CHAPTER 8

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Introduction (pp. 247-248)
   A. Political Parties have contributed greatly to American democracy.
   B. **Party competition** is the battle between Democrats and Republicans for the control of public offices.

II. The Meaning of Party (pp. 248–251)
   A. Introduction
      1. A **political party** is, according to Anthony Downs, a "team of men [and women] seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election."
      2. Political parties are viewed as "three-headed political giants."
         a. The **party-in-the-electorate**
         b. The **party as an organization**
         c. The **party-in-government**
   B. Tasks of the Parties
      1. Parties act as **linkage institutions**, translating inputs from the public into outputs from the policymakers.
      2. Parties perform many functions.
         a. Parties pick candidates.
         b. Parties run campaigns.
         c. Parties give cues to voters.
         d. Parties articulate policies.
         e. Parties coordinate policymaking.
   C. Parties, Voters, and Policy: The Downs Model
      1. **Rational-choice theory** "seeks to explain political processes and outcomes as consequences of purposive behavior."
      2. The wise party selects policies that are widely favored.

III. The Party in the Electorate (pp. 251–253)
   A. **Party images** help shape people's **party identification**, the self-proclaimed preference for one party or the other.
   B. **Ticket-splitting**, voting with one party for one office and another for other offices is near an all-time high.

IV. The Party Organizations: From the Grassroots to Washington (pp. 253–256)
   A. **Local Parties**
      1. Urban political parties were once dominated by **party machines**.
      2. **Patronage** is one of the key inducements used by party machines.
B. The 50 State Party Systems
   1. American national parties are a loose aggregation of state parties.
   2. States limit who can participate in their nomination contests by using closed primaries, open primaries, or blanket primaries.

C. The National Party Organizations
   1. The supreme power within each of the parties is the national convention.
   2. The national committee keeps the party operating between conventions.
   3. The national chairperson is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the national party.

V. The Party in Government: Promises and Policy (pp. 257–258)
   A. The party in control ultimately determines who gets what, where, when, and how.
   B. A coalition is a set of individuals and groups supporting a party.
   C. Parties have done a fairly good job of translating their platform promises into public policy.

VIII. Party Eras in American History (pp. 258–266)
   A. Introduction
      1. Party eras are long periods of time when one party has been the dominant majority party.
      2. Party eras are punctuated by a critical election.
      3. Party realignment is a rare event when the party system is transformed.
   B. 1796–1824: The First Party System
   C. 1828–1856: Jackson and the Democrats versus the Whigs
   D. 1860–1928: The Two Republican Eras
      1. 1850s–1896, Republican Party as the antislavery party.
      2. 1896–1928, Republican Party as the party of the new working class and moneyminded interests.
   E. 1932–1964: The New Deal Coalition
      1. Following the Great Depression, a new Democratic coalition remained dominant for decades.
      1. Since 1968 the South has gradually realigned with the Republican Party.
      2. Party dealignment means that people are moving away from both parties.

VII. Third Parties: Their Impact on American Politics (pp. 266–268)
   A. Parties that promote certain causes.
   B. Splinter parties.
   C. Parties that are an extension of a popular individual with presidential hopes.

VIII. Understanding Political Parties (pp. 268–271)
   A. Democracy and Responsible Party Government
      1. The responsible party model would make it easier to convert party promises into governmental policy.
   B. American Political Parties and the Scope of Government
   C. Is the Party Over?

IX. Summary (p. 271)
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying Chapter 8, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the meaning and functions of a political party.

2. Discuss the nature of the party-in-the-electorate, party organizations, and the party-in-government.

3. Describe the party eras in American history and how parties realign and dealign.

4. Evaluate the two-party system, its consequences, and the place of third parties in the system.

5. Identify the challenges facing the American political parties and explain their relationship to American democracy and the scope of government.

The following exercises will help you meet these objectives:

Objective 1: Discuss the meaning and functions of a political party.

1. Define the term "political party."

2. Explain the three heads of the political party in the expression "a three-headed political giant."

   1.

   2.

   3.
3. What are the five tasks political parties should perform if they are to serve as effective linkage institutions?

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

4. Draw a graph or diagram depicting Anthony Downs' rational-choice model of political parties.

Objective 2: Discuss the nature of the party-in-the-electorate, party organizations, and the party-in-government.

1. What two clear patterns regarding party identification have been evident in recent elections?

1. 

2. 

2. What is meant by "ticket-splitting"?

3. Draw an organizational chart of an American political party and then mark where most of the power actually exists.

4. What is meant by a "party machine"?
5. What are the differences between the following types of party primaries?
   1. closed primaries
   2. open primaries
   3. blanket primaries

6. What is the function of each of the following national party organizations?
   1. National Convention
   2. National Committee
   3. National Chairperson

7. What is the relationship between party promises and party performance?

Objective 3: Describe the party eras in American history and how parties realign and realign.

1. List four elections that might be considered "critical" or "realigning." Explain why.
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. 
2. Complete the following table on party eras.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Era</th>
<th>Major Party</th>
<th>Major Party Coalition</th>
<th>Minor Party</th>
<th>Minor Party Coalition</th>
<th>Prominent President(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1796–1824</td>
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<td>1860–1892</td>
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<td>1896–1928</td>
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<td>1932–1964</td>
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</table>

3. List the six presidents since 1968 and complete the following table on divided government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President and Party Affiliation</th>
<th>Number Of Years With Republican Congress</th>
<th>Number Of Years With Democratic Congress</th>
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Objective 4: Evaluate the two-party system, its consequences, and the place of third parties in the system.

1. What are the three basic varieties of third parties?
   1.
   2.
   3.

2. What are two ways in which third parties can have an impact on American politics?
   1.
   2.

3. What is the most important consequence of two-party governance in the United States?

Objective 5: Identify the challenges facing the American political parties, and explain their relationship to American democracy, individualism, and the scope of government.

1. List the four conditions that advocates of the responsible party model believe the parties should meet.
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.

2. How does the American party system affect the scope of government?
3. What is the key problem of the American political parties today?

KEY TERMS

Identify and describe:

party competition

political party

linkage institutions

rational-choice theory

party image

party identification

ticket-splitting

party machines

patronage
closed primaries

open primaries

blanket primaries

national convention

national committee

national chairperson

coalition

party eras

critical election

party realignment

New Deal coalition

party dealignment
third parties

winner-take-all system

proportional representation

coaition government

responsible party model

*Compare and contrast:*

political party and linkage institutions

party identification and ticket-splitting

party machines and patronage

closed primaries, open primaries, and blanket primaries

national convention, national committee, and national chairperson

party eras and critical election
party realignment and party dealignment

party realignment and New Deal coalition

winner-take-all system and proportional representation

Name that term:

1. This is the battle between the parties for the control of public offices.
   ____________________________

2. This is the perception of what the Republicans and Democrats stand for.
   ____________________________

3. This seeks to explain political processes and outcomes as consequences of purposive behavior.
   ____________________________

4. This is voting with one party for one office and another for other offices.
   ____________________________

5. This is one of the key inducements used by political machines.
   ____________________________

6. This is a set of individuals and groups who support a political party.
   ____________________________

7. Political party eras are punctuated by these.
   ____________________________
8. Often a consequence of proportional representation, many European governments are ruled by these.

_______________________

9. Examples of these include the Free Soil Party, the Jobless Party, and the American Independent Party.

_______________________

10. Advocates of this reform believe that this would make it easier for party promises to be turned into governmental policy.

_______________________

USING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Investigate the party system of another Western democratic political system that is of interest to you, such as the United Kingdom. Try to identify the major features of the political parties in the system in terms of the party-in-the-electorate, the party as organization, and the party-in-government. Briefly describe what you found in comparison to the two-party system in the United States. Include a discussion of whether the party system is experiencing realignment, dealignment, or another form of change.

2. Gerald Pomper's study of party platforms covered the years 1944–1976. Follow up on this study by examining the Republican Party platforms for 1980, 1984, 1988, 2000, and 2004, and the Democratic Party platforms for 1992 and 1996. Make a list of the promises made in the Republican platforms and compare them to the accomplishments of the Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush administrations. Make a list of the promises of the 1992 and 1996 Democratic platform and compare them to the policy initiatives of the Clinton administration. For the party not occupying the presidency, you might compare legislative initiatives by that party in Congress with their party platform. Evaluate the degree to which the parties keep the policy promises they set forth. If possible, look at public opinion polls to see if public opinion supports platform positions on key issues. Develop an analysis of the importance of party platforms in the electoral process and in making public policy.
MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Circle the correct answer:

1. The largest segment of an American political party is described as
   a. the party out of power.
   b. the party in the electorate.
   c. the party in government.
   d. the party volunteers.
   e. the party organization.

2. A political party is best defined as
   a. a group of men and women organized for the sole purpose of influencing public policy.
   b. an organized team of men and women with a political agenda.
   c. any group of men and women with a formal membership and a political or social purpose stated in their by-laws.
   d. a team of men and women seeking control of the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election.
   e. a coalition of interests trying to influence government policies for their benefit.

3. Political parties perform all of the following tasks EXCEPT
   a. pick policymakers and run campaigns.
   b. enforce rigid adherence to their policy positions.
   c. advocate public policies.
   d. coordinate policymaking.
   e. give cues to voters.

4. Rational-choice theory asserts that
   a. the parties should not be expected to differentiate themselves in any way.
   b. more extremist party positions give the public a sense that things can really be changed, and usually win elections.
   c. the wise party selects policies in which it truly believes, and gives the voters a chance to vote them up or down on principle.
   d. the wise party selects policies that are widely favored.
   e. None of the above

5. Voting with one party for one office and the other party for another office is known as
   a. ticket splitting.
   b. treason.
   c. party competition.
   d. party identification.
   e. a rational choice.
6. A political party machine is a kind of local party organization that
   a. uses specific and material inducements to win party loyalty and power.
   b. remains strong in most large American cities.
   c. threatens the efficiency of state and national party organizations.
   d. has recently come to depend heavily on ethnic group support.
   e. only appeared after World War II.

7. In closed primaries,
   a. voters may vote for candidates from either party.
   b. voters may choose on election day which party primary they want to participate in.
   c. only voters who have registered in advance with the party can vote.
   d. voters may vote for multiple candidates.
   e. None of the above

8. If you are registered as a Democrat, you can vote in a(n)
   a. Democratic closed primary.
   b. Republican closed primary.
   c. open primary.
   d. blanket primary.
   e. a, c, and d

9. American national parties are best described as
   a. controlled from the bottom (local level) up.
   b. loose aggregations of state parties.
   c. bicameral in nature.
   d. centralized organizations based in Congress.
   e. powerful, centralized organizations based in Washington, D.C.

10. What is the primary duty of the national party chairperson?
    a. Hiring staff
    b. Raising money
    c. Paying bills
    d. Attending to the daily dues of the party
    e. All of the above

11. Every political party depends upon what the text calls a ________, meaning a set of individuals or groups supporting it.
    a. system of patronage
    b. coalition
    c. set of superdelegates
    d. power base
    e. linkage institution
12. A critical election involves and accelerates a process called
   a. partisan transformation.
   b. electoral examination.
   c. proportional representation.
   d. party realignment.
   e. democratic rejuvenation.

13. The Democratic-Republicans were also known as the
   a. Jeffersonians.
   b. Madisonians.
   c. Whigs.
   d. Federalists.
   e. Hamiltonians.

14. Why did the framers fear a political party system?
   a. They thought that parties would be a forum for corruption and divisiveness.
   b. They were concerned that parties would make government too user friendly for ordinary voters.
   c. They thought that there was room for more than two parties and feared that only two would create a stalemate.
   d. They were concerned that the party system would be used to bring down the new government.
   e. They believed that a two-party system would end up making the country resemble Great Britain too much.

15. Which of the following is TRUE?
   a. Andrew Jackson founded the modern American political party.
   b. Jackson was initially a Democratic-Republican, but his party became known as the Democratic Party soon after he became president.
   c. Jackson’s causes included broadening political opportunity for average citizens.
   d. A and b
   e. All of the above

16. The election of 1896 is considered a watershed because it
   a. entrenched western farmers and silverites in the Republican party.
   b. shifted the party coalitions and entrenched the Republicans in power for another generation.
   c. gave Republicans control of the South.
   d. marked the rise of the Populist Party, which dominated American politics until the Depression.
   e. brought the industrial working classes and Wall Street interests together into the Democratic fold.
17. Who was the president who brought together the original New Deal coalition in support
of his candidacy?
   a. Woodrow Wilson
   b. Lyndon Johnson
   c. John F. Kennedy
   d. Franklin D. Roosevelt
   e. Herbert Hoover

18. In 1968, the Democratic party was torn apart, leaving the door to the presidency open for
Republican Richard Nixon primarily due to
   a. the failure of President Johnson's war on poverty.
   b. the sudden evaporation of the New Deal coalition.
   c. the abandonment of the Democratic party by African Americans.
   d. President Johnson's Vietnam War policies.
   e. the severity of the mid-1960's recession.

19. Party dealignment is symbolized by
   a. the 1992 election of a president and Congress of the same party.
   b. the recent pattern of one-party control.
   c. a renewed commitment to America's two major political parties.
   d. the recent pattern of divided government.
   e. the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994.

20. The "responsible party" model holds that parties should
   a. not use wedge issues that cause the other party's supporters to fight with each
      other during the campaign.
   b. avoid making promises.
   c. keep to middle-of-the-road positions.
   d. present clear alternatives to voters.
   e. avoid ideological stands.

TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

Circle the correct answer:

1. The party in the electorate is the largest component of an American party. T / F

2. Institutions that translate inputs from the public into outputs from policymakers are called
   linkage institutions. T / F

3. Rational-choice theory seeks to explain political processes and outcomes as
   consequences of purposive behavior. T / F

4. The only thing that you have to do to join a political party in the U.S. is to pay a one-time
   membership fee. T / F
5. Organizationally, state parties are on the upswing throughout the country. T / F

6. Progressive reforms, including the merit system, are partially responsible for the weakening of party machines. T / F

7. Each party holds a national convention every two years to bring delegates together, hear speeches, pass the party platform, attempt to project a certain image, and, during presidential election years, to nominate candidates for president and vice president. T / F

8. Coalition governments are relatively rare in European democracies. T / F

9. Andrew Jackson is often remembered as the founder of the modern political party. T / F

10. The Republican Party emerged as an antislavery party prior to the Civil war. T / F

SHORT ANSWER/SHORT ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. What is rational choice theory? How does it explain the behavior of voters and of political parties?

2. Describe the three major components of an American political party, and what the major tasks of a party are. Why is our political system so reliant on parties to organize public opinion? Explain.

3. What is patronage, and how was it used?

4. What was the New Deal coalition? Who were its leaders? How and why was the New Deal coalition significant?

5. Why have third parties been largely unsuccessful and so short-lived in the U.S.?

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Why do some scholars believe that political parties exercise waning influence over American politics? What are the consequences of this waning influence?

2. Evaluate the claim that in a democracy candidates should say what they mean to do if elected and be able to do what they promised once they are elected. To what extent do party promises result in public policy? What changes do the advocates of the "responsible party model" suggest in order to ensure that party promises be turned into public policy?

3. Describe the significance of a critical election, party realignment, and what is meant by a "party era." Do you think 1992 was a critical election? Why, or why not?