

Chapter 14 Voting, Campaign, Election

-200 Election Gore and Bush 43 recount Florida

Voting in a Democratic Society

Founder only popular election was U.S. house; Presidential election indirectly- EC270

Function of Election:

1. Alter way we elect Senators
 2. Electoral College usually follows vote of people
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1. Selects Leaders
 2. Policy direction
 - voice in what government does
 - elect people not polices
 - power divided and checked
 3. Citizen development
 - makes citizens feel fulfilled
 4. Inform public
 - educate us; judges two parties
 5. Contain conflict
 - use election booth
 - like it or vote them out
 - use boycotts, rebellion, etc...
 6. Legitimation and system stability
 - make policy outcome acceptable to participants = legitimize it

Exercising Right to Vote

82% Americans think voting is important

Who votes-who doesn't

54% of young vote

Income=vote

Education, more education more vote

Race and ethnicity

Why Americans don't vote

Percentage of non-voters is increasing

U.S. turn-out around 50%

Yet, 82% say it's important

Legal Obstacles

1. Must register before vote, 1/3 never register; 1993-Motor Voter Bill
2. U.S. laws allows for lots of elections
3. National elections; always on Tuesday

Attitude changes

1. lower poll efficacy-leads to less participation
2. dilemma in party attachments lowers turnout

Why attitudes have changed

World since ND

Negative attitudes towards government-Vietnam, draft, Nixon, etc...

Level of Mobilization

Parties devote much less time to mobilize today than 20 to 30 years ago

Lack of mobilization works-party effort get door knocked, rides to polls, etc...

Hurts society/economy - this cuts down on voting

Gap haves vs. have-nots

Decrease Social Connectedness

Decline in voting-ties to social change

Social community=number of organizations people participate in, how involved they are in the community

Lacks social community=decline in voting in national elections

1. Generational changes -older more likely to vote
2. Rational non-voters - for some this is the best choice
- why does anyone vote

Voting depends on resources, time, effort, social rewards from friends for voting

Does non-voting matter? Would outcome be different if had better turnout? Does low turnout indicate that democracy isn't healthy?

Consequences of outcomes traditional for democracy, non voting affects stability and legitimacy of democratic government

Two things at stake in turnout patterns:

1. Quest of representatives and poll power
2. Low rates is quality of democracy life declines

How Voters Decide?

1. Partisanship-party I.D
2. Issue and policy
 - a. Rely on party labels
 - b. People know where they stand
 - c. Media is poor at covering complex issues
 - d. People process lots of policy, relevant information

Prospective voting

-based on what think will happen in future

-requires lots of information, party elites

Retrospective

-sign of approval or desire for change; looks back at state of economy; easy voting decision, democracy can function with this type voting

-vote based on people-candidates as individuals

Electing the President

1. getting nominated-single viable candidate
1992-present, candidate chosen by primaries give power to activist members not leave it with party elites

Pre-primary season:

childhood Clinton-JFK

Crucial steps:

1. First test the waters unofficially, leaks news; possible candidacy
2. File with Federal Election Commission-so officially explore prospects
3. Get war chest to pay cost of running
Hillary, Obama, Forbes in '96' and DO owes money
4. Position self as credible prospect to media-incumbents have big advantage
5. Official announcement of candidate
last of pre-primary steps

Primaries and Caucuses

Fight for national delegation is in party in states

Party caucus

- grassroots party members gather to select candidate send these to conventions

Time consuming

Iowa-10% voters participate
¼ of states use caucus to select delegates

Presidential primary

-most common way, cast ballots to send delegates commit to vote for particular candidate at convention

Types of primaries

1. Open- any regular voter regardless of party I.D.
2. Blanket- any regular voter-all candidates one ballot
3. Closed-only regular voters of that party

Most primaries are closed

Democrats, use prospective reps to select delegate
Republicans, all across the board

Front loading-schedule primaries early in season (Emily)=held

1988-Super Tuesday=11 Southern States

Incumbents

-have tremendous advantage

Last serious challenge-1976 Ford by Reagan

Table 14.1 see fill-ins

Clear front runners-assume these will win nominations
Front runner stumbles -attacked emerges from the pack
Shark momentum or expectations

Convention

Since 1972 delegates do **not** decide who the nominee will be: still. But:

1. write platform-issue positions
 2. name the Vice President candidate
- nominee get “convention bump?” polls

Electoral college-founders feared masses so we select pres indirectly

We select electors

Electors select President in democracy

538 electors-need 270 to win; if no major, house selects among top 3 votes

getters 1 vote/state here, Senate chose Vice President

1824-last time

All states but Maine and Nebraska use “winner take all system” of electors voting

3 times popular vote gettes? Lost

Election: 1) 2000 2) 3)

Usually Electoral College exaggerates the candidate apparent majority

Winner seems to get a mandate all states get at least 3 electoral college votes

Small states ignored

Sure states ignored

Dem =Competitive states= California, Florida, Michigan

General election campaign

Candidates nominated August

Campaign begins Labor Day

President Campaign is for swing voters

Try to inform voters -issues

-media

-money

All done by professional staffs

Run campaign highly specialized profession

Not amateurs today

Clinton-Carville

-movie- “WAR Room”

Campaign works=Big Business

Campaign manager, strategist

Inform and \$; position papers

Opposition research- study opponents background, etc, get control flow of information

Media consultants

Ads team

Fund Raisers-essential

1. Present Candidate
 - Candidate tied to times of day?
 - Clinton- It's the economy-stupid, but didn't know what Gore stood for
 - 3 debates-3 different people
 - Opp. res?.= negative campaigns
2. Issues- central to campaign
 - valence and position issues
 - Policy-motherhood
 - pie
 - 2 sides
 - Abortion
 - Iraq War
 - Wedge issues parties oppose each other
 - Rep. anti affect action

Issue ownership

- Democrats-educational issues
- Republicans-crime solving
 - Bush took democrat's ed. It became "No Child Left Behind"
- Issue campaign-large extent setting agenda

The Media-campaign ads matter, T.V. etc

- t.v.- info source
- talk radio-opinion structure
- W Harton revolving door ad
- 41 Busch vs. Decacus
- Negative ads -works makes opponent look bad
 - Turned to soft news-Larry King, David Letterman, etc...

Two types of Contribution

1. Hard money-give directly to candidate, give \$2,000
 - Raise \$500 in 20 states to get Federal match dollars this limit what spend
 2. Soft Money- money spent independent of a specific candidate
 - *abolished in 2002
- MaCain-Feingold-eds
Soft Money

Issue Advocacy Ads-free speech, Buckley Valero 1976

- express opinions about an issue these ads are not regulated

Interpreting Elections

- winning candidate claims he had a mandate
- media gives its interpretation too
 - Clinton beats Bush 41-because Bush failed to deal with the economy crises

Citizens and Elections

- Models of citizen dem activity
 1. elite model
 2. pluralist-part of democracy-through group participation

3. prescriptive model-reject 1 and 2
4. American citizen role
 - a) people vote by this group I.D. (David Truman)
income, occupation, religion, poll specialization, review

Do Elections Make a difference?

Our elections give us electoral accountability
Americans are retrospective voters-fear the electorate
Does it matter who wins-YES, direct relation between national election and polices the government enacts?
*policy follows elections

What is at Stake?

If government seems illegitimate it loses its authority
President needs mandate to get popular and congressional support of his proposals.
September 11th Bush and War on Terror
Federal-states have power to conduct elections
Federal-from heart of Electoral College

Elections represent the core of American democracy!