PARTY POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

A monograph written for

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Introduction

In a democracy, governments reflect citizen demands. What is unique about political parties is that they provide mechanisms that work to ensure both policy accountability and responsibility. A key way that this is accomplished is through democratic party policy development which is reflected in campaign promises that the winning party is willing to enact (*responsible for* enacting if elected) and willing to run on (*accountable for* their accomplishments and failures) in the subsequent election. When parties and their candidates disclaim a campaign claim after being elected or say that it is not their fault that policy solutions were not enacted or implemented once in power, democracy is undermined. But when parties ARE successful in being both responsible and accountable, this is when democratic *party government* has been achieved.

The U.S. has unique features – a plebiscitary presidency that receives a mandate in its own right. Because the constitutional and legal structure is unique, some have concluded that the U.S. has little relevance as a model for other countries. But the U.S. has for most of its existence been a developing nation with an expanding frontier. The U.S. has evolved from a nation with a central government and weak parties with a remote and indifferent citizenry to a country with mobilized citizens and strong, polarized parties and an effective national government.

In the U.S., where parties have campaigned for the votes of citizens for nearly (or over) 200 years (depending on how you date the first genuine parties[1]), parties have sometimes failed and sometimes succeeded in providing accountable and responsible policies. Innovations in party policy development have occurred differently in the two major parties, but some innovations have started in one party and later copied by the other party. At some historical timepoints (such as during the 1930s New Deal realignment), parties have even switched their preferences for a strong national government.[2] Over time, American parties have expanded participation and have provided new groups an

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[1] In the U.S., historians date the earliest parties to philosophical debates over ratification of the U.S. Constitution which presaged future American party differences (the Federalists favored a strong national government while Anti-Federalists preferred a weak central government), while social scientists date genuine political parties to the 1820's when grassroots organizations and participation developed once there was universal manhood suffrage.

[2] As discussed later, elections have consequences. For example, he 1912 Republican Convention saw a Republican Party turn away from using government to achieve social justice, while the 1932 New Deal realignment led by Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) marked a sea change where Democrats accepted a strong government as a counterweight to large business interests.

increasing degree of control over party policies and ultimately governmental policy that is distinctive among other countries. In part, this has to do with the expansion of suffrage early in American history, and in part, this has to do with new groups becoming active within a political party as they entered the U.S. mainstream and became politically mobilized. For example, in the 1820s the expansion of (white) manhood suffrage – while limited to white men – greatly expanded the potential electorate beyond property owners. This expansion preceded the extension of suffrage in Britain (1918) and France (1848) and allowed workers to vote prior to industrialization and union mobilizing. Uniquely, newly forming unions in the U.S. did not have to fight for suffrage alongside workers' rights.

To give another example, African-Americans, whose presence as free blacks even prior to the revolution as well as slaves and indentured servants created an historic conflict in the U.S., are quite unique. Following the abolition of slavery, African-Americans started becoming active within the Republican Party after the Civil War, and after 1932 began a long switch from the Republican to the Democratic Party.[3] The switch in allegiance initiated after the New Deal alignment in 1932 when the Roosevelt administration made symbolic outreach to African-Americans and expanded after the 1960s civil rights movement which successfully fought for voting rights laws and effective party representation as convention delegates.

Another example are the Irish Catholics who emigrated to the U.S. in waves both before the Revolution (primarily to the South) and after the Irish Potato Famine (1845-52), who early on associated with the Democratic Party and rose from outsiders to insiders in such cities as Boston (home of President John Kennedy) and Chicago through their participation in the Democratic Party through an organizational style known as the "machine." Discrimination against Irish Catholics was a central tenet of short-lived nativist third party the American Party (referred to as the "Know Nothings" because of their secrecy) which tried to oust Catholics from public office in the 1850s. From the 1830s to the 1960s, Irish Catholics voted 80-95% Democratic.

This has changed with policy polarization in the contemporary era and the growth of Republican Party strength in the former states of the confederacy. Other factors include the now well-established divide between the parties over the issue of abortion and the divide over how to include minorities ranging from African-Americans to more newly arriving immigrant groups including Asians, Latinos and others including indigenous people such as native Americans. The Democratic Party, after having excluded African-Americans through violence and through legal suppression from the late 1800s through the 1950s, now is committed to policy positions that ensure inclusion among diverse groups.

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[3] This long switch culminated in the 1960s after John Kennedy who as a candidate for president in 1960 made the famous Birmingham jailhouse call to Martin Luther King, Jr., who was jailed for his nonviolent protest activity against segregation of African-Americans in Birmingham, Alabama. After that, Martin Luther King, Sr., switched parties from Republican (the party of Lincoln that freed slaves) to the Democratic Party and the majority of African Americans voted Democratic as they were allowed to register and vote after the Democratic Party enacted voting rights legislation.

The Republican Party is now more closely associated with the socially conservative pro-life position aligned with the official Catholic Church, and stresses inclusion through upward (economic) mobility driven by the private sector rather than through government policy. As a result, for example, Irish Catholics now divide their vote between the parties about 50-50, while African-Americans and Latinos overwhelmingly vote Democratic.

It is only recently that the national parties in the U.S. have established themselves as major actors in policy development. While many call this the era of polarized parties, what is new is not party differences, but the integration of this stronger party identity within all facets of the party. The historically decentralized, tri-partite structure of American parties means that there is no single element of the party that is in charge. One part is the party-in-the-electorate. American parties do not have members *per se* – only activists who choose to participate in their party beyond voting. A second aspect is the party organization which in the U.S. is viewed as a private association meaning that parties are not a formal part of government or policy agenda-setting.

As will be stressed throughout, there is no continuing inner circle to American parties. Delegates to national nominating conventions must be elected every four years, and their issues and concerns are what drive party platforms and party agendas. This has always been true – every four years, the party agendas are refashioned anew.

Party organizations are federal in structure, with national, state, city, congressional district, county and precinct level organizations. The only national meeting of the party is the quadrennial national nominating convention for presidents. Finally, the third part is elected officials. At national and state levels, even this is divided with each legislative body and the executive having its own separate party organization responsible for agenda setting, raising money for campaigns and recruiting candidates. Overall, the strength of each separate party organizations varies according to whether the party is in-vs.-out – meaning having control over the executive branch such as Governor or President,

While in times of crisis, America's system of federalism with split powers and the potential of divided government at the national level may result in policy paralysis, the America's evolving model of party policy development can provide tremendous insights into the value of bottom-up, grassroots-driven participatory approaches to party and party policy development over more recent models of party engineering through constitutional and legal regulation.

Political parties are not mentioned in the U.S. Constitution and are considered private associations. New groups that entered political parties included many immigrant groups such as the Irish (from before the American revolution), later the Italians, and many others depending on immigration limits had to work within one of the two major parties. This may have been a ragged process that varied from locality to locality, but groups that self-mobilized and had access to the franchise were able to gain entry over time. States that entered the union after the original thirteen colonies had to meet conditions such as

organizing internally to write a constitution, hold elections, and establish rule of law and order, and sometimes other conditions. Utah, for example, had to ban polygamy in its state constitution and Utah women were granted suffrage in Utah as early as 1870 (well prior to national enfranchisement of women), a right that was included in the 1895 constitution recognized by the U.S. when Utah was admitted as a state in 1895.

What is distinctive about American party policy development is that party policies are tend to be grassroots-driven and reflect civil society and nonpartisan sources as well as formal party policy leadership groups.

Much of this is true because candidates in the U.S. also operate largely outside of the parties. While they run in elections mostly under a partisan label, it is the candidates who campaign on and promote new solutions. Anyone may run as a candidate in a primary and if there is grassroots support or new issues, even newcomers can beat so-called party insiders. They do so by recruiting and funding their own campaigns whether personally or through in-kind or cash donations. While the official party as it is controlled or influenced by other elected officials does provide some financial or other support, it is not determinative. Sometimes this means candidates ally themselves with others within their own party, at other times, it means that they develop an outsider perspective that reshapes and reforms either their party or both major parties through a third or minor party initiative.

Further, even when there is unified government, there is NO single party structure that is responsible for party policy in either the Republican or the Democratic party. Even where a president claims a mandate from the people, presidents are regularly challenged by House and Senate party leaders as well as by state-level Governors within their own party.

This monograph reviews the singular histories of party and policy development in the U.S., the major features of Democratic and Republican party rules, and the practices and implementation of party policies in the U.S. First we turn to an overview of American party development.

Party Development and Policy Development in the United States

American party development has been a central part in American political development throughout its history. American political development is *nation-building* in the true sense – the agreement of a people to make a government together and who work together to build consensus over the fundamentals of political organization. The American civil war was indeed a true test of this process. One of the reasons that some historians say the South lost the civil war was that the confederacy had no political parties. Neither American political development nor party development is linear or progressive. American parties have failed as organizations and in other instances been faithless to their

constituents – but over time they have provided a crucible for new groups to enter the political system, assert their political interests and to be assimilated.

The unique aspect of the American model is that as a new nation, new groups were brought into the system primarily after they had organized internally and made their demands within the existing rules and party systems. For example, women were granted the vote not by fiat but only after significant organizing by women (including after more than 70 years of organizing in what are historically counted nationally as two distinct women's movements, but also a state-level effort that was fought state-by-state). Other large ethnic and racial groups such as African-Americans, Latino-Americans and Asian-Americans have all had their own distinctive fights for suffrage. Native Americans were not granted citizenship until 1924, and endured many restrictions on voting until the 1960s. Latinos have nationality-specific histories based upon immigration and how each nationality (Mexican, Cuban and Puerto Rican[4]) came to be a part of the U.S. Asian-Pacific Islanders have suffered distinct discrimination – Chinese were labeled as "aliens" under exclusion acts in the 1800s – which were not repealed until 1943 when Chinese were permitted to become naturalized citizens. Japanese-Americans were held in internment camps during World War II, and it was not until after the 1965 following passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act those Asian-Americans started becoming politically active. Thus, this has not been a painless or problem-free process – indeed there have been significant periods of American history where groups were systematically excluded and parties have failed to provide alternatives such as in the post-Civil War period, particularly in the period of 1896-1960s.

There are two major parties in the U.S. – the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. Party and party policy development in the U.S. has a long history that has primarily centered on conflicts between these two major parties and an array of third and minor parties as well as independent candidates. Another unique set of conflicts has been driven by sectional and institutional conflicts which has served to divide party authority.

The U.S. is a federal system, which provides one of the central chasms between the Democratic and Republican Parties. The major cleavage between American parties has been sectional (North vs. South) until the past 50 years or so even though the Civil War ended in 1864. Nonetheless, the common thread has been disagreements between the two current major parties over the role of the government – should the government run programs and provide assurances or should individuals get ahead on their own? And with many presidents coming from having served as governors in the states, there is a continuing tension between national and state power.

At the federal level, the principle of separation of powers underlying the U.S.

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[4] Mexican-Americans include those born in the U.S. as well as those who lived on land acquired from Mexico after the Mexican-American War. Their history dates from the mid-1800s. Cuban-Americans are relatively recent immigrants, many of whom have become naturalized since the 1960s.. And Puerto Ricans can vote while on the continental U.S., but lack a vote while residing in Puerto Rico.

political system has been referred to by some scholars as separate branches *sharing powers*. As a result, it is difficult for one branch of power to promote a specific policy without the agreement of leaders in other institutions. Indeed, the branches *even if controlled by the same party* are increasingly less likely to cede power or authority over policy to other branches.[5] While it is true that presidential vetoes are rarely overridden, skirmishes are also evident in inaction. For example, Presidents Kenney and Carter were unable to enact much of their agendas due to congressional opposition. In recent years, presidents have turned to executive orders (ignoring legislation) and international agreements (rather than treaties) to implement desired policy initiatives. House and Senate leaders are very jealous of their prerogatives and their own policy agendas and institutional powers and tend to view presidents as short-term actors while they may remain in office twenty years or more and see a number of presidents serve.

For most of American history, presidential candidates and party platforms developed at national nominating conventions have been the driving force in national party policy development. Beginning in the early 20th century, national party policy development has become nationally driven more by incumbent presidents as well as a more professionalized U.S. Congress and more polarized congressional party leaders and caucuses. Since World War II, this has expanded to include what some call a hypertrophy of partisan and non-partisan think tanks operating outside of the formal party apparatuses even if allied with one party. In the past 40 years, this also includes an array of new citizen's groups from women's and minority groups which demanded and received representation at party conventions. Recent research has shown that citizens groups and civil society have become major actors in lobbying and advocacy. We now turn to the history of the Democratic and Republican parties, the two major American parties.

Party Development in the U.S.

The Democratic Party is the oldest continuous party in the U.S. and is dated by scholars from 1828 with the election of Andrew Jackson after suffrage was expanded to include all white males (previously limited to taxpayers and property owners) and grassroots participation increased dramatically. This era is sometimes identified as the Jacksonian revolution where "an aroused and demanding citizenry [nudged] the officeholders at Washington to develop the political skills and the political organization necessary to satisfy popular demands" (Young 1966). But the Democratic Party officially dates itself as originating in 1792 as the party of Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, and the third U.S. President who was associated with the Democrat-Republican Party. Much of the early Democratic-Republican Party history was as the only party in a one-party system from 1800 to 1824. With the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828, the Whig Party organized as an opposition party. The Kansas-Nebraska Act exacerbated conflict over slavery and sundered both the Whig and the Democratic

[5] The Supreme Court is most likely to cede policy authority to the other two branches (and two houses of Congress) in matters of foreign policy.

parties into northern and southern wings. The Whig Party had virtually disappeared by 1856 after the anti-slavery faction blocked the renomination of the party's own incumbent, Millard Fillmore. The northern and southern factions of the Democratic Party each nominated their own candidate in 1860. But the Democratic Party reunited after the Civil War to remain one of the two major parties. This sectional conflict emerged as the major ideological division in the U.S. and persisted into the 1960s.

The Republican Party, born in 1854 around the dispute over the Kansas-Nebraska Act which only temporarily addressed the growing controversy over slavery,[6] Following the implosion of the Whig Party, Republicans became the majority party from 1860 to 1932. The new Republican Party included many former Whigs and defined itself as the party of free labor, free soil and free men and economic development. The most serious dispute that defined the modern Republican Party developed out of the 1912 Republican convention. The U.S. was experiencing tremendous economic problems out of industrialization that former President Theodore Roosevelt believed were best addressed by a more active government and a "Square Deal" that supervised large corporations, improved the lot of women and children who labored for low wages in unregulated industries and to conserve national resources. Roosevelt was deeply disappointed by his handpicked successor, incumbent Howard Taft, and decided to run against him for the Republican nomination. Roosevelt won all the Republican primaries except for Massachusetts, but Taft prevailed in the leadership dominated caucuses that picked the delegates. Many cried corruption since many of the postmaster appointed delegates came from areas in the South where there were no Republican voters. Roosevelt bolted the convention and ran as the nominee of the newly formed Progressive Party. The result was a divided national vote that elected Democrat Woodrow Wilson as President in 1912, and the Republican Party became – as it is today -- the party of smaller government and less regulation. Notably, Roosevelt won a larger proportion of the popular vote than did Taft. And although Roosevelt's failure against Wilson proved that parties cannot be built on the backs of a single charismatic leader, much of the Progressive Party platform was adopted by the two parties.

Former President Roosevelt's decision to run against Taft on the Progressive Party's ticket brought a slate of issues to the forefront of national consciousness, including those previously sidelined to the periphery of national politics and those ignored by the Republican Party. The platform included the endorsement of issues which have generally become non-issues over time, including an endorsement of women's suffrage, direct primaries for the nomination of state and national officers including candidates for the presidency, and the direct election of U.S. senators – an issue missing from the Republican platform despite its passage by Congress one year earlier. The platform also included support for a "living wage," increased federal government prerogative, strong regulation of inter-state corporations, and a national policy of conservation – all of which are policy problems still under debate one hundred years later, and provide some of the

[6] The Kansas-Nebraska Act in effect repealed the 1820 Missouri Compromise, and permitted newly entering states to choose whether to be a slave-owning or a free state through popular sovereignty.

central divisions between the parties.

A signal change in the Democratic Party, while occurring overtime, is usually associated with the 1932 New Deal realignment. After aligning itself with rural interests with the nomination of William Jennings Bryan in 1896 and taking positions that the national government should not interfere with the right of free labor to organize as guilds and negotiate wage contracts with businesses, the Democratic Party after the Great Depression of the 1920s altered its view toward national government. Instead of viewing the national government as Andrew Jackson did as a threat to liberty, Democratic leaders and allied groups now view government as a significant counterbalance to a marketplace that excluded workers. This, for example, was the genesis of the Wagner or National Labor Relations Act of 1935 which created rights for worked to unionize and required employers to respect these unions.

What is noteworthy about party development in the U.S. is how the long historical development has occurred separately in separate institutions and systems, and how in some cases advances are reversed in ways that have limited participation by some groups or ignored significant policy issues. For example, the U.S. House became organized (collectively) by party in the 1890s, while the U.S. Senate rules still permit individual Senators to put secret holds on bills. Nonetheless, the democratizing role of parties in the U.S. House became diminished between 1920 and 1960 with rule by the Committee Barons and not the party members.

Because political parties in the U.S. are viewed as private associations, they are extra-legal and are better understood as creatures of their environment than as leaders in policy development While American parties are the crucible within which policy priorities are developed, there is no leadership office which can dictate or determine party or national policies. However, American party development also demonstrates tremendous innovation in grassroots-driven party policy tools that may provide models for other parties. We next turn to a summary of this development and then highlight some key facets of American parties that impact their ability to control policy development **(See Table 1)**.

Long Historical Development. The long historical development of nationalized pro-active political parties has developed separately in the U.S. in the following arenas and each of which has followed different historical trajectories:

Table 1
MAJOR FEATURES OF AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE U.S. PARTY SYSTEM AFFECTING IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION

Feature	Traditional Characteristic as Identified by Scholars	Pre-Reform 1960 Effect	Contemporary Changes 1974-
Consistent Two-Party System	Duality of interests presumed to exist in the U.S. (Key 1964) Electoral impact of Single Member Plurality Districts raises barriers for third and minor parties (Schattschneider 1942; McRae 1967) Creation of "Reed's Rules" (1889) in U.S. House decreases ability of third and minor party House members to achieve committee chairmanships or other leadership positions (Baer 1996). Legal recognition of Democratic and Republican parties and sponsored state primaries at state levels since Progressive Era (1890-1920) provides key advantages to major two parties (Ranney 1975)	**MODERATES** Two-party system provides for moderate conflict with both parties campaigning for the middle in terms of public opinion.	**POLARIZES** Two-party system is more entrenched with passage of the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) and amendment in 1974. Increasing polarization produces closely competitive institutionalized parties.
Party as a Coalition of Diverse Interests	Parties Identify with Parties Based on Groups, not Issues (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960) Party Identification among citizens learned during childhood socialization – not issue-based (Easton and Dennis 1969) Critical elections offer choices once every twenty years or so (1955; 1959) Realignments occur during critical elections (Burnham 1970; Sundquist 1975) No structural relationship with labor or union organizations (Epstein 1967)	**WEAK COALITIONS** Voters are weakly interested and leaders are moderate Only during critical elections do voters switch habitual, group-based voting patterns Groups lobby across both parties	**STRONG COALITIONS** Parties now based on distinct coalitions at voter and leader levels (Baer and Bositis 1988). Democratic and Republican parties have distinct political cultures (Freeman 1988) New groups formed; older groups more active (Berry 1984; Baer and Bositis 1988).
No True Socialist Parties	Ideological character of U.S. more narrow than Europe since it never had a monarchy and thus lacks true socialist parties (Hartz 1955) Granting of wide scale suffrage before parties formed alters class basis of parties (Epstein 1967) Sectional conflicts predominate over class conflicts (Alford 1963)	**SECTIONAL CONFLICT OVER CLASS CONFLICT** U.S. non-ideological Little class consciousness Sectional conflicts and leaders predominate	**IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT INCREASES** Parties more ideologically distinct South changed dramatically Conservative coalition disappears
Decentralized Power Structure	Separation of powers creates competing power bases Federal system balkanizes power Electoral College selects president	**NO RESPONSIBILITY** Party responsibility is impossible Prohibited by U.S. Constitution	**CONFLICT NOW NATIONALIZED** Conflict across levels and institutions is now nationalized (Baer and Bositis 1988)
Distinctive Party Organization	"Cadre" not "Mass" type of organizational structure (Duverger 1954) "Stratarchy" not "Hierarchy" (Eldersveld 1964) Power lies in state parties	**COMPETING LEADERSHIP TEAMS** Emphasis on competing leadership teams who alternate between the ins and the outs, with little difference in governing philosophy	**INSTITUTIONALIZED PARTIES** National parties resurgent (Cotter et al., 1964; Herrnson, 1999' Reichley 1985; Baer, 1994)
American Ambivalence Over Parties	Party viewed as a "public utility" (Ranney 1975; Epstein 1986) Reformism as a tradition (Ranney 1975; Banfield 1980) Often, candidates and leaders run against their party.	**"PROGRESSIVE" REFORMS** Americans not devoted to use of party system Attacks on party system occur in party cycles. Progressive reforms (1890-1920) weaken parties	**POLARIZED PARTIES** Decline of straight ticket voting (DeVries and Tarrance 1972) actually strengthens parties (Schlesinger 1985) Social movements and party reform actually strengthens parties (Baer and Bositis 1988) Emergences of public interest groups increases party regulation (McFarland 1984)

- Between parties in party systems. Most histories of American politics are based upon different party systems where there is a majority party who remains in power for a lengthy period **(See Table 2)**. In a stable two-party system, the other party either acts as a responsible opposition party or seeks to regain power by mobilizing new constituencies or appealing an a constituent group either represented by a third party or other outsider group or leader or one already within the majority party.

There have been 3 pre-party systems and 4 party systems with changes in the two major parties and in their coalitional bases following a critical election. Currently, there is no agreement about realignment or critical elections since 1932. The current polarized environment between the parties evident since the 1990s has prevented the parties from swapping constituencies.

Table 2
AMERICAN PARTY SYSTEMS

Three Pre-Party Systems

Ideological differences among leaders; either little or no grassroots or 1-party competition or both

1790s-1800 Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists
1800-1824 National Republicans (1 party)
1824-1828 No Parties

Four True Party Systems

Critical election followed by long-term changes in party coalitions; major party control shown in **BOLD**

1828-1860 **DEMOCRATS** vs. Whigs
1860-1896 Democrats vs. **REPUBLICANS**
1896-1932 Democrats vs. **REPUBLICANS**
1932-???? **DEMOCRATS** vs. Republicans
????-????No agreement on realignment scenarios

- Internal party organizational forms. Party organizations have had some different organizational forms that have changed over time. There are different eras where Democratic and Republican (and earlier the Whig) parties had similar organizational types that had similarities in terms of permanency and methods of rewarding supporters. However, it should not be forgotten that Democrats and Republicans have markedly different political cultures that shape their organizational forms.

Party organizational forms have changed from a legislative caucus factional system[7] (1789-1824) to a cadre structure[8] (1832-1848) to a rudimentary national

[7] This is where party decisions are limited to elected legislators without any grassroots. Those geographic areas without a legislator are excluded.

organization[9] (1848-1856) to an interregnum period during the Civil War (1857-1865) to a machine style patronage-dominated organization[10] (1865-1913) to a highly regulated state level "utility" party[11] (1914-1960) to a transitional era (1960-1972) followed by highly competitive institutionalized party organizations[12] (1974-present). The current American institutionalized party system is now closely competitive and lacks a majority party[13].

- Nomination processes for presidential candidates. Presidents are elected by the electoral college, a unique method where the states appoint electors who vote in their state capitals and then send the vote to Congress – a process that in practice usually follows the popular vote at least since the 1830s. From the earliest days, the key element was nomination. This provided a few alternatives for the state electors to choose from. Otherwise, there would be no majority result (a constitutional requirement) and the election would be decided by the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate – in essence providing possible elements for a parliamentary type system where legislative majorities select the executive. The increasingly grassroots basis for nomination was an early incentive for the development of parties. There are specific eras for these changes

  The early legislative caucus dominant system (1789-1828) denounced by Andrew Jackson as reflecting "King Caucus" changed to a national convention dominant system (1832-1904) to a mixed convention/primary system (1904-1968) to a primary dominant system (1972-present). The current system now includes an expanded set of party activists and leaders who vet, promote and support candidates well prior to the formal primary campaigns.

- Within congressional power centers. The party caucuses are the oldest organizational unit within Congress. For most of congressional history, they did not do much beyond serving as organizing caucuses meeting only at the beginning of a session after an election. Sometimes committees have been the power center and at other times, it has been a small coterie surrounding the Speaker. Caucuses are more important in the U.S. House than they are in the U.S. Senate. Nonetheless,

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[8] Here, temporary party campaign committees arise around a specific candidate and disappear in-between elections. These are fleeting, but are relatively more representational.

[9] National party organizations are created – at least on paper, although it took another 50-60 years for a permanent national office to be created. This is a weak organizational form.

[10] Party machines tended to be local or state level, and were organized with "bosses" and were based on patronage (spoils and graft) rather than on policy. These were efficient vote-getting machines, but are widely viewed as ineffective in representing the view of citizens.

[11] During this period, the parties were heavily regulated by the states, including provisions for nonpartisan elections in many cities. Parties became weaker organizationally..

[12] This concept describes nationally organized parties with polarized constituencies with representational processes for policy development.

[13] The parties switch majority control quite frequently such as every other election or have split control among the branches rather than one party maintaining majority power for 20-40 years as was determined in prior realignments.

there are important historical changes where power became democratized with specific historical eras.

Congressional plenary sessions moved from meeting primarily as a committee of the whole (1789-1809) to the early creation of standing committees with a division of labor (1810-1865) to its expansion to as many as 61 to 74 in each chamber (1866-1918) to its consolidation (1919-1946) and the era of strong committee chairs whose powers superseded party leaders (1947-1964) to the congressional reform era (1968-1980) and the present post-reform era with strengthened party leaders (1980-present). The two major parties have taken different routes to party strength in Congress, but both are more active in making party policy.

In short, what looks like stability and little change masks a great deal of change.

What is noteworthy is that American parties developed in stages. The first parties developed among the grassroots and in localities FIRST in the late 1820s <u>prior</u> to later stages such as developing titular national offices in the 1840s and the organizational ability to define party policy through its leaders and party officers which happened in fits and spurts in the late nineteenth and the bookends of the early and late twentieth centuries.

What is also significant is that over time, changes in the public, changes in institutions and changes in party organizations have converged to create two major national parties who do offer different alternatives to public policy. The fact that this did not occur until the 1980s and 1990s is quite significant and is intimately related to the slow historical and decentralized political development process in the U.S.

The U.S. now has a new type of party system that is ill-understood by both its leaders and by scholars. Many leaders and many scholars still bemoan the loss of civility and compromise between the two major parties and hope for leaders who can be "post-partisan" and who govern from the middle. These sentiments reflect the American cultural ambivalence over parties. Parties are private and informal, yet constitute vital tools for setting policy agendas democratically.

National party organizations in the U.S., for example, did not become permanent fixtures until the 1920s. The Republicans switched to a full-time party headquarters in 1918, rather than gearing up in the election year. The Democrats did so in 1928.

Thus, what stands for "party government" in the U.S. has ricocheted between times of executive dominance at the inception under Federalist Alexander Hamilton and presidential fusion where Democrat-Republican Thomas Jefferson managed Congress from the White House (1800 to 1808) to the post-Civil War Reconstruction Era (1865-1877) where the impeachment of a Republican President by his own political party ended

a presidential-dominated reconstruction policy and replaced it with a congressional-led reconstruction policy. The Strong Speaker Era initiated in 1889 as an effort for the first time to create stronger congressional parties, created for the first time in the U.S. House a set of institutional rules that gave parties the power to develop separate legislative strategies.

During the 1880s, when the House was governed by mostly Democratic majorities, House governance was closely observed by Republican Thomas Reed. While serving on the Rules Committee, Reed became a critic of the way any minority faction – Democrat or Republican – could frustrate the legislative process. Reed's views were widely publicized in magazine articles of the era in which he attacked the lack of majority rule in the U.S. House. When he became Speaker in 1889, Reed drafted a new set of House rules – known as "Reed's Rules" – which greatly strengthened the power of the Speaker and of the majority party. Dilatory motions were banned, and new procedures were implemented for the counting of a quorum, now reduced to 100 members in the Committee of the Whole, and procedures were created to allow the closing of debate.

Reed's tenure was interrupted by Democratic Speaker Charles Crisp when the Democrats regained control of the House from 1891-1895. Reed's reelection as Speaker after the election of 1896 revived his notion of party responsibility. As Reed explained himself to his constituents:

> Party responsibility has begun, and with it also the responsibility of the people, for they can no longer elect a Democratic House and hope the minority will neutralize their action or a Republican House without being sure it will keep its pledges.
>
> If we have broken the precedents of a hundred years, we have set the precedents of another hundred years nobler than the last, wherein the people, with full knowledge that their servants can act, will choose those who will worthily carry out their will.

This era was known as the Strong Speaker Era and both Speaker Reed and Speaker Joseph Cannon who succeeded him ruled the House with an iron hand – an increasingly arbitrary one. The Strong Speaker Era lasted until 1910 when a Republican faction voted with Democratic allies to remove key powers of Republican Speaker Cannon who clashed with members of his own party. The contribution of their brief reigns of dictatorial power while controversial nonetheless introduced the notion of party responsibility as a vital linkage between constituents and their elected representatives and made clear the dangers of a dictatorial Speaker unaccountable to his or her party caucus.

These changes were incorporated 1909 in the first set of House Democratic Party Caucus Rules which formalized the party responsibilities of Democratic members to their Caucus. These Caucus Rules form the basis for the Democratic Caucus Rules of today. The purposes of the Rules was to set forth in the clearest for the obligations and the rights of Democratic Members of the House and thus, to promote unity and harmony among Democratic Members. The 1909 Rules included a preamble which defined party principles and fidelity, and rules which could bind members to vote in a certain way if directed by a

two-thirds vote of the Caucus.

Democratic President Woodrow Wilson, elected in 1912 in the divided election where third party candidate and former President Theodore Roosevelt and Republican incumbent President William Taft split the immigrant vote, placed the first Democratic President in the White House since President Grover Cleveland left office in 1896. Wilson, a student of legislatures, worked closely with Congress and revived the practice of speaking to Congress in person and inaugurated another short period of partisan presidential fusion (1913-1916). Constitutionally, American presidents cannot introduce legislation and historically they do not participate in congressional party caucuses. However, Wilson (and Jefferson before him) did directly involve themselves in caucus decisionmaking where they used pressure to ensure their dominance[14]. Wilson pronounced the British party system as "perfected party government" because "no effort is made in the Commons, such as is made in the House of Representatives in the composition of Committees, to give the minority a share in lawmaking." According to Wilson, in contrast with the British Westminister model, American legislation passed in any particular session "did not represent the policy of either" party. By contrast, Wilson envisioned a process in which the majority would pass its own legislation. Under Wilson, bills were first marked up in the Caucus rather than in congressional committees. Only after the Caucus approved the bills by two-thirds binding vote were they introduced on the floor. Committee action became a hollow formality, and once bills were introduced on the floor, Caucus Rule 7 provided that "a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at the Caucus meeting shall bind all members of the Caucus."

Wilson's tenure as president became increasingly compromised in his second term, and his influence over Congress waned. Nonetheless, the growth of national party strength became increasingly tied to the presidency. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the national party chair became someone who dispensed federal patronage for the party that controlled the White House. Patronage (jobs, money or the provision of government services based upon loyalty) is organizational glue that works to ensure the persistence of existing leaders and is non-ideological. A major source of patronage was the Post Office prior to its conversion from a cabinet department to a government corporation in 1971. The use of the postmaster-delegates was a key factor in the renomination of Republican Howard Taft over Theodore Roosevelt in 1912. A number of national party chairs in that era served simultaneously as party chair and Postmaster General while others did so either right before or after their chairmanship.

Following Reed and Cannon, House Republican Conference rules and practices did not change substantially until the 1980s. In part, this was due to the fact that the Democratic Caucus had long periods of being the majority party where caucus rules also

[14] It is also true the Vice Presidents, while constitutionally are an officer of the U.S. Senate (they hold the position of President of the Senate and may vote in cases of a tie), are not welcome on the Senate floor and due to custom typically only make an appearance to preside when party leaders indicate that a tie vote is likely. As such, they also typically do not participate in Senate caucus meetings in either party.

laid the basis for the rules of the U.S. House. In the late 1980s,the House Republican Conference did start to alter their selection procedures for their ranking committee members and for committee assignment to emphasize alignment with party principles rather than seniority. Other significant reforms such as limitations on the tenure of committee chairs took place after the 1994 congressional elections which elected a Republican House majority.

The U.S. Senate made one significant change in the early 20th century when majority and minority party leaders were given recognition. These positions remain informal positions, however, and lack institutional authority in the Senate. Another was the development of institutional (i.e., supported by taxpayer funds through the appropriations process rather than private party funds) party policy committees in the 1940s – which happened only in the Senate. These Senate policy committees have played a large role in party-based policy development to a degree not seen in the U.S. House, where party-created policy committees focus less on legislation than on message development for campaigns. In the U.S. House, they do research, write reports and state party positions.

The U.S. House has never developed institutional party policy committees for the parties. In 1943, the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress was appointed to recommend changes on congressional committees also included a provision for the creation of majority and minority policy committees. This was dropped in conference committee due to the opposition of Democratic House Speaker Sam Rayburn who opposed what he saw as the erosion of his authority. The Senate, however, went on to provide institutional and statutory support for Senate policy committees through an appropriations bill. As a result, while the Senate does not have organized party caucus meetings, both Senate Democrats and Republicans do have relatively well-developed policy committees. These have developed separately due to differences in party culture. Senate Republicans have distributed authority among a floor leader, whip, Conference chair, Conference secretary and a Conference Policy Committee chair. In contrast, Senate Democrats have concentrated leadership with their floor leader who also chairs the Conference and until the 106th Congress also chaired the Policy Committees. Now both positions are elected positions elected by all members of the caucus each voting secretly with equal votes.

Overall, the Senate institutional Policy Committees were more influential in the period prior to 1970 when individual Senators and House members had few staff. The Legislative Reorganization Act provided House and Senate members with committee staff and mandated minority staff for committees. However, there have been times when the Senate Policy Committees have been important. For example, the Senate Republican Policy Committee under the long-term (1973-1985) chairmanship of the late Sen. John Tower (R-TX) was quite active in develop opposing positions to President Carter. In 1980, Tower also chaired the Republican Convention Platform Committee, held hearings across the U.S. and his staff drafted the platform endorsed by Republican candidate Ronald Reagan and defined his early presidency. As this review demonstrates, there are many

sources for policy ideas in both houses and within each party.

Most Reforms Are Procedural. The reform process in the U.S. has primarily been composed of procedural reforms that change the process of how decisions are made. Within this process, there have been two major types of reforms – known as "progressive" versus group-based demands. Progressive reforms utilized laws to regulate parties externally, while group-based demands primarily worked within the parties to expand inclusion of new or excluded groups.

Progressive reforms reflect a distinctive American ambivalence over parties based in American political culture and public opinion. They originated in the Progressive Era (1890-1920) and a similar type reappeared in the 1970s and more recently in terms of party finance reforms worked to reduce what was thought to be party corruption. Progressive reforms were distinctive in that they were intentionally designed to weaken parties.

The goal of progressive reformers was to alter electoral machinery and procedures in ways that were designed to extend the control of the public over elected officials *outside of parties*. The most direct efforts to achieve this included the requirement of nonpartisan elections at the local levels, the move toward at-large rather than ward-based elections, and restructuring of local government in ways that placed power in non-elected positions and made elected officials irrelevant to policy decisions. This also included the principle of universal suffrage alongside voter registration requirements whose stated purpose was to remove voter fraud but in practice actually reduced voter turnout and disenfranchised whole groups of voters. Other Progressive reforms were based on the principle of equal weight to all votes; the institution of direct primaries and direct elections; creation of civil service and merit systems for public employees to reduce the scope of patronage appointments, the use of elections to make policy (e.g., referendum, recall and initiative procedures); and the secret ballot printed by the government rather than the parties.

More recent progressive reforms include campaign finance reforms and governmental reforms to limit government waste, fraud and abuse. This includes earmark reforms and new methods of "performance management" which limits the ability of federal agencies to define their missions based on their grants of legislative authority and privatizes critical governmental functions (e.g., roads, prisons). Instead, performance management is intended to move toward an outcome-based model based on "expert" advice or the market. This transfers power from accountable entities of government to unaccountable groups – a principle separate from parties and representation and the mechanism of party government.

Group-based and representational reforms include the demands of African-Americans, women and youth to be included in the Democratic Party based upon the mobilization at the grassroots that occurred in the 1960s. Social movements such as the civil rights movement, the women's rights movement, and the youth protest over being

drafted to serve in the Vietnam War but not yet able to vote created tremendous pressure for reform between 1964 and 1968. Internal party reforms such as quotas and affirmative action as well as the creation of a variety of party affiliates and organized group-based caucuses within the national party through informal and formal quadrennial representational party reform commissions in the Democratic Party from 1964 to 1988[15] have dramatically increased the participation of women, youth, African-Americans, Latinos and other minority groups in the Democratic Party. Similar demands for group inclusion in the Republican Party also resulted in reform commissions (the DO and the Rule 29 Committees), but resulted in exhortations rather than rules changes.

Right of Conscience. There is NO segment of any American political party which has the authority to demand compliance with any authoritative party policy. Known as the right of conscience, this right of American elected officials to speak their mind and vote their conscience is a preeminent feature of American party policy development. At both state and federal levels, all legislative members are expected to represent their constituencies, rather than act as at-large representatives.

This right of conscience is an ingrained and valued aspect of American culture even today. A classic statement about this came from George Smith, Secretary of the Senate Republican Steering Committee when Senate Republicans took no position on the 1944 Bretton Woods agreement in July, 1944, to create the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund:

> Every Senator is free to do what he pleases....We are for some things and against other things and not the same men are for the same things, and so on. Party agreement on principles is a very difficult thing to secure.

For this reason, adherence to party policy is voluntary. There was only brief exception to this during the presidency of Woodrow Wilson who sought to bind the votes of members of the House Democratic Caucus. Wilson's experiment was so unpopular that the House Republicans formally adopted the title of "conference" to distinguish themselves from the idea that party caucuses could bind votes. When beginning in 1969, the House Democratic Caucus was transformed from a dormant group meeting only at the start of a new Congress every two years to a group that met monthly, the Caucus rules were revised to drop the rule permitting bound votes. This meant that the House Democratic Caucus could be used for debate and consensus building, but not for coercing votes.

As the Democratic Caucus instituted other rules changes in the 1970s, power was placed under collective party control. The Caucus created a secret ballot for determining whether a committee chair should be retained or be replaced. The secret ballot ensured

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[15] The self-appointed Special Equal Rights (Hughes) Commission after the 1964 Convention was followed by formal party commissions authorized by subsequent Democratic Conventions: the McGovern-Fraser Commission (1968); the Mikulski Commission (1972); the Winograd Commission (1976); the Hunt Commission (1980); and the Fowler Commission (1984). Since then, the Democratic Party has made rules changes in-house using the DNC Rules Committee.

that the chair could not influence the result and neither could other colleagues.

The U.S. President has historically been the only nationalizing influence. There has been a growing tension between the incentives of presidents to strengthen parties to provide them with more resources to bargain with Congress and presidents seeking to be an independent actor using "triangulation" strategies to work separate from both parties. Sometimes this can occur when a president utilizes issues championed by the other party, such as when Bill Clinton ran for reelection in 1996 by arguing for tax cuts, reform of welfare policies and in favor of balanced budgets. It can also occur when a President such as Republican Ronald Reagan negotiates budget compromises with the Democrats, ignoring the positions of and excluding his own House party members from negotiating meetings. Triangulation strategies work best when party control is divided between Republican and Democrats. Presidents are nonetheless elected as a partisan figure. However, while presidents are also party leaders, once elected, presidents also tend to focus on their individual legacy. To pull other party leaders along with them, presidents must either privately persuade, cajole, and offer positive inducements (e.g., invitations to the White House, background information, offering credit for policy accomplishments, location of federal projects in districts) to obtain individual votes or else use the "bully pulpit" of national speeches designed to arouse public opinion.

In vs. Out Party Differences. In-party (meaning having control of the executive branch either at the governor or presidential levels) control provides a titular leader for the party. Out-party periods provide key opportunities for legislative and organizational leaders to assert control over party policy agendas and the center-of-gravity for the party from the executive office to Capitol Hill or becomes a factional battle for control.

Sometimes this can become a period of innovation. While the Democrats lacked control of the White House during Republican Dwight Eisenhower's president (1952-1960), the Democratic National Committee under the direction of DNC Chair Paul Butler created a Democratic Advisory Council (DAC). The DAC had seven officers who, together with ten regional chairmen, composed a Steering Committee. The full DAC also had 62 executive committee members and 175 active Democrats, including influential former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, former President Harry Truman, Adlai Stevenson II (1952 and 1956 Democratic presidential nominee), and New York Governor Averill Harriman. DAC's purpose was to develop more liberal Democratic party platform positions, including on civil rights and limits on the filibuster. Then Senate Democratic Majority Leader and future President Lyndon Johnson (1964-68) and U.S. House Democratic Speaker Sam Rayburn refused to join saying that the DAC infringed on the prerogatives of Congress to make policy.

Another short-term innovation that had the potential to provide opportunities for national grassroots policy development was the advent of a mid-term convention. The Democrats held three mid-term conventions in 1974, 1978 and 1982 which were later abandoned because they provided an official forum for factional conflict. The 1974 mid-

term convention in Kansas City was noteworthy for the adoption of a party charter which for the first time permanently authorized the Democratic National Committee. The 1978 mid-term convention in Memphis found 40% of the 2,500 delegates voting against resolutions supporting then incumbent Democratic President's economic policies and Sen. Edward "Ted" Kennedy made a speak against Carter's position on national health care which was followed by his 1980 primary challenge to Carter's renomination. The 1978 midterm convention was also noteworthy for recommending that women be provided half of the convention delegate seats for 1980 – a change which was later adopted by the DNC. The 1982 mid-term convention held in Philadelphia had a much smaller group of 950 attending and these were known as "participants" rather than delegates who were authorized to represent specific constituencies. Then DNC Chair Charles Manatt determined to keep all policy disputes off the mid-term agenda, and this was the last mid-term convention held in the Democratic Party.

When out-of-power, there is a difference in the types of policy proposals. The in-party is responsible for developing a legislative package that can become law, while the out-party need only obtain agreement on a common set of principles that the party can campaign on as a record in the next election.

Major Party Ideological Divisions in the U.S.

Historically, the U.S. party divisions have been between the "ins" and the "outs" rather than having a- strong ideological basis. Samuel Eldersveld, a political scientist who has studied American parties, finds that the "critical action locus of party is at its base (1964:9). Thus, historically, national political leaders have engaged in "downward deference" to local interests, culture and inertia. Both the cadre and the machine forms of organization focused on local politics, not national politics. Further, local and state party leaders had varying motivations for their party work such that American parties were historically "incohesive" and no more than 10 percent of local leaders of either party were ideologically motivated.

How the Old Non-Ideological "Indigenous" American Parties Polarized. Scholars have referred to this as "indigenous" parties which were localized and different in each of the 50 states and even differed between the President and the Congress with each chamber and institution having a different Democratic and Republican party of its own. This has recently changed with more distinct ideological differences appearing between the two major parties.

While "Reed's Rules" provided on paper a structure for organized party control in Congress, in practice, the decentralization of legislative powers to committee chairs that was accentuated after the 1930s separated both party and policy needs from legislative power Chairs were not selected according to their fidelity to party principles, but only by their seniority (length of continuous service). Committee chairs while nominally selected

by a vote in the party caucus were in fact accountable to no-one. The vote merely ratified the selection of the longest serving party member. The basic problem became weakened congressional parties. As noted by the American Political Science Association in its 1950 report on the functioning of American political parties during this era:

> Historical and other factors have caused the American two-party system to operate as two loose associations of state and local organizations with very little national machinery and very little national cohesion. As a result, either major party, when in power, is ill-equipped to organize its members in the legislative and the executive branches into a government held together and guided by the party program. Party responsibility at the polls tends to vanish. This is a very serious matter, for it affects the very heartbeat of American democracy. It also poses grave problems of domestic and foreign policy in an era when it is no longer safe for the nation to deal piecemeal with issues that can be disposed of only on the basis of coherent programs. (1950).

The contemporary nationalized ideological polarization between the two major parties has occurred since the 1980s and 1990s for the first time in American history because of the growth of centralized but collective party authority and the expansion of the political system to include previously excluded groups who had become politically active.

As political scientist Samuel Huntington stated concerning what became known as the "Committee Baron Era (1947-64):

> The dispersion of power in Congress has created a situation in which the internal problem of Congress is not dictatorship but [committee-based] oligarchy. The only effective alternative to oligarchy is centralized authority.
>
> In actuality, ...the centralization of power within Congress in party committees and leadership bodies would also increase the power of Congress. It would tend to reconstitute Congress as an effective legislative body, deprive the President of his monopoly of the "national interest," and force him to come to terms with the centralized congressional leadership, much as Theodore Roosevelt had to come to terms with Speaker Cannon. (1973)

In Congress beginning in the 1950s, Democratic congressional leaders started to complain of a "paper majority" where the majority party had no control of the agenda. During this time, votes in Congress were dominated by an informal cross-party coalition of Southern Democrats and Northern Republicans (known as the Conservative Coalition) which prevented party agenda setting. A reform movement developed through a member-supported reform caucus within the House Democratic Party called the "Democratic Study Group" or DSG organized in 1959. DSG raised funds, recruited candidates, provided electoral support, issued reports, took policy positions, developed a whip system for floor votes, and promoted internal party reforms – all before the House Democratic Caucus had any of these capacities and only met once every two years to organize.

Internal reforms within Congress adopted in the 1970s opened congressional leadership to members reflecting the new grassroots activism of new public interest groups and social movements (women and African-Americans) as well as a youth movement focused on protest against the Vietnam War who all demanded inclusion in policy

processes. For example, the number of African-Americans serving in the U.S. House increased fivefold between the 1952-1960 period (only 0.7% served) and the 1970s (3.6% served between 1972-1980). The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) which represents the policy views of African-American members of Congress was organized in 1971. Among the thirteen CBC founding members include former Representative Ronald Dellums (1971-1998) and current Representative John Conyers (who has represented the Detroit, Michigan area since 1965). Conyers, a former civil rights organizer and the current ranking member on the House Judiciary Committee, has also served as its Chair, and is well-known for his effort to create universal single-payer health care in the U.S. and his successful introduction of the first bill to make Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday after King's assassination in 1968. Dellums, who defeated a Democratic incumbent in the primary in 1970 as an anti-Vietnam War candidate and who later served as Chair of the House Armed Services Committee, is well-known for his successfully effort to enact 1986 Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act over President Ronald Reagan's veto, and his championing of the peaceful resolution of conflict.

Between 1917 (when the first woman, Jeannette Rankin, was elected to the U.S. Congress) and 1962, nearly half of all women serving in Congress had succeeded their husbands through what was known as "the widow's mandate." A new type of woman public official emerged in the 1960s with women more often having advanced and law degrees and prior office experience in state legislatures and other state and local offices. Typical of this background was Hawaii Representative Patsy Mink, first elected in 1965 as the first woman of color elected to Congress. Mink, an attorney who had served in the Hawaii territorial and later State Senator, had obtained a law degree after she was denied admission to medical school because she was a woman. Mink was the original sponsor of the 1972 Title IX Higher Education Act providing gender equality for all schools receiving federal aid, later renamed the Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act. Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman elected to Congress in 1968, succeeded Mink as the Secretary of the House Democratic Caucus, the fourth ranking party leadership position and was instrumental in forcing changes which renamed that post as Vice-Chair and ensured that the next incumbent, Geraldine Ferraro, was included as a ranking party leader now invited to the White House for negotiations. Bella Abzug, who served from 1970-1976, was significant as an opponent of the Vietnam War, a peace activist and a proponent of the Equal Rights Amendment, and the sponsor of the first federal gay rights bill in 1974. Abzug was the co-founder of the nonpartisan National Women's Political Caucus which is credited for expanding the inclusion of women as national nominating delegates in both political parties in 1972. Patricia Schroeder was elected in 1972 at the age of 31, is noted for her leadership of family policy. Schroeder first introduced the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act in 1993. Chisholm and Schroeder also had campaigns for the U.S. President. The Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues was first organized in 1977 with fifteen founding women members.

All of these changes led to the contemporary era of polarized parties which are described in greater detail below.

The "Invisible Hand" of American Party Polarization. As stated earlier, American parties have always lacked a continuing inner circle. Nonetheless, the indigenous party era did have informal leaders who – while changing in personnel – did represent a particular class. For example, the delegates to nominating conventions in both parties tended to be white men, professionals (e.g., lawyers or other professional occupations), and those who were primarily protestant in their faith and earned a relatively high income. This changed with party reform in the 1970s. New groups entered politics. It is best to understand American parties as having a "market" where ideas are debated openly and without elite or top-down control. Beginning in the 1960s, new groups and new ideas entered American politics and demanded that leaders respond. In many cases, new leaders were elected and gained stature when exiting leaders did not react quickly enough. The "invisible hand" does not mean that party regulars and party leaders do not still play a role – it simply means that the party grassroots has avenues for quickly registering their party policy issues.

As these new "left" groups of the 1960s became joined by new "right" (e.g., Christian Coalition and pro-life) groups in the 1980s, grassroots polarization at the grassroots began to elect new members to Congress. These new members saw themselves as linked to new groups and movements. In the wake of the Watergate scandal, the 1974 midterm election elected 75 new Democrats in the House (known as the "Watergate Babies" due to their overall youth) in a year where the Democrats also took 49 seats from the Republican Party. A similar ideological shift occurred in 1994 "Contract Class" (named after the campaign document "Contract With America") when 73 new Republicans entered the House, and the Republican party became the majority party in 1994 after forty years in the minority.

Since the 1980s, among Democrats, the resuscitation of party leadership authority created an alternative route to leadership. Speaker Thomas ("Tip") O'Neill was the last Democratic leader who served as a committee chair prior to being selected as Majority Leader and then Speaker. Later Democratic Minority Leaders and Speakers (Richard Gephardt and Nancy Pelosi) rose solely through the party leadership ranks. This has occurred through competitive elections within the party, and it is those who have worked to support party consensus and party members who tend to be successful.

The Republican Conference moved to the right between the late 1960s and the late 1980s. This was reflected in a more energized party caucus where the election of ranking members (when the Democrats were in the majority) who more closely reflected the increasingly conservative Republican backbenchers who were being elected to Congress.

Today, both parties are ideologically distinct. Party unity has developed as policy positions supported by a group within one party's coalition are no longer better represented by the opposing party. For example, labor unions previously were

conservative on women's rights and foreign policy. During the 1972 Democratic convention, the AFL-CIO's head George Meany took hawkish positions and supported the war in Vietnam in contrast to the nominee, George McGovern. Meany refused to endorse McGovern who was anti-war and was the co-chair of the reform commission which expanded opportunities for women, blacks and youth to become nominating conventions delegates. Now labor unions are very supportive of women's issues and inclusive of newer immigrants. Interestingly, the Republican Party which is now opening opposed to federal or state funding of Planned Parenthood, a local organization which provides health care to women, traditionally supported this provision of low-cost health care in communities.

Party unity is defined as occurring when a majority of Democrats vote against a majority of Republicans. Party unity scores have reached a 40 year high in American politics recently, rising from lows of about 3 out of 10 to 6 or 7 votes out of 10 in the 1980s and since. The term party polarization widely used to describe American parties in the past two decades simply means that within each party there is a greater alignment across issues as well as internal homogeneity while each party has distinct positions. Most important, polarization rests on a greater alignment between party leaders and the party base, a more diverse, numerous and active interest group landscape, and an expansion of the domestic and foreign policy issues dividing the two major parties. These changes made the parties more permeable, representative and accountable to the grassroots. It also affected the policy process. The new polarized interest group landscape gave rise larger, multi-group "issue networks," replacing the smaller "iron triangles" of closed interest group representation characteristic of the 1950s. Iron triangles are based on insider lobbying based on policy consensus among bureaucrats, Congress and a single affected interest group (e.g., a sugar lobby seeking subsidies) out of the view of the public. Issue networks are public, permeable informal multi-group entities that embody public conflict over polarized issue arenas.

New "cultural" issues (e.g., abortion, gay marriage, death penalty, prayer in schools) emerged alongside the pre-existing separation between the parties over the size of government and the degree of government intervention in society and markets. Party and congressional reform also played causal roles. Party reform, initiated in the 1968 Democratic Convention and effective for the 1972 Democratic Convention affected both parties to varying degrees. Both parties had to decide their stance on issues like abortion, affirmative action, civil rights and other cultural issues as platforms became arenas for intra-party battle. Congressional reforms in both parties allowed committee chairs and ranking members to be removed by an internal party vote if they failed to represent party agendas. For the Democrats, this was in the 1970s, and for the Republicans, this occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. These changes helped parties to become more cohesive in the U.S. Congress by allowing new members to develop programmatic policies as campaign and party leadership vehicles.

Policy Development in the U.S.

Policy development at the national levels in terms of domestic policy was minimal until the 1932 New Deal program of Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt. In the nineteenth century, much of the income of the federal government came from tariffs and most of the national domestic policy making focused on land development and the expanding frontier. Foreign policy tended to be the province of Presidents until World War II. For this reason, the parties were not heavily involved in policy development until the twentieth century.

Redistricting Revolution. Fifty years ago, one of the most significant decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, *Baker v. Carr* (1962) was decided. This and subsequent decisions required that all legislative districts be drawn based on population so that districts were equal-sized. Prior to these decisions, districts drawn by state legislatures had ignored population changes such that while about two-thirds of American population lived in cities, about two-thirds of state and national legislators were elected from rural districts. The electoral imbalance supported the clout of the Conservative Coalition and undermined the role of parties in defining policy democratically. It was not until the election of 1972 (and the new census of 1970) when the new districts were redrawn that citizens were represented equally. Today the redrawing of districts every decade has become quite politicized where both parties use modern technology to draw congressional and state legislative districts designed to maximize the number of safe seats for their party.

House vs. Senate. The U.S. House and the U.S. Senate differ markedly. Unlike the House with its Reeds' Rules, the U.S. Senate operates under essentially the same rules as existed in the 18th Century at its founding. The result is that an individual Senator can still stop all Senate plenary proceedings by either formally refusing to yield the floor (known as a filibuster) or informally by putting a "hold" on a bill scheduled for floor consideration. For that reason, almost all Senate business comes to the floor through a Unanimous Consent (or UC) Agreement which allows for floor debate and bill consideration through an exception to Senate rules. Thus, unlike the U.S. House, where rule changes providing more influence to the rank-and-file members in the Democratic Caucus were also accompanied by a strengthening of Democratic leadership prerogatives, no additional powers were given to Senate party leaders to assist in coping with a more politicized and partisan membership. In the House, the Democratic Caucus (and also subsequently the Republican Conference) were empowered. In contrast, Senate rules provide only one major resource to the Majority Leader (the highest Senate party position) – the right to be recognized first before other senators on the floor.

New Issues. New social movements developed in the 1950s and 1960s on civil rights and women's rights resulted in new legislation and new programs to secure equity. As a result, Americans now expect government to address social problems that previously were viewed as private – issues like discrimination in employment, equal pay, child care, and domestic violence. Since the early 1990s, there has been an increasing public debate

and demand for universal health care as a citizen right. And issues typically relegated to government – macro-economic management of the economy, foreign affairs, terrorism and immigration have become more salient. The range of issues debated in the 2008 presidential election demonstrate the range of current public expectations for government – universal health care, management of the economy, war and peace, immigration, terrorism.

This change has meant that a formerly bipartisan American foreign policy is now polarized. Republican Senator Arthur Vandenburg, Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the start of the Cold War in 1947, famously converted from isolationism to internationalism, saying that "politics stops at the water's edge." Vandenburg worked to implement a bipartisan policy supporting the Truman Doctrine promulgated by Democratic President Harry Truman as well as the European Marshall Plan and NATO. But the conflict over the Vietnam War in the 1960s which preceded later conflicts in Central America and now Iraq and Afghanistan, followed by increasing splits between business and labor over trade, immigration and outsourcing policies, the mobilization of nationalities and ethnic groups of all types around issues related to American policy toward their countries, and the growth of global issues such as human rights, genocide and hunger and disaster response has created new partisan divides on foreign policy issues.

Lobbying, Parties and Policy Development. In the U.S. it is commonly thought that lobbyists mostly work across the "aisle" on a bipartisan or nonpartisan basis. In fact, the relationship between policy advocates (another term for lobbyists) and political parties and national policy agendas is quite intimate:

- Government officials do act as policy advocates themselves in concert with coalitions of interest groups.
- Interest groups are active in electing officials who share their policy views.
- In many cases, many elected officials view themselves as leaders of specific interests and are elected on the basis of the support of these groups.
- Interest group advocates can provide critical resources to legislators. In addition to campaign funding, this can range from research, to providing legislative language, to liaison and mobilization of public support both in campaigns and during key legislative votes as well as acting as surrogates in traditional and social media,

Party coalitions help structure these relationships. For example, conservative and religious citizens groups are associated with Republican officials, while labor unions and diverse liberal citizens groups (e.g., women's and civil rights organizations) are associated with Democratic officials.

While it remains an effective lobbying strategy to claim to be bipartisan, comprehensive research on lobbyists in the polarized era finds that lobbyists actually primarily work within their own partisan networks. According to a major study of policy advocates, these networks tend to be homogeneous and within the same political party.

More specifically, Democratic lobbyists and advocates tend to self-select colleagues who are also Democrats at a 59% rate, while Republicans also show similar "in-breeding" at a lower but still relatively high 41% rate (Heinz, Laumann, Nelson and Salisbury, 1993:. 179). And in terms of contacting public officials, "more than three-quarters of the time, all of the groups making contact were on the same side of the issue" (Heinz et al., 1993:242). Government officials are even more partisan: "not only does it affect the policy positions they take and the contacts they seek, but it is very often a decisive factor in getting them their jobs" (Heinz et al., 1993:244). It is only the independent agencies and regulatory commission officials which are relatively bipartisan which makes sense given their appointment structure.

A recent study which focused on policy issues (rather than advocates) similarly finds that government officials "far from being merely the object of lobbying activity from outside interests….[are in fact] more than 40 percent of the advocacy universe" (Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball and Leech:2007:13). Thus, government officials do advocate for policies themselves. In Congress, party leaders as primarily as policy gatekeepers rather than as advocates. Of the issues examined in this study, about half of the "issues didn't have a partisan dimension and another quarter were only somewhat partisan" (Baumgartner et al., 1993:107). But partisan issues did have greater salience – and "partisan issues…[received] significantly more attention in Congress" and "were more likely to be the subject of a vote on the floor of the House or Senate" (Baumgartner et al., 1993:108).

Party Rules

Because parties in the U.S. do have different organizational structures, party rules affecting policy development encompass both the legislative parties as well as the formal party organizations.

There are no explicit party rules in either the Democratic or the Republican parties which define how party policy is developed. Instead, party rules define the procedures by which party leaders, party auxiliaries and decision making bodies are elected and constituted. Below, the major DNC and RNC rules are described, as were the congressional rules previously. Each state and local party also determine their own rules, and the national party does not usually overrule state and local parties except in terms of the national nominating conventions.

Democratic Party Rules

Democratic Party rules include both the party organization and Congress – in particular, the U.S. House for reasons discussed earlier. The organization of the Democratic Party has altered substantially in the contemporary era, both in terms of formal

structures and informal relationships within the party, each of which provide direct and indirect sources for policy. There are three main national organizational units: the Democratic National Committee (DNC) which focuses on the presidency, plans the conventions and supports state and local parties; the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) which supports candidates for the Senate; and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) which supports candidates for the House. Historically, all outside electoral assistance came from one organization: the National Committee for an Effective Congress organized in 1948 by Eleanor Roosevelt. The activities of the DSCC and the DCCC are selected by and closely tied to the Senate and House leaders and reflect legislative strategies specific to that body. This is important because congressional reforms in the 1960s and 1970s created an alternate leadership track through the party leadership. An empowered congressional party leadership has striven to strengthen their ties to the DNC. Beginning in 1981, a member of the House Democratic Caucus was designated as a liaison to the DNC. Currently, at least one DNC Vice Chair is a member of Congress.

The membership of the DNC has changed over the years. At present, it has a population basis to its membership which reflects the diversity of the party as well as providing for inclusion of state party chairs and representatives of other party affiliates. The total of 447 members includes 75 at-large members appointed by the Chair.

Democratic Party rules are written both at the conventions and by the Democratic National Committee. The adoption of the Democratic Party Charter in 1974 permanently authorized the DNC and identified the basic principles of the party. Previously, the DNC ceased to exist during the quadrennial convention until reauthorized.

Rules have been an important part of defining the Democratic Party. It was the "two-thirds" rule for winning the nomination (revoked in the 1936 Convention) and the “unit (winner take all) rule” for state voting (dropped in 1968) that more than anything else gave the "Solid South" its veto and provided for sectional conflict.

More recently in 2008 and 2012, both the Democratic and Republican parties have cooperated in separately writing into their rules new procedures for sanctioning state parties that do not follow national guidelines for extending the window for selecting delegates so that the primaries and caucuses are spread out of the spring and early summer of the election year. Both parties have provided for a reduction in the number of voting delegates for states that violate these rules. While these rules changes do not have a specific policy impact, they significantly demonstrate the greater power of the national parties to enforce compliance with national party rules. Ultimately, this may have a long-term impact on the ability of the national parties to force local and state parties to be compliant with national policy directives.

Following the change of House rules after the revolt against Speaker Cannon, the Democratic House Caucus made changes in how its members received their committee

assignments. The Democratic members of the House Ways and Means (taxation) Committee were empowered to make committee assignments. This severed the link between party leaders and committee assignment. It also had the function of empowering the southern and conservative wing of the party at a time that northern and southern Democrats were deeply divided. These rules changes did have a direct policy impact – members now know that they cannot rise in party leadership unless they are willing to align themselves with official party policy as determined by their fellow congressional party members.

Republican Party Rules

As is the case for the Democrats, Republican Party rules encompass both the party organization (the Republican National Committee (RNC)) and the House Republicans. Other core groups include the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) and the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC), each of which organizes campaign support for election House and Senate Republicans respectively.

The Republican Party Rules place the Republican National Convention as the highest party authority during the four days it exists each four years. The RNC ceases to exist during the convention until reauthorized, and reforms proposed by the RNC must be approved by the subsequent convention to become party law.

The RNC's composition is state-based and includes the state chair, the national committeeman and the national committeewoman from each state and territory for a total of 163 members

In the years following the 1912 loss of the White House, the Republican Rules started adding bonus delegates to their convention delegate allocation formula which placed greater weight on areas of Republican strength. Extra delegates were allotted to states that gave its electoral vote to the Republican presidential ticket, elected a Republican Governor, or had a Republican majority in the combined U.S. House and Senate delegation. This tended to link Republican conventions to more conservative or traditional Republican views.

The major factor shaping House Republican Conference Rules was being in the minority from 1954-1994 – known colloquially as "forty years in the desert." House Republicans became a semi-permanent minority party and its rules were designed to oppose Democratic policies. While Democrats focused on reducing the strength of the one-party South and the Conservative Coalition, Republicans who remained dormant during the periods of Democratic majorities after 1932 began to change in the 1980s. The House Republican Conference became more externally focused and more focused on policies designed to win elections.

One core set of rules changes for the House Republican Conference occurred after regaining the House majority in 1918. This involves appointment of members to committees which is done by a group called the "committee on committees." With the end of the appointment powers by the Speaker (the revolt against Speaker Cannon), the Republican Conference created a committee on committee composed on one member from each state who was empowered to cast as many votes as there were Republican members from that state delegation. This also separated committee assignment from party leadership, but here Republicans placed leadership power among Republican members of Congress who came from Republican strongholds.

Policy Development and Implementation in Practice

Policy development in practice is affected by a number of factors including the role of third and minor parties and competition among various party leaders.

The American "Third Party" Campaign Dynamic for Policy Development

The United States is a persistent two-party system and third parties historically played a key role American political development. The contemporary era exhibits a different pattern. Voting for independent and third party candidates increased in 1992 with Ross Perot earning 18.9% of the popular vote, the best showing since 1912 when Theodore Roosevelt won 27.4% of the vote. Since 1912, four of the five independent or third party candidates who won more than 5% of the popular vote for president occurred in the contemporary era: George Wallace in 1968, John Anderson in 1980, and Perot in 1992 and 1996. Yet, the American two-party system remains stable and the dominant Democratic and Republican parties are now institutionalized, providing protection from third party threats. In fact, while voting for independent and third party candidates has increased to some degree since the 1970s, today it is unlikely that a new third party could become a major party.

For example, in 1992, Ross Perot ran an insurgent campaign formally structured as an independent candidacy that provides a good example of how this process works. He ran as an independent candidate rather than as a third or minor party due to difficulties getting on the ballot as a political party. Third parties reflect flash points in policy issues and define new constituencies that once defined, allow the major parties to "move in" and revise their policies to make them a more attractive mechanism for achievement of the new policy ideas. Perot was no exception despite the fact that he was not a party in the "true" sense and the self-funding of his campaign.[16] He stressed government reform, a balanced federal budget and economic nationalism and after campaigning using unheard

[16] Perot spent over $12 million of his own money in 1992 to fund his campaign.

of 30 minute paid “infomercials,” Perot won 19% of the national vote in 1992. This is significant since most Americans know that unless they are truly unhappy with both of the major parties, a vote for a non-major party candidate can be a “wasted” vote.

In this instance, the aftermath was significant – particularly for the losing Republican Party where an incumbent president was toppled. The top Republican party leaders such as Hayley Barbour, then the Chair of the Republican National Committee (and current Mississippi Governor), Bob Dole, the Republican Senate leader (and later the 1996 Republican presidential nominee) and Bob Michel, the Republican House leader were not welcoming. Dole, for example, called Perot a “hit and run artist.” But others – in particular House Republicans under the leadership of then maverick Republican Whip Newt Gingrich (later Speaker of the U.S. House) – reached out. Not only was Perot’s pollster invited to speak to the House Republican policy retreat in 1993, Perot himself met with House Republican freshman, and increasingly major Republican elected officials in both the U.S. House (in addition to Newt Gingrich, this included John Doolittle (CA-4), Joe Barton (TX-6), and Pete Hoekstra (MI-2) and the U.S. Senate (e.g., Kay Bailey Hutchinson (TX), Jim Inhofe (OK) Alfonse D’Amato (NY) became dues-paying members of Perot’s organization, United We Stand America (UWSA).

The impact of Perot’s campaign was large – his focus on cutting government programs can be seen in the 2010-12 debate over cutting social insurance programs that are labeled by the right as “entitlement” programs. In the immediate aftermath of his 1992 campaign, the House Republicans under the leadership of Newt Gingrich released the “Contract With America” – a set of policy proposals and campaign talking points that are widely credited as leading to the election of a House Republican majority in 1994. “Contract with American” was a national policy document that was quite different from the 1992 Republican convention platform. It did not address or discuss the so-called social issues such as family and moral values and abortion. Instead, it creating a policy agenda stressed governmental reform and budget and tax issues that were very similar to the Perot policies. In 1995, Perot launched the Reform Party and ran as its 1996 presidential nominee. This year he won only 8 percent of the vote. Nonetheless, this was still quite large, however, in terms of the history of third parties in the U.S. In 2000, the Reform Party nominee was Pat Buchanan, who had sought the Republican Party nomination in 1992 and 1996. Support for the Reform Party has dwindled in subsequent elections and it is clear that the Republican Party has welcomed the Perot constituency within its ranks and adopted the major planks of the Perot insurgency.

In the absence of extraordinary times or insurgent leaders, policy development primarily occurs within the permanent and temporary party organizations.

The Party Crucible for Policy Development

The “Permanent” Party. The “permanent party” refers to party organizations

which have an ongoing existence either through an elected position or else an organization. As discussed earlier, members of Congress and the executives (Presidents and Governors) have conflicted over policy. In addition, there may be times when elected officials are at odds with party organizational leaders. And there may be genuine conflicts over federal vs. state issues that unite elected officials at the state as opposed to the federal level that crosscut party lines.[17]

For example, after the 2004 presidential election, there was a battle for party control between congressional candidates for the DNC Chair and those supported by state leaders, a division which has been mirrored in the Republican party for decades as well. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid informally supported two former House members (Martin Frost from Texas and Tim Roemer from Colorado) in their losing bids for DNC Chair. However, 2004 presidential candidate Howard Dean won the DNC Post with crucial support from the Association of State Democratic Chairs with his plank of a 50-state plan for rebuilding state parties. There are ongoing efforts to define and control the national Democratic Party. After Dean's election, there were some public conflicts between then DCCC Chair Rahm Emmanuel and DSCC Chair Chuck Schumer with Dean reflecting differences over the DNC role in financing their strategies of targeting to the district versus Dean's 50 state effort.

Beyond state-congressional divisions over party leadership, some national committee chairs are widely considered bad leaders and managers. The Republican Party elected their first African-American leader Michael Steele, a former Lt. Governor and senate candidate of Maryland, in 2009. Steele faced criticisms of having mismanaged the party's finances, including spending lavish amounts of money on party retreats and events, spending several million dollars in cash reserves and leaving the party in debt, and weak fundraising. Many of his top aides resigned in disgust with the state of the party. As a direct result, several outside groups emerged emboldened by the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision, which effectively allowed for unlimited fundraising provided the groups do not coordinate with the parties or candidates' campaigns.

These are known as Political Action Committees (or PACs) based upon the campaign finance reforms enacted in 1974. The legal status of these groups has changed with subsequent ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court which now permit funding to be provided outside of the political parties. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that PACs are only a

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[17] Prior to the strong national organization of the two parties' governors' organizations, the nation's governors organized under the National Governors Association led by New York Republican Nelson Rockefeller in the 1960s. Governor Rockefeller organized leaders of the states to take advantage of Congress's block grants to the states under Medicaid for coverage of low-income women, children, elderly people and individuals with disabilities – a major policy problem among the states' leaders. The program funding structure allowed for governors to insure their neediest constituents at low costs to their own budgets, saving at least 50 percent of the costs. The nation's governors still meet regularly today to discuss policy issues of interest to their states and organize to pressure Congress and the President to protect their states' needs.

legal creation and are also affiliated with membership groups as well as wealthy donors. Thus, during Steele's tenure (and thereafter), Republican donors turned from the RNC to groups such as American Crossroads (which was formed in direct response to criticisms against Steele and promised donors Steele and the RNC would lack access to their donations) and Crossroads Grassroots Policy Strategies, a group led by Republican strategists and former Bush advisor Karl Rove. While these groups lack the full reach of the RNC, they have encouraged division over unity within the Republican Party.

On the Democratic side, a parallel example would be the election of Howard Dean, the former Vermont Governor and 2004 presidential candidate as Chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). During his tenure as Chair, significant funds were channeled outside of the DNC by George Soros and other wealthy donors as well as other allies and former staffers of former Pres. Bill Clinton to private sector groups to build databases and develop get-out-the-vote efforts. Dean did not get along well with Rahm Emmanuel (now Mayor of Chicago and previously Chief of Staff to Pres. Obama in his first term), the then Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Dean, a medical doctor interested in health care reform, who had hoped to receive a cabinet appointment did not only not receive an appointment, but was passed over when Pres. Obama's first choice, former Sen. Tom Daschle, had to step aside over ethical concerns.

Governors and Presidents. Governors and Presidents are the titular leaders of their parties. For both, their party organizations are both a collegial body and a headquarters bureaucracy for managing the party. Historically, much of presidential relationships with national committees are centered around patronage appointments. While this is not a traditional patronage or machine-type of power, the status of having held a cabinet or other high level administrative appointment is an attractive inducement for elected officials. This includes those who are expected to be reflected as well as those who have left office or are defeated.

In some instances, the parties have sponsored policy development when in the "in-party." For example, in 1950, Democrats held a rather unique event outside of the regular party conventions – a "National Democratic Conference and Jefferson Jubilee" that was attended by the full cabinet, the majority of Democrats in the House and the Senate, Democratic National Committee members and state party leaders. This "convention" included a policy statement.

However, there have been cases where new Presidents find themselves facing a national committee that was managed by interests and leaders hostile to their presidential ambitions (e.g., Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) in 1933 and Republican Dwight Eisenhower in 1953). In these circumstances, new Presidents have an incentive to remake the party in their image. Sometimes, these efforts have involved rules changes, For example, FDR was unique for his championing "all-year-round political parties" before becoming President. As Governor, he wrote a letter to the 1924 convention delegates championing the idea and mailed a questionnaire to 1928 delegates to see what support

there was (a report that was released to the press).

Sometimes these efforts include attempting to remake the party even after leaving office. In the last year of Eisenhower's presidency, his RNC Chair, Meade Alcorn appointed a Republican Committee on Program and Progress chaired by then Illinois industrialist Charles Percy. Percy then served as the 1960 Convention Platform Chair. While the stated goal was to develop party policy, the Percy Committee was viewed by many congressional leaders as redundant and dangerous. Senator Barry Goldwater came to the first meeting and advised all to "fold up their tents and go home" as what the party stood for was determined by the White House and elected Republicans in Congress. This effort was not repeated.

In other instances, Presidents may view rules reforms as central to the success of their legislative agenda. President Kennedy, newly elected in 1960, expended a lot of political capital in reforming the Rules Committee by expanding its membership to include members in a campaign led by White House liaison Larry O'Brien in a 217 to 212 vote. The change in the Rules Committee, a key committee in legislative steering, was a critical first step in remaking this committee as a party leadership tool.

Party Congressional Caucuses. The U.S. Senate has no organized party structure. While individual Senators do vote partisan, the policy incentives are all individual. The common way to compare the two bodies is to say that the individual House member must conform to the House while the Senate must conform to the individual Senator. A key difference is that in the Senate, the top official is the U.S. Vice President and yet the U.S. Vice President is NOT a member of the Senate and therefore cannot be a party leader and is only invited to preside in cases of an expected close vote. The opposite is true in the U.S. House; the Speaker is simultaneously a member and a partisan leader. As a result, the policy process in the U.S. Senate is driven by small cross-party groups that broker solutions between the two parties. Depending on the policy issue, these groups are known variously as the gang of 6, the gang of 7, the gang of 10, the gang of 14 and so forth depending on the fluid alliances that are built across party lines.

In the U.S. House, party caucuses play different roles depending on whether they are in the majority or the minority, and whether their party controls the White House. In a more polarized environment, there is tremendous pressure to not oppose the President if of the same party. The majority power has the ability to govern – it makes House rules, controls committees, sets the agenda, governs the Rules Committee, The minority caucus is more free to discuss and propose policy agendas.

As discussed earlier, the congressional parties have reorganized to produce authoritative legislative – indeed party – agendas. Nonetheless, the two parties each took different but parallel routes to party strengthening and party government from the 1970s to the mid-1990s, followed by a strong Speaker model utilized by both parties. In general, the two parties have evolved differently. The Democratic Caucus model is more

coalitional, relatively more subservient to committee chairs and more internally driven. The Republican Conference model developed out of years being in the minority is more both externally oriented and more centralized. Both parties developed more party policy tools that provided for collective control through party caucuses, first initiating with the Democrats and followed about 10 years later by the Democrats.

When the House Republicans were not in power in the 1980s to 1995, they proliferated party leadership positions to provide other positions for entrepreneurial members. In addition to the positions of floor leader, whip, campaign committee chair, and conference chair, positions were added to include conference vice chair, conference secretary, research committee chair, and policy committee chair. After becoming the majority party in 1995, the structure was reduced and streamlined.

The Democratic Party began to initiate new party policy capacity when in the majority, but as an out-party when Republican Ronald Reagan was President. In 1981, the Democratic Caucus under the leadership of Caucus Chair Gillis Long (D-LA), the caucus held the first issues conference. Held in January, 1981, prior to the opening of the new Congress as a private retreat open only to members, this became an annual event where Democrats could discuss party policy. Later that year, Democrats created policy task forces where Democratic members could work on policy issues across committees. In December, 1982, the Democratic Caucus produced a comprehensive policy book known as the “Yellow Book” for its cover.

In 1983, the House Republican Conference held its first Issue Conference. This was the same year that then back-bencher Newt Gingrich (R-GA) organized the Conservative Opportunity Society (COS). COS members began to dominate the annual Issue Conference and became the driving force behind the 1994 campaign document ***Contract With America*** credited with the Republicans becoming the majority party in 1994. As discussed earlier, this document drew heavily on the Perot platform in 1992. Gingrich, who also organized GOPAC, an organization designed to elect more conservative members to Congress, was elected Whip in 1989 and become House Speaker in 1995. Gingrich’s election as Whip constituted a turning point as Gingrich defeated Edward Madigan ®-IL) who was the protégée of the then Republican House Minority Leader, Bob Michel (R-IL). In 1990, Gingrich led a revolt against the budget deal that President Bush had negotiated with the congressional Democrats. Once Gingrich became Speaker, he revised congressional rules and Republican Conference rules to enhance his power as Speaker: committee staffs were reduced by one-third, committee chairs were term-limited and the Speaker and a small leadership team both selected committee chairs and approved committee staff directors, and party policy was set by the Speaker and his advisory committee.

Gingrich was singular in that he viewed himself as constitutionally superior to the Republican Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-KS) and as equal to President Clinton. In this role, he viewed himself as the major spokesperson for his party. This created

tensions in the Conference after the losses in 1996 and 1998. When Gingrich was challenged by Rep. Bob Livingston ®-LA), he resigned both his Speakership and his House seat.

Congressional Party Factions and Groups. There has been a proliferation of what are called legislative service organizations (LSOs) or caucuses within the Democratic Party in the contemporary era. The oldest are the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) (1969) and the Hispanic Caucus (1976). Others include the moderate to conservative Blue Dog Coalition (1994) and New Democrat Coalition (1997). The largest are the Progressive Coalition (1990) with 71 members and the Out-of-Iraq Caucus (2005) with 73 members. The Congressional Women's Caucus (1977) and the Asian-Pacific Islander Caucus (1994) are both bipartisan. Increasingly, these groups, in particularly the Progressive, New Democrat, and Blue Dog groups are endorsing and supporting candidates for office and caucusing with convention delegates in addition to taking formal positions within the party on party issues and legislation.

The Republican Party has fewer legislative caucuses than is true of the Democratic Party. In fact, one of the reforms undertaken when Republican Newt Gingrich became Speaker in 1995 was to drop taxpayer support of LSOs. Now, individual members must support these groups out of their own individual office allowance, and a number of these groups now also have separate foundations organized external to Congress that support their activities (e.g., the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation). Republican legislative party caucuses include: Republican Study Committee (1973), the Republican Main Street Partnership (1994); and the Tea Party Caucus (2010)

Organized Party Factions. In the Democratic Party, there are a variety of formal national party affiliates ranging from Democratic Governors, Mayors, State Legislative Leaders, County Officials, Municipal Officials, State Democratic Chairs, National Federation of Democratic Women, and College Democrats. Each of these groups has its own history and groups have become avenues of recruitment to party and elective office. Young Democrats and a variety of other groups are typically chartered by individual state parties. In addition there are a whole panoply of unaffiliated party-linked groups ranging from the Women's National Democratic Club to Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition and a variety of labor organizations.

The Republican Party also has a number of formal party affiliates parallel to the Democratic Party including Republican Governors, Mayors, State Legislative Leaders, County Officials, Municipal Officials, State Republican Chairs, National Federation of Republican Women, and College Republicans. Compared to the Democratic Party, the National Federation of Republican Women is a much more active group although it does not play a policy role.

The "Temporary" Party. The term "temporary party" refers to the voters who vote in primaries, the activists who become mobilized in any one election year, and the activists

who choose to run for delegate positions at a national nominating convention. Research among convention delegates and primary voters demonstrate that each election's coalition does vary according to issues and the degree of mobilization. The results of these researches are too voluminous to detail here, but it is the case that research among the party-in-the-electorate supports the widening of party conflict to voters and party activists. Group caucuses do meet at the national nominating conventions and this provides a major organizing opportunity for new factions within each party. The last public hearings for Democratic and Republican Platform Committees was in 1992, a fact which has limited direct involvement in the policy process.

Democratic Partisan and Non-Partisan Sources for Policy

The Democratic Party has a wide variety of partisan and formally nonpartisan groups that work to develop policy. Each of these groups works informally, and their clout varies with their political ties.

Democratic Leadership Council. The Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), was a think tank type policy shop group organized by Al From, a former Executive Director of the House Democratic Caucus that emerged as the major proponent of why Democrats must make appeals to the moderate center between the 1980s until 2011. The DLC argued that the Democratic Party should not be trapped by what they characterized as old constituencies such as labor, and extremist groups like African Americans. Organized in 1984 after the 49-1 state defeat of Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro, the DLC selected Bill Clinton as the national spokesperson in 1989 and spun off an affiliated think tank, the Progressive Policy Institute. After Clinton's election in 1992, the DLC play a prominent policy role in the Clinton-Gore Reinventing Government initiative and the Democratic Party policy reversals on welfare and free trade issues. In 2011, the DLC closed its doors although its spin-off think tank, the Progressive Policy Institute continues to exist.

Women's Caucus and Emily's List. The partisan Democratic Task Force of the nonpartisan National Women's Political Caucus was a major player in Democratic Party reforms and organized meetings of women delegates at Democratic Conventions from 1972-1992, a task now taken over by the DNC Women's Caucus. The DNC also sponsors regular meetings of the Women's Leadership Forum, a women's donor group organized in 1993. Emily's List, which started in 1985 as a donor group for women by Ellen Malcolm, is independent of the DNC. Emily's List has more than 100,000 donors and provides highly regarded training and research to women candidates. Emily's List is well-known for selecting candidates based on their pro-choice position on abortion and is credited with raising the profile of the pro-choice issue with the Democratic Party.

NDN. Started in 2005 by Simon Rosenberg, NDN is an advocacy organization and successor to the New Democrat Network which operated from 1996 through 2004. NDN is

affiliated with the New Politics Institute, also formed in 2005. Rosenberg, who ran for Democratic Party Chair in 2004, split from the DLC to organize the New Democrat Network. NDN is distinctive because it focuses on Hispanic and immigration issues, in addition to others issues, from a Democratic Party perspective. Hispanics are emerging as a new and growing group with the Democratic Party and part of their policy focus is on immigration reform, particularly for children brought to the U.S.as illegal immigrants. While immigration reform has been stalled in Congress, the Obama administration has used executive orders to halt deportation of young people in these cases..

Center for American Progress. Organized by former Clinton White House Chief of Staff John Podesta in 2003, the Center for American Progress (CAP) is a new political shop designed to provide actionable policy information. CAP has a sister organization, The Center for American Progress Action Fund, which is the advocacy and lobbying arm of CAP. Together, they utilize research and social media provide a permanent campaign infrastructure for the Democratic Party. Podesta served as the Transition Director for the newly elected Obama administration. Senior CAP fellows are former well-known longterm Democratic staffers or politicians and many were appointed to the Obama administration.[18] CAP has a staff of over 250. Modeled on the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute, its purpose is to generate progressive ideas and policy proposals, as well as to generate an ability to quickly respond to conservative proposals and communicate effectively with the American public.

Daily KOS. Other new groups include the Daily KOS, Netroots Nation, and ActBlue, which are internet-based organizations. The Daily KOS, the largest progressive online community, is a blog started in 2002 that now receives over 600,000 hits a day. The Netroots Nation combines this community with in-person events, including the third convention in 2008. ActBlue is an online PAC that endorsed and funded candidates beginning in 2004. The Daily KOS was noteworthy in its demand to oust McAuliffe for presiding over House and Senate seat losses, and a failure in 2004 to defeat what they call “the Worst President Ever.”

The Democracy Alliance (DA). The Democracy Alliance (DA) is a donor group organized in 2005. Following the defeat of John Kerry in 2004, these donors decided to act independently rather than giving directly to the Democratic Party. DA founders openly discussed their dissatisfaction with the DNC’s leadership and their own interest in having a say in Democratic strategies. The DNC Voter File (known as Data Mart), for example, was a wide disappointment. DA founder Rob Stein argued that the donors needed to develop a new group of progressive activists through outside funding. Stein’s assessment has been discussed widely in Democratic blogs, based upon his PowerPoint presentation "The

[18] They include Carol Browner a Distinguished Senior Fellow and former Administrator of the EPA for Bill Clinton and Head of the White House Office of Energy and Climate Change for Barack Obama; Tom Daschle a Distinguished Senior Fellow and former Representative, Senator and Majority Leader in the Senate from South Dakota; and Lawrence Korb a Senior Fellow and former Assistant Secretary of Defense to Ronald Reagan and Director of National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Conservative Message Machine Money Matrix." DA has produced considerable impact because it provided seed funding to a variety of groups organized outside of the DNC that are creating campaign resources typically done within the party; Harold Ickes' effort to build a Data Warehouse as well as existing groups, such as the Center for Progressive Leadership, Emily's List, ACORN, and the Center for American Progress. Since 2008, DA has been much less active.

Republican Partisan and Non-Partisan Sources for Policy

Republican Party sources for policy include a variety of organizations that reflect conservative points of view from disparate sources – market, religious and philosophical (libertarian).

American Enterprise Institute. The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) started as an association in 1943 and became a nonpartisan think tank in 1954. AEI is one of the largest and oldest of the Republican Party unaffiliated think tanks. Its mission is to defend the principles and improve the institutions of American freedom and democratic capitalism—limited government, private enterprise, and individual liberty and responsibility. AEI is credited with providing over 50 of the top staffers and advisors for President Ronald Reagan's administration in 1981, and for over 20 of the top staffers and advisors for President George W. Bush in 2001.

Heritage Foundation. Founded in 1973, the Heritage Foundation is a nonpartisan think tank whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.

Cato Institute. The Cato Institute is a nonpartisan think tank founded in 1977 to promote libertarian principles. Cato owes its name to Cato's Letters, a series of essays published in 18th- century England that presented a vision of society free from excessive government power. Cato is known for its advocacy of libertarian approaches to small government.

The Religious Right. Religious organizations have varied – starting with the Moral Majority (started by Rev. Jerry Fallwell in 1979 and dissolved in the late 1980s) and the Christian Coalition (started by 1988 Republican Presidential Candidate and evangelist which nearly dissolved in 2002), the Christian right got its start with encouragement from Republican party leaders. By 2012, the religious right has separated itself from the Party and lacks a single organizational umbrella although the two organizations started by Rev. James Dobson, Focus on the Family (1977) and the Family Research Council (1981) are important fixtures. In 2012, former Sen. Rick Santorum ®-PA) received the endorsement of a private group of evangelicals and conservative religious leaders held at Texas ranch in January, 2012.

Libertarian Party. The Libertarian Party, while considered a minor party in the U.S., has an interesting relationship with the Republican Party. Ron Paul, a Republican member of the U.S. House (R-TX) and a Republican presidential candidate in 2008, 2012 ran as the Libertarian Party nominee in 1988. In some states in 2012, Paul received as much as 19% (Nevada) to 21% (Iowa) or 23% (New Hampshire) or 27% (Minnesota) of the Republican Party votes which suggests that Libertarians have become a regular part of the party.

The 2012 Democratic and Republican Party Conventions

The events are the 2012 Democratic and Republican party conventions are consistent with the points discussed in this monograph and include rules changes as well as platform changes.

Rules Changes. There were no significant rules changes in the Democratic Party. As discussed earlier, the Democratic Party rules were largely established during the party reform era. However, a modification of delegate selection rules for the 2008 convention under DNC Chair Howard Dean.to include lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered individuals as a targeted group (since 1988, there had been an effort to reach out to LGBT delegates) has resulted in more than doubling LGBT delegates since 2000 when there were about 160 LGBT delegates. This number has increased from about 350 to over 500 LGBT delegates in 2012. This rules change has increased the clout of LGBT policy views in the party and was one of the sources for the 2012 Democratic Platform change in support of same-sex marriage (discussed more below).

The Republican Party did adopt a number of significant rules changes at the 2012 Convention. Focused on what are known as Rules 12 and 15, these rules changes have the net effect of consolidating the power of the national party to control the delegate selection process. In doing so, the RNC and the insider or frontrunner presidential candidate can limit insurgent candidates and control the platform process from the top-down. Combined with Ron Paul's absence from the speaking podium at the convention and the decision of the Credentials Committee to strip Paul of half of the Maine delegation and to award these delegate slots to Romney supporters, this demonstrates a significant change in the Republican Party. The rules changes include:

- Wiinner-take-all primaries in March of presidential election years are allowed. For 2012, March primaries had to in some way allocate delegate votes proportionately to the popular vote.
- The number of states required to be won by a presidential candidate before his or her name could be formally placed in nomination before the convention was raised from five to eight states.
- Delegate votes are required to go to candidates who won those delegate votes in binding presidential primaries (Rule 15) (this was a compromise position in place of a more extreme position that would allow presidential candidates to disavow and remove national convention delegates who were legally elected under the party rules and laws of the respective states.
- Delegates who are bound by state law to a presidential candidate that has not released his/her delegates must vote for that candidate under penalty of losing his or her delegate seat.
- The RNC (with a 75 percent vote of its members) may make changes to party rules without a vote by delegates to a national convention (Rule 12)

These are dramatic changes that reverse the long-standing tradition of the Republican Party's confederal organizational structure. These rules will make it more difficult for grassroots, insurgent or movement groups to gain clout within the Republican Party. It is not status

To some degree, these rules changes parallel rules changes made by the Democratic Party after the 1988 Convention. Jesse Jackson, a presidential candidate, utilized the Rules Committee of the Democratic Convention to implement changes which shifted power to convention delegates in selection of DNC members. Most of these rules changes were later reversed by the DNC. These battles – some 24 years apart – demonstrate the growing centralization of polarized parties in the U.S. Nonetheless, conventions remain a powerful opportunity for the grassroots to introduce new issues for national policy agendas.

2012 Party Platforms. The two party platforms diverge on economic as well as social issues and foreign policy issues.

On economic issues, the parties take different approaches to deficit reduction. Democrats argue for a "balanced approach" that includes raising taxes on the wealthy while the Republican Party argues for extension of the Bush-era tax cuts. The Democratic platform opposes the privatization of the Medicare and Social Security programs, while the Republican platform suggests the reform of both to include vouchers for use in the private market and personal investment accounts rather than a governmentally insured and managed program. The Democrats defend the right of workers to collectively organize in unions, while Republicans argue for the so-called "right to work" without union membership. Both party platforms support reducing the reliance of the U.S. on foreign energy sources, but the Democrats seek to protect sensitive areas like the coastal plain of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, while

the Republican Platform seeks to open up these areas for exploration.

New this year in terms of social issues, the Democratic platform supports same-sec marriage for the first time stating that “We support marriage equality and support the movement to secure equal treatment under law for same-sex couples,” In addition, the Democratic platform reaffirms the Democratic party’s support for abortion rights. In contrast, the Republican Party platform supports passage of constitutional amendments that ban abortion and define marriage as “the union of one man and one woman.”

In terms of health care, the Republican platform states their plan to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, labeled as "Obamacare" by conservative critics. In contrast, the Obama administration and the Democratic Platform treats the new law as a major accomplishment and hopes to expand medical benefits.

In other areas, the Democratic Party, while affirming its commitment to the Second Amendment’s right to bear arms, calls for restriction of assault rifles. In contrast, the Republican platform opposes any limits. And the Democratic Platform advocates comprehensive immigration reform to provide a path to citizenship, while the Republican Platform opposes any form of “amnesty.”

The Democratic Platform which was approved at the Tuesday session (9/4/12) was amended in two ways at the Wednesday session (9/5/12) in a voice vote. First, the omission of language from the 2008 platform which states that Jerusalem “is and will remain the capital of Israel” was reversed and added to the 2012 platform. This language, inconsistent with the Obama (and prior Democratic and Republican administrations which as a matter of policy have declared that this is an issue to be resolved by the Israelis and Palestinians), nonetheless demonstrates the sentiments of a significant portion of Democratic delegates. This same language is in the 2004, 2008 and 2012 Republican platforms – thus demonstrating that support for Israel is one of the few remaining bipartisan issues in American politics. Nonetheless, the growing presence of Arab Americans among delegates indicates that this is going to be an issue to watch in future conventions. The second change was symbolic, and added language that mentioned “God” – stating that "gives everyone willing to work hard the chance to make the most of their God-given potential."

In terms of other foreign policy areas, the two parties have similar positions but offer different routes to achieving them. The Republican Party while opposing the acquisition of nuclear arms by Iran similar to the position in the Democratic Platform, criticized what they called as the “failed engagement policy” for the risk.

Good Public Policy and the American Party Crucible

The major facet of American party policy development that has remained true since the formation of true political parties in the late 1820s is that it is candidate-

dominated. Ambitious candidates are incentivized to both to appeal to voters based upon genuine political problems as well as to work to build party consensus over these proposed policy solutions. The crucible of American party policy development lies in elections, and it is the candidates who compete to provide the best options and to be both responsible and accountable for them. Throughout this process, the American political party system has innovated a number of policy tools that have been used to develop more collectively accountable tools to ensure that no one elected official or party leader can dominate the process without caring what the public, outside experts, and other leaders (peer review) think about the problem and the proposed solution(s) **(See Table 3)**.

This has not been a perfect process – but it is one that has allowed – over time – a more democratic development process. Despite significant periods of party collusion, party mistakes, and party failures, American political development has never veered towards permanent oligarchy and it has been responsive to change from the grassroots. This has permitted a permeable political development process whereby new issues, new groups, and new ideas can come to the fore and be implemented.

What is Good Public Policy?

A key question is what is good public policy? Is it party policy development or is it policy made by non-partisan experts? The U.S.

Table 3
SUMMARY OF INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN PARTY POLICY DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

PARTY-IN-THE-ELECTORATE
Creation of an interested, demanding and mobilized citizenry
Elections provide periods of intense political learning

PARTY-IN-ORGANIZATION
Organization at local, state and national levels
Quadrennial nominating conventions that are
- National in scope
- Representational of local interests
- Selected according to population and interest
- Highest authority in party when in session
- Write platforms that state party policy
- Inclusive of organized party groups and factions

Party rules that are
- Written and publicly available
- Open to revision
- Inclusive of decision-making procedures

National platform committees that
- Include diverse views and are representational
- Hold testimony / include witnesses
- Use regional hearings
- Use public hearings

Party leadership posts
- Determined by election
- Expanded number with different portfolios
- Permit upwardly mobile route for political recruitment and policy agenda-setting responsibilities

PARTY-IN-OFFICE – LEGISLATIVE
Right of conscience guaranteed for members
Right of conscience limited for party leadership posts
Party factions may organize and incubate new policy ideas
Annual Issues Conferences by Party
Caucus/conference provides for collective control
- Meets regularly/weekly
- Members may call meetings upon petition
- Secret ballots

Steering committee is collectively accountable
Committee on Committee is collectively accountable
Individual committees have some partisan autonomy
Institutionally supported party policy committees (Senate only)

PARTY-IN-OFFICE – EXECUTIVE
President/Governor viewed as national party leader
President/Governor nationalizes party sentiment
President/Governor has incentives to persuade fellow party members for legislative success
Primaries permit free, open competition for nomination

model provides different answers to this question at different times.

The committee baron era in Congress focused on good public policy in a non-partisan way – using rules of specialization, reciprocity, comity and committee deference. Where there were chamber or committee disagreements, policies were determined by trading voters (known as "logrolling"). This system made non-partisan policy based on expertise. This system froze political alignments at the leadership level and excluded new groups and issues and failed to reflect change.

Party caucus governance was viewed as undermining good public policy because only one party was in charge of making policy.

In short, one of the key lessons of American party policy development is that both party competition as well as accountable and responsible party organizations are necessary for democracy.

Evaluation of Public Policy: What Works?

There are three pitfalls in the current American party policy development system.

1. Current American political parties lack any policy vehicle for long-term policy development. Policies tend to be focused on short-term legislative enactment and may not take appropriate attention for policies which require short-term costs before long-term policy outcomes are achieved. For this reason, for example, the U.S. has failed to adopt long-term energy or environmental policies that work. The short-term result is that long-term policy problems are failing to be addressed.

2. The polarized party system does not work well under separation of powers. Parties sometimes have the incentive of developing more extreme policies since they fear their values will be lost in the policy process. This can result in a lack of responsibility and accountability. As a result, the current American system risks policy paralysis since there is no institutional structure for resolving party differences under divided government. The short-term result is that there is no permanent policy solution and much of the governmental is revisiting the same issues over and over again.

3. Where a political party in an institutionalized two-party system lacks a mechanism for incorporating party factions into a coherent point of view, fringe viewpoints can sometimes gain major party clout without being moderated. The Republican Party, for example, is currently split between libertarians, Christian conservatives, and business interests, each of who finds the Republican Party more compatible to their interests yet are deeply opposed to other party factions. The result for the short-term is a party that has veered sharply right.

4. Where a political party in an institutionalized two-party system has become too entrenched with leadership prerogatives, the grassroots may become alienated or become “captured” with few policy issues addressed and no other party to turn to. The Democratic Party, for example, is currently torn between a dissatisfied grassroots that feels ignored and a presidential wing of the party which is focused only on winning the White House and seeks to minimize differences with the other party to achieve electability. The result for the short-term is a party that may not be providing much of a difference.

None of these problems are insurmountable. But each needs to be addressed through new policy mechanisms, perhaps new constitutional or legal/structural reforms as well as internal party reforms. The American method of electoral dynamics and grassroots politics has proven able to respond to problems like this before, and indeed, that is the process of democratic party development – to respond to changes as they produce new problems and require new solutions and new leadership.

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