Chapter 9
Political Parties

In This Chapter
- Why political parties are important in a democracy
- How American political parties differ from parties elsewhere
- Why we have a two-party system
- How our party system has changed over the years
- What role third parties play
- How the Republican and Democratic parties differ
“This was not a good decision for the parties.”1 Bob Bauer, a Democratic campaign finance lawyer, was responding to the 2003 Supreme Court decision upholding the most important provisions of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002—commonly known as McCain-Feingold, after the two senators who had first introduced the reform legislation. Other party professionals, both Democrats and Republicans, expressed concern as well, primarily because the law banned soft-money contributions to national party organizations, and empowered nonparty organizations to play a larger role in campaigns. (see Table 7.1 for details).

Until 2002, Republican and Democratic national party organizations had it good, enjoying the fact that “the money kept rolling in,” to quote the well-known song from the musical Evita. Although previous campaign finance laws regulated contributions to presidential and congressional campaigns by individuals and PACs, party professionals had discovered a huge loophole through which the Democratic and Republican parties could collect unlimited amounts of soft money to support “party-building” activities. And collect they did. From 1995 to 2002, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Workers, for example, gave more than $16 million to the Democratic Party; Philip Morris Tobacco gave almost $9 million to the Republican Party during the same time period, while the American Financial Group added another $6 million.

The parties used the influx of unregulated soft money to build state-of-the-art campaign machines to help party candidates. Both of the national party organizations built shiny new office buildings in Washington, D.C. Out of these buildings come a range of campaign services for party candidates. In-house TV and radio studios provide attack ads aimed against the opposing party and its candidates, tailored to the particular district or state in which the ads will be used. Other ads extol the sponsoring party and its achievements. Direct mail campaigns are mounted to disseminate information and party positions on the issues and to make appeals for campaign contributions. News releases are prepared for the media, as are campaign-oriented sound and video bites to be used as news clips on local radio and television. Each of the parties also produces training courses for potential candidates, complete with “how-to” manuals and videos. Each of the two parties has a Website where people can access information about the party, get news about the nefarious behavior of the opposition, and make monetary contributions to the party and party candidates.

To carry out these activities, both the Republican and Democratic National Committees steadily increased the number of employees in their national offices, especially in the areas of finance, advertising, information technology, campaign planning, and video specialist and support personnel, and they expanded their budgets to carry out an ever-broader range of campaign activities for party candidates. Each of the national committees became a highly professionalized campaign organization, filled with highly skilled people able to provide party candidates with what they needed to wage first-rate electoral campaigns.

The ban on soft money imposed by McCain-Feingold will hurt the party organizations; less money will pour into party coffers than in the past. To be sure, they will hardly go broke;
the new law actually allows larger hard- or “regulated”—money contributions to the parties than in the past—$25,000 per year from individuals, for example, compared with $20,000. But the days of unlimited contributions to parties is gone. So, where will unregulated political money go? According to most observers, the beneficiaries of the new law will be private, not-for-profit organizations, with no formal affiliation with the political parties, that espouse a cause or ideology or partisan agenda. The new law imposes no restrictions on the size of the contributions these organizations—called “527 committees” after the section of the Tax Code that created them—can accept from individuals, other private organizations, labor unions, or corporations. As Senator Mitch McConnell (R–KY) put it, “Soft money has not gone; it has just changed its address.”

The upshot is that the national party organizations will have to compete in the business of financing and organizing campaigns with powerful new groups such as “America Coming Together,” funded by large contributions from billionaire George Soros committed to the defeat of George W. Bush and congressional Republicans in the 2004 elections. Or, they will have to compete with traditional interest groups such as the National Rifle Association, whose executive vice president Wayne LaPierre announced that his organization would devote more energies to increasing the size of its PAC treasure chest and finding new ways to use “unregulated” contributions to get its message to voters, perhaps even buying a television or radio station or two.

This new competition from nonparty organizations comes at an interesting time in the evolution of the parties’ campaign organizations. During the 1990s, the Republican and Democratic parties became slick campaign machines, lending ever-more sophisticated advertising and marketing help to local, state, and national party candidates in election contests. As they became more proficient in these tasks, oddly enough, public regard for the parties continued to decline: fewer Americans now identify with the parties than in the past (see Chapter 5); turnout for national elections is at an all-time low; vital grassroots party organizations have withered and disappeared in many areas as party leaders turned their attention and resources to feeding the campaign party machines; fewer people today than in the past volunteer to work in candidate campaigns; and regard for both parties has declined, as has confidence in the ability of either one to solve pressing national problems.

The Republican and Democratic parties face a major dilemma, then. Having abandoned their traditional role as community-based organizations with close links to voters in favor of a new role as campaign service organizations for candidates—and perhaps losing some of their legitimacy with voters and potential voters in the process—they now must face competition from new nonparty organizations (with very deep pockets) that will play a larger and larger role in election campaigns. Although these nonparty organizations often are created by people who say they are committed to mobilize voters and press party ideas, there is no guarantee that party professionals and leaders can keep them entirely under control. These changes may have important implications for how well political parties function as a tool of democracy in the United States. We will examine these issues in this chapter, as well as in the next chapter on elections and political participation.

Thinking Critically About This Chapter

This chapter is about American political parties, how they evolved, what they do, and how their actions affect the quality of democracy in the United States.

Using the Framework  You will see in this chapter how parties work as political linkage institutions connecting the public with government leaders and institutions. You will see, as well, how structural changes in the American economy and society have affected how our political parties function.

Using the Democracy Standard  You will see in this chapter that political parties, at least in theory, are one of the most important instruments for making popular sovereignty and majority rule a reality in a representative democracy, particularly in a system of checks-and-balances and separated powers such as our own. Evaluating how well our parties carry out these democratic responsibilities is one of the main themes of this chapter.
The Role of Political Parties in a Democracy

Political parties are organizations that try to win control of government by electing people to public office who carry the party label. In representative democracies, parties are the principal organizations that recruit candidates for public office, run their candidates against the candidates of other political parties in competitive elections, and try to organize and coordinate the activities of government officials under party banners and programs.

Many political scientists believe that political parties are essential to democracy. They agree with E. E. Schattschneider that “political parties created democracy and ... modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties.” What Schattschneider and others see in the political party is the main instrument of popular sovereignty and, especially, majority rule: “The parties are the special form of political organization adapted to the mobilization of majorities. How else can the majority get organized? If democracy means anything at all it means that the majority has the right to organize for the purpose of taking over the government.”

In theory, political parties can do a number of things to make popular sovereignty and political equality possible:

- Keep elected officials responsive. Political parties can provide a way for the people to keep elected officials responsive through competitive elections. Competitive party elections help voters choose between alternative policy directions for the future. They also allow voters to make a judgment about the past performance of a governing party and decide whether to allow that party to continue in office. And, a party can adjust

Political parties generally try to broaden their appeal by running candidates from a wide range of ethnic, racial, and religious groups.
its **party platform**—the party’s statement of its position on the issues—to reflect the preferences of the public as a way to win elections. (These three ways in which elections relate to democracy are discussed in Chapter 10.)

- **Include a broad range of groups.** Political parties can enhance political equality in a democracy because they tend to include as many groups as they possibly can. Parties are by nature inclusive, as they must be if they are to create a winning majority coalition in elections. It is customary for parties in the United States to recruit candidates for public office from many ethnic and racial groups and to include language in their platforms to attract a diversity of groups.

- **Stimulate political interest.** When they are working properly, moreover, political parties stimulate interest in politics and public affairs and increase participation. They do this as a natural by-product of their effort to win or retain power in government; they mobilize voters, bring issues to public attention, and educate on the issues that are of interest to the party. Party competition, by “expanding the scope of conflict,” attracts attention and gets people involved.

- **Ensure accountability.** Parties can help make officeholders more accountable. When things go wrong or promises are not kept, it is important in a democracy for citizens to know who is responsible. Where there are many offices and branches of government, however, it is hard to pinpoint responsibility. Political parties can simplify this difficult task by allowing for collective responsibility. Citizens can pass judgment on the governing ability of a party as a whole and decide whether to retain the incumbent party or to throw it out of office in favor of the other party.

- **Help people make sense of complexity in politics.** Party labels and party positions on the issues help many people make sense of the political world. Few people have the time or resources to learn about and reach decisions on every candidate on the ballot or the issues before the public at any period in time. Party labels and policy positions can act as useful shortcuts enabling people to cut through the complexities and reach decisions that are consistent with their own values and interests.

- **Make government work.** In a system like ours of separation of powers and checks and balances, designed to make it difficult for government to act decisively, political parties can encourage cooperation across the branches of government among public officials who are members of the same party. Parties can help overcome gridlock, an all too common feature of our constitutional system.

Political parties, then, can be tools of popular sovereignty. Whether our own political parties fulfill these responsibilities to democracy is the question we explore in the remainder of this chapter as well as in Chapter 10.

**History of the Two-Party System**

The United States comes closer to having a “pure” two-party system than any other nation in the world. Most Western democracies have multiparty systems. In the United States, however, two parties have dominated the political scene since 1836, and the Democrats and the Republicans have controlled the
presidency and Congress since 1860. Minor or third parties have rarely polled a significant percentage of the popular vote in either presidential or congressional elections (more will be said later about third parties and independent candidates), although they are sometimes successful at the state and local levels. Jesse Ventura, for example, was elected governor of Minnesota in 1998 as the nominee of the Reform Party.

Although the United States has had a two-party system for most of its history, it has not been static. The party system has, in fact, changed a great deal, both mirroring and playing a central role in the dynamic and sometimes chaotic story of the development of the United States, as described in Chapter 4. There have been six relatively stable periods in the history of the two-party system in the United States, each stretching over 30 or 40 years, interspersed with much shorter periods of transformation or realignment. Realignment is a transition period, most notable in our history in 1896 and 1932, when a party system dominated by one of the two major parties is replaced by another system dominated by the other party. Figure 9.1 shows this history in graphic form.

The First Party System: Federalists Versus Democratic Republicans

Although the Founders were hostile to parties in theory, they created them almost immediately. The first was formed in the 1790s by George Washington’s energetic secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton. In a successful effort to push through the administration’s ambitious legislative program, Hamilton persuaded sympathetic members of Congress to form a loosely organized party that eventually took the name Federalist.

Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and others formed a party in Congress to oppose the Hamilton domestic program and Federalist foreign policy. They used the label Republican, although the Federalists tried to discredit them by calling them Democratic Republicans (the term democratic was a term of derision, not praise, in those days).

The Federalist party gradually disappeared, tainted by its pro-British sympathies during the War of 1812 and its image as a party of the wealthy and the aristocratic in an increasingly democratic America. By 1816, the first two-party system had evolved into a one-party or no-party system, generally known (because of the absence of party competition) as the Era of Good Feelings.

The Second Party System: Democrats Versus Whigs

The Era of Good Feelings gave way in the late 1820s to a strong two-party system that grew out of the disputed presidential election of 1824. In that election, Andrew Jackson won a plurality of the popular and electoral votes but failed to win a majority of either. The House of Representatives chose John Quincy Adams as president. Supporters of Jackson formed an opposition that soon became the Democratic party, while supporters of Adams and his ally in the House, Speaker Henry Clay, organized as the Whig party. Starting in 1828, when Jackson defeated Adams for the presidency, the Democrats won six of the next eight presidential elections.

Each of the parties split apart as the nation drifted toward civil war. The Whig party simply disintegrated and disappeared. Several of its fragments came together with Free-Soilers (who opposed the expansion of slavery into the western territories) and antislavery Democrats to form a new Republican party—the ancestor of the present-day Republicans—which ran
its first presidential candidate, John Frémont, in the election of 1856. The Democrats survived but could not agree on a single candidate to run against Republican Abraham Lincoln in 1860, so each wing of the party nominated its own candidate.

From the Civil War to 1896: Republicans and Democrats in Balance

Once the southern states had reentered the Union after Reconstruction, the Republicans and the Democrats found themselves roughly balanced in national politics. Between 1876 and 1896, the Democrats managed to control the presidency for 8 of 20 years, the Senate for 6 years, and the House of

The second party system was characterized by well-organized parties, skilled in the use of methods (such as this parade) to mobilize the “common man” to participate in electoral politics.
Representatives for 14 years. Each party had a strong regional flavor. The Democratic party was primarily a white southern party, although Catholics and many workers in northern urban areas also supported it. The Republicans (also known as the “Grand Old Party,” or GOP) became a party of business, the middle class, and newly enfranchised African Americans.

The Party System of 1896:
Republican Dominance

Beneath the apparent calm of a balanced two-party system, however, a storm was brewing. The late nineteenth century was a time of rapid economic and social change and disruption, one effect of which was to spawn a host of protest movements and third parties. The Populist party, the most important of them, garnered 8.5 percent of the total vote in the 1892 election and won four states in the electoral college, running on the slogan, “Wealth belongs to him who creates it.” During the 1890s, Populist party candidates also won governorships in eight states and control of at least as many state legislatures.

In 1896, the Populist party joined with the Democratic party to nominate a single candidate for the presidency, the charismatic orator William Jennings Bryan, who urged “free coinage of silver” to help debtors with cheaper currency. The threat of a radical agrarian party, joining blacks and whites, farmers and labor unionists, proved too much for many Americans and contributed to one of the most bitter electoral campaigns in U.S. history. Conservative Democrats deserted their party to join the Republicans. Businesses warned each other and their workers in no uncertain terms about the dangers of a Populist-Democratic victory. Newly formed business organizations, such as the National Association of Manufacturers, spread the alarm about a possible Democratic victory. In the South, efforts to intimidate potential black voters increased dramatically.12

The Republicans won handily and dominated American politics until the Great Depression and the election of 1932. Between 1896 and 1932, the Republicans won control of both houses of Congress in 15 out of 18 elections and of the presidency in 7 out of 9.

The New Deal Party System:
Democratic Party Dominance

The Great Depression, the New Deal, and the leadership of President Franklin D. Roosevelt ushered in a long period of Democratic party dominance. From 1932 through 1964, the Democrats won seven of nine presidential elections, controlled the Senate and the House of Representatives for all but
four years, and prevailed in a substantial majority of governorships and state legislatures across the nation. Democratic dominance was built on an alliance of workers, Catholics, Jews, unionists, small- and medium-sized farmers, urban dwellers, white ethnics, southerners, and blacks that came to be known as the New Deal coalition.

The New Deal coalition supported an expansion of federal government powers and responsibilities, particularly in the areas of old age assistance, aid for the poor, encouragement of unionization, subsidies for agriculture, and regulation of business.

The Sixth Party System: Dealignment and Parity

The New Deal coalition began to slowly disintegrate in the 1968 election (won by Republican Richard Nixon) and finally collapsed in 1994 with the Republican capture of Congress, a process triggered in significant part by the civil rights revolution and the subsequent departure of many white southerners and blue collar workers from the Democratic Party. Although Democrats continued to control Congress for much of the period, they began to lose their lead across the country in governorships and state legislatures, as well as in party identification among the electorate, lost the Senate to the Republicans from 1981 to 1986, lost both houses of Congress to the Republicans between 1995 and 2001, and after the 2002 congressional elections, and managed to control the presidency for only 12 years between 1968 and 2000. Increasingly during this period, divided government characterized both state government and national government, a situation in which one party controlled the executive and the other party controlled all or part of the legislative branch most of the time.

The transition from the fifth party system to the sixth was not the classic party realignment that occurred after the elections of 1896 and 1932. In those earlier elections, a system dominated by one party was replaced by a system dominated by the other party. This time, instead, the previously dominant party lost preeminence (the Democrats in this case), but no new party took its place.

**New Deal coalition**
The informal electoral alliance of working-class ethnic groups, Catholics, Jews, urban dwellers, racial minorities, and the South that was the basis of the Democratic party dominance of American politics from the New Deal to the early 1970s.
place as the dominant party. Scholars, journalists, and politicians have come to call this process **dealignment**.\(^{15}\) The resulting sixth party system is one of near parity in which the Republican and Democratic parties are evenly divided in terms of elected offices held, the distribution of votes among the electorate, and party identification among Americans. The dead-heat between Al Gore and George W. Bush in the 2000 presidential contest, and the near-even split of seats among Democrats and Republicans in Congress following the 2000 and the 2002 elections exemplified the politics of parity.\(^{16}\) In party terms, the United States had become a 50–50 nation at the start of the twenty-first century.

This sixth party system, characterized by parity between the parties, declining party identification among the population, but more sharply divided views between Republican and Democratic the party identifiers who are left (see Chapter 5), may mean that we are in for a period of political volatility. Because the parties are so close in the number of elected offices they hold, even small swings in turnout can change which party controls the presidency and Congress. Because Democratic and Republican identifiers are divided so deeply on issues and ideology, partisan voters and party activists and leaders in both parties believe more is at stake in elections, increasing the emotional intensity of elections. And, because there are so many more independent voters than in the past, there are more voters who might swing toward the Democrats in one election then toward the Republicans in the next election. Or, they might now and again support a maverick independent candidate or insurgent third party, upsetting the fine balance between Democrats and Republicans.

**Why a Two-Party System?**

Most Western democracies have multiparty systems, with more than two major parties. Why are we so different from other countries? There are several possible answers.

**Electoral Rules**

The kinds of rules that organize elections help determine what kind of party system exists.\(^{17}\) Which rules are chosen, then, has important consequences for a nation’s politics.

**Proportional Representation** Most other democratic nations use some form of **proportional representation** (PR) to elect their representatives. In PR systems, each party is represented in the legislature in rough proportion to the percentage of the popular vote it receives in an election. In a perfect PR system, a party winning 40 percent of the vote would get 40 seats in a 100-seat legislative body, a party winning 22 percent of the vote would get 22 seats, and so on. In such a system, even very small parties would have a reason to maintain their separate identities, for no matter how narrow their appeal, they would win seats as long as they could win a proportion of the popular vote. Voters with strong views on an issue or with strong ideological outlooks could vote for a party that closely represented their views. A vote for a small party would not be wasted, because it would ultimately be translated into legislative seats and, perhaps, a place in the governing coalition.

Israel and the Netherlands come closest to having a pure PR system, organized on a national basis; most western European nations depart in various
ways from the pure form. Most, for instance, vote for slates of party candidates within multimember electoral districts, apportioning seats in each district according to each party’s percentage of the vote. Most also have a minimum threshold (often 5 percent) below which no seats are awarded.

**Winner-Take-All, Plurality Election, Single-Member Districts** Elections in the United States are organized on a winner-take-all, single-member-district basis. Each electoral district in the United States—whether it is an urban ward, a county, a congressional district, or a state—elects only one person to a given office and does so on the basis of whoever wins the most votes (not necessarily a majority). This is why our way of electing leaders is sometimes called a “first past the post” system, analogous to a horse race. This arrangement creates a powerful incentive for parties to coalesce and for voters to concentrate their attention on big parties. Let’s see why.

From the vantage point of party organizations, this type of election discourages minor-party efforts because failure to come in first in the voting leaves a party with no representation at all. Leaders of such parties are tempted to merge with a major party. By the same token, a disaffected faction within a party is unlikely to strike out on its own because the probability of gaining political office is very low.

From the voter’s point of view, a single-member, winner-take-all election means that a vote for a minor party is wasted. People who vote for a minor party may feel good, but most voters have few illusions that such votes will translate into representation and so are not inclined to cast them.

Note that the most important office in American government, the presidency, is elected in what is, in effect, a single-district (the nation), winner-take-all election. The candidate who wins a majority of the nation’s votes in the electoral college wins the presidency (see Chapter 10). A party cannot win a share of the presidency; it is all or nothing. (The “By the Numbers” feature examines the geography of the electoral college.) In parliamentary systems, the executive power is lodged in a cabinet, however, where several parties may be represented.
Restrictions on Minor Parties

Once a party system is in place, the dominant parties often establish rules that make it difficult for other parties to get on the ballot. A number of formidable legal obstacles stand in the way of third parties and independent candidates in the United States. While many of these restrictions have been eased because of successful court challenges by recent minor-party and independent presidential candidates such as Ross Perot, the path to the ballot remains tortuous in many states, where a considerable number of signatures is required to get on the ballot.

The federal government’s partial funding of presidential campaigns has made the situation of third parties even more difficult. Major-party candidates automatically qualify for federal funding once they are nominated. Minor-party candidates must attract a minimum of 5 percent of the votes cast in the general election to be eligible for public funding, and they are not reimbursed until after the election. In recent decades, only the Reform Party among the legion of minor parties has managed to cross the threshold to qualify for federal funding. Because the Green Party’s candidate, Ralph Nader, won only 2.7 percent of the national vote in the 2000 election, it was not eligible for federal funding for the 2004 election.

Absence of a Strong Labor Movement

The relative weakness of the American labor movement has already been noted in several places in this book. In the western European countries, the organized labor movement was instrumental in the creation of Socialist and Labor political parties that challenged classical Liberal (free enterprise, small government) and traditional Conservative (monarchist, Catholic, and aristocratic) parties. The British Labour party, for instance, was created by trade union officials and Socialists in 1906. Strong Socialist and Labor parties in Europe did not replace traditional Liberal and Conservative parties (except in Great Britain) but spurred them on to more spirited organizing and electioneering of their own. The result has been the creation of a basic three-party system in many European countries—Conservative, Liberal, and Labor or Socialist—with a number of small satellite parties (encouraged by PR electoral systems) clustered about them.

The Role of Minor Parties in the Two-Party System

Minor parties have played a less important role in the United States than in virtually any other democratic nation. In our entire history, only a single minor party (the Republicans) has managed to replace one of the major parties. Only six (not including the Republicans) have been able to win even 10 percent of the popular vote in a presidential election, and only seven have managed to win a single state in a presidential election.

Minor parties have come in a number of forms:

- **Protest parties** sometimes arise as part of a protest movement. The Populist party, for instance, grew out of the western and southern farm protest movements in the late nineteenth century. The Green Party was an offshoot of the environmental and antiglobalization movements.
Two-hundred seventy is the magic number for presidential candidates; it is the number of electoral college votes needed to win the presidency. In 2000, though he lost the national popular vote to Al Gore, George W. Bush won 271 electoral votes and the White House. Like any other winning presidential candidate, Bush put together a package of states with enough electoral college votes to win the only election that counts.

**Why It Matters:** Because of the magic number 270, presidential campaign strategists always design their campaigns around the states. For the most part, they attempt to build a majority of electoral votes by maintaining their lead in states with solid loyalties to their party, contesting states that might go either way, and generally ignoring states that are safely in the camp of the opposition. As the American population distributes and redistributes itself across the United States, campaign strategists must be alert to changes in the party leanings of the states, and constantly readjust their strategies for winning.

**Behind the Number:** Over the past half-century or so, the states that each party can count on to put together 270 electoral votes has changed. Much (though not all) of this can be explained by population movements:

- Many African Americans migrated from the deep South to manufacturing centers in the Northeast, the upper Midwest, and far West, bringing their Democratic Party loyalties with them.
- Many other Americans migrated to the South and Southwest to fill jobs in nonunion factories and in defense and high-tech industries, swelling GOP votes in the states of these regions.

*Ideological parties* are organized around coherent sets of ideas. The several Socialist parties have been of this sort, as has the Libertarian party. The Green Party ran in the 2000 elections on an anticorporate, antiglobalization platform.

*Single-issue parties* are barely distinguishable from interest groups. What makes them different is their decision to run candidates for office.
• Immigrants swelled the populations of a wide range of states, making Florida more Republican (its large number of Cuban immigrants favor the GOP), but making California, New York, and Illinois more Democratic (Asian and Hispanic immigrants lean toward the Democrats).

• A substantial number of white Americans migrated to the Mountain states, enhancing their standing as the area with the highest proportion of non-Hispanic whites, anchoring these states even more firmly in the Republican camp.

Counting to 270: We display here two electoral college maps, one showing the distribution of party victories by state in the 1960 presidential election (John F. Kennedy versus Richard M. Nixon), the other in the 2000 election. Democratic states are shown in blue, Republican states in red. Note the geographical pattern of the vote. In 1960, the geographical strength of the Democratic Party was in the South and in the large industrial states of the mid-Atlantic and the upper Midwest; by 2000, states in the South had become bastions of the Republican Party. In 1960, the GOP could count on most of New England, the farm states of the Midwest, the Mountain states, and the Pacific Coast states. By 2000, New England and the Pacific Coast were solidly in the Democratic camp (though, to be sure, the vote in Oregon in 2000 was extremely close).

What to Watch For: Pay attention to where presidential candidates make most of their campaign visits and where the parties spend the most money on advertising and getting out the vote. For the most part, they leave “hopeless” states alone, do enough to maintain their lead in states where they are strong, and focus the bulk of their activities in states that are very close and where the election could go in either direction.

What Do You Think? Do you think that the electoral college distorts political campaigns by encouraging presidential candidates to focus on particular states rather than on Americans everywhere? Or do you think there is something about the electoral college system that is important for the health of our federal system?

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The Prohibition party and the Free-Soil party fall into this category as did Perot’s “balanced budget” Reform Party in 1996.

• Splinter parties form when a faction in one of the two major parties bolts to run its own candidate or candidates. An example is the Bull Moose Progressive party of Teddy Roosevelt, formed after Roosevelt split with Republican party regulars in 1912.
Minor parties do a number of things in American politics. Sometimes they articulate new ideas that are eventually taken over by one or both major parties. The Socialist party under Norman Thomas, for example, advocated public works projects as a way to battle unemployment during the Great Depression, an idea that became part of the Democrats’ New Deal legislative package. Ross Perot’s popular crusade for a balanced budget during his 1992 campaign helped nudge the major parties toward a budget agreement that, for a while, eliminated annual deficits in the federal budget.

It is also the case that third parties can sometimes change the outcome of presidential contests by changing the outcome of the electoral vote contest in the various states: in 1992, a substantial portion of the Perot vote was comprised of people who otherwise would have voted Republican, allowing Bill Clinton to win enough states to beat George H. W. Bush; in 2000, a substantial
portion of the Nader vote in Florida was comprised of people who otherwise would have voted Democratic, allowing George W. Bush to win Florida’s electoral votes and the presidency over Al Gore.

**The Parties as Organizations**

*I don’t belong to an organized political party. I’m a Democrat.*

—WILL ROGERS

American parties don’t look much like the parties in other democratic countries. In most of them, the political parties are fairly well-structured organizations led by party professionals and committed to a set of policies and principles. They also tend to have clearly defined membership requirements, centralized control over party nominations and electoral financing, and disciplinary authority over party members holding political office.

**The Ambiguous Nature of American Political Parties**

The classic boss-led political machines of American folklore—long identified with such names as Tammany Hall, “Boss Tweed” of New York, Richard J. Daley of Chicago, and Huey Long of Louisiana—have disappeared from the cities and states where they once existed, mainly because of reforms that ended party control over government contracts and jobs. Political machines run by a “boss” have never existed at the national level. There have been leaders with clout, reputation, and vision, to be sure, but never a boss who could issue commands. Even popular, charismatic, and skillful presidents, including George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, John Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan, have had nearly as much...
trouble controlling the many diverse and independent groups and individuals within their own parties as they have had dealing with the opposition.

The vagueness of party membership is a good indicator of the ambiguous nature of our parties. Think about what it means to be a Republican or a Democrat in the United States. Americans do not join parties in the sense of paying dues and receiving a membership card. To Americans, being a member of a party may mean voting most of the time for the candidate of a party or choosing to become a candidate of one of them. Or it may mean voting in a party primary. Or it may mean contributing money to, or otherwise helping in, a local, state, or national campaign of one of the party candidates. Or it may just mean a general preference of one party over another most of the time. These are loose criteria for membership, to say the least—looser than for virtually any other organization that might be imagined.

The Organization of American Political Parties

The Republican and Democratic parties are not organizations in the usual sense of the term but rather loose collections of local and state parties, campaign committees, candidates and officeholders, and associated interest groups that get together every four years to nominate a presidential candidate. Unlike a corporation, a bureaucratic agency, a military organization, or even a political party in most other countries, the official leaders of the major American parties cannot issue orders that get passed down a chain of com-

![Political Party Organization in the United States](image)

**FIGURE 9.2 • Political Party Organization in the United States**

The graphic on the left shows a hypothetical organizational chart of the Republican and Democratic parties as if they were structured hierarchically like many other organizations you are familiar with. It would be a mistake, however, to think of our national parties this way. The drawing on the right, which depicts our national parties as network or weblike organizations, where there is neither central authority nor a chain of command, is closer to reality. The ties between elements of the parties include money, ideology, sentiment, and common interests.
The various elements of the party are relatively independent from one another and act in concert not on the basis of orders but on the basis of shared interests, sentiment, and the desire to win elections. Most important, the national party is unable to control its most vital activity—the nomination of candidates running under its party label—or the flow of money that funds electoral campaigns or the behavior of its officeholders. (See Figure 9.2 for a graphical representation of these ideas.)

Party Conventions This is not to suggest that the parties are entirely devoid of tools to encourage coordination and cooperation among their various levels. The national party conventions are the governing bodies of the parties (see Chapter 10). Convention delegates meet every four years not only to nominate presidential and vice presidential candidates but also to write a party platform and revise party rules.

Although the national convention is the formal governing body of each of the parties, it cannot dictate to party candidates or party organizations at other levels of jurisdiction. The presidential nominee need not adhere to either the letter or the spirit of the party platform, for instance, although most nominees stay fairly close to the platform most of the time (usually because the winning candidate’s supporters control the platform-writing committee). State and local party organizations may nominate whomever they choose to run for public office and may or may not support key planks in the national party’s platform.

National Party Committees The Democrats and Republicans each have a national committee whose responsibility is to conduct the business of the party during the four years between national conventions. Although the national committees have little direct power, they provide valuable services for local and state parties and for party candidates at all levels (a subject detailed in the vignette that opens this chapter). These include production of campaign training materials, issue and policy research, design and maintenance of Websites, assistance in creating radio and TV spots and other campaign materials, and research on the opposition. They also make significant financial contributions to the campaigns of party candidates. The ability of the national party committees to support this range of campaign activities will diminish because they will have less money to use given the ban on soft money contributions to the parties imposed by the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (McCain-Feingold). How much it will diminish remains to be seen.

National party conventions serve several purposes for American political parties. Every four years, delegates choose presidential and vice presidential candidates, settle party rules, write the party platform, repair or build political coalitions, and, as shown here, attempt to whip up enthusiasm for their nominees.
The national committees are made up of elected committeemen and committeewomen from each of the states, a sizable staff, and a chairperson. The national committees rarely meet. The real business of the committee is run by the party chair, assisted by the committee staff. The chair exercises little power when a president from the party is in office because the party chair is compelled to take direction from the White House. When the opposition controls the presidency, the party chair exercises more influence in party affairs, although the extent of that power is still not very great.

**Congressional Campaign Committees** Almost as old as the national party committees, but entirely independent of them, are the congressional campaign committees that aid members of Congress in their campaigns for re-election. They help raise money, provide media services (making short videotapes of the members of Congress for local television news shows, for instance), conduct research, and do whatever else the party members in Congress deem appropriate. These committees are controlled by the party members in Congress, not the party chair, the national committees, or even the president. Much as with the national committees, the congressional campaign committees have become highly professionalized and well funded.

**State Party Organizations** As expected in a federal system, separate political party organizations exist in each of the states. Although tied together by bonds of ideology, sentiment, and campaign money and constrained in what they can do by rules set by the national party committees and conventions—rules on how and when to choose delegates to the national convention, for example—the state party organizations are relatively independent of one another and of the national party.

**Associated Interest Groups** Although not technically part of the formal party organizations, some groups are so closely involved in the affairs of the parties that it is hard to draw a line between them and the political parties. The Christian Coalition, for example, is barely distinguishable from the Republican party; it contributes campaign money almost exclusively to GOP candidates, runs its own candidates in the Republican primaries, and counts many of its members among the delegates to the Republican National Convention. Organized labor has had a similar relationship with the Democratic party since the Great Depression and the New Deal.

Some new interest groups with strong ties to the party have been created as a way to get around the ban on soft money to national party organizations. These 527 groups—described in the chapter-opening story—can accept donations of any size and are free to collect as much money as they can for use in issue and candidate campaigns: making hard money contributions to the parties and candidates, mobilizing voters, and educating the public about issues in ways that compatible with the views of party candidates. Although theoretically independent of the parties, several have been created by prominent Democrats and Republicans to bolster party electoral fortunes. America Votes, for example, is a new liberal campaign organization that works closely with the Democrats; the Club for Growth is a conservative organization that works closely with Republican candidates.

**The Primacy of Candidates**

American politics is candidate centered, meaning that candidates are primary in our political system and parties are secondary. In the United States, not
only are candidates relatively immune from party pressure but their electoral needs also shape what parties are and what they do. Candidates have independent sources of campaign financing, their own campaign organizations, and their own campaign themes and priorities. And party organizations are becoming but another part, an important part to be sure, of candidates’ campaign armament.

In the past, party candidates were usually nominated in district, state, and national conventions, where party regulars played a major role. They are now almost exclusively nominated in primaries or grassroots caucuses, where the party organizations are almost invisible. Nomination comes to those who are best able to raise money, gain access to the media, form their own electoral organizations, and win the support of powerful interest groups (such as the National Rifle Association in the GOP and the National Education Association in the Democratic party).

Nominees are so independent they sometimes oppose party leaders and reject traditional party policies. Republicans were embarrassed, for example, when David Duke, former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, was elected to the Louisiana state legislature in 1988 under the Republican banner and ran for the governorship as a Republican in 1990, despite the opposition of state and national Republican officials.

In Germany, by way of contrast, individual candidates for the Bundestag (the equivalent of the House of Representatives) are less important than the political parties. Candidates are nominated by local party committees dominated by party regulars. Party lists for the general election are drawn up by state party organizations. Money for conducting electoral campaigns, moreover, is mostly raised and spent by the party organizations, not individual candidates. Finally, the campaign is waged between the parties and their alternative programs, not between individual candidates, and the electorate tends to make its choices based on feelings about the parties rather than about the candidates. Most of the western European democracies have similar party systems.
Ideology and Program

Because the Republican and Democratic parties have traditionally organized themselves as broad coalitions, seeking to attract as many voters as possible in order to prevail in winner-take-all, single-member-district elections, there always have been strong pressures on the two major parties to tone down matters of ideology. However, each party also has a core of loyal supporters and party activists, such as delegates to the party convention and caucus attendees, who are more ideologically oriented than the general public. Each
Party strategists are not only looking for a win in the next election but for a way to solidify gains in such a way that the party will become the dominant party in the next period of American history. The current thinking among many Democrats is that demographic change favors expansion in the number of Americans who are a solid part of its base. They point to the rapid expansion of the Democratic-leaning Hispanic population in the United States; the growth in the numbers of highly educated women, scientific and technical workers, and professionals who tend to favor Democrats; and in the rapid expansion in the populations of cosmopolitan, socially liberal, metropolitan areas—with universities and high-tech knowledge-based industries—where Democrats hold an edge. Republicans see their hope for dominance among the growing numbers of religiously oriented people, that segment of the Hispanic population that is religious and committed to traditional values, and the continued population growth in the South and Sun Belt, where Republicans fare best. Although party strategists sometimes advise making symbolic appeals to independents—“compassionate conservatism” comes to mind—or using appointments to try to steal a few votes from the other side’s base—something that both Bill Clinton and George W. Bush did with great skill—for the most part, mobilizing one’s own base is the name of today’s game.

**What’s at Stake?**  Party strategists are not only looking for a win in the next election but for a way to solidify gains in such a way that the party will become the dominant party in the next period of American history. The current thinking among many Democrats is that demographic change favors expansion in the number of Americans who are a solid part of its base. They point to the rapid expansion of the Democratic-leaning Hispanic population in the United States; the growth in the numbers of highly educated women, scientific and technical workers, and professionals who tend to favor Democrats; and in the rapid expansion in the populations of cosmopolitan, socially liberal, metropolitan areas—with universities and high-tech knowledge-based industries—where Democrats hold an edge. Republicans see their hope for dominance among the growing numbers of religiously oriented people, that segment of the Hispanic population that is religious and committed to traditional values, and the continued population growth in the South and Sun Belt, where Republicans fare best. Although party strategists sometimes advise making symbolic appeals to independents—“compassionate conservatism” comes to mind—or using appointments to try to steal a few votes from the other side’s base—something that both Bill Clinton and George W. Bush did with great skill—for the most part, mobilizing one’s own base is the name of today’s game.

**Is This Good for Democracy?**

- Are we stuck between a rock and a hard place?
- Can we have parties that serve democracy without having partisan conflict?  
- Here is the dilemma. When party competition is close and elections are hard fought, partisanship conflict grows and civility and bipartisanship decline. But is party competition that gives people real choices about the future what serves democracy best?
- If we yearn for a peaceful and civil form of politics, must we do without real party conflict over who shall run the government and what policies should be established?
- Is the dominance by a single party—such as the Republican dominance from 1896 to 1932 and the Democrats from 1936 to the early 1970s—the only way to have cooperation, compromise, and comity across party lines?

ties are closely associated with an ideology—an organized set of beliefs about the fundamental nature of the good society and the role government ought to play in achieving it—in the sense that their activists, members, and officeholders identify with it, campaign with themes based on its ideas, and are guided by it in their governmental actions. Socialist and Labor parties often line up in elections against Liberal and Conservative or Catholic parties, with Marxist, Christian Socialist, Monarchist, Neo-Fascist, Nationalist, and other parties entering into the contest as well.

Ideological contests in the European manner are not the norm in U.S. elections because both American parties share many of the same fundamental beliefs: free enterprise, individualism, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and so on. Nevertheless, the differences between Democrats and Republicans on many issues—especially on affirmative action, abortion, the environment, taxes, and the role of government in the economy—are real, important, and enduring, and are becoming much more distinctive. (See “The Rise of Partisan Conflict” for an examination of party ideological differences and how it helps full the contest between Democrats and Republicans.)

Let’s see how ideological and policies differences manifest themselves in our political parties.

Ideology and Party in Public Perceptions

For one thing, the Democratic and Republican parties differ in the electorate’s perceptions of them; 64 percent of Americans, for example, report that they see the parties as different on a whole range of issues. Most accurately see the Democrats as the more liberal party (in the sense of favoring an active federal government, helping citizens with jobs, education, medical care, and the like) and the Republicans as the more conservative party (opposing such government activism and supporting business). Democrats, moreover, are much more likely to say they are liberals; Republicans are much more likely than others to say they are conservative. Additionally, those Americans who classify themselves as liberals overwhelmingly support Democratic candidates; self-described conservatives overwhelmingly support Republicans. This association of liberalism with the Democrats and conservatism with the Republicans is growing stronger all the time.

Ideology in Party Platforms

Our parties also tend to write different political platforms at their conventions. Scholars have discovered persistent differences in the platforms of the two parties in terms of rhetoric (Republicans tend to talk more about opportunity and freedom), issues (Democrats worry more about poverty and social welfare), and the public policies advocated.

The Ideologies of Party Activists

The activists of one party are quite different in their views from activists and voters in the other party, as well as the general public. Republican delegates to the 2004 Republican National Convention, for example, as in all recent conventions, were more conservative than Republican voters and much more conservative than the average registered voter. They were also much more hostile to affirmative action, social spending programs, and gun control than Republican voters and registered voters in general. Analogously, delegates to the Democratic National Convention were more liberal than Democratic voters and registered voters and much more favorable to gun control, affirmative action, and a woman’s right to an abortion than the other two groups.
Party Ideologies in Action  Finally, the parties differ in what they do when they win. Republican members of Congress tend to vote differently from Democrats, the former being considerably more conservative on domestic issues. This difference translates into public policy. Republicans and Democrats produce different policies on taxes, corporate regulation, and welfare when they are in power. These differences will be explored further in Chapter 11 on Congress.

Growing Ideological Differences Between the Parties  The Republican party has become much more ideologically cohesive and conservative since the mid-1970s, advocating free markets and less regulation, low taxes, a halt to most abortions, diminished social spending, opposition to affirmative action, and a hard line on “law and order.” The party seems to have settled on an outlook in which government helps create a society where individuals are free to pursue their own happiness and to take the consequences if they fail, without government providing a minimum standard of living below which people cannot fall. This growing conservatism is a product of the increasing influence in the party of the business community, anti-tax and anti-big government advocacy groups, the white South and suburbs, and Christian evangelicals. It is also a product of the declining influence in party affairs of the northeastern states, the traditional breeding ground of GOP moderates (represented in the past by such figures as Nelson Rockefeller of New York and John Chafee of Rhode Island). And, similar to ideological parties in Europe, Republican party leaders in Congress have successfully imposed party discipline on important legislative votes, particularly in the House of Representatives, using ideological appeals and campaign funds as carrots and harsh discipline of dissenters from the party line as the stick.

The Democratic party is split between a very liberal wing—found among Democratic activists, party officeholders in the non-Southern states, and in
members of Congress—and a more “centrist” wing—represented by the Democratic Leadership Council (of which Bill Clinton and Al Gore were prominent members). The liberal wing supports traditional Democratic party programs in which government plays a central role in societal improvement, leveling the playing field for all Americans regardless of race or gender, encouraging economic growth, protecting union jobs, providing substantial social safety nets, and protecting civil liberties. The centrist wing of the party opposes racial quotas and set-asides and supports lower taxes, free trade, deregulation, and a crackdown on crime, thus blurring the lines between itself and Republicans. During the Clinton years, the president and congressional Democrats, not surprisingly, often found themselves at loggerheads, especially over the budget, welfare reform, and trade. The trade issue has been particularly divisive for Democrats, with free traders such as Clinton and Gore faced off against organized labor and environmentalists, important parts of the party base.

The Parties in Government and in the Electorate

Fearful of the tyrannical possibilities of a vigorous government, the framers designed a system of government in which power is so fragmented and competitive that effectiveness is unlikely. One of the roles that political parties can play in a democracy such as ours is to overcome this deadlock by persuading officials of the same party in the different branches of government to cooperate with one another on the basis of party loyalty. The constitutionally designed conflict between the president and Congress can be bridged, it has been argued, when a single party controls both houses of Congress and the presidency.

We will learn in considerable detail what parties do in government in later chapters on Congress (Chapter 11), the president (Chapter 12), the executive branch (Chapter 13), and the courts (Chapter 14). In general, we will see that the parties only partially improve the coherence and responsiveness of our government. The parties seem to be the best institutions we have for making government work in a cohesive and responsive fashion—that is, when the same party controls the legislative and executive branches—but they do not consistently do the job very well.

The Problem of Divided Government

For much of the last half century, Republicans controlled the presidency, while Democrats controlled one or both houses of Congress. After the 1994 election, the situation reversed, with Republicans gaining control of Congress and Democrats retaining the presidency (see Figure 9.3). After the 2000 elections, unified government returned for a few months until moderate Vermont Republican Senator James Jeffords quit his party, giving the Democrats control of the Senate. (Republicans retained control of the House and the presidency.) The 2002 congressional elections resulted in a return to unified government when the GOP won both houses of Congress.

Divided party control of the federal government has worried scholars and journalists for many years and has produced a substantial amount of litera-
Figure 9.3 • Party Control of Congress and the Presidency

One of the most striking things about our recent political history is the persistence of split party control of the presidency and Congress. Scholars disagree about the effects of this development: Some believe it has crippled the government; others say split party control makes no difference.

Many scholars and journalists believe the effects to be unfortunate. At best, they suggest, divided party control adds to the gridlock and paralysis that are built into the constitutional design of our system of government. At worst, they suggest, divided party control gives rise to a state of near civil war between the two branches, in which each tries to damage the other in the interests of advancing the fortunes of its party.

Some scholars have begun to argue, however, that divided party control may not be very important. They point to cases in which unified party control did not produce good results and cases in which divided control did not prevent the fashioning of coherent policy. Unified party control of government under the Democrats after the 1936 election did not guarantee a vigorous and effective federal government in the last years of Roosevelt’s New
Background: In the 1990s, official Washington not only seemed to come to a screeching halt, but there was a dramatic decline in the atmosphere of civility in Congress and in the relations between Congress and the president. Fierce partisan warfare broke out over President Clinton’s health care proposal, the federal budget (which led to the closure of the federal government at one point), foreign policy issues (Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Test Ban Treaty), abortion, and, of course, the impeachment and trial of the president. Taking a look at how structural, political linkage, and governmental factors affect party politics and policymaking in Washington will help explain the situation. The role of strong parties in a divided government is especially noteworthy.
How Democratic Are We?

**Political Parties and Responsive Government**

**PROPOSITION:** American political parties don’t ensure that government is responsive and responsible to the people.

**AGREE** Our parties are so loose and fragmented in an organizational sense, and often so mushy in an ideological sense, that voters do not know what they are getting when they put a party in office and cannot be assured that the majority party will be able to carry out its program, even if it wanted to do so. Democrat Bill Clinton, for example, campaigned as a liberal in the 1992 presidential campaign but ended up advocating free trade, balanced budgets, and a cautious approach to affirmative action. In addition, parties don’t seem to be able to do much to overcome the constraints on bold initiatives created by our system of separation of powers and checks and balances, even when one party is in control of several branches of government. For example, George W. Bush’s attempt to fashion a new energy policy for the United States was killed in Congress in 2003, despite the fact that his party—the Republicans—controlled both the House and the Senate. Things are even worse when Republicans control one branch of government and the Democrats control the other. Partisan warfare and gridlock in Washington are the most common result of this division of power between the parties.

**DISAGREE** Our parties are the only mechanism we have for allowing voters to decide on a program for the government and to hold a group or team of elected officials responsible for their actions. Though flawed, parties are the only instrument that people have for doing this. Interest groups and social movements are much too narrow; only parties seek to be inclusive and present broad programs for public approval. Moreover, the parties are becoming better organized and more ideologically distinctive, so voters increasingly know what they are getting when they put a party in office. To be sure, divided government often leads to gridlock when strong parties exist, but this is simply an argument that people ought to vote along party lines and have a single party control the entire government.

**CONSIDER** Political scientists tend to believe that strong political parties are an essential part of democracy.

- Are you persuaded that political parties are important for democracy?  
- If you believe they are important for democracy, how well do you think our existing parties carry out their responsibilities?  
- Does the increasing intensity of partisan conflict in the United States appeal to you as a way to simplify electoral and policy choices, or do you find yourself turned off, wishing that the overlap between Democrats and Republicans were greater and that bipartisanship might play a larger part in American politics today?  
- If you believe that parties are important in a democracy, but they are not fulfilling their role very well, what would you do to change what they do?  
- Are we stuck with parties as they are, or can they be changed to better serve citizens?
Deal. Democratic presidents Carter and Clinton did not produce impressive periods of government performance even when both enjoyed Democratic majorities in Congress. There is some evidence, moreover, that gridlock is no more prominent in periods of divided party control than in periods of unified control.37 Having completed their studies before the appearance of intense partisan gridlock in the middle and late 1990s, however, these scholars may have seriously underestimated the detrimental effects of divided government. Anyone witnessing the closing of the federal government during the presidential–congressional budget battles during the Clinton years and the intensely partisan impeachment process to remove President Clinton from office cannot feel sanguine about divided government.

Parties in the Electorate

Parties are not only organizations and officeholders but also images in the minds of voters and potential voters, mental cues that affect the behavior of the electorate. This aspect of the parties was discussed in Chapter 5 and will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 10. We will simply reiterate the points that fewer Americans than in the past are inclined to identify with or to have confidence in a party but that those who still identify themselves as Republicans or Democrats feel more strongly about this identification and divide more clearly along the lines of ideology and policy preferences. This odd combination of growing indifference toward the parties and withdrawal from active participation among one group of Americans (mainly independents), and an intensification of commitment and partisanship among party identifiers and activists, is helping contribute to a more volatile and conflict-ridden politics in the United States, a theme we will return to over the course of this text.

Summary

The American party system is unique among the Western democracies in several respects. First, ours is a relatively pure two-party system and has been so since the 1830s. Second, our major parties are candidate centered, having very little power in their national party organizations to affect the behavior of individual candidates, officeholders, or state and local party organizations. American parties are less ideologically coherent than parties in other democracies, but the enduring and important differences between Democrats and Republicans are very important and becoming more pronounced.

Although American politics has been dominated by the same two parties for almost a century and a half, the two-party system has not been stagnant. It has undergone a series of realignments, spurred by structural changes in society and the economy, in which the relative power of the parties has shifted, as have the voting alignments of the public, the dominant political coalitions, and government policies.

The parties play an important role in government, sometimes contributing to governmental effectiveness and policy coherence. In the era of divided government, however, parties often contribute to gridlock.
Suggestions for Further Reading

   The classic analysis of the realignment process in the American party system.

   A comprehensive history of the Republican party in the United States.

   A bold plan for breaking the politics of parity by one of the Democratic Party’s leading strategists.

   A new edition of the leading political parties textbook in the United States; comprehensive, detailed, yet engaging.

   A sophisticated attempt to assess the effect of divided government. Argues that the alarm about divided government has been overstated.

   A vivid description of how the requirements of modern campaign politics have changed the political parties.

   A rigorous analysis of the conditions under which third parties and independent candidates emerge in American politics.

   A comprehensive history of the Democratic party in the United States.

Internet Sources

Democratic National Committee
www.democrats.org/
   Information about Democratic party candidates, party history, convention and national committees, state parties, stands on the issues, affiliated groups, upcoming events, and more.

The Green Party
www.greenpartyus.org
   News about the Green Party and links to state and local Green-affiliated groups.

National Political Index
http://www.politicalindex.com/
   Links to state and local parties and affiliated organizations and interest group, as well as news and information about the parties.

Political Resources on the Web
www.politicalresources.net/
   Information about political parties in all democratic countries.

Republican National Committee
http://www.rnc.org/
   Information about Republican party candidates, party history, convention and national committees, state parties, stands on the issues, affiliated groups, upcoming events, and more.

The Reform Party
www.reformparty.org/
   Learn about Reform Party candidates, proposals, and issue positions.
Chapter 9 Notes


2. Ibid.


7. Ibid.


29. (to come)


37. Mayhew, *Divided We Govern.*