

Introduction

As you probably know by now, we are approaching the millennium. This dating in itself should make us alert to ongoing change in American political parties, as in the rest of our society. Moreover, we have recently witnessed actual change: the Republican takeover of Congress, the first re-election of a Democratic president since Franklin Roosevelt, even the bipartisan promise of a balanced budget.

Moreover, there's a lot of current debate about the parties themselves. Some think they are disappearing, to be replaced by the media, or individual candidates, and that the loss is not important. Others think - or hope - that the parties, while changing, are also reviving and will continue to play an important role in our democratic system. We'll be looking at this debate, and try to glimpse the future.

There are various ways to analyze political parties. The stress here is on parties as organizations which contest elections. This includes attention to their structure, nominations, campaigns, and finance. We also will be examining the ways voters react to the parties, and the way the parties act in government, particularly the effects of President Clinton's emergence as a "New Democrat" and the Republicans' 1994 "Contract with America."

The basis for class discussions and lectures will be the readings listed below, but you will also need to pay attention to current events, such as the parties' strategic moves, policy developments, and the upcoming congressional elections, as reported in The New York Times or other reliable sources. The listed reading should be done in advance of the week listed for class consideration. Most of it comes from books to be purchased (by Bibby, Maisel, Mayer, Riordan, and White and Green) or from readings I have placed on reserve at Alexander Library (identified by # in the syllabus). There also are readings from a book I've edited, *The Election of 1996*. You can probably purchase a used copy, and two copies will be on reserve. If you buy a new copy, I'll be glad to refund my 40-cent royalty.

The 1998 campaign also offers an opportunity to learn more about individual candidates, issues, and the politics of particular states. The class will divide itself into about ten groups, each with 6-8 students. Each group will examine the parties and 1998 Senatorial election in a particular state., or a current policy controversy, or a potential presidential candidate. The group is to decide how to divide its work, and how to prepare its written report, due March 23. The best reports will be presented orally the following week. My only rule is that each member of the group must participate, and each person gets the same grade. You are expected to use your computer skills to include materials from the Internet in your research.

As to basic details. My office is at the Eagleton Institute, Douglass, (campus phone: 2-9384/x222; email: gpomper@rci). I will be there on Monday and Thursday afternoons, at least, and will be glad to make appointments at other times. There will be a midterm exam on March 9th or 12th, leaving you free time during the Spring break, and a final examination. Term grades will reflect participation in class, as well as the group project and performance on exams. I hope you share my hope for a good political semester.

Topics and Readings

Introduction (Jan. 22)

1. The Character of American Parties (Jan. 26 - 29)

- J. Bibby, *Politics, Parties and Elections in America*, chaps. 1, 3
- #E.E. Schattschneider, "In Defense of Political Parties"
- #J. Aldrich, *Why Parties?*, chap. 1

2. Historical Development (Feb. 2 - 5)

- Bibby, chap. 2
- L.S. Maisel, *The Parties Respond*, chap. 1
- #G. Pomper, *The Election of 1996*, Introduction (Burnham)
- W. Mayer, *The Divided Democrats*, pp. 91-102

3. Party Organization and the Urban Machine (Feb. 9 - 12)

- W.L. Riordan, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*
read at least pp. vii-xxvi, 3-20, 25-36, 57-83, 90-98
- Bibby, chaps. 4, 5
- Maisel, chaps. 2, 3

4. Money in Politics (Feb. 16 - 19)

- Bibby, pp. 204-222 ("Financing Elections")
- Maisel, chap. 10
- #Pomper,, chap. 4 (Corrado)

5. Presidential Nominations (Feb. 23 - 26)

- Bibby, chap. 6
- Maisel, chaps. 4, 8
- Pomper, chap. 1 (Mayer)
- Mayer, chaps. 2, 3

6. Campaigns and the Mass Media (March 2 - 5)

- Bibby, chap. 7
- Maisel, chap. 11
- Pomper, chap. 2 (Just)
- #T. Patterson, *Out of Order*, chap. 1
- #A. Gelman & G. King, "Party Competition and Media Messages"
American Party Politics- p. 3

7. Parties and Ideas (March 9 -12)

- J. White and J. Green, *The Politics of Ideas*, chaps. 1, 4, 5, 7

Mid-Term Examination

8. Parties and Government (March 23 - 26)

- Bibby, chap. 9
- Maisel, chaps. 12, 13

#D. King, "The Polarization of American Parties and Mistrust of Government"

9. Student Reports (March 30-April 2)
10. Parties, Elections, and Voters (April 6-9)
 - Bibby, chap. 8
 - Maisel, chaps. 5, 6
 - Mayer, chap. 4, pp. 102-122, chap. 6
11. The Election of 1996 (April 13 - 16)
 - Maisel, chaps. 9, 15
 - Pomper, chaps. 3, 5, 6 (Keeter, Pomper, Hershey)
12. Party Realignment (April 20 - 23)
 - #W.D. Burnham, "Realignment Lives"
 - #E. Ladd, *The End of Realignment?*, chap. 2
13. Reform of American Parties (April 27 - 30)
 - White and Green, chaps. 2, 3, 6
 - #L. Sabato, *The Party's Just Begun*, " chaps. 6-7
 - Mayer, chap. 7
14. Review: Past and Future Trends (May 4)
 - Maisel, chap. 16
 - Pomper, Conclusion (McWilliams)