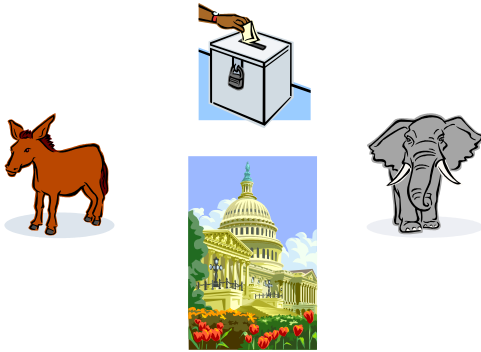


American Political Parties



American Political Parties

- Parties and democracy
- American antagonism
- Definitions
- Weakness of American parties

Parties and Democracy

- E.E. Schattschneider, "political parties created democracy and the modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties."
- All democracies have political parties

American Antagonism

- James Madison, Federalist Paper # 10
 - Parties are divisive
 - Cure with separation of powers
- Public doubts
 - half see neither party solve nation's problem
 - confuse the issues, create conflict, better elections without them

Definitions of Political Parties

- Ideological
- Functional
- Organizational

Functional Definitions

- Recruitment of candidates
- Contesting of elections
- Organization of the government
- Aggregating interests
- Representation

Organizational Definition

- Party Organization
- Party in Government
- Party in Electorate

Organizational Definition: Three Levels of American Political Party Organizations

National Party:
Chair, Headquarters
Committees
Convention

State Parties:
Chair, Headquarters
Committees & Convention

Local: County, Precinct and Ward Organizations
Officers and committees
Volunteer efforts

Party Organizations on the Web

Democrats

National

<http://www.democrats.org>

Arizona

www.azdem.org

Republicans

National

www.rnc.org

Arizona

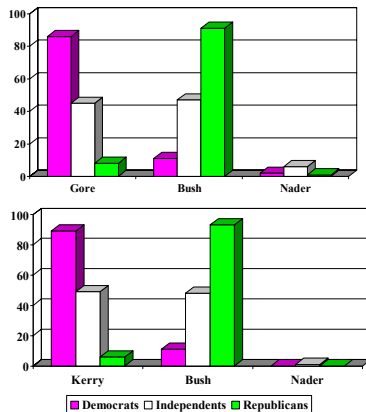
www.azgop.org

See pages 309-312 in Hershey textbook for additional party websites

Organizational Definition: Party in the Electorate

- “Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or what?”
- Most stable, most influential attitude
- Affects participation levels
- Affects vote choice in elections

Influence Of Party On 2000 & 2004 Presidential Elections



Source: Exit Polls

Organizational Definition: Party in Government

- Congress
 - majority party all committee chairs
 - strategy and agenda along party lines
 - over half of votes along party lines

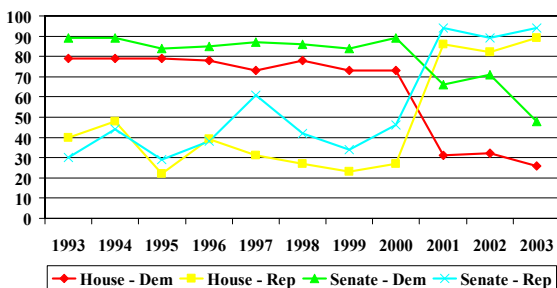
Example of Party Line Vote: Bill to increase minimum wage, 106th Congress

	Democrat	Republican	Vote
Increase	97%	37%	66%
No change	3%	63%	34%
Number	207	216	423

Party in Government: Presidents

- Symbolic leader of party
- Nominate judges & officials from own party
- More support from members of own party in Congress

Party Support for Presidents in Congress



Weaknesses of American Parties

- Don't control nominations - primaries
- Don't control campaigns - candidates
- Undisciplined parties in government
- Decentralized party organization
- Public attachment psychological not legal or monetary

Why Parties Weak

- Separation of powers vs. parliament
- Federalism
- Political culture
 - Individualism
 - Vote for person
 - Conflict not legitimate
 - Non Sequitur, January 5 & 7, 2005

Why Parties Weak: Progressive Reforms (1890s-1910s)

- Primary elections
- Nonpartisan local elections
- City managers, weak councils, weak mayors
- Civil service replaces patronage
- Registration laws
- Initiatives, referenda, recall

Summary

- What are parties and why important to democracies
- What are the functions of parties
- The three components of the party
 - Party organization
 - Party in the electorate
 - Party in government
- Weakness of American parties