



AP American Government: Unit V
Political Parties and Elections
(Chapters 9 & 10)
“And If I’m Elected . . .”

Wednesday	10/16	Quiz over Ch9 pp. 198-217 (Up to The Two Party System) Class Work: Ludlum Lesson #18 (Party Platforms - Lesson is in packet). Activity: <i>Am I a liberal or conservative?</i>
Thursday	10/17	Quiz, Ch9 pp. 217-229 Video: Kennedy-Nixon debates
Thursday	10/18	NO SCHOOL! Central Ohio Teacher’s Assoc. Day
Monday	10/21	Critical Review Due: “The Selling of the President 1968” By Joe McGinnis (in packet)
Tuesday	10/22	Election video: <i>Primary Colors</i> Start reading Ch10 pp. 231-245 (to Money).
Wednesday	10/23	Quiz Ch10 pp. 231-245 (to Money). Election video: <i>Primary Colors</i>.
Thursday	10/24	Summary due on “A Theory of Critical Elections” by V.O. Keys, Jr. in Woll p. 203. Note: Concentrate on the overall idea of what a critical election is and don’t get bogged down in detail. Read the introduction, skim section I, read sections II and III. Define critical election, deviating election, maintaining election, and reinstating election. Election video: <i>Primary Colors</i>

Friday

10/25

Quiz Ch10 pp. 245-262

Election video: *Primary Colors*

7

ELECTIONS AND CAMPAIGNS

American campaigns are unique. Running for national office requires an *individual* effort—in many other democracies, running for national office requires a party effort. The candidate decides to run, raises money, and appeals to voters on the basis of personality and definition of issues. Political parties are playing a decreased role in American elections.

KEY TERMS

caucus	party realignment
Federal Election Commission	political action
general election	committees
gerrymandering	position issues
incumbency	primary election
independent expenditures	soft money
malapportionment	spots
1974 Federal Campaign Reform Law	valence issues
party coalitions	visuals

KEY CONCEPTS

- Presidential and congressional campaigns have significant differences.
- Campaigns are long and expensive, relying increasingly on media to communicate.
- Campaign finance is a continual source of reform in campaigns.

- Elections can cause a realignment of coalitions that form political parties.

For a full discussion of elections and campaigns, see *American Government*, 9th ed., Chapter 8 / 10th ed., Chapter 10.

COMPARING PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Several striking differences exist between congressional and presidential elections. Presidential races are generally more competitive than congressional races, with the narrower margin of victory. While a president is limited to two terms of office, congressmen often serve for decades and hold a greater incumbency advantage. While congressmen can take credit in their home states or districts for grants, projects, and programs, constantly reminding constituents of these achievements via mail or visits home, presidents have significant national power but little local power. They must rely more and more on the media for communication. While a congressional candidate can detach his or her record from Washington and even campaign against the "insiders," presidents are held accountable for all that flows from the nation's capitol. With the reduced role of political parties in American politics, congressional candidates have stopped hanging on to presidential coattails and increasingly run campaigns independent of the president.

Running for president is a commitment of several years, of dizzying effort and energy, and of a staggering amount of money. When the media notices an individual and refers to him as having presidential "caliber," a candidacy has begun. Congressmen and senators running for president can stress their sponsorship of significant legislation. Governors, particularly from large and powerful states, often command attention quite naturally. Candidates set aside years to run for the presidency. Ronald Reagan, for instance, spent six years running a campaign. Huge sums of money must be raised. A large, paid staff must be established as well as hundreds of volunteers and advisors. Finally, a campaign strategy and campaign themes must be envisioned and coordinated, with incumbents defending their records and challengers attacking incumbents.

Running for Congress is a different sort of animal indeed. With no term limits in Congress, incumbents have an extraordinary advantage. Each state has two senators, who serve for six years, and House representatives (the number is determined by population), who serve for two years. House races can be affected by district boundaries, and these boundaries have traditionally been characterized by two problems:

- **Malapportionment** Districts have at times been created with very different populations, giving votes in less populated districts more clout.
- **Gerrymandering** District boundaries have been drawn to favor one party rather than another, which can lead to very odd-shaped districts. In addition, gerrymandering can be used

to make minorities the majority of a district, an issue that has received contradictory rulings from the Supreme Court.

National and state governments continue to wrestle with these problems.

With these as a backdrop, individuals start their quest for a seat in Congress by acquiring a state-mandated number of signatures. A primary election is often held to determine each major party's candidate, though parties have limited influence over who wins. In the general election, incumbents almost always win. Their independence from the party they represent creates a couple of important consequences. First, legislators are closely tuned in to local concerns and to those who elected them. Second, their lack of dependence on a party for election means that party leaders in Congress have little influence over them.

HOW CAMPAIGNS ARE CONDUCTED

Especially in presidential campaigns, strategies in primary and general elections are different. Primaries generally draw a party's activists, who are often more ideologically stringent than voters at large. Therefore, a Democratic candidate must appear more liberal than usual and a Republican more conservative. Without the help of party activists, candidates have little success mobilizing donors and volunteers. Political elites play a critical role during the presidential primaries.

The first test of the primary season for a presidential candidate is not a primary at all, but caucuses in the state of Iowa. Held in February of every presidential election year, caucuses are small, precinct-level meetings held simultaneously throughout the state to select party candidates. Candidates must do well in Iowa or face an immediate disadvantage in media attention and contributor interest. Winners tend to be the most liberal Democrats in the race and the most conservative Republicans, reflecting the characteristics of the party elites.

New Hampshire traditionally hosts the first primaries of a campaign year. The importance of the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primaries presents a problem: those electorates hardly represent the American electorate in general. Southern states, sensing that northern states such as Iowa and New Hampshire have too much influence on the choice of the nominee, created Super Tuesday by moving all of their primaries to the same day in early March. As the primary season continues, candidates face the dilemma of being conservative or liberal enough to get nominated but mainstream enough so to hold on to moderate voters in the general election.

After the primary season has established the candidates from the two major parties, the general election campaign begins in order to determine who will be the final victor and officeholder. Two kinds of campaign issues emerge. *Position issues* are those on which the candidates have opposing views. Voters are also divided on these. For instance, in the 2000 election, candidates Bush and Gore disagreed on Social Security, defense, and public school voucher systems. Other issues are of a nature that does not divide the general public. These,

called *valence issues*, focus on the extent to which a candidate emphasizes the issue, such as a strong economy or low crime rates.

Modern campaigns are increasingly waged through television, debates, and direct mail. Television time falls into two categories: paid advertising (known as “spots”) and news broadcasts (known as “visuals”). Spots can have an important effect in some elections. Little-known candidates can increase visibility through frequent use of spots, a strategy employed successfully by Jimmy Carter in 1976. Spots tend to work better in primary elections than in general elections, as voters have far greater information from various sources available to them in general elections. Visuals are vital to any campaign because they cost little. Filmed by a news agency, a visual may have greater credibility for viewers than a spot does. Campaign staffs know that visuals depend on cameras and newsmen being around, so they work hard to have their candidate at a place and time that can be easily filmed and will be of interest to viewers. Ironically, visuals may be less informative than spots because visuals often display the “horse-race” aspect of a campaign while spots describe more substantial issues!

With the growing popularity of television over the past fifty years, debates have become an integral part of many campaigns. Even primaries often include televised debates. While some campaigns have profited from debates (notably John F. Kennedy’s in 1960 and Ronald Reagan’s in 1980), most debates do not profoundly affect campaigns. If anyone benefits, it is generally the challenger. In a debate, a candidate risks committing the dreaded slip of the tongue, which the media and opponents will then attempt to exploit. For this reason, candidates often resort to stock speeches with frequently repeated campaign themes and proven favorites among supporters.

The computer and the Internet are increasingly important factors in campaigns. The computer makes sophisticated direct-mail campaigning possible and enables candidates to address targeted voters with specific views. Howard Dean’s extensive use of the Internet in establishing himself as a viable Democratic candidate in the 2004 Democratic primaries may well have a profound effect on the way money is raised in future elections.

MONEY AND CAMPAIGNING

AP Tip

Campaign finance continues to be a hotly contested political issue. Knowledge of the 1974 law is critical to understanding recent reforms and will likely be part of the AP exam.

Campaigns acquire money from a variety of public and private sources. During the presidential primaries, candidates receive federal matching funds for all individuals’ donations of \$250 or less, creating incentives to raise money from small donors. During the general presidential election, all campaign money comes from the government unless the candidate decides not to accept federal money. Congressional elections are primarily funded by private donations, including those of individuals, political action committees (PACs), and

political parties. Most individual donors give less than \$200, with a maximum of \$2,000. PACs are limited to contributions of \$5,000, but most give significantly less than that. Incumbent candidates typically receive one-third of their campaign funds from PACs and rarely have to spend their own money on a campaign. Challengers often supply a greater percentage of their own campaign funds than incumbents do.

Coupled with other illegal donations, the Watergate scandal of the 1970s convinced Congress to pass the 1974 Federal Campaign Reform Law and, as part of it, create the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The law included several provisions:

- The limit on individual donations is \$1,000 per candidate per election.
- The previous ban on corporate and union donations was reaffirmed, but PACs can be created to raise money instead.
- PACs have to consist of at least fifty volunteer members, give to at least five federal candidates, and limit their donations to \$5,000 per election per candidate and \$15,000 per year to any political party.
- Primary and general elections count separately for donations.
- Public funding for presidential campaigns includes matching funds for presidential primary candidates who meet funding stipulations; full funding for presidential general campaigns for major party candidates; and partial funding for minor party candidates that had at least 5 percent of the vote in the previous election.

Campaign spending increased dramatically as a result of the law. Loopholes in the law include independent expenditures, allowing PACs to spend as much as they want on advertising as long as it is not coordinated with a specific campaign; and soft money, by which unlimited funds can be donated to a political party as long as a candidate is not named. Soft money can then be passed on to candidates from the party.

Independent expenditures and soft money led to campaign finance reform in 2002. Reforms included a ban on soft money given to national parties, an increase in the limit of an individual donation (up to \$2,000), and a restriction on advertisements referring to a candidate by name thirty days before a primary and sixty days before a general election. The full impact of these reforms remains to be seen.

Party affiliation, the state of the economy, and the character of the candidate probably influence voting more than money does. Congressional races are no doubt more affected by money. Challengers must spend a significant amount of money to be recognized, and big-spending incumbents also tend to do better. Even so, party, incumbency, and issues play a large role in congressional races. It is difficult for a challenger to overcome not only an incumbent's money but also his credit claiming, mailing privileges, and free publicity from sponsoring legislation.

ELECTIONS AND PARTY ALIGNMENTS

Several factors determine who wins elections. Party identification still matters, but Democrats are more likely to vote for a Republican than vice versa. Republicans also tend to get more of the independent vote. Issues, in particular that of the economy, help determine elections. A poor economy is difficult for an incumbent president to overcome; a strong economy generally means reelection. Campaigns do make a difference in an election, however, mainly by reawakening voters' loyalties and allowing voters to see the character and core values of a candidate. Retrospective voters, those who look at how things have gone in the recent past, often decide elections. They vote for the party in the White House if they like what has happened and vote against that party if they do not.

If a candidate is going to win, he or she must build a winning coalition, or combination of several distinct groups. Traditionally the Democratic coalition has been African Americans, Jews, Hispanics, Catholics, southerners, and union members. Republicans have long had a coalition of business and professional people as well as many farmers. Coalitions historically have been reorganized under certain conditions. Realignment describes this reorganization of a party's following. Realignment occurs when a new issue arises that cuts across existing party divisions—for example, slavery or a weak economy. Some political scientists feel that the nation is due for another realignment and that the 1980s might have started one. Yet neither the 1984 nor the 1988 election truly signaled a realigning shift among the voters. Perhaps parties are actually decaying far more than they are realigning as twenty-first-century politics begins to emerge—a process called dealignment by some.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Presidential and congressional races differ in all of the following ways EXCEPT
 - A) presidential races are more competitive than races for the House of Representatives
 - (B) a much smaller proportion of people vote in congressional races in nonpresidential election years
 - (C) members of Congress can get credit for the constituent service they provide
 - (D) candidates for Congress can disassociate themselves from what is going on in Washington, D.C.
 - (E) congressional elections receive more national funding than presidential elections

ANSWER: E. All of the statements are true except the last one. Only qualifying presidential candidates receive federal funding (*American Government*, 9th ed., page 186 / 10th ed., page 232).

8

POLITICAL PARTIES

American political parties are among the oldest in the world. At one time parties could mobilize voters in a way that gave local machines enormous power. Today, parties are relatively weak because the laws and rules under which they operate have taken away much of their power. In addition, many Americans have lost their sense of commitment to any particular party.

KEY TERMS

divided government

economic-protest party

factional party

Federalists

ideological party

Jacksonian Democrats

minor party

nominating convention

one-issue party

plurality system

political machines

political party

realignment

Republicans

solidarity party

split ticket

sponsored party

superdelegates

third party

two-party system

Whigs

winner-take-all system

KEY CONCEPTS

- Political parties, once strong in the United States, are now increasingly weak.
- Political parties function differently at the national, state, and local levels.

- The United States has a strong two-party system that makes it difficult for minor parties to succeed.
- Political party delegates often differ ideologically from average voters.

For a full discussion of political parties, see *American Government*, 9th ed., Chapter 7 / 10th ed., Chapter 9.

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

A political party is a group that seeks to elect candidates to public office by giving those candidates an identification that is recognizable to the electorate. While European parties generally command great loyalty, parties in this country have become relatively weak.

Parties change over time. Critical periods produce sharp, lasting realignments of the parties. Such a shift might occur at the time of an election or just after. Good examples include the election of 1860, which made the Republicans a major party, and the election of 1932, which began the era of the New Deal. Electoral realignments seem to occur when a new issue of great importance cuts across existing party lines and replaces old issues that previously had held a party together. New coalitions combine to form a different composition within a party.

Although the Founders disliked parties and guarded against them, parties quickly emerged in the young republic. Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton had a number of policy disagreements even while serving in George Washington's administration. Their followers developed into loose caucuses that became the first political parties. Jefferson's followers were labeled the Republicans—not the precursors of today's Republican party—and Hamilton's followers were called the Federalists. Though the Republicans had early success in national elections that led to the demise of the Federalists, the parties were both relatively weak and little more than heterogeneous coalitions.

Andrew Jackson and his followers changed the party system by making it a fixture of the masses. By 1832, presidential electors were selected by popular vote in most states, giving the common man greater impact. Jackson's party, the Democrats—the original members of today's Democratic party—built from the bottom up. Presidential caucuses, at which party leaders nominated presidential candidates, were replaced by a national party convention. Another party, the Whigs, emerged to oppose the Jacksonian Democrats.

The two parties that came out of the Jacksonian period were the first truly national parties, but they were unable to survive the sectionalism created over the issue of slavery. The modern Republican party began as a third party and became a major party as a result of the Civil War. Republican dominance of the White House, and to a lesser extent of Congress, for the following seventy-five years was the result of two forces. Supporters of the Union during the Civil War became Republicans for several generations; while former Confederates consolidated as Democrats. Republicans later benefited from the presidential candidacy of Democrat William Jennings Bryan in 1896. Bryan's populist stances made him unpopular with Democrats

in the Northeast, furthering the North-South split of the parties. Because of this sectionalism, most states came to be dominated by one party, with factions developing within each party.

Reform of the party system began with the progressives of the early 1900s and was amplified during the New Deal. Progressives pushed measures that were designed to curtail the power and influence of both local and national party activities. Primary elections were favored over nominating conventions. Nonpartisan elections at the local and sometimes state levels became commonplace. Party alliances with business were halted. Strict voter registration requirements became the norm, as did civil service reform to eliminate patronage. Initiative and referendum measures were started in many states to allow citizens to vote directly on proposed legislation. These reforms reduced the worst kinds of corruption. At the same time, they weakened the parties by allowing officeholders to be less accountable to them and by hindering coordination of parties across the branches of government.

In recent decades the Democrats and Republicans have seemed to be decaying and dealigning, not realigning as in earlier eras. The proportion of those identifying with a party declined between 1960 and 1980 while the proportion of those voting a split ticket (voting for one party for certain offices and another party for other offices) increased. Ticket splitting creates divided government, in which different parties control the White House and Congress. Divided government is strong evidence of the overall weakening of the parties.

AP Tip

The number of voters who practice ticket splitting continues to increase. Divided government is a direct result of ticket splitting. Both ticket splitting and divided government are likely to appear on the AP exam.

PARTIES AT THE NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LEVELS

At the national level, the two major parties appear to be quite similar. Both hold national conventions every four years to nominate the presidential candidates. Both have a national committee composed of delegates from the states, who manage affairs between conventions. Congressional campaign committees support congressional candidates with party money, and a national chair manages daily work.

The party structures of the Democrats and Republicans took different paths in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Republicans became a well-financed, highly staffed organization devoted to funding and electing Republican candidates, especially to Congress. Democrats changed their rules for nominating presidential candidates, altering the distribution of power in the party. Consequently the Republicans became an efficient bureaucracy while the Democrats became quite factionalized. Republicans were also the first to take advantage of computerized mailings, building a huge file of names of people who had given or might give money to the party. Eventually

the Democrats adopted the same techniques, and both parties began to focus on sending money to state parties, sidestepping federal spending restrictions, a loophole referred to as soft money.

The major event of the national parties is the national convention. The national committee sets the time and place for each convention, held every presidential election year. Different formulas are used to allocate delegates at the conventions. Democrats in recent decades have tended to shift delegates away from the South to the North and the West. Republicans have shifted delegates away from the East and towards the South and the Southwest. Ideologically this has caused the Democrats to move more to the left and the Republicans more to the right.

In addition, the Democrats have established different rules for their convention. In the 1970s, the McGovern-Fraser Commission was charged with making representation at conventions more diverse and democratic. As a result, the power of local party leaders was weakened and the proportion of women, African Americans, youth, and Native Americans attending the convention was increased. Later reforms reestablished some of the influence of elected officials by reserving 14 percent of the delegates for party leaders and elected officials, who would not have to commit themselves in advance to a presidential candidate. These became known as superdelegates.

Democrats have also changed the distribution of delegates drawn from state primaries and caucuses. A state's delegates are divided among candidates who receive at least 15 percent of the vote, rather than the traditional winner-reward system that gave primary and caucus winners extra delegates.

The conventions of both parties have changed fundamentally, and probably permanently. Primary elections and grassroots caucuses now choose delegates once selected by party leaders. As a result the national party conventions are no longer places where party leaders meet to bargain over the selection of their presidential candidates. They are instead places where delegates come together to ratify choices already made by party activists and primary voters.

National party structures have changed, but grassroots organizations have withered. As a result, state party systems have sought to redefine their role. Every state has a Democratic party and a Republican party, each of which typically consists of a state central committee, county committees, and sometimes various local committees. Distribution of power differs from state to state.

At one time, state and local parties held power through political machines. These recruited members through incentives such as money, jobs, and political favors. Party leaders held great control and power, and abuses were commonplace. Gradually the corruption of machines was controlled through voter registration, civil service, and the Hatch Act, which made it illegal for federal civil service employees to take an active part in a political campaign while on the job. Changes in the profiles of voters also doomed the machines. Voters grew in education, income, and sophistication, and they came to depend less on the advice, help, and leadership of local party officials.

Today state and local parties deal with several modern trends that seem to be taking parties in the opposite direction from the old political machines. Many voters are drawn to ideological groups for whom principle is more important than winning an election. These

tend to be single-issue activists within one of the two parties. Other modern voters are motivated by the "game" of politics. Loyal voters, they nonetheless are often difficult to mobilize. Sometimes a strong party organization can be created from a preexisting organization. These are known as sponsored parties. For example, the local Democratic party in Detroit was developed out of the United Auto Workers union. The drawbacks of solidary groups (political party organizations based on a friendship network) and sponsored parties have led many candidates to seek personal followings at state and local levels. These require an appealing personality, an extensive network, name recognition, and money. The Kennedys in Massachusetts, the Talmadges in Georgia, the Longs in Louisiana, and the Byrds in Virginia, all have developed strong personal followings in their states. Dealing with these trends is difficult for local parties as they struggle to define their role in the twenty-first century.

THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM AND MINOR PARTIES

The United States has a two-party system that dates back to the original parties—the Republicans and the Federalists. Several unique features are responsible for this system.

Elections at every level are based on the plurality, winner-take-all method. A plurality system means that the winner is the person who gets the most votes, even if he or she does not get a majority of all votes cast. Some countries require majorities through runoff elections or give legislative seats based on proportional representation. Either of these encourages a multiparty system. The most dramatic example of the winner-take-all principle is the electoral college. In all but two states, Nebraska and Maine, the presidential candidate who wins the most popular votes in a state wins all of that state's electoral votes. Minor parties cannot compete under this system because they are unable to get enough votes to defeat a major party candidate.

Another explanation for the endurance of the two-party system is found in the opinions of the voters. There has always been a rough parity between the two parties, and most voters have been satisfied to let their individual beliefs fall into one of the two broad coalitions that the parties represent. Bitter dissent within parties has been quite common, but only sparingly has such dissent driven voters to a third party.

Though rarely successful at getting candidates elected, minor parties, or third parties, have often come on the American political scene. These tend to fall into one of four categories:

- **Ideological parties** These tend to be at the edges of the political spectrum. Some examples are the Socialist party, the Communist party, the Green party, and the Libertarian party.
- **One-issue parties** Minor parties often address a single issue. Examples include the Prohibition party (to ban alcohol) and the Women's party (to obtain women's voting rights).
- **Economic protest parties** These parties, often regional, protest against depressed economic conditions. Examples include the Populist party, the Reform party (under Ross Perot), and the Greenback party.

- **Factional parties** Splits in the major parties can create a factional party, usually over the identity and philosophy of the major party's presidential candidate. Examples include the "Bull Moose" Progressive party and the States' Rights party.

Through concessions, minor parties often have impact in getting the major parties to address their issues. The minor parties with probably the greatest influence on policy are factional parties. The threat of a factional split is significant to either party, and the major parties often go to great lengths to avoid such a split.

DELEGATES AND VOTERS

When a party nominates a presidential candidate, it must seek an appealing, moderate candidate but must also keep dissidents in the party satisfied by making compromises. Today's delegates are often issue-oriented activists. Democratic delegates are more liberal as a whole than the party's voters; Republican delegates, more conservative. Today's delegates are often issue-oriented activists. While they help create the broad coalition necessary to elect a president, they sometimes can nominate a candidate unacceptable to the party's rank-and-file voters.

This disparity between delegates and voters accounts to some extent for the low number of Democratic presidential candidates elected since 1968, with several liberal candidates lacking appeal to moderate voters. The 1964 candidacy of Barry Goldwater, a staunch conservative, illustrates the same phenomenon at work within the Republican party. On the campaign trail, candidates must limit themselves to issues that most of the party agrees on because of the wide range of beliefs within a party. However, by doing this, the candidate can risk losing the vote of the more ideologically extreme voters.

While the parties have far less impact than they did a century ago, they continue to play a significant role in the voting habits and political activities of Americans.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. How do American political parties compare with political parties in Europe?
 - (A) American parties are stronger and have more loyal members.
 - (B) American parties are more centralized, with more control by the national party organizations.
 - (C) Because of federalism, American political parties are decentralized, with significant power at the state and local levels.
 - (D) For the past three decades, the party that controls Congress has usually controlled the presidency.
 - (E) National law regulates European parties heavily.

POLITICAL PARTY ERAS IN AMERICAN HISTORY

1796-1824: The Federalists

Purpose: to gather support for Hamilton's national bank
Coalition: Capitalists

1796-1824: The Democratic Republicans

Led by: Jefferson, Madison, & Monroe
Coalition: agrarian interests (rural South)

THE BEGINNING OF THE MODERN POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM

1828-1860: The Whigs

Led by: Henry Clay & Daniel Webster
Coalition: northern industrialists and southern planters

1828-1860: Democratic (Republican) Party

Led by: Andrew Jackson
Coalition: westerners, southerners, new immigrants

1860-1932: Republican Party

Coalition: anti-slavery Whigs & Democrats
Favored: gold standard, industrialization, banks, high tariffs, industrial working class

1896 Election: W.J. Bryan & "free silver"

1932-1968: The New Deal Coalition (Democrats)

Coalition: urban dwellers, labor unions, Catholics/Jews, poor, southerners, African Americans, intellectuals

1968-Present: Era of Divided Government

Republicans have won 5 out of 7 elections
The Republicans have become the Party of Efficiency

1968-Present: The Democrats as the Party of Representation

1968 Chicago Convention riot resulted in the McGovern-Fraser Commission

The Difference between Democrats and Republicans

Part A

Use the following information concerning the Democratic and Republican platforms to answer the three questions at the end of part A.

Issue	Democratic Platform Position	Issue	Republican Platform Position
Defense	Calls for "stable" defense spending and "readiness and mobility" over "dubious new weapons."	Defense	Calls for modernizing land, sea and air nuclear arms (B-1, B-2, Trident, MX) and for "rapid and certain" deployment of strategic defense not subject to negotiation; 600-ship Navy with two new carriers; updated chemical weapons.
Superpower Relations	Calls for testing intentions of new Soviet leaders on arms control, emigration, human rights, then reciprocating; allies should pay for more of common defense.	Superpower Relations	Avoid "naive inexperience or overly enthusiastic endorsement of current Soviet rhetoric"; Soviets must release political prisoners, open borders.
Central America	Support for Arias plan; no mention of contras.	Central America	Supports military aid to Nicaraguan contras.
Trade	Use all tools "to export more goods and fewer jobs."	Trade	Renews free-trade commitment.
Economics	Advance notice of plant closings, major layoffs; opposition to "unproductive mergers, takeovers."	Economics	Supports enterprise zones, deregulation, free-market principles.
Spending Cuts	Restrain defense spending, farm subsidies.	Spending Cuts	"With Gramm-Rudman and a flexible freeze," budget can be balanced by 1993.
Taxes	Calls for "the wealthy and the Pentagon" to pay "fair share," for "investing in America" and reducing deficit.	Taxes	"We oppose any attempts to raise taxes" and support new tax incentives for saving; lower taxes on capital gains; taxpayers' Bill of Rights.
Health	"Every family should have the security of basic health insurance."	Health	"Nationalized medicine" is disastrous; competition and choice are only cost-cutters.
Education	Deserves "highest priority"; no one to be denied college for lack of funds; create National Teacher Corps.	Education	Parents have right to control child's education; competition, choice produce quality.
Drugs	Calls for "drug czar" empowered to use every agency necessary, including armed forces.	Drugs	"Strict accountability" for users and traffickers.
Housing	"Steps should be taken to ensure a decent place to live for every American."	Housing	"The best housing policy is sound economic policy: low inflation rates, low interest rates and the availability of a job with a good paycheck . . ."
Environment	Calls for aggressive enforcement of toxic cleanup, anti-dumping laws, ban on offshore drilling in sensitive areas.	Environment	Takes credit for Superfund Act; but also supports cost-benefit analysis of cleanups; urges new nuclear power plants with uniform design.
Women	Supports Equal Rights Amendment. Supports pay equity. Supports right to abortion regardless of ability to pay.	Women	Opposes Equal Rights Amendment; supports rights of fetus that "cannot be infringed" for any reason; opposes public funding of abortion.
Minorities	Supports affirmative action goals, timetables and procurement set-asides.	Minorities	Expanding economy should provide opportunity for all regardless of race or gender; opposes timetables, quotas.
Farm	Mix of supply management and "reasonable" price supports.	Farm	Opposes production controls; upholds price support system of 1985 farm bill.
Crime	Calls for ban of "cop-killer" bullets; abhors greed in economy and in Reagan administration.	Crime	Supports death penalty for capital crimes; would deny prison furloughs for murderers; opposes gun control. ¹

¹Ronald D. Elving, "Party Platforms Helped Shape Fall Campaigns," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (October 22, 1988): 3042-3043.

Name _____

Date _____

1. What are the major issues on which the Democratic and Republican party platforms agree? Be specific. Do not just list the issues.

2. What are the significant points of disagreement in the platforms of the Democratic and Republican parties? Be specific. Do not just list the issues.

3. Based on your analysis of these planks in the Democratic and Republican party platforms, what evidence is there that a major difference exists between the Democrats and Republicans concerning the role of government in society. Use specific references to the platforms.

Campaign Financing: The Federal Election Campaign Act

**ORIGINAL FEC, NOT BI-PARTISAN
 CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM (2002)**

Part A

Contribution Limits				
Contributions From:	To Candidate or His/Her Authorized Committee	To National Party Committee ¹ Per Calendar Year ²	To Any Other Committee Per Calendar Year	Total Contributions Per Calendar Year
Individual	\$1,000 Per Election ³	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
Multicandidate Committee ⁴	\$5,000 Per Election	\$15,000	\$5,000	No Limit
Party Committee	\$1,000 or \$5,000 ⁵ Per Election	No Limit	\$5,000	No Limit
Republican or Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, ⁶ or the National Party Committee, or a Combination of Both	\$17,500 ⁷	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Any Other Committee or Group ⁸	\$1,000 Per Election	\$20,000	\$5,000	No Limit

¹For purposes of this limit, each of the following is considered a national party committee: a party's national committee, the Senate Campaign committees and the National Congressional committees, provided they are not authorized by any candidate.
²Calendar year extends from January 1 through December 31. Individual contributions made or earmarked to influence a specific election of a clearly identified candidate are counted as if made during the year in which the election is held.
³Each of the following elections is considered a separate election: primary election, general election, runoff election, special election, and party caucus or convention which has authority to select the nominee.
⁴A multicandidate committee is any committee with more than 50 contributors which has been registered for at least six months and, with the exception of State party committees, has made contributions to five or more Federal candidates. A nonconnected committee may qualify as a multicandidate committee.
⁵Limit depends on whether or not party committee is a multicandidate committee.
⁶Republican and Democratic Senatorial Campaign committees are subject to all other limits applicable to a multicandidate committee.
⁷To Senate candidate per calendar year in which candidate seeks election.
⁸Other committee may include a nonconnected committee not qualified as a multicandidate committee; group includes an organization, partnership or group of persons.

Table 20.1. Federal Election Commission "Campaign Finance Reform," *Congressional Digest* (October, 1990): 229.

aware of government decisions affecting their lives and are capable of rendering rational judgments on the actions of political leaders. At the same time, Key pointed out that voter rationality depends upon the rationality of political campaigns, although he argued that in many instances voters are clever enough to see through political propaganda. Joe McGinniss described in his book *The Selling of the President 1968* how public relations experts and political propagandists view the electorate and also demonstrated how these views affected the management of President Nixon's campaign in 1968. Readers should ask themselves how a rational democratic electorate can be maintained if the political leadership holds voters in such low esteem.

30

Joe McGinniss
THE SELLING OF THE
PRESIDENT 1968

Politics, in a sense, has always been a con game.

The American voter, insisting upon his belief in a higher order, clings to his religion, which promises another, better life; and defends passionately the illusion that the men he chooses to lead him are of finer nature than he.

It has been traditional that the successful politician honor this illusion. To succeed today, he must embellish it. Particularly if he wants to be President.

"Potential presidents are measured against an ideal that's a combination of leading man, God, father, hero, pope, king, with maybe just a touch of the avenging Furies thrown in," an adviser to Richard Nixon wrote in a memorandum late in 1967. Then, perhaps aware that Nixon qualified only as father, he discussed improvements that would have to be made—not upon Nixon himself, but upon the image of him which was received by the voter.

That there is a difference between the individual and his image is human nature. Or American nature, at least. That the difference is exaggerated and exploited electronically is the reason for this book.

Advertising, in many ways, is a con game, too. Human beings do not need new automobiles every third year; a color television set brings little enrichment of the human experience; a higher or lower hemline no expansion of consciousness, no increase in the capacity to love.

From Joe McGinniss, *The Selling of the President 1968* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1969), chap. 2. Copyright © 1969, by Joemac, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

It is not surprising, then, that politicians and advertising men should have discovered one another. And, once they recognized that the citizen did not so much vote for a candidate as make a psychological purchase of him, not surprising that they began to work together.

The voter, as reluctant to face political reality as any other kind, was hardly an unwilling victim. "The deeper problems connected with advertising," Daniel Boorstin has written in the *The Image*, "come less from the unscrupulousness of our 'deceivers' than from our pleasure in being deceived, less from the desire to seduce than from the desire to be seduced. . . ."

"In the last half-century we have misled ourselves . . . about men . . . and how much greatness can be found among them. . . . We have become so accustomed to our illusions that we mistake them for reality. We demand them. And we demand that there be always more of them, bigger and better and more vivid."

The presidency seems the ultimate extension of our error.

"Advertising agencies have tried openly to sell presidents since 1952. When Dwight Eisenhower ran for reelection in 1956, the agency of Batton, Barton, Durstine and Osborn, which had been on a retainer throughout his first four years, accepted his campaign as a regular account. Leonard Hall, national Republican chairman, said: "You sell your candidates and your programs the way a business sells its products."

The only change over the past twelve years has been that, as technical sophistication has increased, so has circumspection. The ad men were removed from the parlor but were given a suite upstairs.

What Boorstin says of advertising: "It has meant a reshaping of our very concept of truth," is particularly true of advertising on TV.

With the coming of television, and the knowledge of how it could be used to seduce voters, the old political values disappeared. Something new, murky, undefined started to rise from the mists. "In all countries," Marshall McLuhan writes, "the party system has folded like the organization chart. Policies and issues are useless for election purposes, since they are too specialized and hot. The shaping of a candidate's integral image has taken the place of discussing conflicting points of view."

Americans have never quite digested television. The mystique which should fade grows stronger. We make celebrities not only of the men who cause events but of the men who read reports of them aloud.

The televised image can become as real to the housewife as her husband, and much more attractive. Hugh Downs is a better breakfast companion, Merv Griffin cozier to snuggle with on the couch.

Television, in fact, has given status to the "celebrity" which few real men attain. And the "celebrity" here is the one described by Boorstin: "Neither good nor bad, great nor pretty . . . the human pseudoevent . . . fabricated on purpose to satisfy our exaggerated expectations of human greatness."

This is, perhaps, where the twentieth century and its pursuit of illusion have been leading us. "In the last half-century," Boorstin writes, "the old heroic human mold has been broken. A new mold has been made, so that marketable human

models—m
without any
into a 'natio

The te
else's know
like the chi
paper.

Televi
lacks ideas.
the parag
nists—and
ideology. T
candidate
way to rea

On te
what the v
must only
he invited
tician" to
finally the

The
against a s
against M
he twitch,
Style

Style

votes.
In off
to forgive
course on
his calling

We f
he had a
televised

Then
He might
able to ch
lens. The

"The
style of pr
must hid
of Eugen
in intima
request,
lance.

Wan

models—modern 'heroes'—could be mass-produced, to satisfy the market, and without any hitches. The qualities which now commonly make a man or woman into a 'nationally advertised' brand are in fact a new category of human emptiness."

The television celebrity is a vessel. An inoffensive container in which someone else's knowledge, insight, compassion, or wit can be presented. And we respond like the child on Christmas morning who ignores the gift to play with the wrapping paper.

Television seems particularly useful to the politician who can be charming but lacks ideas. Print is for ideas. Newspapermen write not about people but policies; the paragraphs can be slid around like blocks. Everyone is colored gray. Columnists—and commentators in the more polysyllabic magazines—concentrate on ideology. They do not care what a man sounds like; only how he thinks. For the candidate who does not, such exposure can be embarrassing. He needs another way to reach the people.

On television it matters less that he does not have ideas. His personality is what the viewers want to share. He need be neither statesman nor crusader; he must only show up on time. Success and failure are easily measured: How often is he invited back? Often enough and he reaches his goal—to advance from "politician" to "celebrity," a status jump bestowed by grateful viewers who feel that finally they have been given the basis for making a choice.

The TV candidate, then, is measured not against his predecessors—not against a standard of performance established by two centuries of democracy—but against Mike Douglas. How well does he handle himself? Does he mumble, does he twitch, does he make me laugh? Do I feel warm inside?

Style becomes substance. The medium is the massage and the masseur gets the votes.

In office, too, the ability to project electronically is essential. We were willing to forgive John Kennedy his Bay of Pigs; we followed without question the perilous course on which he led us when missiles were found in Cuba; we even tolerated his calling of reserves for the sake of a bluff about Berlin.

We forgave, followed, and accepted because we liked the way he looked. And he had a pretty wife. Camelot was fun, even for the peasants, as long as it was televised to their huts.

Then came Lyndon Johnson, heavy and gross, and he was forgiven nothing. He might have survived the sniping of the displaced intellectuals had he only been able to charm. But no one taught him how. Johnson was syrupy. He stuck to the lens. There was no place for him in our culture.

"The success of any TV performer depends on his achieving a low-pressure style of presentation," McLuhan has written. The harder a man tries, the better he must hide it. Television demands gentle wit, irony, understatement; the qualities of Eugene McCarthy. The TV politician cannot make a speech; he must engage in intimate conversation. He must never press. He should suggest, not state; request, not demand. Nonchalance is the key word. Carefully studied nonchalance.

Warmth and sincerity are desirable but must be handled with care. Unfiltered,

they can be fatal. Television did great harm to Hubert Humphrey. His excesses—talking too long and too fervently, which were merely annoying in an auditorium—became lethal in a television studio. The performer must talk to one person at a time. He is brought into the living room. He is a guest. It is improper for him to shout. Humphrey vomited on the rug.

It would be extremely unwise for the TV politician to admit such knowledge of his medium. The necessary nonchalance should carry beyond his appearance while on the show; it should rule his attitude toward it. He should express distaste for television; suspicion that there is something "phony" about it. This guarantees him good press, because newspaper reporters, bitter over their loss of prestige to the television men, are certain to stress anti-television remarks. Thus, the sophisticated candidate, while analyzing his own on-the-air technique as carefully as a golf pro studies his swing, will state frequently that there is no place for "public relations gimmicks" or "those show business guys" in his campaign. Most of the television men working for him will be unbothered by such remarks. They are willing to accept anonymity, even scorn, as long as the pay is good.

Into this milieu came Richard Nixon: grumpy, cold, and aloof. He would claim privately that he lost elections because the American voter was an adolescent whom he tried to treat as an adult. Perhaps. But if he treated the voter as an adult, it was as an adult he did not want for a neighbor.

This might have been excused had he been a man of genuine vision. An explorer of the spirit. Martin Luther King, for instance, got by without being one of the boys. But Richard Nixon did not strike people that way. He had, in Richard Rovere's words, "an advertising man's approach to his work," acting as if he believed "policies [were] products to be sold the public—this one today, that one tomorrow, depending on the discounts and the state of the market."

So his enemies had him on two counts: his personality, and the convictions—or lack of such—which lay behind. They worked him over heavily on both.

Norman Mailer remembered him as "a church usher, of the variety who would twist a boy's ear after removing him from church."

McLuhan watched him debate Kennedy and thought he resembled "the railway lawyer who signs leases that are not in the best interests of the folks in the little town."

But Nixon survived, despite his flaws, because he was tough and smart, and—some said—dirty when he had to be. Also, because there was nothing else he knew. A man to whom politics is all there is in life will almost always beat one to whom it is only an occupation.

He nearly became President in 1960, and that year it would not have been by default. He failed because he was too few of the things a President had to be—and because he had no press to lie for him and did not know how to use television to lie about himself.

It was just Nixon and John Kennedy and they sat down together in a television studio and a little red light began to glow and Richard Nixon was finished. Television would be blamed but for all the wrong reasons.

They would say it was makeup and lighting, but Nixon's problem went deeper

than that. His problem camera portrayed him like the taste.

The content of the content seldom does. few observers at the McLuhan read

appalled at the sections in American history one clue as to the nature White considers the but it never occurs to intense image like Nixon In McLuhan's opinion

What the camera confused, he blamed

He made another world a little piece of They did not want to be rich.

He was afraid of he considered it a game when he He half suspected it silly. It offended his

So his decision of him argued against to the darkest place Graham Greene told inside had proved to would have to learn

America still suffers again, as candidate discarded figure from

He spoke to me stability, a sense of perspective, a moral

His problem was press. He knew what gotten. He would have nuts and smiles from

Television was just any kind of television would have to find the proper

than that. His problem was himself. Not what he said but the man he was. The camera portrayed him clearly. America took its Richard Nixon straight and did not like the taste.

The content of the programs made little difference. Except for startling lapses, content seldom does. What mattered was the image the viewers received, though few observers at the time caught the point.

McLuhan read Theodore White's *The Making of the President* book and was appalled at the section on the debates. "White offers statistics on the number of sets in American homes and the number of hours of daily use of these sets, but not one clue as to the nature of the TV image or its effects on candidates or viewers. White considers the 'content' of the debates and the deportment of the debaters, but it never occurs to him to ask why TV would inevitably be a disaster for a sharp intense image like Nixon's and a boon for the blurry, shaggy texture of Kennedy." In McLuhan's opinion: "Without TV, Nixon had it made."

What the camera showed was Richard Nixon's hunger. He lost, and bitter, confused, he blamed it on his beard.

He made another, lesser thrust in 1962, and that failed, too. He showed the world a little piece of his heart the morning after and then he moved East to brood. They did not want him, the hell with them. He was going to Wall Street and get rich.

He was afraid of television. He knew his soul was hard to find. Beyond that, he considered it a gimmick; its use in politics offended him. It had not been part of the game when he had learned to play, he could see no reason to bring it in now. He half suspected it was an eastern liberal trick: one more way to make him look silly. It offended his sense of dignity, one of the truest senses he had.

So his decision to use it to become President in 1968 was not easy. So much of him argued against it. But in his Wall Street years, Richard Nixon had traveled to the darkest places inside himself and come back numbed. He was, as in the Graham Greene title, a burnt-out case. All feeling was behind him; the machine inside had proved his hardest part. He would run for President again and if he would have to learn television to run well, then he would learn it.

America still saw him as the 1960 Nixon. If he were to come at the people again, as candidate, it would have to be as something new; not this scarred, discarded figure from their past.

He spoke to men who thought him mellowed. They detected growth, a new stability, a sense of direction that had been lacking. He would return with fresh perspective, a more unselfish urgency.

His problem was how to let the nation know. He could not do it through the press. He knew what to expect from them, which was the same as he had always gotten. He would have to circumvent them. Distract them with coffee and doughnuts and smiles from his staff and tell his story another way.

Television was the only answer, despite its sins against him in the past. But not just any kind of television. An uncommitted camera could do irreparable harm. His television would have to be controlled. He would need experts. They would have to find the proper settings for him, or if they could not be found, manufacture

them. These would have to be men of keen judgment and flawless taste. He was, after all, Richard Nixon, and there were certain things he could not do. Wearing love beads was one. He would need men of dignity. Who believed in him and shared his vision. But more importantly, men who knew television as a weapon: from broadest concept to most technical detail. This would be Richard Nixon, the leader, returning from exile. Perhaps not beloved, but respected. Firm but not harsh; just but compassionate. With flashes of warmth spaced evenly throughout.

Nixon gathered about himself a group of young men attuned to the political uses of television. They arrived at his side by different routes. One, William Gavin, was a thirty-one-year-old English teacher in a suburban high school outside Philadelphia in 1967, when he wrote Richard Nixon a letter urging him to run for President and base his campaign on TV. Gavin wrote on stationery borrowed from the University of Pennsylvania because he thought Nixon would pay more attention if the letter seemed to be from a college professor.

Dear Mr. Nixon:

May I offer two suggestions concerning your plans for 1968?

1. Run. You can win. Nothing can happen to you, politically speaking, that is worse than what has happened to you. Ortega y Gasset in his *The Revolt of the Masses* says: "These ideas are the only genuine ideas: the ideas of the shipwrecked. All the rest is rhetoric, posturing, farce. He who does not really feel himself lost, is lost without remission. . . ." You, in effect, are "lost"; that is why you are the only political figure with a vision to see things the way they are and not as Leftist or Rightist kooks would have them be. Run. You will win.

2. A tip for television: instead of those wooden performances beloved by politicians, instead of a glamorboy technique, instead of safety, be bold. Why not have live press conferences as your campaign on television? People will see you daring all, asking and answering questions from reporters, and not simply answering phony "questions" made up by your staff. This would be dynamic; it would be daring. Instead of the medium using you, you would be using the medium. Go on "live" and risk all. It is the only way to convince people of the truth: that you are beyond rhetoric, that you can face reality, unlike your opponents, who will rely on public relations. Television hurt you because you were not yourself; it didn't hurt the "real" Nixon. The real Nixon can revolutionize the use of television by dynamically going "live" and answering everything, the loaded and the unloaded question. Invite your opponents to this kind of a debate.

Good luck, and I know you can win if you see yourself for what you are; a man who had been beaten, humiliated, hated, but who can still see the truth.

A Nixon staff member had lunch with Gavin a couple of times after the letter was received and hired him.

William Gavin was brought to the White House as a speech writer in January of 1969.

Harry Treleven, hired as creative director of advertising in the fall of 1967, immediately went to work on the more serious of Nixon's personality problems. One was his lack of humor.

"Can be corrected to a degree," Treleven wrote, "but let's not be too obvious

about it. Ron
a pro write t

Treleven
be helped gr
that will sho
RFK talking
ject. . . .

"He sho
studio. The

Some o
editorial writ
prominent s
inaugural ad

In 1967
reason is to
conclusion t
people to ma

Price su
factors" whic
Nixon.

"These
analytical, a

of the candid
not to the m
carrying it o
receives. It's

And this imp
on the candi

So there
television.

"What,
wrote.

"For one
out firmly in
identified wi

So, at th
still felt by hi
that vision o

"Second
experiment,
particular er

that can best
"The TV
effect on the
received. An

about it. Romney's cornball attempts have hurt him. If we're going to be witty, let a pro write the words."

Treleaven also worried about Nixon's lack of warmth, but decided that "he can be helped greatly in this respect by how he is handled. . . . Give him words to say that will show his *emotional* involvement in the issues. . . . Buchanan wrote about RFK talking about the starving children in Recife. *That's what we have to inject. . . .*

"He should be presented in some kind of 'situation' rather than cold in a studio. The situation should look unstaged even if it's not."

Some of the most effective ideas belonged to Raymond K. Price, a former editorial writer for the *New York Herald Tribune*, who became Nixon's best and most prominent speech writer in the campaign. Price later composed much of the inaugural address.

In 1967, he began with the assumption that, "The natural human use of reason is to support prejudice, not to arrive at opinions." Which led to the conclusion that rational arguments would "only be effective if we can get the people to make the *emotional* leap, or what theologians call [the] 'leap of faith.'"

Price suggested attacking the "personal factors" rather than the "historical factors" which were the basis of the low opinion so many people had of Richard Nixon.

"These tend to be more a gut reaction," Price wrote, "unarticulated, non-analytical, a product of the particular chemistry between the voter and the *image* of the candidate. *We have to be very clear on this point: that the response is to the image, not to the man. . . .* It's not what's *there* that counts, it's what's projected—and carrying it one step further, it's not what *he* projects but rather what the voter receives. It's not the man we have to change, but rather the *received impression*. And this impression often depends more on the medium and its use than it does on the candidate himself."

So there would not have to be a "new Nixon." Simply a new approach to television.

"What, then, does this mean in terms of our uses of time and of media?" Price wrote.

"For one thing, it means investing whatever time RN needs in order to work out firmly in his own mind that vision of the nation's future that he wants to be identified with. This is crucial. . . ."

So, at the age of fifty-four, after twenty years in public life, Richard Nixon was still felt *by his own staff* to be in need of time to "work out firmly in his own mind that vision of the nation's future that he wants to be identified with."

"Secondly," Price wrote, "it suggests that we take the time and the money to experiment, in a controlled manner, with film and television techniques, with particular emphasis on pinpointing those *controlled* uses of the television medium that can *best* convey the *image* we want to get across. . . ."

"The TV medium itself introduces an element of distortion, in terms of its effect on the candidate and of the often subliminal ways in which the image is received. And it inevitably is going to convey a partial image—thus ours is the task

of finding how to control its use so the part that gets across is the part we want to have gotten across. . . .

"Voters are basically lazy, basically uninterested in making an effort to understand what we're talking about . . ." Price wrote. "Reason requires a high degree of discipline, of concentration; impression is easier. Reason pushes the viewer back, it assaults him, it demands that he agree or disagree; impression can envelop him, invite him in, without making an intellectual demand. . . . When we argue with him we demand that he make the effort of replying. We seek to engage his intellect, and for most people this is the most difficult work of all. The emotions are more easily roused, closer to the surface, more malleable. . . ."

So, for the New Hampshire primary, Price recommended "saturation with a film, in which the candidate can be shown better than he can be shown in person because it can be edited, so only the best moments are shown; then a quick parading of the candidate in the flesh so that the guy they've gotten intimately acquainted with on the screen takes on a living presence—not saying anything, just being seen. . . ."

"[Nixon] has to come across as a person larger than life, the stuff of legend. People are stirred by the legend, including the living legend, not by the man himself. It's the aura that surrounds the charismatic figure more than it is the figure itself, that draws the followers. Our task is to build that aura. . . ."

"So let's not be afraid of television gimmicks . . . get the voters to like the guy and the battle's two-thirds won."

So this was how they went into it. Trying, with one hand, to build the illusion that Richard Nixon, in addition to his attributes of mind and heart, considered, in the words of Patrick J. Buchanan, a speech writer, "communicating with the people . . . one of the great joys of seeking the Presidency"; while with the other they shielded him, controlled him, and controlled the atmosphere around him. It was as if they were building not a President but an Astrodome, where the wind would never blow, the temperature never rise or fall, and the ball never bounce erratically on the artificial grass.

They could do this, and succeed, because of the special nature of the man. There was, apparently, something in Richard Nixon's character which sought this shelter. Something which craved regulation, which flourished best in the darkness, behind clichés, behind phalanxes of antiseptic advisers. Some part of him that could breathe freely only inside a hotel suite that cost a hundred dollars a day.

And it worked. As he moved serenely through his primary campaign, there was new cadence to Richard Nixon's speech and motion; new confidence in his heart. And, a new image of him on the television screen.

TV both reflected and contributed to his strength. Because he was winning he looked like a winner on the screen. Because he was suddenly projecting well on the medium he had feared, he went about his other tasks with assurance. The one fed upon the other, building to an astonishing peak in August as the Republican convention began and he emerged from his regal isolation, traveling to Miami not so much to be nominated as coronated. On live, but controlled, TV.

❖❖ The entrance into politics, the extensive use of television in 1952, has changed the nature of presidential candidacies, the role of public relations advisers, and the relationship between the candidate and the electorate. Nixon's first appeal to the voters was through the media advisers as Joe McGinniss, in the preface to his book, *The Making of a President 1960*, wrote in his comment on Nixon's first television debate in 1960, "because he was too good to have had no press to lie about himself." Nixon's first television debate in 1968 were very carefully planned as to project a favorable image.

Joe McGinniss's book *The Making of a President 1960* began what was to become a tradition of the importance of television in the presidential race until Nixon's theme that the campaign should be portrayed as a Massachusetts and an unpatriotic campaign stressed among Dan Quayle's character in the campaign in a different way that the campaign v

♦♦ The entrance of the professional public relations person into politics, the extensive use of television to "sell" the candidate, all of which began in 1952, has changed the landscape of presidential politics. The advertising of presidential candidates has changed little over the years, because their public relations advisers basically take the same approach to the campaign and the electorate. The images of candidates are to be shaped to optimize their appeal to the voters. The loss of elections is now blamed as much on media advisers as on the candidates and their public policy stances. Joe McGinniss, in the preceding selection, put this idea in its most cynical form in his comment on President Nixon's campaign in 1960: "He nearly became President in 1960, and that year it would not have been by default. He failed because he was too few of the things a President had to be—and because he had no press to lie for him and did not know how to use television to lie about himself." Nixon's defeat in 1960 is often said to have been caused by deficiencies in his popular image, including his *physical* appearance in the first television debate with John F. Kennedy. Thus, his television advisers in 1968 were very careful to structure the television environment in such a way as to project a favorable Nixon image.

Joe McGinniss's classic portrayal of electioneering in the previous selection began what was to become a trend in political analysis that emphasized the importance of images over issues. As political pundits put the 1988 presidential race under their analytical microscopes, they echoed McGinniss's theme that the campaign was down and dirty: George Bush's advisers portrayed Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis as a coddler of criminals and an unpatriotic opponent of the Pledge of Allegiance while the Dukakis camp stressed among other things Republican vice-presidential candidate Dan Quayle's character flaws. The following selection presents the 1988 campaign in a different light as the author argues contrary to most analysts that the campaign was really about important public issues.

abstract models, presumed European practice, and well-airbrushed American experience, but we seldom take a cold look at real American experience. We forget about Franklin Roosevelt's troubles with HUAC and the Rules Committee, Truman's and Kennedy's domestic policy defeats, McCarthy's square-off against Eisenhower, Johnson versus Fulbright on Vietnam, and Carter's energy program and "malaise."

Political parties can be powerful instruments, but in the United States they seem to play more of a role as "policy factions" than as, in the British case, governing instruments. A party as policy faction can often get its way even in circumstances of divided control. Witness the Taftite Republicans in 1947, congressional Democrats under Nixon, or the Reaganites in 1981. How, one might ask, were these temporary policy ascendancies greatly different from that of the Great Society Democrats in 1964-66?

To demand more of American parties—to ask that they become governing instruments—is to run them up against components of the American regime as fundamental as the party system itself. There is a strong pluralist component, for example, as evidenced in the way politicians respond to cross-cutting issue cleavages. There is a public-opinion component that political science's modern technologies do not seem to reach very well. The government floats in public opinion; it goes up and down on great long waves of it that often have little to do with parties. There is the obvious structural component—separation of powers—that brings on deadlock and chronic conflict, but also nudges officials toward deliberation, compromise, and super-majority outcomes. And there is a component of deep-seated individualism among American politicians, who build and tend their own electoral bases and maintain their own relations of responsibility with electorates. This seems to be a matter of political culture—perhaps a survival of republicanism—that goes way back. Unlike most politicians elsewhere, American ones at both legislative and executive levels have managed to navigate the last two centuries of history without becoming minions of party leaders. In this complicated, multi-component setting, British-style governing by party majorities does not have much of a chance.

FUNCTIONS AND TYPES OF ELECTIONS

Most people transmit their political desires to government through elections. Elections are a critical part of the democratic process, and the existence of free elections is a major difference between democracies and totalitarian or authoritarian forms of government. Because elections reflect popular attitudes toward governmental policies and personalities, it is useful to attempt to classify different types of elections on the basis of changes and trends that take place within the electorate. Every election is not the same. For example, the election of 1932 with the resulting Democratic landslide was profoundly different from the election of 1960, in which Kennedy won by less than 1 percent of the popular vote.

Members of the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan, as well as V. O. Key, Jr., have developed a typology of elections that is useful in analyzing the electoral system. The most prevalent type of election can be

classified as a "maintaining election," "one in which the pattern of partisan attachments prevailing in the preceding period persists and is the primary influence on the forces governing the vote."¹ Most elections fall into the maintaining category, a fact significant for the political system because such elections result in political continuity and reflect a lack of serious upheavals within the electorate and government. Maintaining elections result in the continuation of the majority political party.

At certain times in American history, what V. O. Key, Jr., has called "critical elections" take place. He discusses this type of election, which results in permanent realignment of the electorate and reflects basic changes in political attitudes.

Apart from maintaining and critical elections, a third type, in which only temporary shifts take place within the electorate, occurs; which can be called "deviating elections." For example, the Eisenhower victories of 1952 and 1956 were deviating elections for several reasons, including the personality of Eisenhower and the fact that voters could register their choice for president without changing their basic partisan loyalties at congressional and state levels. Deviating elections, with reference to the office of president, are probable when popular figures are running for the office.

In "reinstating elections," a final category that can be added to typology of elections, there is a return to normal voting patterns. Reinstating elections take place after deviating elections as a result of the demise of the temporary forces that caused the transitory shift in partisan choice. The election of 1960, in which most of the Democratic majority in the electorate returned to the fold and voted for John F. Kennedy,² has been classified as a reinstating election.

26

V. O. Key, Jr.

A THEORY OF CRITICAL ELECTIONS



Perhaps the basic differentiating characteristic of democratic order consists in the expression of effective choice by the mass of the people in elections. The electorate

¹Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1960), chap. 19.

²See Philip E. Converse, Angus Campbell, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, "Stability and Change in 1960: A Reinstating Election," *The American Political Science Review* 55 (June 1961):269-280.

occupies, at least in the mystique of such orders, the position of the principal organ of governance; it acts through elections. An election itself is a formal act of collective decision that occurs in a stream of connected antecedent and subsequent behavior. Among democratic orders elections, so broadly defined, differ enormously in their nature, their meaning, and their consequences. Even within a single nation the reality of election differs greatly from time to time. A systematic comparative approach, with a focus on variations in the nature of elections would doubtless be fruitful in advancing the understanding of the democratic governing process. In behavior antecedent to voting, elections differ in the proportions of the electorate psychologically involved, in the intensity of attitudes associated with campaign cleavages, in the nature of expectations about the consequences of the voting, in the impact of objective events relevant to individual political choice, in individual sense of effective connection with community decision, and in other ways. These and other antecedent variations affect the act of voting itself as well as subsequent behavior. An understanding of elections and, in turn, of the democratic process as a whole must rest partially on broad differentiations of the complexes of behavior that we call elections.

While this is not the occasion to develop a comprehensive typology of elections, the foregoing remarks provide an orientation for an attempt to formulate a concept of one type of election—based on American experience—which might be built into a more general theory of elections. Even the most fleeting inspection of American elections suggests the existence of a category of elections in which voters are, at least from impressionistic evidence, unusually deeply concerned, in which the extent of electoral involvement is relatively quite high, and in which the decisive results of the voting reveal a sharp alteration of the preexisting cleavage within the electorate. Moreover, and perhaps this is the truly differentiating characteristic of this sort of election, the realignment made manifest in the voting in such elections seems to persist for several succeeding elections. All these characteristics cumulate to the conception of an election type in which the depth and intensity of electoral involvement are high, in which more or less profound readjustments occur in the relations of power within the community, and in which new and durable electoral groupings are formed. These comments suppose, of course, the existence of other types of complexes of behavior centering about formal elections, the systematic isolation and identification of which, fortunately, are not essential for the present discussion.

I

The presidential election of 1928 in the New England states provides a specific case of the type of critical election that has been described in general terms. In that year Alfred E. Smith, the Democratic presidential candidate, made gains in all the New England states. Rise in Democratic strength was especially notable in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. When one probes below the surface of the gross election figures it becomes apparent that a sharp and durable realignment also occurred

date of low-income, Catholic, urban voters of recent immigrant stock. In New England, at least, the Roosevelt revolution of 1932 was in large measure an Al Smith revolution of 1928, a characterization less applicable to the remainder of the country.

The intensity and extent of electoral concern before the voting of 1928 can only be surmised, but the durability of the realignment formed at the election can be determined by simple analyses of election statistics. An illustration of the new division thrust through the electorate by the campaign of 1928 is provided by the graphs in Figure A, which show the Democratic percentages of the presidential vote from 1916 through 1952 for the city of Somerville and the town of Ashfield in Massachusetts. Somerville, adjacent to Boston, had a population in 1930 of 104,000 of which 28 percent was foreign born and 41 percent was of foreign-born or mixed parentage. Roman Catholics constituted a large proportion of its relatively low-income population. Ashfield, a farming community in western Massachusetts with a 1930 population of 860, was predominantly native born (8.6 percent foreign born), chiefly rural-farm (66 percent), and principally Protestant.

The impressiveness of the differential impact of the election of 1928 on Somerville and Ashfield may be read from the graphs in Figure A. From 1920 the Democratic percentage in Somerville ascended steeply while the Democrats in Ashfield, few in 1920, became even less numerous in 1928. Inspection of graphs also suggests that the great reshuffling of voters that occurred in 1928 was perhaps the final and decisive stage in a process that had been under way for some time. That antecedent process involved a relatively heavy support in 1924 for La Follette in those towns in which Smith was subsequently to find special favor. Hence, in Figure A, as in all the other charts, the 1924 figure is the percentage of the total accounted for by the votes of both the Democratic and Progressive candidates rather than the Democratic percentage of the two-party vote. This usage conveys a minimum impression of the size of the 1924-1928 Democratic gain but probably depicts the nature of the 1920-1928 trend.

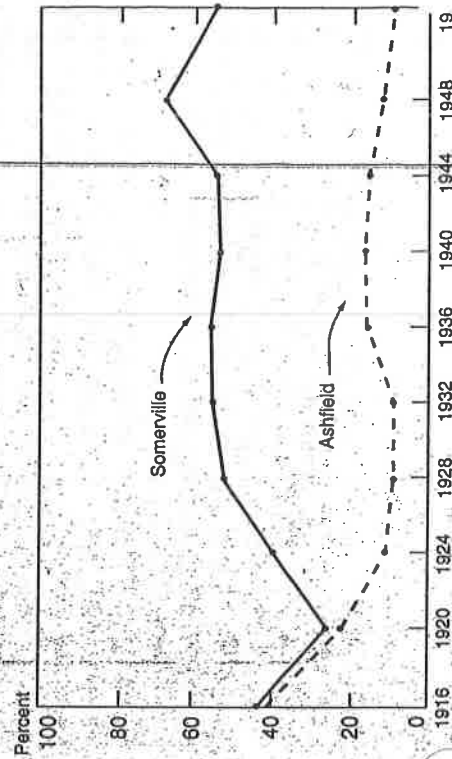


Figure A Democratic Percentages of Major-Party Presidential Vote, Somerville and Ashfield, Massachusetts, 1916-1952

For present purposes, the voting behavior of the two communities shown in Figure A after 1928 is of central relevance. The differences established between them in 1928 persisted even through 1952, although the two series fluctuated slightly in response to the particular influences of individual campaigns. The nature of the process of maintenance of the cleavage is, of course, not manifest from these data. Conceivably the impress of the events of 1928 on individual attitudes and loyalties formed partisan attachments of lasting nature. Yet it is doubtful that the new crystallization of 1928 projected itself through a quarter of a century solely from the momentum given it by such factors. More probably subsequent events operated to reinforce and to maintain the 1928 cleavage. Whatever the mechanism of its maintenance, the durability of the realignment is impressive.

Somerville and Ashfield may be regarded more or less as samples of major population groups within the electorate of Massachusetts. Since no sample survey data are available for 1928, about the only analysis feasible is inspection of election returns for geographic units contrasting in their population composition. Let it be supposed, however, that the good citizens of Somerville and Ashfield were aberrants simply unlike the remainder of the people of the Commonwealth, examination of a large number of towns and cities is in order. In the interest of both comparison and comprehensibility, a mass of data is telescoped into Figure B. The graphs in that figure compare over the period 1916-1952 the voting behavior of the 29 Massachusetts towns and cities having the sharpest Democratic increases, 1920-1928, with that of the 30 towns and cities having the most marked Democratic loss, 1920-1928. In other words, the figure averages out a great many Ashfields and Somervilles. The data of Figure B confirm the expectation that the pattern exhibited by the pair of voting units in Figure A represented only a single case of a much more general phenomenon. Yet by virtue of the coverage of the data in the figure, one gains a stronger impression of the difference in the character of the election of 1928 and the other elections recorded there. The cleavage confirmed by the 1928 returns persisted. At subsequent elections the voters shifted to and fro within the outlines of the broad division fixed in 1928.

Examination of the characteristics of the two groups of cities and towns of Figure B—those with the most marked Democratic gains, 1920-1928, and those with the widest movement in the opposite direction—reveals the expected sorts of differences. Urban, industrial, foreign-born, Catholic areas made up the bulk of the first group of towns, although an occasional rural Catholic community increased its Democratic vote markedly. The towns with a contrary movement tended to be rural, Protestant, native born. The new Democratic vote correlated quite closely with a 1930 vote on state enforcement of the national prohibition law.

Melancholy experience with the eccentricities of data, be they quantitative or otherwise, suggests the prudence of a check on the interpretation of 1928. Would the same method applied to any other election yield a similar result, i.e., the appearance of a more or less durable realignment? Perhaps there can be no doubt that the impact of the events of any election on many individuals forms lasting party loyalties; yet not often is the number so affected so great as to create sharp realignment. On the other hand, some elections are characterized by a large-scale transfer of party affection that in a short-term a different sort of phenomenon from that

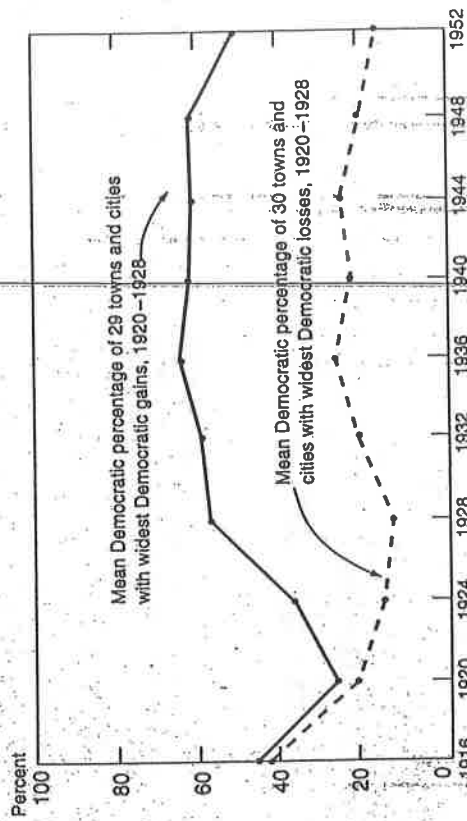


Figure B Persistence of Electoral Cleavage of 1928 in Massachusetts: Mean Democratic Percentage of Presidential Vote in Towns with Sharpest Democratic Gains, 1920-1928, and in Towns of Widest Democratic Losses, 1920-1928

which occurs in elections marked by broad and durable shifts in party strength. The difference is illustrated by the data on the election of 1932 in New Hampshire in Figure C. The voting records of the twenty-five towns with the widest Democratic gains from 1928 to 1932 are there traced from 1916 to 1952. Observe that Democratic strength in these towns shot up in 1932 but fairly quickly resumed about the same position in relation to other towns that it had occupied in 1928. It is also evident from the graph that this group of towns has on the whole been especially strongly repelled by the Democratic appeal of 1928. Probably the depression drove an appreciable number of hardened Republicans of these towns to vote for a change in 1932, but they gradually found their way back to the party of their fathers. In any case, the figure reflects a type of behavior differing markedly from that of 1928. To the extent that 1932 resembled 1928 in the recrystallization of party lines, the proportions of new Democrats did not differ significantly among the groups of towns examined. In fact, what probably happened to a considerable extent in New England was that the 1928 election broke the electorate into two new groups that would have been formed in 1932 had there been no realignment in 1928.

The Massachusetts material has served both to explain the method of analysis and to present the case of a single state. Examinations of the election of 1928 in other New England states indicate that in each a pattern prevailed similar to that of Massachusetts. The total effect of the realignment differed, of course, from state to state. In Massachusetts and Rhode Island the number of people affected by the upheaval of 1928 was sufficient to form a new majority coalition. In Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont the same sort of reshuffling of electors occurred, but the proportions affected were not sufficient to overturn the Republican combination, although the basis was laid in Maine and New Hampshire for later limited Democratic success. To underpin these remarks the materials on Connecticut, Maine, New