Policy, Party and Perceptual Bias in American Politics

Written by Colleen Harris and updated by Simon Lemieux, this updated New Edition Student Unit Guide provides support throughout the course. Feel confident you understand the unit: the guide comprehensively covers the unit content and includes topic summaries, knowledge check questions and answers, and a reference index. Use up-to-date examples: fully updated in line with the 2012 US Presidential Election. Get to grips with the exam requirements: the specific skills on which you will be tested are explored and explained. Analyse exam-style questions: graded student responses will help you focus on areas where you can improve your exam technique and performance.

The Decline of American Political Parties, 1952-1996

This is a study of Kentucky political parties: how they are organized and how they nominate and elect candidates. Because state politics in Kentucky is dominated by the Democratic Party, a major portion of the study is devoted to the Democratic primary candidates, campaign techniques, funding, of elections, and voting patterns. As in other states, campaign techniques in Kentucky are changing. During the 1950s and 1960s the Democratic Party had two dominant factions, and candidates for statewide office sought factional allies among local party organizations. Now factional alignments have disappeared, and candidates for statewide office build campaign organizations from thousands of active party workers. The characteristics, motivations, and allegiances of these party activists form one major focus of this book. Another focus is television, which has assumed ever greater importance in statewide primary campaigns. Because it is expensive, candidates who are wealthy or can raise large sums for television advertising enter the primaries with a substantial advantage, and those who use that medium most effectively are most likely to win. Two wealthy candidates who proved to be...
talented campaigners in person and on television were nominated by the Democrats in 1987: Wallace Wilkinson in the gubernatorial race and Brereton Jones in the race for lieutenant governor. The book features case studies of these two campaigns, which in many ways typify modern primary elections in Kentucky. Finally, since the 1950s, the Republican Party has been highly successful in campaigns for national office in Kentucky but has been unable to elect a governor since 1967. This study provides some answers to two questions: What is wrong with the Republican Party in Kentucky? And why are so many Kentuckians voting Republican in national races and Democratic in state races?

Justice and Partisanship

Political scientists, journalists, and astute political observers agree that American political parties, at both the mass and elite level, have become more partisan over the past fifty years. The two national parties have increasingly moved apart on various social and economic issues, and elected representatives have become more ideologically divided over time. In response to party polarization, rank-and-file party identifiers have further sorted themselves into the Republican and Democratic parties. Their evaluation of political figures, as well as their positions over a range of political issues, is more likely to be influenced by their party identification now than decades ago. Yet when one closely examines the overall distributions of ideology and public opinions, one can hardly detect any changes in them over time. The electorate remains largely ideologically centrist and moderate. Given frequent elections and the prevalence of watchdog groups and a savvy media, one would expect that representatives who deviate ideologically from the preferences of their constituents would get voted out. In principle, one would expect any electoral disconnect to diminish, if not completely disappear in the long run. Yet in reality, the opposite is true -- the electoral disconnect between the overall attitudes of the mass public and those of elites appears to have widened over time. The empirical puzzle is: How can party polarization be sustained when the constituents who elect them are not ideologically divided? The answer is geography. Federal elections are geographically-based. There are four hundred and thirty five separate electoral districts for House seats, and fifty districts for Senate seats. Congressional members are single-minded re-election seekers who are held accountable to their home constituents—not to the national electorate. In order to understand what contributes to party polarization and electoral disconnect, one must begin by studying the spatial composition of voters across geographic regions. I argue that the increasingly skewed spatial distribution of partisan preferences, which I refer to as 'geographic polarization of partisan preferences', holds the key to the empirical puzzle. There are two ways in which geographic polarization of partisan preferences can occur. One is through electoral behavioral change; another is through spatial compositional change. By electoral behavioral change, I refer primarily to party sorting that began after 1980. As the two national parties pull apart ideologically, voters can easily differentiate between the major parties and align themselves with the political party that lies closer to their political preferences. Because of party sorting, the connection between a person's socio-demographic characteristics and his or her partisan preference strengthens over time. By spatial composition change, I refer to the condition in which the demographic make-up of geographic regions (or electoral districts) gets altered over time in ways that are politically relevant. There are two mechanisms that can induce spatial compositional change. The first mechanism is selective migration. When individuals' politically relevant socio-demographic characteristics and lifestyle preferences are correlated with both the migration decision and residential choice, then voters become geographically sorted over time in ways that matter for their political choices. The second mechanism is place-varying generational replacement. The conventional notion of generational replacement suggests that cohorts coming of age in different time (or political) periods might develop distinct partisan preferences or beliefs. As younger cohorts replace older cohorts, the overall composition of the electorate might then change. While such conventional generational replacement continues to take place, I show that, after 1980, there is an additional form of generational replacement that is spatially dependent. In addition to the time in which one comes of
age, the place in which one comes of age also matters. In California, I demonstrate that younger voters coming of age in pro-Democratic regions (the Bay Area and Los Angeles County) are systematically more likely to identify as Democrats than those growing up in pro-Republican regions. As these younger cohorts age, the spatial disparity in term of partisan preferences widens. I use California as a case study because it is a very large and diverse state. There are many unique historic data, including individual-level opinion polls, voter registration data and yearly county-level demographic data. By assembling and examining various datasets, I show that selective migration began long before elite polarization resumed in Congress in the 1960s. Migration patterns have largely been stable over the past few decades. They are mostly driven by economic considerations and not by religious preferences. Over time, the accumulation of selective migration results in an increasingly skewed spatial distribution of voters of various socio-demographic characteristics. When the two national political parties began to pull apart on social and economic issues during the Reagan administration, voters took the cues and became more sorted by partisanship. Party sorting had two political impacts. First, it led to the onset of place-varying generational replacement. Second, it further accentuated the connection between the skewed spatial distribution of social-demographic characteristics and aggregate partisan preferences. Consequently, geographic polarization began to emerge in 1980 and continued to increase over time. Prior to 1980, counties in California used to have fairly similar partisan preferences. The moderate, centrist distribution of ideology among voters was reflected by a bell-shape distribution of partisan preferences at the county level. By 2000, the distribution of partisan preferences at the county level had become bimodal -- counties either had gone more pro-Democratic or pro-Republican, with very few electorally competitive counties in between. Through the interaction of electoral behavioral changes and spatial compositional changes, the moderate, centrist electorate is now spatially arranged in partisan polarized districts. These districts perpetuate party polarization at the elite level as Congressional candidates must appeal to either strongly Democratic or strongly Republican electorates within their districts. Lastly, I argue that since party sorting and the pattern of selective migration are deeply entrenched in the electorate, geographic polarization and electoral disconnect are likely to be sustained in the long run.

AQA A2 Government & Politics Student Unit Guide New Edition: Unit 3A
The Politics of the USA

Polarized

Partisan Hearts and Minds

Who Gets Represented?

Introduce your students to the complicated evolution of our nation's most important document, the Constitution. This packet focuses on various political parties throughout history and their impact on our nation. Challenging review questions encourage meaningful analysis. Tests, an answer key, and a timeline are also included.

Guide to U.S. Political Parties

Written by a senior examiner, Colleen Harris, this AQA A2 Government & Politics Student Unit Guide is the essential study companion for Unit 3A: The Politics of the USA. This full-colour book
includes all you need to know to prepare for your unit exam: clear guidance on the content of the unit, with topic summaries, knowledge check questions and a quick-reference index examiner's advice throughout, so you will know what to expect in the exam and will be able to demonstrate the skills required exam-style questions, with graded student responses, so you can see clearly what is required to get a better grade

**Steadfast Democrats**

In this work, Maisel provides an insider's view of how the American political system actually works while shining a light on some its flaws. Illustrations.

**Voters and Responsible Party Government**

To elucidate the impact of polarization on the daily lives of U.S. citizens, the research community may need to modify its benchmarks for what constitutes a successful public policy. The authors suggest that we need a better understanding of how polarization affects the quantity and substance of rulemaking, regulations, and judicial decisions. We also need to examine the effects of partisan polarization at the state and local levels of government, how much polarization complicates the conduct of defense and foreign policy, and precisely how polarization affects different policy areas. The publication should be of interest to members of Congress, presidential candidates, civil servants, political scientists, reporters, and stakeholders seeking to influence public policy.

**American Presidential Elections**

The major theme of Chapter 12, new to this edition, is the missed opportunities for the parties in the 1996 elections. The year started with a highly visible confrontation over the budget that could have revitalized the party coalitions if the issues had been carried over to the election. However, the candidate-centered campaign of 1996 ultimately did little to resolve these issues or to reinvigorate partisanship in the electorate. In spite of the opportunities for getting new voters to the polls created by the Motor Voter Act, voter turnout in 1996 was the lowest since 1924. Turning out the vote is one of the most crucial functions of political parties, and their inability to mobilize more than half of the eligible electorate strongly indicates their future decline in importance to voters. Until citizens support the parties more by showing up to cast votes for their candidates, the decline of American political parties must be considered to be an ongoing phenomenon. --From the preface

**Improving Public Opinion Surveys**

Seminar paper from the year 2005 in the subject Politics - International Politics - Region: USA, grade: 2.0, Durham University, language: English, abstract: Due to my father's involvement in local politics, I was excited when election time came around. Even little children were showered with gifts, such as candy, sun visors, balloons, pens – and the list goes on. Seeing the party logo in bold letters on every imaginable item became an everyday experience. But it was after my grandfather had died that I had the most memorable experience concerning the German party system. My father had kept his party membership certificate, a book with smooth leather binding and a black, red, and golden tassel dangling from its spine. I asked my father whether my grandfather was still a member; he shook his head and told me: "No, a party membership expires once the person has died." It is striking, that this kind of regulating party identification by institutional and legal means is non-existent in the United States. What theories then describe the exceptional conceptualization of party identification in the American context and how has party identification developed over time in the U.S.? To answer these questions, major theories of party identification will be presented and the decline of party
identification will be analyzed. In conclusion, evidence will show that American parties in the electorate are in a state of decline, which will have major consequences for the political and social landscape during the next few decades.

Political Communication in Real Time

Congress is crippled by ideological conflict. The political parties are more polarized today than at any time since the Civil War. Americans disagree, fiercely, about just about everything, from terrorism and national security, to taxes and government spending, to immigration and gay marriage. Well, American elites disagree fiercely. But average Americans do not. This, at least, was the position staked out by Philip Converse in his famous essay on belief systems, which drew on surveys carried out during the Eisenhower Era to conclude that most Americans were innocent of ideology. In Neither Liberal nor Conservative, Donald Kinder and Nathan Kalmoe argue that ideological innocence applies nearly as well to the current state of American public opinion. Real liberals and real conservatives are found in impressive numbers only among those who are deeply engaged in political life. The ideological battles between American political elites show up as scattered skirmishes in the general public, if they show up at all. If ideology is out of reach for all but a few who are deeply and seriously engaged in political life, how do Americans decide whom to elect president; whether affirmative action is good or bad? Kinder and Kalmoe offer a persuasive group-centered answer. Political preferences arise less from ideological differences than from the attachments and antagonisms of group life.

Political Parties in the U.S.

Six Feet Under - The Death of American Parties

American democracy is in crisis, but nobody seems to know what to do about it. Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop offers a big and bold plan. The true crisis of American democracy is that two parties are too few. Deftly weaving together history, theory and political science research, Drutman shows the only to break the binary, zero-sum toxic partisanship is to break it apart. America needs more partisanship, rather than less, but in the form of more parties. In this wide-ranging, learned, but highly accessible book, Drutman charts an exciting path forward that might just save the country.

The Great Alignment

Interpreting extensive data gathered in eleven southern states during the 1992 presidential election, this book addresses a critical question about the democratic process: Do political parties still have a meaningful role to play in linking government and the governed? While some observers have written off modern parties -- arguing that they have been supplanted by political action committees, social movements, candidate organizations, and the like -- Michael Maggiotto and Gary Wekkin find that parties remain viable mediators between the wishes and values of voters and the policy espousals of party activists. The authors base their conclusions on surveys conducted among a wide range of southern political participants in the 1992 election -- from the eligible electorate to those constituting the various party elites, such as chairs and members of party committees and delegates to the national conventions. In analyzing the data, the authors proceed in three steps. First, they define party masses by party identification and expected vote and compare them with party elites using demographic, socioeconomic, and ideological factors. Second, they identify issue and ideological connections between party elites and masses. Third, they contextualize their findings by exploring the various political and socioeconomic environments within which elite-mass interaction occurs. This study is
valuable for several reasons. Its southern focus adds to our understanding of a dynamic political culture in which patterns of party competition and loyalty have changed rapidly in recent decades. Also, it is the first such study to take into account the influence of demographic, institutional, and cultural variables on the ways in which parties cohere on issues. Finally, it reaches some intriguing conclusions. The authors find, for example, that issue-congruence within parties often has as much to do with internal factors, such as the strength of the part organization, as it does with external variables, such as race, religion, or level of education. In illuminating the continuing vitality of partisanship in American political life, this book will be studied and debated for years to come.

Neither Liberal nor Conservative

The 2016 elections took place under intense political polarization and uncertain economic conditions, to widely unexpected results. How did Trump pull off his victory? Political Behavior of the American Electorate, Fourteenth Edition, attempts to answer this question by interpreting data from the most recent American National Election Study to provide a thorough analysis of the 2016 elections and the current American political behavior. Authors Elizabeth Theiss-Morse and Michael Wagner continue the tradition of Flanigan and Zingale to illustrate and document trends in American political behavior with the best longitudinal data available. The authors also put these trends in context by focusing on the major concepts and characteristics that shape Americans’ responses to politics. In the completely revised Fourteenth Edition, readers will explore get-out-the-vote efforts and the reasons people voted the way they did, as well as the nature and impact of partisanship, news media coverage, and other issues in 2016—all with an eye toward understanding the trends that led up to the historic decision.

Machine Politics in Transition

Dismantling the Parties

This one-volume reference presents the major conceptual approaches to the study of U.S. political parties and the national party system, describing the organization and behavior of U.S. political parties in thematic, narrative chapters that help undergraduate students better understand party origins, historical development, and current operations. Further, it provides researchers with in-depth analysis of important subtopics and connections to other aspects of politics. Key Features: Thematic, narrative chapters, organized into six major parts, provide the context, as well as in-depth analysis of the unique system of party politics in the United States. Top analysts of party politics provide insightful chapters that explore how and why the U.S. parties have changed over time, including major organizational transformations by the parties, behavioral changes among candidates and party activists, and attitudinal changes among their partisans in the electorate. The authors discuss the way the traditional concept of formal party organizations gave way over time to a candidate-centered model, fueled in part by changes in campaign finance, the rise of new communication technologies, and fragmentation of the electorate. This book is an ideal reference for students and researchers who want to develop a deeper understanding of the current challenges faced by citizens of republican government in the United States.

Political Behavior of the American Electorate

Since 1932 elections and decision making in Chicago have been dominated by the Regular Democratic Organization of Cook County, led for a quarter of a century by the late Mayor Richard J. Daley. The extraordinary longevity of this Democratic machine provides the basis for this penetrating investigation into the nature of machine politics and grassroots party organization. For three years,
Thomas M. Guterbock participated in the daily activities of the Regular Democratic Organization in one North Side Chicago ward in order to discover how political machines win the support of the urban electorate. Guterbock's participant observation data, supplemented by a sample survey of ward residents' attitudes toward, and contacts with the machine, provide convincing evidence that the most widely accepted notions of how political machines work are no longer correct. Contrary to conventional wisdom about the machine, Guterbock finds that the party does not secure votes by doing "favors" for people, nor do services rendered determine actual voting behavior. Instead, party loyalty is governed by such factors as social status, educational achievement, and bureaucratic competence. Guterbock finds that Democratic loyalists are drawn disproportionately from the ward's lowest strata. Ironically, the characteristics of these loyal Democrats contrast sharply with the characteristics of those most likely to use party services. What keeps the machine going, then? To answer this question, Guterbock takes us behind the scenes for a unique look inside the ward club. He shows how members develop loyalty and motivation beyond concern for their own pocketbooks. And he analyzes the public involvement of machine politicians in neighborhood affairs, describing the skillful—sometimes devious—ways in which they appeal to their constituents' sense of community. By focusing on the interplay of party loyalty and community attachments, Guterbock is able to explain the continued hegemony of Chicago's political machine and its enduring image of legitimacy.

Polarized Politics and Policy Consequences

Tracing the changes taking place in the South, this volume identifies their broader consequences. The South is undergoing a political revolution--from issueless politics to one of the most issue-oriented sets of party coalitions and policy alternatives in the nation. These studies explore fundamental aspects of the changing system. Concerns include the role of elite studies in understanding mass politics, the increasing institutionalization of American politics particularly as effected by 1970 nominating reforms; and the realignment of southern politics, its present condition, and its consequences for both southern and national politics.

Unstable Majorities

A treatment of party identification, in which three political scientists argue that identification with political parties powerfully determines how citizens look at politics and cast their ballots. They build a case for the continuing theoretical and political significance of partisan identities.

American Political Parties and Elections

America is "currently fighting its second Civil War." Partisan politics are "ripping this country apart." The 2016 election "will go down as the most acrimonious presidential campaign of all." Such statements have become standard fare in American politics. In a time marked by gridlock and incivility, it seems the only thing Americans can agree on is this: we're more divided today than we've ever been in our history. In Unstable Majorities Morris P. Fiorina surveys American political history to reveal that, in fact, the American public is not experiencing a period of unprecedented polarization. Bypassing the alarmism that defines contemporary punditry, he cites research and historical context that illuminate the forces that shape voting patterns, political parties, and voter behavior. By placing contemporary events in their proper context, he corrects widespread misconceptions and gives reasons to be optimistic about the future of American electoral politics.

Political Parties in the Southern States
Party Identification, Political Behavior, and the American Electorate

Party identification may be the single most powerful predictor of voting behavior, yet scholars continue to disagree whether this is good or bad for democracy. Some argue that party identification functions as a highly efficient information shortcut, guiding voters to candidates that represent their interests. Others argue that party identification biases voters' perceptions, thereby undermining accountability. Competing Motives in the Partisan Mind provides a framework for understanding the conditions under which each of the characterizations is most apt. The answer hinges on whether a person has sufficient motivation and ability to defend her party identity or whether norms of good citizenship motivate her to adjust her party identity to reflect her disagreements. A series of surveys and experiments provide a window into the partisan mind during times of conflict between party identity and political attitudes. These studies show that individuals devote cognitive resources to defending their party identities against dissonant thoughts, often resorting to elaborate justifications. However, when cognitive resources are insufficient, these defenses break down and partisans are forced to adjust their identities to reflect disagreements. In addition, thoughts of civic duty can stimulate responsiveness motivation to the point that it overwhelms partisan motivation, leading individuals to adjust their identities to reflect their disagreements. In demonstrating the influence of competing motives, this book reconciles the two dominant theories of party identification. Rather than characterizing party identification as either a highly stable affective attachment or a running tally of political evaluations, it suggests that the nature of party identification hinges on the interplay between the motivations that underlie it. Perhaps even more importantly, this book shifts the discussion away from partisan change versus stability to the normative implications of party identification. While the polarization of American politics may be exacerbating partisan biases, there is plenty of reason for hope. By simply making citizens' widespread feelings of civic duty salient to them, these biases may be overcome.

AQA A2 Government & Politics Student Unit Guide New Edition: Unit 3a The Politics of the USA Updated

A gripping in-depth look at the presidential election that stunned the world Donald Trump's election victory resulted in one of the most unexpected presidencies in history. Identity Crisis provides the definitive account of the campaign that seemed to break all the political rules—but in fact didn't. Featuring a new afterword by the authors that discusses the 2018 midterms and today's emerging political trends, this compelling book describes how Trump's victory was foreshadowed by changes in the Democratic and Republican coalitions that were driven by people's racial and ethnic identities, and how the Trump campaign exacerbated these divisions by hammering away on race, immigration, and religion. The result was an epic battle not just for the White House but about what America should be.

Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop

Much has been made of the speed and constancy of modern politics. Whether watching cable news, retweeting political posts, or receiving news alerts on our phones, political communication now happens continuously and in real time. Traditional research methods often do not capture this dynamic environment. Early studies that guided the study of political communication took place at a time when transistors and FM radio, television, and widely distributed films technologically changed the way people gained information and developed knowledge of the world around them. Now, the environment has transformed again through digital innovations. This book provides one of the first systematic assessment of real-time methods used to study the new digital media environment. It features twelve chapters—authored by leading researchers in the field—using continuous or real time response methods to study political communication in various forms. Moreover, the authors explain
how viewer attitudes can be measured over time, message effects can be pin-pointed down to the second of impact, behaviors can be tracked and analyzed unobtrusively, and respondents can naturally respond on their smartphone, tablet, or even console gaming system. Leading practitioners in the field working for CNN, Microsoft, and Twitter show how the approach is being innovatively used in the field. Political Communication in Real Time is a welcome addition to the growing field of interest in "big data" and continuous response research. This volume will appeal to scholars and practitioners in political science and communication studies wishing to gain new insights into the strengths and limitations of this approach. Political communication is a continuous process, so theories, applications, and cognitive models of such communication require continuous measures and methods.

**Political Behavior of the American Electorate**

Many continue to believe that the United States is a nation of political moderates. In fact, it is a nation divided. It has been so for some time and has grown more so. This book provides a new and historically grounded perspective on the polarization of America, systematically documenting how and why it happened. Polarized presents commonsense benchmarks to measure polarization, draws data from a wide range of historical sources, and carefully assesses the quality of the evidence. Through an innovative and insightful use of circumstantial evidence, it provides a much-needed reality check to claims about polarization. This rigorous yet engaging and accessible book examines how polarization displaced pluralism and how this affected American democracy and civil society. Polarized challenges the widely held belief that polarization is the product of party and media elites, revealing instead how the American public in the 1960s set in motion the increase of polarization. American politics became highly polarized from the bottom up, not the top down, and this began much earlier than often thought. The Democrats and the Republicans are now ideologically distant from each other and about equally distant from the political center. Polarized also explains why the parties are polarized at all, despite their battle for the decisive median voter. No subject is more central to understanding American politics than political polarization, and no other book offers a more in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the subject than this one.

**Growing Geographic Polarization and the Perpetuation of the Electoral Disconnect**

**Partisan Linkages in Southern Politics**

The 2020 elections took place under intense political polarization, uncertain economic conditions, a global pandemic, and social unrest. Political Behavior of the American Electorate, Fifteenth Edition, attempts to answer your questions around the above topics by interpreting data from the most recent American National Election Study to provide a thorough analysis of the 2020 elections and the current American political behavior. Authors Elizabeth Theiss-Morse and Michael Wagner continue the tradition of Flanigan and Zingale to illustrate and document trends in American political behavior with the best longitudinal data available. The authors also put these trends in context by focusing on the major concepts and characteristics that shape Americans’ responses to politics. In the completely revised Fifteenth Edition, readers will explore support and opposition to the Black Lives Matter movement, discuss post-election attitudes about the January 6th attempted coup, examine misinformation and the beliefs in QAnon, and dissect reports on public assessments of President Trump’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Competing Motives in the Partisan Mind**
Democracy for Realists assails the romantic folk-theory at the heart of contemporary thinking about democratic politics and government, and offers a provocative alternative view grounded in the actual human nature of democratic citizens. Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels deploy a wealth of social-scientific evidence, including ingenious original analyses of topics ranging from abortion politics and budget deficits to the Great Depression and shark attacks, to show that the familiar ideal of thoughtful citizens steering the ship of state from the voting booth is fundamentally misguided. They demonstrate that voters—even those who are well informed and politically engaged—mostly choose parties and candidates on the basis of social identities and partisan loyalties, not political issues. They also show that voters adjust their policy views and even their perceptions of basic matters of fact to match those loyalties. When parties are roughly evenly matched, elections often turn on irrelevant or misleading considerations such as economic spurts or downturns beyond the incumbents’ control; the outcomes are essentially random. Thus, voters do not control the course of public policy, even indirectly. Achen and Bartels argue that democratic theory needs to be founded on identity groups and political parties, not on the preferences of individual voters. Now with new analysis of the 2016 elections, Democracy for Realists provides a powerful challenge to conventional thinking, pointing the way toward a fundamentally different understanding of the realities and potential of democratic government.

Democracy for Realists

The most in-depth analysis to date of America’s current political polarization and the forces that led to a Trump presidency

The Decline of American Political Parties, 1952-1994

An investigation of policy preferences in the U.S. and how group opinion affects political representation. While it is often assumed that policymakers favor the interests of some citizens at the expense of others, it is not always evident when and how groups’ interests differ or what it means when they do. Who Gets Represented? challenges the usual assumption that the preferences of any one group—women, African Americans, or the middle class—are incompatible with the preferences of other groups. The book analyzes differences across income, education, racial, and partisan groups and investigates whether and how differences in group opinion matter with regard to political representation. Part I examines opinions among social and racial groups. Relying on an innovative matching technique, contributors Marisa Abrajano and Keith Poole link respondents in different surveys to show that racial and ethnic groups do not, as previously thought, predictably embrace similar attitudes about social welfare. Katherine Cramer Walsh finds that, although preferences on health care policy and government intervention are often surprisingly similar across class lines, different income groups can maintain the same policy preferences for different reasons. Part II turns to how group interests translate into policy outcomes, with a focus on differences in representation between income groups. James Druckman and Lawrence Jacobs analyze Ronald Reagan’s response to private polling data during his presidency and show how different electorally significant groups—Republicans, the wealthy, religious conservatives—wielded disproportionate influence on Reagan’s policy positions. Christopher Wlezien and Stuart Soroka show that politicians’ responsiveness to the preferences of constituents within different income groups can be surprisingly even-handed. Analyzing data from 1876 to the present, Wesley Hussey and John Zaller focus on the important role of political parties, vis-à-vis constituents’ preferences, for legislators’ behavior. Who Gets Represented? upends several long-held assumptions, among them the growing conventional wisdom that income plays in American politics and the assumption that certain groups will always—or will never—have common interests. Similarities among group opinions are as significant as differences for understanding political representation. Who Gets Represented? offers important and surprising answers to the question it raises.
Political Behavior of the American Electorate

A groundbreaking look at how group expectations unify black Americans in their support of the Democratic party. Black Americans are by far the most unified racial group in American electoral politics, with 80 to 90 percent identifying as Democrats—a surprising figure given that nearly a third now also identify as ideologically conservative, up from less than 10 percent in the 1970s. Why has ideological change failed to push more Black Americans into the Republican Party? Steadfast Democrats answers this question with a pathbreaking new theory that foregrounds the specificity of the Black American experience and illuminates social pressure as the key element of Black Americans’ unwavering support for the Democratic Party. Ismail White and Chryl Laird argue that the roots of Black political unity were established through the adversities of slavery and segregation, when Black Americans forged uniquely strong social bonds for survival and resistance. White and Laird explain how these tight communities have continued to produce and enforce political norms—including Democratic Party identification in the post–Civil Rights era. The social experience of race for Black Americans is thus fundamental to their political choices. Black voters are uniquely influenced by the social expectations of other Black Americans to prioritize the group’s ongoing struggle for freedom and equality. When navigating the choice of supporting a political party, this social expectation translates into affiliation with the Democratic Party. Through fresh analysis of survey data and original experiments, White and Laird explore where and how Black political norms are enforced, what this means for the future of Black politics, and how this framework can be used to understand the electoral behavior of other communities. An innovative explanation for why Black Americans continue in political lockstep, Steadfast Democrats sheds light on the motivations consolidating an influential portion of the American electoral population.

Political Socialization Across the Generations

Political Behavior in the American Electorate is the best introduction to the understanding of political attitudes and behavior in our country today. Are Americans committed to upholding basic democratic values? Who votes and why? What impact do economic and social characteristics have on an individual’s politics? How much influence do the mass media have on our attitudes and political choices?

The Decline of American Political Parties, 1952-1992

Basing his discussion on analyses of national surveys in presidential-election years from 1952 to 1972, the author describes the social-group composition of political parties and persistent religious, racial, regional, and socioeconomic cleavages.

Reconstructing Past Partisanship

The American National Election Studies (ANES) is the premier social science survey program devoted to voting and elections. Conducted during the presidential election years and midterm Congressional elections, the survey is based on interviews with voters and delves into why they make certain choices. In this edited volume, John Aldrich and Kathleen McGraw bring together a group of leading social scientists that developed and tested new measures that might be added to the ANES, with the ultimate goal of extending scholarly understanding of the causes and consequences of electoral outcomes. The contributors—leading experts from several disciplines in the fields of polling, public opinion, survey methodology, and elections and voting behavior—illuminate some of the most important questions and results from the ANES 2006 pilot study. They look at such varied topics as self-monitoring in the expression of political attitudes, personal values and political orientations,
alternate measures of political trust, perceptions of similarity and disagreement in partisan groups, measuring ambivalence about government, gender preferences in politics, and the political issues of abortion, crime, and taxes. Testing new ideas in the study of politics and the political psychology of voting choices and turnout, this collection is an invaluable resource for all students and scholars working to understand the American electorate.

Political Parties and Primaries in Kentucky

This text on the travails of political parties in the United States is now up-to-date with a chapter bringing the analysis through to the 1992 presidential election. As in all previous editions, Wattenberg has a new angle of vision: in 1992 it is the Ross Perot phenomenon.

Identity Crisis

Abstract: Judicial elections do not generally attract much attention. The rolloff rates are often high between those voting in more prominent elections and those voting for state judges. That is, a significant minority of voters makes the effort to show up to the polls but do not vote in all races. Since 1984, The Ohio State University Political Science department has conducted election surveys measuring variables about the respondents as well as about voting behavior in statewide races; for my thesis, I analyzed survey data from gubernatorial years between 1986 and 2006 to examine the relationship between informational levels and party voting in Ohio Supreme Court elections. The scope of my project is unique, since few surveys have included questions about judicial elections, especially over such a lengthy time span: this is the first opportunity, nationwide, to examine voting behavior in judicial elections over time based on surveys. While most states select judges through nonpartisan or partisan elections, Ohio judicial races are notable for their hybrid mix of nonpartisan and partisan elements. Candidates for the Ohio supreme court first run in a partisan primary, but in general elections, parties are not listed on the ballot. Ohio presents a unique subject for research, since it combines elements of both types. I sought to determine the relationship between party-line voting (voters choosing candidates from their own party) in Ohio Supreme Court races and information levels present in the races. As voters acquire more information about a race, will they be more or less likely to vote for the candidate from their own party? There are two parallel issues here--the amount of political knowledge that a voter brings to an election, and the amount of information that is actually available in a given race. I hypothesized that as information levels increase, and also as voters' education and political knowledge increase, voters would be more likely to vote on a party-line basis. I also predicted that information levels would have a greater effect on high-knowledge and high-education respondents than their low-knowledge and low-education counterparts. In a partisan election, I would predict the opposite--as voters gain more information, they might find reasons to vote against party, rather than using party identification as a shortcut. But in Ohio judicial elections, a key component to information gathering is determining candidates’ party affiliation. Moreover, the overall amount of information available is limited, so there is little to dissuade voters from deciding based on party. Voter knowledge was measured by education levels and general political knowledge, demonstrated by respondents’ answers to survey questions. Party identification was measured by self-identified survey responses. Availability of information was determined by campaign spending and amount of media coverage for each race. The research I conducted allowed me to compare different election years and elections to each other, to see how varying levels of information will affect party voting. All three of my hypotheses were supported by the data. First, the three highest visibility races averaged higher rates of party voting than the other, lower visibility elections. Second, there were slight differences in party voting levels among groups of voters based on education and knowledge, with the higher-education and knowledge respondents showing higher rates of party voting. And finally, increases in information levels correlated more strongly with the college graduates and high-
knowledge groups than the non-graduates and low-knowledge groups. Two main implications can be
drawn from these results. While increases in spending in judicial races have been widely viewed as a
negative phenomenon, this study shows that such high-visibility races might help voters obtain more
useful information about a given race. Also, the study suggests that voters incorporate information
when it is available; ignorance in regards to judicial races might be more a product of lack of available
information than willful apathy on the part of voters.

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