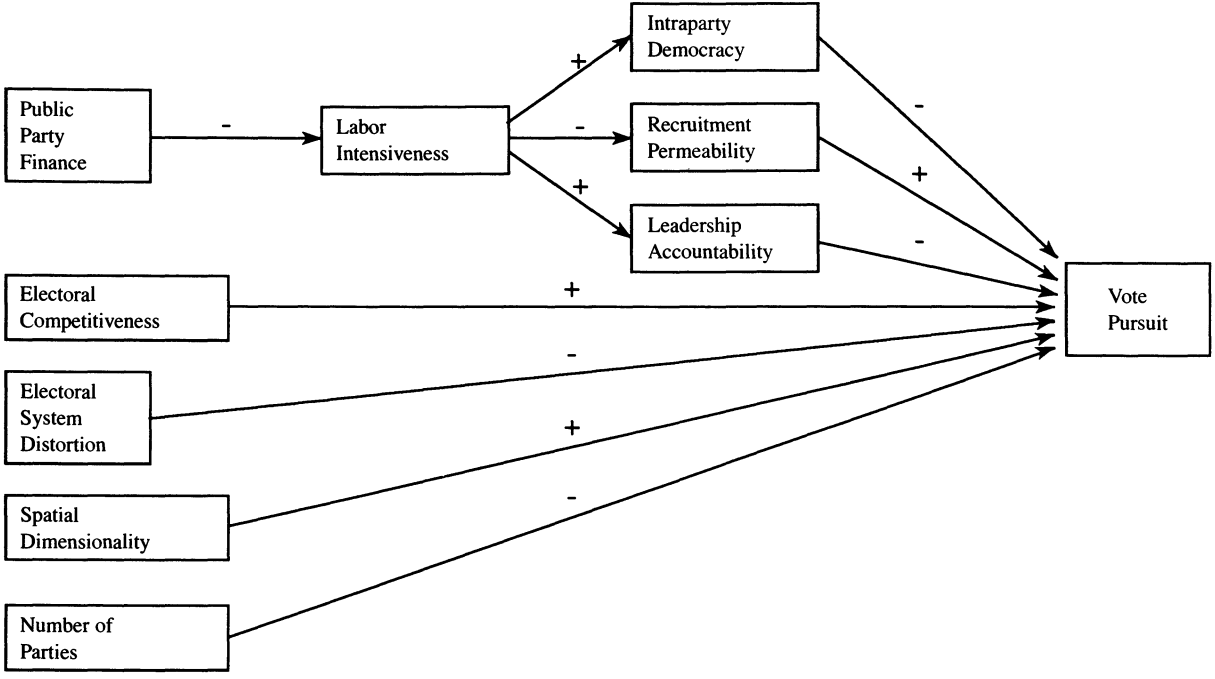

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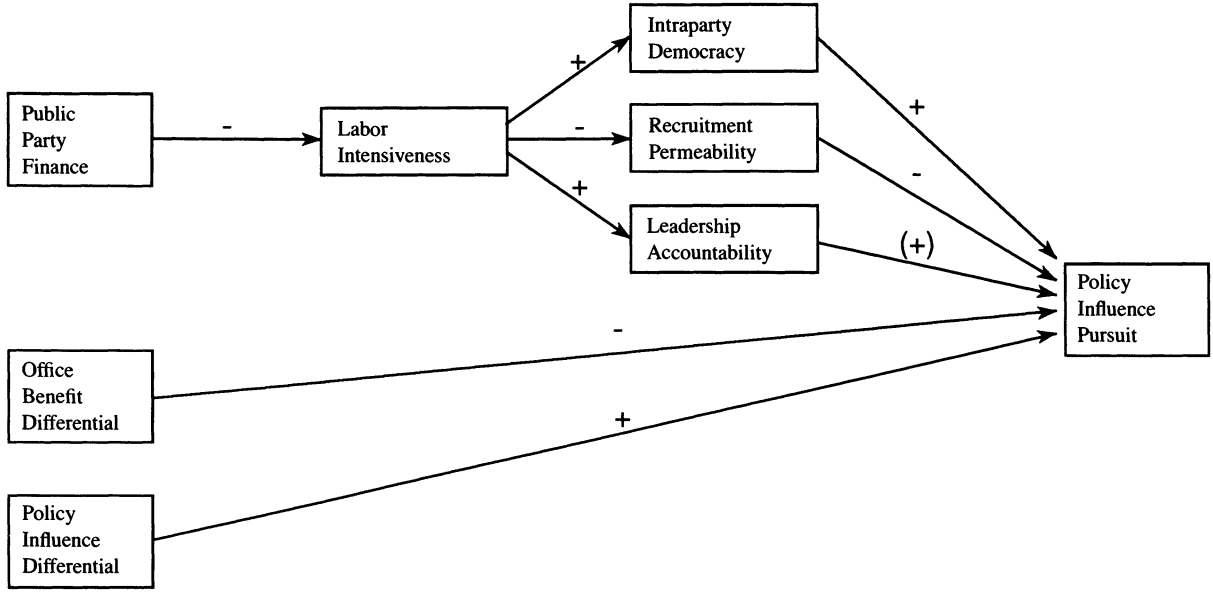
Figure 5. Determinants of the Propensity of Political Parties to Pursue Policy Influence Rather Than Office Benefits



Note: Parenthesized signs indicate weaker expected relationships.

Table 2. Expected Signs of Coefficients in Equations 3 and 4

Equation (3)	Equation (4)
$b_1 < 0$	$b_8 > 0$
$b_2 > 0$	$b_9 < 0$
$b_3 < 0$	$b_{10} \gtrless 0$
$b_4 > 0$	$b_{11} < 0$
$b_5 < 0$	$b_{12} > 0$
$b_6 > 0$	
$b_7 < 0$	

trade-off between votes and more immediate benefits is more complex, involving both organizational and institutional determinants. The conflict between policy influence and office is less complex and more strictly organizationally defined.

Some Special Cases

At this point we return to the original models of party behavior as special cases. In other words, we can now specify the conditions under which parties are most likely to be vote seekers, office seekers, or policy seekers.

The Vote-Seeking Party

The vote-seeking party is first of all a feature of two-party politics, where strategic party interaction disappears and voting power leads virtually directly to policy influence and office benefits. For the same reason, parties with a large expected vote (close to 50%) in electorally competitive multiparty systems resemble parties in two-party systems in their pursuit of votes. However, for smaller parties in multiparty systems vote seeking may entail costs in office benefits and policy influence. Parties with unaccountable leaders, low degrees of intraparty democracy, and permeable recruitment channels are more likely to make these sacrifices. Capital intensive parties with large public subsidies are likely to match these organizational characteristics. Finally, votes will be most diligently pursued by parties in high-dimensionality issue spaces in low-fragmentation polities. Hence, parties like the German Christian Democrats and the British Conservatives should exhibit such behavior. The first column in Table 3 summarizes the conditions most conducive to vote-seeking behavior.

The Office-Seeking Party

The short-term office-seeking party is in many ways fostered by the very opposite institutional conditions from those conducive to vote-seeking behavior.

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Office-seeking behavior should prevail in electorally noncompetitive polities with multiparty systems, unpredictably distortionary electoral systems, and spatially constrained bargaining conditions. In addition, office-seeking behavior is promoted by high office benefit differentials relative to policy influence differentials (such as in Proportional regimes), low degrees of intraparty democracy, and permeable recruitment structures. As in the case of vote-seeking parties, public party finance and capital intensive organizations are likely to favor office pursuit. These conditions are summarized in the second column of Table 3. Italian parties (commonly perceived as notorious office seekers) fulfill many of these organizational and institutional conditions (except for the electoral system). Thus the Italian Christian Democrats and Social Democrats may best exemplify this type of behavior.

The Policy-Seeking Party

Policy-seeking parties are promoted by several institutional features that also foster office-seeking behavior: noncompetitive elections, multiparty systems, electoral laws yielding unpredictable outcomes, and spatially constrained interparty bargaining. However, severe spatial constraints may promote policy-

Table 3. Organizational and Institutional Conditions Conducive to Three Models of Party Behavior

	Model		
Conditions	Vote Seeking	Office Seeking	Policy Seeking
Public party finance	Large	Large	Small
Organizational form	Capital intensive	Capital intensive	Labor intensive
Intraparty democracy	Low	Low	High
Recruitment channels	Permeable	Permeable	Impermeable
Leadership accountability	Low	High or low	High
Electoral competitiveness	High	Low	Low
Electoral system distortion	Low	High	High
Spatial dimensions	Many	Few	Few
Number of parties	Few	Many	Many
Office benefit differential	High or low	High	Low
Policy influence differential	High or low	Low	High
Example	British Conservatives	Italian Christian Democrats	Finnish Social Democrats(?)

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seeking behavior even more than office pursuit. Contrary to office-seeking parties, policy-seeking parties are also fostered by regimes with large policy influence differentials relative to office benefit differentials. Two organizational properties set policy-seeking parties apart from office seekers: (1) high degrees of intraparty democracy and (2) impermeable recruitment structures. These properties are likely to be favored by labor intensive organization and modest public subsidies. This mix of conditions is more difficult to exemplify, though the Finnish Social Democrats may be a reasonable approximation.

Conclusions

We have discussed three well-known models, or families of models, of competitive party behavior. These models, which have contributed substantially to the comparative study of political parties, are only beginning to be successfully interrelated. For example, electoral party competition in parliamentary democracies is commonly studied in splendid theoretical isolation from the government formation process. A more complete theory of party behavior must attempt to integrate these theories dynamically. Such a theory must also incorporate institutional and organizational factors, which typically have been inadequately addressed.

This article represents an attempt at such integration, drawing on the New Institutionalism. The analysis has been relatively informal and has aimed at developing testable probabilistic hypotheses. The next step consists precisely in testing these hypotheses. For this purpose we need systematic data on institutions and party organization. Some of these data (e.g., on electoral laws and competitiveness) are readily accessible. Other valuable data sources have recently been generated, such as on party and government policy positions (see Budge, Robertson, and Hearl 1987; Laver and Budge 1990). Ongoing research projects will contribute to our systematic knowledge of political party organization. The questions we have discussed require utilization of all these sources.

An equally important task is to identify aspects of party behavior in need of better theoretical understanding. Among the aspects of competitive party behavior calling for our attention are (1) policy formulation, (2) coalitional behavior in cabinet formation processes, (3) pursuit of office benefits and policy influence while in government, and (4) resource allocation in electoral campaigns. So far, the former two questions have been more adequately researched than the latter two. This is at least partly because good data on these aspects of party behavior are more readily accessible. Items (3) and (4) call for intensive and theoretically guided research on a country-to-country basis.

Despite the broad sweep of the discussion in this article, many important questions have been left untouched or underdeveloped. One theme deserving greater attention is the effect of institutions on organizational factors that condition party behavior. Second, nothing more than hints have been given that the

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causal relationship between institutions and party strategy in the long run may be reversed, in that the design of political institutions may be endogenous to party behavior. That is to say, the design of electoral, legislative, and governmental institutions is subject to self-interested manipulation. Election laws are an obvious example. Thus vicious or virtuous circles of party behavior and institutional development may be identified. Third, I have assumed more generally that all causal effects are independent, that is, that there is no interaction between the explanatory variables and that such functions as equations (3) and (4) are linear.[22] Though useful as starting points, these assumptions are no more than heuristic simplifications. Finally, we have not squarely addressed the behavioral effects of strategic party interaction. The further pursuit of these themes is an ample agenda for future research.

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[22] Equation (3), for example, may more appropriately be expressed as a logistic function.

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