

-
- I. Introduction: the discontent with American parties
 - A. Two sets of critics
 - 1. Advocates of “responsible party government”
 - 2. Advocates of ideological parties
 - B. Ideological polarization of parties since 1960s
 - II. The case for responsible party government
 - A. Goals
 - 1. Strong and decisive government
 - a. Liberal goal: **equality**
 - b. Conservative goal: **order**
 - 2. Simplify the electoral choices: **to increase popular sovereignty**
 - B. How would party government (responsible parties) work?
 - 1. Clear and coherent (and conflicting) party electoral platforms: **e.g., House Republican’s “contract with America” in 1994**
 - 2. Candidates: **bound by party platform**
 - 3. Campaigns: **that clarify party differences**
 - 4. Programmatic policy making to enact electoral mandate: **not just to win office or distribute patronage or preferments**
 - 5. Control of both elected branches: **and acceptance of judicial branch**
 - C. The case against party government
 - 1. It would increase conflict
 - a. Rigid and dogmatic politics
 - b. Limits on representation of diverse interests
 - c. Undercut or destroy interest groups and other nonparty organizations
 - d. Splintering of the two-party system
 - 2. It wouldn’t work in the U.S.
 - a. Constitutional barriers
 - (1) Division of powers and representation
 - (2) Separation of powers and representation Table 15.1, p. 298
 - (3) Sharing of overlapping powers
 - b. Statutory barriers
 - (1) Direct primary
 - (2) Campaign finance
 - c. Social barriers
 - (1) Voter ignorance, disinterest, and distrust
 - (2) Issue complexity
 - D. The Gingrich experiment: a temporarily responsible party
 - 1. Changed institutional arrangements
 - 2. Increased organizational discipline
 - 3. Increased ideological cohesion
 - III. Semi-responsible parties: party cohesion and ideology
 - A. Are the American parties ideological? Box, pp. 302-05
 - 1. Pragmatic – no intra-party unity on core purposive values and litmus tests
 - 2. But with inter-party differences in campaign promises and legislative programs
 - 3. Brokerage function
 - B. Do they at least offer clear choices?
 - 1. Divisive issues: **civil rights and cold war**
 - 2. Attractive leaders with a simple message, such as Ronald Reagan: **end civil rights initiatives and reduce public welfare for the undeserving poor; fight communism any time & any place**
 - C. But internal variations remain
 - 1. Economic v. social conservatives
 - 2. Moderate v. extreme liberals

IV. Ideology and the American voter

- A. How ideological is the American public?
 - 1. Media answer: **shift to the right**
 - 2. Academic answer
 - a. Issue consistency: **3/4s are not ideologues with consistent & coherent issue positions**
 - b. Issue voting vs. results-oriented retrospective voting: **e.g., in both 1980 & 1984, the majority of voters preferred Carter and Mondale's issue stands over Reagan's**
- B. The dilemma of ideology: **differential spread of ideological thinking**
 - 1. Differences by social class: **primarily education – cognitive sophistication**
 - 2. Differences among activists, candidates, and voters Figure 15.1, p. 308 **activists vs. candidates & officeholders vs. voters**
 - 3. Differences among the party's three parts
 - 4. Regional differences
 - 5. Striking the right ideological balance: **principle vs. compromise**

V. When is party government most likely?

pp. 309-11

- A. When there is strong presidential leadership: **LBJ & Reagan**
- B. In times of crisis: **more programmatic than ideological – e.g., New Deal & the Great Depression**
- C. During party realignments: **closest approach to responsible-party government**
 - 1. Single line of partisan cleavage
 - 2. Greatest intra-party cohesion
 - 3. Greatest inter-party polarization
 - 4. One-party control of both elected branches at federal level (and the federal judiciary by appointments) and a majority of state governments: **4 examples – 1800, 1860, 1896, & 1932**
 - 5. But, not as much ideological purity and policy cohesion as in European parliamentary democracies: **e.g., the New Deal Democratic coalition of diverse minorities & the current Republican coalition of economic and social conservatives**
- D. Barriers to party responsibility: divided government
 - 1. Definition: **the president or governor faces at least one house of the legislature controlled by the opposition party**
 - 2. Historical patterns
 - a. Prior to WWII: **divided govt. rare – mostly resulting from very close presidential contests**
 - b. Since WWII: **much more common – only HST, DDE, JFK, LBJ, JEC, WJC enjoyed undivided govt.** Table 15.1, p. 313
 - 3. Causes
 - a. Weakening of party identification: **and rise of split-ticket voting**
 - b. Increased careerism in Congress
 - c. Separation and division of governmental powers
 - d. Insulation of legislative from executive elections
 - e. Proliferation of single-issue groups
 - f. Loss of control of electoral politics
 - (1) Nomination
 - (2) Campaign funding
 - 4. Consequences: **responsible-party govt. not likely**
 - a. Increased of partisan conflict
 - b. Increased policy gridlock
 - c. Increased political distrust & cynicism in electorate
 - d. Decreased political efficacy in electorate
 - e. Decreased popular sovereignty

VI. Party government and popular control