UNIT 3

INTEREST GROUPS: REASONS FOR THEIR GROWTH,

I. Interest group: group w/common interest that seeks to influence government.

II. Madison’s dilemma: wanting both liberty and order: allowing people the liberty to form groups and express their views could destroy the hope for an orderly society. Political factions were inevitable --- need to control their effects. A geographically large republic is more likely to be able to cure the “mischief of factions.”

III. Pluralism: growth of interest groups prevents the concentration of excessive power in the hands of few, and thus enhances democracy ---> rebuttal that groups do not have equal resources and equal access.

IV. Reasons for growth of interest groups:

A. Tocqueville’s description of Americans as having a propensity for joining groups.
B. Economic developments, e.g., farm problems ---> Grange.
C. Government policies. Whenever govt. creates an agency, it creates an entry point for interest groups, e.g., New Deal and Great Society programs created agencies ---> more groups needed to form in order to protect their stakes in these agency activities.
D. Diversity of population -- countless social, racial, economic and geographic cleavages.
E. Diffusion of power in government. Political power shared by many ---> plenty of places in which a group can argue its case. The more places there are to influence policy, the more organizations there will be to exercise that influence.
F. Weakness of political parties: when parties are unable to get things done, interest groups have filled the power vacuum.
G. Reforms of the 1970s that opened up and brought out into the open the lobbying process, e.g., FECA and the explosion of PACs.
H. Interest groups tend to beget interest groups, i.e., when one group is formed, another may be formed to counter it.
I. Technology, e.g., computerized mailing lists to solicit funds, use of communications media.
TYPES OF INTEREST GROUPS

I. Traditional.
   A. Goal: to promote economic interests of its members.
   B. Types:
      1. Agricultural, e.g., Grange, American Farm Bureau Federation (nation's largest).
      2. Labor, e.g., AFL-CIO, UAW, Teamsters. Note decline of union membership in recent years.
      4. Professional, e.g., AMA, ABA.

II. Nontraditional protest.
   A. Goal: to protest the status of its members and to convince government to take remedial action.
   B. Examples: NAACP, MALDEF, NOW, ACT UP.

III. Single issue.
   A. Goal: to get government action on one overriding issue.
   B. Examples: Right to Life League, National Abortion Rights Action League, NRA, MADD, NORML, PETA
   C. Polarizing effect of these.

IV. Public interest.
   A. Goal: to bring about good policy for society as a whole.
   B. Examples:
      1. Common Cause: campaign finance reform
      2. Public Citizen (a Nader group): consumer advocacy
      3. League of Women's Voters: encourages people to become informed, to register to vote, and to vote.
      4. Various environmental groups (e.g., Sierra Club, Wilderness Society).
   C. 501(c)(3) groups: tax exempt and cannot be involved in election campaigns. Examples: American Cancer Society, Girl Scouts of America, FBLA

V. Ideological.
   A. Goal: to convince government to implement policies that are consistent with their philosophies.
   B. Examples: Christian Coalition, People for the American Way, Free Congress Foundation, ACLU, American Conservative Union, "think tanks" (Brookings Institute, Heritage Foundation, Cato Institute).

VI. Governmental, e.g., National League of Cities, National Association of Governors.
VII. PACs (covered later).
TACTICS OF INTEREST GROUPS

I. Use of mass media.

II. Boycotting, e.g., NOW's boycott of states that didn’t ratify ERA, civil rights groups boycotting S. Carolina because of that state flying the Confederate flag at the state capital.

III. Litigation.

IV. Use of amicus curiae briefs, e.g., disabled groups filing these on behalf of disabled PGA golfer Casey Martin, NAACP filing these on behalf of minorities in civil rights cases, NRA filing these in gun control cases.

V. Campaign contributions.

VI. Endorsement of candidates.


VIII. Issuing "report cards" to rate candidates.

IX. Initiative, referendum and recall at state and local levels.

X. Lobbying (more on this later).

XI. Mass mailings. New techniques of targeting specific segments of population w/database software.
REASONS FOR JOINING INTEREST GROUPS

I. Irrationality of joining a group:
   A. Single person will probably not make much of a difference.
   B. Person will probably receive benefits from the group anyway, e.g., an elderly person joining AARP will benefit from the group's lobbying efforts whether or not he joins AARP --- free rider problem --- need for groups to offer incentives for people to join.

II. Types of incentives:
   A. Material benefits, e.g., newsletters, t-shirts, mugs, magazine subscription.
   B. Purposive benefits, i.e., satisfaction that a person has done a good thing in joining.
   C. Solidary benefits, i.e., social benefits of joining.
FACTORS INFLUENCING INTEREST GROUP STRENGTH

I. Nature of membership.

A. Size.
   1. More members = more money, more votes. AARP as an example.
   2. More members also means greater cross-pressure among members and possibly less focus.

B. Spread, i.e., the degree to which a group’s membership is either concentrated or dispersed.

C. Cohesiveness: degree to which members are committed to “the cause,” e.g., members who joined solely for getting a good deal on life insurance would be less committed than members who joined because they deeply believed in “the cause.”

D. Leadership.
E. Resources, e.g., money, expertise, reputation, connections.
I. Attempting to influence government. **Interest group lobbying is generally most effective on narrow, technical issues that are not well-publicized.**

   A. Iron triangle: informal coalition of interest groups/congressional committee/federal agency that seeks to influence public policy
   B. These are sometimes known as issue networks, policy networks, subgovernments

II. Cooperative lobbying: groups with a similar purpose combining their efforts, e.g., liberal interest groups joined forces to put pressure on the Senate to reject the nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court.

III. Grassroots lobbying: organizing lobbying efforts at the local level.

IV. “Netroots” lobbying: political activism organized through blogs and other online media

IV. **Functions of lobbyists:**

   A. Influence govt.
   B. **Provide information to govt.**
   C. Testify at hearings.
   D. Help write legislation.

   -- a “third house of Congress.”

V. Regulation of Lobbying.

   A. 1946 Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act: Required registration and disclosure, but was full of loopholes.
   B. Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995: tightened up registration and disclosure requirements.
   C. Restrictions on gifts, meals, and expense paid travel that members of Congress may receive from lobbyists.
   D. Former agency employee must wait 1 year before lobbying that agency.

VI. The case for lobbyists.

   A. **They provide useful information to govt.**
   B. They provide a means of participation for people.
   C. They provide a means of representation on the basis of interest rather than geography. A “linking mechanism” between people and government. A “third house of Congress.”
   D. 1st Amendment protection.
   E. As Madison points out in Federalist #10, the “remedy” of curing the evils of faction by eliminating their causes is worse than the disease. Potential loss of liberty is worse than the abuses of lobbyists.

VII. The case against lobbyists.

   A. Rich and powerful interests are over-represented.
   B. Average and poor people are under-represented.
   C. By safeguarding liberty, equality is sacrificed.
   D. Single issue lobbies, especially, contribute to political polarization.
   E. Lobbies contribute even further to diffusion of power, making it even more difficult for govt. to get things done.
   F. National interest is sacrificed for narrow interests.
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES

I. Explosive growth of PACs: group that raises funds for favored candidates.

A. In 1974, only 600 PACs existed. Now: more than 4100.
B. Reason: cong. legislation that had the intent of preventing a few wealthy campaign
   contributors from helping candidates “buy” elections. Instead, Cong. wanted to “open up”
   campaign contributions to the masses, as represented by PACs.
C. FECA of 1974 did just that:
   1. Individuals could contribute no more than $1000 (now $2400 for 2009-10 cycle).
   2. Individuals could also, however, contribute $1000 to a PAC, with no limit on the
      number of PACs they could contribute to.
   3. Furthermore, PACs **could contribute 5x** (now ~ 2x) what an individual could contribute, and
      there is no limit on the total amount that a PAC can contribute in any one year.
   4. In addition, there is no limit on the amount of independent expenditures that a PAC
      could make.

II. Explosive growth of PAC contributions.

A. In 1972, PAC contributions to congressional races totaled only $8.5 million. By 2004,
   that figure was $384 million.
B. 50 House candidates raised > $500,000 each from PACs in 1998 (only 4 lost).
C. 38 Senate candidates raised >$500,000 each from PACs in 1998 (7 lost).
D. PACs even donate to candidates facing no opposition at all! Why?
E. Important to keep things in perspective: most congressional campaign money comes from individual
   contributions.

III. PAC strategies.

A. Campaign contributions --->Factors influencing who gets PAC money:
   1. **Incumbents. (Political party affiliation is of little importance.)** In 2004, 79% of PAC money
      went to congressional incumbents, and only 7% went to challengers (14% went to open seat
      campaigns).
   2. Winners.
   3. Those who share a similar philosophy.
   4. Those who are likely to grant access.
   1. Those in positions of special influence, e.g., party leaders, committee chairs.
   6. Whether or not a candidate holds a committee seat of special importance to the
      PAC.
   7. **PAC money makes up a higher % of congressional campaign funds than presidential campaign funds.**
B. Voter education projects (mailings, fliers, commercials).
C. Independent expenditures, issue advocacy ads
D. “Bundling.”
E. 527 groups: tax exempt groups that can accept and spend money on election activities
   1. These run issue advocacy ads and voter mobilization campaigns to influence elections. Since
      they do not make expenditures to directly to a candidate, they are not regulated by the FEC
   2. Since they are not subject to same contribution limits as PACs, many 527s are run by interest
      groups as a way of getting around those limits and regulations
   3. Examples: MoveOn.org, Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, America Coming Together

IV. Who has PACs?
A. **Corporations:** ~50% of all PACs. Largest growth in these since 1970s.
B. “Nonconnected” (ideological) organizations.
C. Professional/trade/health associations.
D. Labor unions.
E. Leadership PACs: formed by congressional leaders. Why are these formed?
V. Dangers of PACs.
A. Ethical concerns: does a contribution "buy" anything?
B. Special access of PACs that the average person lacks.
A. Drives up the cost of campaigning -> more time spent by Cong on fundraising
D. **Overrepresentation of those wealthy enough to have PAC representation.**
E. **Underrepresentation of those who lack such representation.**
F. Further incumbency advantage in elections.

VI. In defense of PACs.
A. PACs provide a means of participation and representation for the average person. Another linkage institution.
B. Without PACs, perhaps only the wealthy could afford to run for office.
C. 1st Amendment's right to **petition the government.**
D. Contributions are nonpartisan.
E. No conclusive evidence that PACs change congressional votes. Contributions more likely to make a difference in arcane, obscure issues with little public awareness more than in issues of major importance with much public awareness.
F. PACs provide political education.
G. PACs diversify political funding. W/over 4100 PACs, many interests are represented.
INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL PARTIES

I. 3 components of parties

A. **Party-in-Government.** Party leaders occupy positions in:
   1. Presidency
   2. Congress
   3. State governors
   4. State legislatures
   5. Local governments (though sometimes these are nonpartisan positions)

B. **Party-in-Electorate.**
   1. Registered Democrats
   2. Democratic identifiers/leaners
   3. Registered Republicans
   4. Republican identifiers/leaners

C. **Party Organizations.** Parties are decentralized along federal lines.
   1. National level.
      a. National Convention. Highest authority
      b. National Committee. When convention not in session.
      c. National Chairperson.
      d. Congressional Campaign Committees (for House seats).
      e. Senate Campaign Committees.
   2. State Committee.
   3. Local Committees: city, ward, precinct levels.
   4. Neither DNC or RNC can “punish” state/local committees if they stray from the party line — again, parties are decentralized.

II. Functions of political parties.

A. Nominate candidates.
   1. Previously: caucuses ---> nominating conventions ---> now **primary elections.**
   2. **W/expansion of primaries, nominating function now seriously lessened.** Party leaders no longer control nominations → *more candidate-centered politics* than party-centered politics. Contrast with **responsible party system in Europe** where officeholders are more accountable to their parties.

B. Raise and spend campaign funds ---> declining importance w/advent of "candidate-centered" campaigns.

C. Register voters.

D. Simplify decisions for voters: Provide a "shorthand" through which busy and uninterested voters can base a voting decision -- use of "party lens" by voters. In an LA Community College District election, 133 candidates were on the ballot, and *without* party labels -> difficult for voters to make decisions.

E. Unify diverse interests.
   1. Example: FDR's grand coalition.
   2. However, to appeal to such a wide variety of party members, parties must avoid taking strong stands ---> *charges of "tweedledee/tweedledum," "not a dime's worth of difference between the parties."
   3. U.S. not as party-centered as Western Europe (which has the “responsible party system”) → U.S. more of a candidate-centered system.
F. Act as moderating influence on govt.

1. To win elections, parties must usually nominate moderate candidates who appeal to the vast center of the American electorate. Fringe elements squeezed out. When parties do nominate people outside the mainstream (e.g., Goldwater and McGovern), they pay the price at the polls --- they therefore generally avoid nominating such fringe candidates.

2. Again, this is in contrast to the European multi party system, where fringe parties and candidates are common.

G. Reduce diffusion of power in govt.

1. In theory, a party brings govt. together in order to overcome the systems of separation of powers and checks and balance -- parties act as a unifying force.

2. In reality, people tend to split their tickets --- divided govt.

1. Office-column ballot facilitates split-ticket voting (as opposed to party column ballot, which facilitates straight ticket voting).

H. Provide patronage.

1. In theory, this should ensure that the will of the people is carried out.

2. In reality, vast majority of govt. jobs are filled by Civil Service. Plus, appointment of people with political connections has often resulted in corruption and incompetence (e.g., Harding's "Ohio Gang," Nixon's "Palace Guard").

I. Inform public through party platforms.

J. Provide "loyal opposition" (after the "honeymoon period")

K. Agents of political socialization, esp. at turn-of-century.

L. Linking mechanism between people and government.
RISE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

I. Origins.

A. Dangers of factions mentioned by Madison in Federalist #10 and Washington's warning about the "baneful effects of the spirit of party."

B. Nevertheless, parties became necessary in order to get things done in government, e.g., Hamilton's financial plan and support for Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase. Necessity of an institution that unifies government in order to overcome the systems of separation of powers and checks and balances that divide government.

C. Historical development: the Six Party Systems in American history. Realignment occurs roughly every 36 years or so.

1. 1796-1820: the 1st party system: Federalists v. Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans
2. 1824-1856: the 2nd party system: Jacksonian Democrats v. Whigs
3. 1860-1892: the 3rd party system: Republican dominance as the party against slavery and the party that put the Union back together.
4. 1896-1928: the 4th party system: second period of Republican dominance with its coalition of big business and the working classes against the Democratic rural interests.
5. 1932-1964: the 5th party system: Democratic dominance begun under FDR and the New Deal. FDR's grand coalition included urban dwellers, labor unions, Catholics, Jews, the poor, Southerners, Blacks, farmers
   a. Much split ticket voting.
   b. Presidents of one party (typically Republican) with Congresses of the opposite party (typically Democratic).
   c. An era of party dealignment, as voters are moving away from both parties and are increasingly independent.
   d. Nixon ("Southern strategy") and Reagan built a coalition of disenchanted white suburban middle class, Southern white Protestants, big business
   e. Clinton won twice in part because of his resurrection of FDR's grand coalition, especially Southern middle class moderates ("Reagan Democrats"). Women's votes were also decisive.
   f. Election of 2000 gave us a Republican president who won only a minority of popular votes, a 50-50 Senate (which became a 50-49-1 Democratic Senate after Jeffords defection), and a House w/a narrow Republican majority
   g. Election of 2004 provided a unified Republican government

II. Relative party strengths.

A. National govt.

1. President: Democratic.
1. Senate: 58 Democrats, 39 Republicans, 2 independent, 1 seat unresolved (111th Congress)

-- Divided government typical of the past few decades. The usual pattern has been Republican Presidents and a Democratic Congress.

B. State governments.

2. State legislatures: Democrats control 18 states, Republicans control 20 states, and the remaining states are split or nonpartisan (2006 figures).
IV. Third parties.

A. Types:
   1. Doctrinal: apply a general philosophy to wide variety of issues (e.g., Communist Party, Socialist Party).
   2. Issue-oriented (e.g., Free Soil, Greenback, Prohibition).
   3. Parties centered around a strong personality (e.g., Perot's Reform Party, TR's Bull Moose Party).

B. Contributions of third parties.
   1. Raise issues that other parties must address, and often incorporate into their own party platforms. “Champions not of lost causes, but of causes yet to be won” (e.g., Populist Party: direct election of senators, income tax, etc.).
   2. Voice for the fringe elements in society.

C. Effects of third parties.
   1. Rarely win elections
   2. Influence the outcome of presidential elections (e.g., 1968, 1992, 2000): “spoiler role.”

D. Obstacles.
   1. Two-party tradition.
   2. Single-member, winner-take-all district system for congressional seats (more associated with two party systems), as opposed to the multi-member, proportional system (more associated with multi-party systems) that is common in Western Europe.
   3. Electoral college's winner-take-all system, e.g., Perot won 19% of the vote in 1992, but had zero electoral votes since he did not win any states.
   4. Getting candidates on the ballot.
   5. Money.
   6. Media coverage.
   7. Exclusion from t.v. debates.
PARTY WEAKNESSES

I. Parties lack strong rank-and-file membership/lack strong grass roots organization
   A. Anyone can join merely by registration.
   B. No duties or dues.
   B. Most activities occur only at election time
   C. Most Americans are mere spectators, rather than participants, in party activity.
   D. Small percentages of “Strong Democrats” and “Strong Republicans”
   D. Increase in percentage of Independents (though most of these are “leaners”)

III. Parties have lost many of their traditional functions, or these functions have been weakened:
   A. Nomination of candidates (now done by primary elections)
   B. Funding of political campaigns (trend towards candidate-centered campaigns).
   C. Unifying govt. (we often have divided government, and intra-party conflict can be strong).
   D. Providing patronage (jobs now filled by Civil Service).

IV. Weak party discipline
   A. Split ticket voting. Voters feel less loyalty to parties.
   B. Few penalties for politicians who stray from the party line. Since candidates are nominated by the people
      rather than by the party bosses, candidates feel less beholden to the party.
   C. Candidates finance their campaigns on their own rather than rely upon the parties -> more willing to stray
      from the party line

V. Intra-party divisions
   A. Between party regulars and candidate loyalists/issue advocates.
   A. Between Dem. liberals and moderates (e.g. “Blue Dogs” in Congress).
   B. Between Rep. conservatives and moderates.
IMPACT OF PARTIES ON GOVERNMENT

I. Congress.
   A. Majority party has a majority on all committees and subcommittees.
   B. Majority party has chairmen on all committees.
      1. Minority party has a “ranking member” on each committee.
      2. The ranking member often becomes the chairman when party control of Congress changes.
   C. Majority party controls key leadership positions.
   D. Staffers are partisan.

II. Executive branch.
   A. Nearly all appointments to White House Office are partisan (“political appointees”). Many go to people from election campaigns.
   B. Nearly all appointments to top positions in other parts of executive branch are partisan (“political appointees”)
   C. Development of Civil Service System has greatly reduced party influence over the bureaucracy.

III. Judicial branch: nearly all appointments are partisan.

IV. State and local govts.
   A. Most state govt. positions are partisan.
   B. Many local govt. positions (e.g., school board, city council) are nonpartisan.
PARTY REFORM

I. Historical abuses:
   A. Control of nominations by bosses and caucuses.
   B. Corruption of political machines, e.g., Tweed, Daley.
   C. Unrepresentative nature -- young, poor, and minorities often excluded.

II. Reforms of Progressive Era.
   A. Direct primary elections.
   B. Nonpartisan elections at state and local level.
   C. Civil Service expansion.
   D. Initiative, referendum, and recall.
   E. 17th Amendment.

III. Other factors that have weakened the parties:
   A. Candidate-centered campaigns (esp. after FECA).
   B. Rise of campaign consultants to take over many of the functions of parties.
   C. Public disenchantment with parties and politics during the 60s.
   D. Growth of interest groups -- have taken on some party functions.
   E. Development of mass media -- candidates rely on media rather than party organization to get message across. The Internet, especially, has become important for candidate fund raising, candidate web sites, candidate MySpace/Facebook profiles, candidate advertising on web sites. Candidates can do these themselves and do not need the parties for these things.

IV. Evidence of "dealignment:" rejection of parties rather than changing of party membership, as in realignment.
   A. Growth of political independents.
   B. Trend to "vote the man, not the party" and rise of ticket-splitting since 1950s. (Go over congressional and presidential elections in last 50 years).
   C. Counter arguments to dealignment theory:
      1. Even though % of independents has increased, 2/3 of "independents" are actually "leaners." They are, in effect, "closet Democrats" and "closet Republicans."
      2. Same % of pure independents in 1992 as in 1956.

V. Reforms of the Democratic Party since 1970.
   A. Prohibited unit rule, in which a state’s entire vote at the convention was cast for the candidate with the most votes from the state’s delegation (winner take all)
   B. Developed a "quota system" to ensure that the young, women, and minorities were represented in party affairs (esp. the national convention).
   C. Super Tuesday to give more clout to the South, and perhaps a more moderate nominee
   D. Superdelegates (those who can attend the convention by virtue of holding public office) give the “party regulars/pros” a chance to do what is good for the party, and not necessarily for the people. These were “created” in 1982 amidst concern that liberal activists and outsiders were taking over the party.
   E. 1986 Fairness Commission.
      1. Complaints from Jesse Jackson that the threshold requirement was too high. He won 18% of the vote in the 1984 primaries, but got only 10% of the delegates).
      2. Requirement was lowered from 20% to 15%. Candidates now have to get only a minimum of 15% of the vote to receive delegates.

V. Party resurgence.
   A. National party organizations are better funded than in the past. Soft money donations to national parties, though now banned, were important factors in elections in 1990s.
   B. National parties compensated for loss of soft money by raising more hard money.
   C. Both parties, w/better funding, hold training sessions for candidates: how to plan, raise funds, organize.
   D. Very strong party unity scores (where a majority of 1 party voted against a majority of the other party) within Congress: 70%-80%.
   E. Party ID is still the best predictor of voting.
WHO ARE THE MASS MEDIA?

I. “Traditional” media.
   B. Television: CBS, NBC, ABC -- decline of 3 major networks w/advent of greater competition from cable.
   E. Trend towards mergers and consolidation → less competition.

II. The "new media."
   B. Characteristics:
      1. More interactive.
      2. More emphasis on entertainment -- "infotainment."
      3. Personalized.
      4. Emotional.
      5. Informal
      6. Opinionated
      7. Topical

THE MEDIA AND PUBLIC OPINION, 280-92

I. Do the media influence public opinion? Mixed evidence:
   A. Yes.
      1. Television "personalizes" candidates and elections.
      2. Media stress short-term elements of elections at expense of long-term elements
3. Those who "consume" media in turn influence others.
5. Rise of advocacy journalism/adversarial journalism rather than objective journalism. Journalists "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."
6. Studies show that journalists are more liberal than public as a whole.
7. Media are a primary linking mechanism between public and government
8. Profit motive $\rightarrow$ emphasis on boosting ratings $\rightarrow$ "trivialization" of news $\rightarrow$ people less informed on important issues

B. No.
1. Mass public pays little attention to the news (e.g., surveys showing how little people know about current affairs) and often forgets what it sees or reads.
2. Selective attention: many focus in on media sources they already agree with.
3. Selective perception: many perceive news in the way they want to view it -- they see what they want and filter out the rest.
4. Media are only one source of influence -- political socialization suggests importance of family, schools, peers, and other influences.
5. People consume media for variety of reasons other than information: boredom, entertainment --- these people are less likely to pay close attention to "hard" news and analysis.

II. Impact of newspapers.
A. Typical perception of liberal bias, but they generally endorse Republican candidates. (Publishers tend to be Republicans.)
B. Complaints from both liberals and conservatives:
   1. Conservatives claim that reporters are too liberal: college graduates (often from elite schools) with hostility towards middle class values.
   2. Liberals claim that publishers are conservative and therefore are more concerned with sales and profits than exposing social/political/economic evils $\rightarrow$ status quo bias.
C. Lack of competition: most cities now have only one major newspaper.
D. Largest amount of pres. campaign coverage devoted to day-to-day campaign activities.
E. "Horse race" coverage.

III. Impact of television.
A. Most people now get their news from television. Most get their political info from t.v.
   $\rightarrow$ decline of substance in coverage and rise of image and slogans.
B. Concern that television is allied with "big government:" use of television as electronic throne of President.
   1. President can now bypass journalists' annoying questions and go right to the people with a speech.
   2. Decline in number of presidential press conferences.
   3. White House manipulation of television with photo opportunities and sound bites.
C. Concern that television has fostered cynicism, distrust and negativism towards government and politics -- adversarial journalism.
D. Lack of competition (although advent of cable has made this less of a problem)/media conglomerates.
E. Concern that people look at politics through the "camera lens" rather than the "party lens" $\rightarrow$ further decline of parties.
F. Decline of network TV news and rise of cable TV news.
EFFECTS OF THE MEDIA ON POLITICS

I. Symbiotic relationship between government and the press: journalists need politicians to inform and entertain their audiences, and politicians need journalists for media exposure.

II. Roles of media.
   A. **Gatekeeper:** influence which subjects are of national importance, i.e. help to set national agenda.
   B. **Scorekeeper:** keep track of, and help make, political reputations, e.g., importance attached to Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary. Emphasis on **horse race** element of elections at expense of issues.
   C. **Watchdog:** scrutinize people, places and events (e.g., Watergate, Iran-Contra). "Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

III. Nature of media influences.
   A. Most influential at the agenda-setting phase of the policy making process.
   B. Issue framing: once an issue is on the national agenda, media provide context for understanding that issue
   C. "Sameness" – homogeneity of coverage.
   D. Media companies are businesses, where the main objective is to make money.
   E. Provide forum for building candidate images.
   F. Act as linking mechanism between govt. and people:
      1. In the past: People ---> Parties ---> Government.
   G. Contribute to higher cost of campaigning.
   H. Contribute to candidate-centered campaigns.
   I. Increase the role of campaign consultants. Instead of parties telling candidates what to say, media consultants report on findings of polls and focus groups and then tell candidates what to say.
   J. **White House manipulation of media** (use of television as "electronic throne")
      1. Photo opportunities.
      2. Sound bites.
      3. Spin control.
      4. Staged events.
      5. Trial balloons.
      6. "Going public:" when the president takes his case directly to the people
   K. Negative coverage of Congress. Congress seen as obstructionist foil to President.
   L. Emphasis on sensationalism and scandal → "feeding frenzy" when a story is hot
   M. Far less coverage of Supreme Court than of Congress and presidency.
   N. Media most influential:
      1. In primary elections rather than general elections.
      2. On undecided voters. Most voters make up their minds before the fall campaign, and many make up their minds even before the conventions.
   O. Increasing importance of Internet ("net roots")
      1. Fundraising

Communicating w/public: web sites, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc....