CHAPTER 8 - POLITICAL PARTIES

UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are essential components of democratic government. Ideally, candidates in a democracy should say what they mean to do if elected and be able to carry out what they promised once they are elected. Critics of the American party system complain that this is all too often not the case, and have called for a more responsible party system. The responsible party model calls for each party to present distinct, comprehensive programs; carry out its program if elected; implement its programs if it is the majority party or state what it would do if it were in power; and accept responsibility for the performance of the government. American parties do not meet the criteria of the responsible party model. They are too decentralized to take a single national position and then enforce it; parties do not have control over those who run under their labels; and there is no mechanism for a party to discipline officeholders and ensure cohesion in policymaking.

There are also supporters of America’s two-party system who criticize the responsible party model. They argue that the complexity and diversity of American society needs a different form of representation, and that local differences need an outlet for expression. Advocates of America’s decentralized parties consider them appropriate for the type of limited government the founders sought to create and most Americans wish to maintain.

Because no single party in the United States can ever be said to have firm control over the government, the hard choices necessary to limit the growth of government are rarely addressed. Divided government has meant that neither party is really in charge, and each tries to blame the other for failures and limitations of government.

Parties are no longer the main source of political information. More and more political communication is through the mass media rather than face-to-face. However, there are indications that the parties are beginning to adapt to the high-tech age. State and national party organizations have become more visible and active. Although more people than ever before call themselves independent and split their tickets, the majority still identify with a party (and this percentage seems to have stabilized).
CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION
   A. Party competition is the battle between Democrats and Republicans for control of public office.
   B. Without this competition there would be no choice, and without choice there would be no democracy.

II. THE MEANING OF PARTY
   A. Political parties endorse candidates for public office and try to win elections.
   B. Party leaders often disagree about policy, and between elections the parties are nearly invisible.
   C. Political scientists often view parties as “three-headed political giants”—the party-in-the-electorate, the party as an organization, and the party-in-government.
      1. The party-in-the-electorate are individuals who perceive themselves as party members; many voters have a party identification that guides and influences their votes. Unlike many European political parties, American parties do not require dues or membership cards to distinguish members from nonmembers. To be a member of a party, one needs only to claim to be a member.
      2. The party as an organization has a national office, a full-time staff, rules and bylaws, and budgets. Party activists keep the party running between elections and make its rules. Although American parties are loosely organized at the national, state, and local levels, the party organization pursues electoral victory.
      3. The party-in-government consists of elected officials who call themselves members of the party (such as president and Congress). These leaders do not always agree on policy, but they are the main spokespersons of the party.
   D. Tasks of the parties.
      1. In a large democracy, linkage institutions translate inputs from the public into outputs from the policymakers.
      2. Tasks performed by parties as linkage institutions:
         a. Parties pick policymakers; a nomination is the party’s endorsement of a candidate.
         b. Parties run campaigns; although parties coordinate the campaigns, recent technology has made it easier for candidates to campaign on their own.
         c. Parties give cues to voters; even though party ties have weakened, most voters have a party image of each party; and many voters still rely on a party to give them cues for voting.
         d. Parties articulate policies; within the electorate and in the government, each political party advocates specific policy alternatives.
         e. Parties coordinate policymaking; each officeholder is also a member of a party, and the first place they look for support is to their fellow partisans.
   E. Parties, voters, and policy: The Downs model.
      1. Anthony Downs has provided a working model of the relationship among citizens, parties, and policy, employing a rational-choice perspective.
2. **Rational-choice theory** assumes that parties and political actors have goals (such as winning elections) that are more important to the party than ideology.
   a. If both parties and voters are rational, both will try to select the best way to achieve their goals.
   b. In order to win an office, the wise party pursues policies that have broad public appeal.
   c. The majority of the American electorate are in the middle, and successful parties in the U.S. rarely stray far from the midpoint of public opinion.
   d. Although we frequently hear criticism that there is not much difference between the Democrats and Republicans, the two parties have little choice (given the nature of the American political market).
   e. From a rational-choice perspective, one should expect the parties to differentiate themselves to some extent. The two parties have to forge different identities in order to build voter loyalty.

**III. THE PARTY-IN-THE-ELECTORATE**

**A.** The *party-in-the-electorate* consists largely of symbolic images.
1. There is no formal “membership” in American parties.
2. For most people, the party is a psychological label.

**B.** Party images help shape people’s *party identification*—the *self-proclaimed preference* for one of the parties.
1. The clearest trend in party identification over the last four decades has been the decline of both parties and the resultant upsurge of Independents (mostly at the expense of the Democrats).
2. Virtually every major social group (except African-American voters) has moved toward a position of increased independence.
3. By contrast, African Americans have moved even more solidly into the Democratic party (currently only five percent of African Americans identify themselves as Republicans).

**C.** Party identification remains strongly linked to the voter’s choice, but *ticket-splitting* (voting with one party for one office and another for other offices) is near an all-time high.
1. Not only are there more Independents now, but those who still identify with a party are no longer as loyal in the voting booth as they once were.
2. *Divided government* has frequently been the result (often with Republican control of the White House and Democratic control of Congress).

**IV. THE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS: FROM THE GRASS ROOTS TO WASHINGTON**

**A.** American political parties are *decentralized and fragmented.*
1. Unlike many European parties, formal party organizations in America have little power to enforce their decisions by offering rewards (like campaign funds and appointments) to officeholders who follow the party line and punishing those who do not.
2. Candidates in the United States can get elected on their own, and the party organization is relegated to a relatively limited role.
B. Local parties: the dying urban machines.
   1. Urban party organizations are no longer very active.
   2. At one time, the urban political party was the basis of political party
      organization in America.
      a. From the late nineteenth century through the New Deal of the 1930s,
         scores of cities were dominated by party machines (a party
         organization that depends on material inducements such as patronage,
         in which jobs were awarded for political reasons rather than for merit or
         competence).
C. The 50 state party systems.
   1. American national parties are a loose aggregation of state parties, which in
      turn are a fluid association of individuals, groups, and local organizations.
   2. There are 50 state party systems, no two exactly alike. Parties in some
      states (such as Pennsylvania) are well organized, have sizable staffs, and
      spend a lot of money, while parties in other states (such as California) are
      very weak.
   3. The states are allowed great discretion in the regulation of party
      activities, and how they choose to organize elections influences the strength
      of the parties profoundly. States determine how easy it is to participate in
      nomination contests by their adoption of closed primaries, open
      primaries, or blanket primaries.
D. The national party organizations.
   1. The national convention of each party meets every four years to write the
      party’s platform and nominate its candidates for president and vice president.
   2. The national committee, composed of representatives from the states
      and territories, keeps the party operating between conventions.
   3. Day-to-day activities of the national party are the responsibility of the
      national chairperson.

V. THE PARTY-IN-GOVERNMENT: PROMISES AND POLICY
A. Party control does matter because each party and the elected officials who
   represent it generally try to turn campaign promises into action.
B. Since candidates are now much less dependent upon parties to get nominated and
   elected, party control has weakened. In addition, presidents are now less likely to
   play the role of party leader, and members of Congress are less amenable to
   being led.
C. Voters and coalitions of voters are attracted to different parties largely (though not
   entirely) by their performance and policies.
D. The parties have done a fairly good job over the years of translating their platform
   promises into public policy—the impression that politicians and parties never
   produce policy out of promises is largely erroneous.

VI. PARTY ERAS IN AMERICAN HISTORY
A. In contrast to the United States, most democratic nations have more than two
   parties represented in their national legislature.
B. Throughout American history, one party has been the dominant majority party for
   long periods of time (referred to as party eras).
   1. Party eras were punctuated by critical elections, in which new issues
      appeared that divided the electorate and party coalitions underwent
      realignment.
2. A party realignment (a rare event) is typically associated with a major crisis or trauma in the nation’s history (such as the Civil War and the Great Depression, both of which led to realignments).

3. A new coalition (a set of individuals or groups supporting the party) is formed for each party, and the coalition endures for many years.

4. A critical election period may require more than one election before change is apparent, but the party system will be transformed in such a period.

C. 1796–1824: The first party system.
   1. Alexander Hamilton was probably the person most instrumental in establishing the first party system.
   2. Hamilton needed congressional support for policies he favored (particularly a national bank), and the foundation of the Federalist party came from his politicking and coalition building.
   3. The Federalists were America’s shortest-lived major party: they were poorly organized, they faded after John Adams was defeated in his reelection bid of 1800, and they no longer even had a candidate for president after 1820.
   4. The Democratic-Republicans (also known as Jeffersonians) replaced the Federalists. The Democratic-Republican coalition was derived from agrarian interests—which made the party popular in the rural South—but the coalition was torn apart by factionalism.

D. 1828–1856: Jackson and the Democrats versus the Whigs.
   1. General Andrew Jackson founded the modern American political party when he forged a new coalition in 1828.
   2. Jackson was originally a Democratic-Republican, but soon after his election his party became known simply as the Democratic party (which continues to this day).
   3. Jackson’s successor, Martin Van Buren, was a realist who argued that a governing party needed a loyal opposition to represent other parts of society. This opposition was provided by the Whigs, but the Whig party was only able to win the presidency when it nominated popular military heroes such as William Henry Harrison (1840) and Zachary Taylor (1848).
   4. The Whigs had two distinct wings—northern industrialists and southern planters—who were brought together more by the Democratic policies they opposed than by issues on which they agreed.

   1. The issue of slavery dominated American politics and split both the Whigs and the Democrats in the 1850s.
   2. The Republican party rose in the late 1850s as the antislavery party.
   3. The Republicans forged a coalition out of the remnants of several minor parties and elected Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860.
   4. The Civil War brought a party realignment, and the Republican party was in ascendancy for more than 60 years (though the Democrats controlled the South).
   5. The election of 1896 was a watershed during this era—a period when party coalitions shifted and the Republicans were entrenched for another generation.
   6. The Republicans continued as the nation’s majority party until the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression.
   1. President Herbert Hoover’s handling of the Great Depression was disastrous for the Republicans. He took the position that “economic depression cannot be cured by legislative action.”
   2. Franklin D. Roosevelt promised a New Deal and easily defeated Hoover in 1932.
   3. Congress passed scores of Roosevelt’s anti-Depression measures during his first 100 days in office.
   4. Party realignment began in earnest after the Roosevelt administration got the country moving again, and Roosevelt forged the New Deal coalition from such diverse groups as union members, southerners, intellectuals, liberals, the poor, and African Americans.

G. 1968–present: The era of divided government.
   1. The New Deal coalition has weakened, especially due to the erosion of the former “Solid [Democratic] South,” as conservative Democrats became increasingly unsatisfied with their national party. Today the south is now strongly Republican, whereas there are fewer Republicans in the northeast and Pacific coast.
   2. An unprecedented period of divided government (when the executive and legislative branches are controlled by different parties) has existed since 1968.
   3. It is likely that divided party government will be a regular phenomenon at both the federal and state levels.

H. Party dealignment means that people are gradually moving away from both political parties.
   1. Many political scientists believe that the recent pattern of divided government means that the party system has dealigned rather than realigned.
   2. Many scholars fear that the parties are becoming useless and ineffective through the pattern of divided government and realignment.
   3. Conversely, there are also some signs of party renewal, such as the increase in the regular Washington staff of the national party organizations.

VII. THIRD PARTIES: THEIR IMPACT ON AMERICAN POLITICS

A. There are three basic varieties of third parties.
   1. Parties that promote certain causes—either a controversial single issue such as prohibition of alcoholic beverages or an extreme ideological position such as socialism or libertarianism.
   2. Splinter parties that are offshoots of a major party—such as Teddy Roosevelt’s Progressives (1912), Strom Thurmond’s States’ Righters (1948), and George Wallace’s American Independents (1968).
   3. Parties that are an extension of a popular individual with presidential aspirations—including John Anderson (1980) and Ross Perot (1992 and 1996).

B. Importance of third parties.
   1. Third parties have controlled enough votes in one-third of the last 36 presidential elections to have decisively tipped the electoral college vote. For example, if Ralph Nader did not run in 2000, exit polls show quite conclusively that Al Gore would have been elected.
2. They have brought new groups into the electorate and have served as "safety valves" for popular discontent.
3. They have brought new issues to the political agenda.

C. Consequences of the two-party system.
1. The most obvious consequence of two-party governance is the moderation of political conflict.
   a. With just two parties, both will cling to a centrist position to maximize their appeal to voters.
   b. The result is often political ambiguity—parties will not want to risk taking a strong stand on a controversial policy if doing so will only antagonize many voters (as with Goldwater in 1964 and McGovern in 1972).
2. One of the major reasons the United States has only two parties represented in government is structural—America has a winner-take-all system.
   a. In this system, the party that receives a plurality (more votes than anyone else, even though it may be less than a majority) is declared the winner; the other parties get nothing.
   b. This system discourages small parties, because they never get a foothold in government upon which to build for the future.
3. In a system that uses proportional representation (used in most European countries), legislative seats are allocated roughly according to each party's percentage of the nationwide vote.
   a. In most countries, parties must achieve a certain small percentage of votes to be awarded any seats in the legislature; this generally excludes extremist parties.
   b. A coalition government is created when two or more parties combine their numbers to form a majority of seats in a national legislature. This form of government is quite common in the multiparty systems of Europe.

VIII. UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL PARTIES
A. Political parties are considered essential elements of democratic government.
B. Democracy and responsible party government.
   1. Ideally, in a democracy candidates should say what they mean to do if elected and be able to do what they promised once they are elected.
   2. Critics of the American party system complain that this is all too often not the case, and have called for a more disciplined, responsible party system.
      a. The responsible party model calls for each party to present distinct, comprehensive programs; carry out its program if elected; implement its programs if it is the majority party or state what it would do if it were in power; and accept responsibility for the performance of the government.
      b. Under this model, a party's officeholders would have firm control of the government, and they would be collectively (rather than individually) responsible for their actions.
   3. American parties do not meet the criteria of the responsible party model.
      a. They are too decentralized to take a single national position and then enforce it.
b. Because virtually anyone can vote in party primaries, parties do not have control over those who run under their labels.

c. In America’s loosely organized party system, there is no mechanism for a party to discipline officeholders and ensure cohesion in policymaking.

4. There are supporters of America’s two-party system who criticize the responsible party model.
   a. They argue that the complexity and diversity of American society needs a different form of representation; local differences need an outlet for expression.
   b. America’s decentralized parties are appropriate for the type of limited government the founders sought to create and most Americans wish to maintain.

C. Individualism and gridlock.
   1. The Founding Fathers wanted to preserve individual freedom of action by elected officials.
      a. With America’s weak party system, this is certainly the case.
   2. Weak parties make it easier for politicians to avoid tough decisions; this creates gridlock.

D. American political parties and the scope of government.
   1. Weak parties limit the scope of government in America because the president cannot command party discipline to pass important legislation, such as healthcare.
   2. Because no single party can ever be said to have firm control over government, the hard choices necessary to cut back on existing government spending are rarely addressed.
   3. Divided government has meant that neither party is really in charge, and each points the finger at the other.

E. Is the party over?
   1. Parties are no longer the main source of political information.
      a. More and more political communication is not face-to-face but rather through the mass media.
      b. The technology of campaigning—television, polls, computers, political consultants, media specialists, and the like—can be bought by candidates for themselves, and they therefore do not need to be dependent on the party.
      c. With the advent of television, voters no longer need the party to find out what the candidates are like and what they stand for.
      d. The power of interest groups has grown enormously in recent years; they pioneered much of the technology of modern politics, including mass mailings and sophisticated fund-raising.
   2. There are indications that the parties are beginning to adapt to the high-tech age.
      a. State and national party organizations have become more visible and active.
      b. Although more people than ever before call themselves Independent and split their tickets, the majority still identify with a party (and this percentage seems to have stabilized).
KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Blanket primaries: nomination contests where voters are presented with a list of the candidates from all the parties and allows them to pick candidates from all parties.

Coalition: a set of individuals and groups supporting a political party.

Coalition governments: governments where smaller parties combine with larger parties to control half of the seats in the legislature.

Closed primaries: nomination contests where only people who have registered in advance with the party can vote.

Critical election: an election where each party’s coalition of support begins to break up and a new coalition of forces is formed for each party.

Linkage institutions: institutions such as parties, elections, interest groups, and the media translate inputs from the public into outputs from policymakers.

National chairperson: the person responsible for taking care of the day-to-day activities and daily duties of the party.

National committee: a coalition of representatives from the states and territories charged with maintaining the party between elections.

National convention: the supreme power within each party, which meets every four years, writes the party platform, and nominates candidates for president and vice president.

New Deal coalition: the new coalition of forces (urban, unions, Catholics, Jews, the poor, southerners, African Americans, and intellectuals) in the Democratic party that was forged as a result of national economic crisis associated with the Great Depression.

Open primaries: nomination contests where voters can decide on election day whether they want to participate in the Democratic or Republican contest.

Party competition: the battle between the two dominant parties in the American system.

Party dealignment: when voters move away from both parties.

Party eras: periods during which there has been a dominant majority party for long periods of time.

Party identification: the self-proclaimed preference for one or the other party.

Party image: what voters know or think they know about what each party stands for.

Party machine: a particular kind of party organization that depends on both specific and material inducements for rewarding loyal party members.

Party realignment: process whereby the major political parties form new support coalitions that endure for a long period.

Patronage: one of the key inducements used by machines whereby jobs are given for political reasons rather than for merit or competence alone.

Political party: a team of men and women seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election.

Proportional representation: an electoral system where legislative seats are allocated on the basis of each party’s percentage of the national vote.

Rational-choice theory: a theory that seeks to explain political processes and outcomes as consequences of purposive behavior, where political actors are assumed to have goals and who pursue those goals rationally.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying Chapter 8, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the meaning and functions of a political party.
2. Discuss the nature of the party-in-the-electorate, party organizations, and the party-in-government.
3. Describe the party eras in American history and how parties realign and dealign.
4. Evaluate the two-party system, its consequences, and the place of third parties in the system.
5. Identify the challenges facing the American political parties and explain their relationship to American democracy and the scope of government.

The following exercises will help you meet these objectives:

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

1. Define the term "political party."
2. Explain the three heads of the political party as a "three-headed political giant."
   1.
   2.
   3.
3. What are the five tasks political parties should perform if they are to serve as effective linkage institutions?
   1.
Objective 2: Discuss the nature of the party-in-the-electorate, party organizations, and the party-in-government.

1. What has been the most prominent trend in party identification in recent years?

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. List four elections which might be considered "critical" or "realigning" and explain why.
   1.
2. Complete the following table on party eras.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Era</th>
<th>Major Party</th>
<th>Major Party Coalition</th>
<th>Minor Party</th>
<th>Minor Party Coalition</th>
<th>Prominent President(s)</th>
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<td>1796-1824</td>
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3. List the six presidents since 1968 and complete the following table on divided government.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>President and Party Affiliation</th>
<th>Number Of Years With Republican Congress</th>
<th>Number Of Years With Democratic Congress</th>
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4. What is meant by "party neutrality"?

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

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

2. What are two ways in which third parties can have an impact on American politics?
   1.
   2.
3. What is the most important consequence of two-party governance in the United States?

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

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

2. How does the American party system affect the scope of government?

3. What is the key problem of the American political parties today?
Compare and contrast:

political party and linkage institutions

party identification and ticket-splitting

party machines and patronage

closed primaries, open primaries, and blanket primaries

national convention, national committee, and national chairperson

party eras and critical election

party realignment and party dealignment

party realignment and New Deal Coalition

winner-take-all system and proportional representation

Name that term:

1. The battle between the parties for the control of public offices.
2. The perception of what the Republicans and Democrats stand for.

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

4. Voting with one party for one office and another for other offices.

5. One of the key inducements used by political machines.

6. A set of individuals and groups who support a political party.

7. Political party eras are punctuated by these.

8. Often a consequence of proportional representation; many European governments are ruled by these.

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

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

Check ☑ the correct answer:

1. The framers of the U.S. Constitution approved of the formation of political parties.
   ☑ True
   ☐ False

2. Which of the following statements regarding political parties is FALSE?
   ☐ a. The main goal of political parties is to try to win elections.
   ☐ b. Party teams are well disciplined and single-minded.
   ☐ c. Party leaders often disagree about policy.
   ☐ d. Between elections the parties seem to all but disappear.
3. The largest component of the political party is the
   □ a. party-in-the-electorate.
   □ b. party as an organization.
   □ c. party-in-government.
   □ d. local party machine.

4. The people who keep the party running between elections and make its rules are members of the
   □ a. party-in-the-electorate.
   □ b. party as an organization.
   □ c. party-in-government.
   □ d. local party machine.

5. Which of the following is NOT one of the four key linkage institutions?
   □ a. parties
   □ b. elections
   □ c. interest groups
   □ d. policymakers

6. According to Kay Lawson, the key tasks that parties perform, or should perform, include
   □ a. articulating policies.
   □ b. picking policymakers.
   □ c. running campaigns.
   □ d. all of the above

7. The concept of party image would be most important for parties to
   □ a. pick policymakers.
   □ b. run campaigns.
   □ c. give cues to voters.
   □ d. articulate party policies.

8. According to Anthony Downs, political parties and voters are both irrational.
   □ True
   □ False

9. According to the Downsian model, the most successful political parties would be
   □ a. extremely conservative.
   □ b. liberal.
   □ c. moderate.
   □ d. slightly conservative.
10. More than half of the population currently feels that important differences exist between the parties.
   □ True
   □ False

11. Party identification
   □ a. requires formal membership with one of the parties.
   □ b. is strongest for young Americans.
   □ c. has declined while there has been an upsurge of people identifying as independents.
   □ d. can always predict voting behavior.

12. In America, ticket-splitting is
   □ a. rare.
   □ b. illegal.
   □ c. near an all-time high.
   □ d. a sign of party renewal.

13. Power in the American political parties is highly centralized.
   □ True
   □ False

14. Urban political machines depended on
   □ a. specific inducements.
   □ b. material inducements.
   □ c. patronage.
   □ d. all of the above

15. The national parties are actually a loose aggregation of state parties.
   □ True
   □ False

16. The 50 state party systems are all well organized, have sizable staffs, and spend a lot of money.
   □ True
   □ False

17. Primaries that allow voters to decide on election day whether they want to participate in the Democratic or Republican contests are called
   □ a. closed primaries.
   □ b. open primaries.
   □ c. blanket primaries.
   □ d. political primaries.
18. The supreme power within each of the parties is the
   □ a. national chairperson.
   □ b. national convention.
   □ c. local party organization.
   □ d. president.

19. The day-to-day activities of the national party are the responsibility of the
   □ a. president.
   □ b. national committee.
   □ c. national chairperson.
   □ d. national convention.

20. (bonus) Which of the following presidents failed to keep his campaign promise to balance the budget?
   □ a. Lyndon Johnson
   □ b. Richard Nixon
   □ c. Jimmy Carter
   □ d. Ronald Reagan

21. Most promises by presidential candidates are kept once they take office.
   □ True
   □ False

22. Gerald Pomper found that party platforms
   □ a. do not predict party performance.
   □ b. are ignored after elections.
   □ c. consist of promises that are kept more often than not.
   □ d. are very similar for the two major parties.

23. Most democratic nations have a
   □ a. one-party system.
   □ b. two-party system.
   □ c. multi-party system.
   □ d. regional party system.

24. During party eras, one party is the dominant majority party for long periods of time.
   □ True
   □ False

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25. Party eras are punctuated by
☐ a. critical elections.
☐ b. party reforms.
☐ c. national party conventions.
☐ d. political coalitions.

26. Party realignment occurs with great frequency in American party politics.
☐ True
☐ False

27. The coalition behind the Democratic-Republican Party included
☐ a. Federalists.
☐ b. capitalists.
☐ c. farmers.
☐ d. silver interests.

28. More than anyone else, the person who founded the modern American political party was
☐ a. Alexander Hamilton.
☐ b. Andrew Jackson.
☐ c. Martin Van Buren.
☐ d. Abraham Lincoln.

29. Which of the following was NOT a part of the Republican era from 1860 to 1928?
☐ a. the battle to outlaw slavery
☐ b. the fight to establish the gold standard
☐ c. a shifting of party coalitions
☐ d. the New Deal

30. The New Deal was a political response to the
☐ a. Great Depression.
☐ b. Civil War.
☐ c. rise of agrarian interests.
☐ d. resurgence of capitalism.

31. Which of the following groups were NOT associated with the New Deal coalition?
☐ a. Catholics and Jews
☐ b. urban working classes
☐ c. Republicans
☐ d. intellectuals
32. Lyndon Johnson's programs to help the poor, dispossessed, and minorities are known as the
   □ a. New Deal.
   □ b. Fair Deal.
   □ c. New Frontier.
   □ d. Great Society.

33. The Democratic Party was torn apart in 1968 by
   □ b. Johnson's Vietnam War policies.
   □ c. economic depression.
   □ d. the Watergate scandal.

34. The 1968 election was important because
   □ a. it solidified Democratic control of the South.
   □ b. it was the first time a newly elected president did not have his party in control of both houses of Congress.
   □ c. it was the first time a third party won electoral college votes.
   □ d. none of the above

35. Most people say they vote for the person rather than the party.
   □ True
   □ False

36. The recent party dealignment has been characterized by a
   □ a. growing party neutrality.
   □ b. dramatic decline in voter participation.
   □ c. decline in party organization.
   □ d. growth in the strength of third parties.

37. Throughout American history, third parties have
   □ a. developed as offshoots of a major party.
   □ b. promoted specific causes.
   □ c. developed as an extension of a popular presidential aspirant.
   □ d. all of the above

38. Which of the following consequences is LEAST associated with third parties in America?
   □ a. serving as safety valves for popular discontent
   □ b. bringing new groups into the electorate
   □ c. consistent victories in federal offices
   □ d. "sending a message" to Washington
39. Consequences of the two-party system include
☐ a. increased political conflict.
☐ b. moderation of conflict and policy ambiguity.
☐ c. more distinct policy choices.
☐ d. representation of extreme ideologies.

40. The founding of the world's first party system in the United States was seen as a risky adventure in the uncharted waters of democracy.
☐ True
☐ False

41. The system in which whoever gets the most votes wins the election is called the
☐ a. winner-take-all system.
☐ b. proportional representation system.
☐ c. coalition system.
☐ d. multi-party system.

42. In a system that employs proportional representation,
☐ a. whoever gets the most votes wins the election.
☐ b. parties are awarded legislative seats in proportion to their votes.
☐ c. every party gets represented in the legislature.
☐ d. there is very little difference between the political parties.

43. According to the responsible party model, which of the following is NOT one of the functions of the parties?
☐ a. They should present distinct, comprehensive programs.
☐ b. They should implement their programs once in office.
☐ c. They should create a fragmented decisional system.
☐ d. They should accept responsibility for the performance of government.

44. (bonus) The 1991 Republican nominee for Governor of Louisiana who was denounced by Republican President George H.W. Bush was
☐ a. George Wallace.
☐ b. David Duke.
☐ c. Ross Perot.
☐ d. David Mayhew.
45. Which of the following statements is FALSE?

☐ a. American parties are too decentralized to take a single national position and then enforce it.

☐ b. Party discipline in America has resulted in members of Congress voting with their party over 90 percent of the time.

☐ c. Most candidates are self-selected, gaining their nomination by their own efforts and not the party's.

☐ d. Parties do not have control over those who run under their labels.

46. The lack of disciplined and cohesive parties in America explains much of why the scope of governmental activity is less in the United States compared to other established democracies.

☐ True

☐ False

47. Which of the following is NOT one of the contemporary rivals of the political parties?

☐ a. the media

☐ b. urban machines

☐ c. interest groups

☐ d. campaign technology

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of a political party? What functions do parties in America perform? How well do you think they perform them, especially in comparison to other linkage institutions?

2. What is the Downsian model of party government? What are its limitations as a normative model for the American party system?

3. How has party identification changed over the years and what affect has it had on elections?

4. Describe the organization of the American political parties. How do party politics at the local, state, and national levels differ? Which level is most important and why?

5. How did the American two-party system evolve? How were coalitions important to this evolution? Include in your answer a discussion of party eras and critical elections.
6. What are the political and policy consequences of having a two-party system? How have third parties made a difference?

7. What is the responsible party model and what are its consequences for democracy?

8. In what ways have the American political parties declined? What are the principal rivals of the political parties? Speculate on the future of political parties in America.