Political parties & party systems:

DPI~413
Readings:

- LeDuc et al ch by
  - Scarrow, Dalton, and Van Biezen
- Haerpfer et al
  - Ch 14 (Morlino)
I. The function of parties for democracy
II. Electoral systems and party systems
III. Parties in the mass public
IV. Parties as organizations
V. Parties in government
VI. Conclusions:
   ♦ Strength of parties in government and yet weak organizations and partisan dealignment among citizens
I: Functions of parties

- V.O. Key (1964)
  - Parties-in-the-electorate
    - Simplifying electoral choices for voters
    - Educating citizens
    - Generating symbolic loyalties
    - Mobilizing citizens to participate
  - Parties-as-organizations
    - Recruiting leaders for elected/appointed office
    - Training elites
    - Articulating interests
    - Aggregating interests
  - Parties-in-government
    - Creating government majorities
    - Organizing government and the legislature
    - Implementing policy objectives
    - Organizing dissent
    - Ensuring responsibility for government actions
    - Fostering stability
Types of party systems

1. Single-party systems
   - Legal or constitutional bans on opposition parties
   - E.g. Communist party in USSR, China, Cuba

2. Predominant party systems
   - One large party for sustained period in government, multiple fragmented opposition parties

3. Two-party system
   - Periodic alternation in government and opposition, other minor parties exist in the electorate and legislature
   - E.g. Australia, Britain, Costa Rica, Spain, US

4. Moderate multi-party system
   - Several (4/5) parties, none approaching 50% of votes/seats, coalition governments
   - E.g. Denmark, Germany

5. Fragmented multiparty system
   - Multiple parties (6+) in the legislature
   - E.g. Israel, Netherlands, Belgium
Why?
Role of electoral rules on party systems

Maurice Duverger (1954)

Mechanical effects of electoral systems
- Due to constitutional provisions, legal statutes or administrative regulations
- Ballot access, campaign access to media and funds, vote thresholds (legal and effective)

Psychological effects of electoral systems
- The strategic incentives facing candidates, parties and voters under electoral rules
Sequential process

Figure 4.1: The sequential model of the main stages to elected office

**Mechanical effects**: due to constitutional requirements, legal statutes, or administrative procedures.

**Nomination**
- **Ballot access:**
  The legal regulations for party registration and for parties to nominate candidates on the official ballot paper.

**Campaigning**
- **Media and funding access:**
  The legal regulations governing access to free campaign media and public funds or subsidies for parties.

**Election**
- **The effective vote threshold:**
  The minimum share of the vote required for a party to win a seat.

**Psychological effects**: due to the strategic incentives facing parties and citizens under electoral rules.

Types of electoral systems

Nation States: 191

- Majoritarian: 93
  - Majority: 27
    - AV: 2
    - 2nd Ballot: 25
  - Plurality: 66
  - Independent: 14
  - Dependent: 13
- Combined: 27
- PR: 64
- No direct elections: 7
  - STV: 2
  - Party List: 62
    - Closed
    - Open

Adversarial - Consensual

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# Mechanical effects worldwide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean N of parl parties (1 seat)</th>
<th>Mean N of relevant parl parties (3%+ seats)</th>
<th>% Vote for party 1st</th>
<th>% Seats for party 1st</th>
<th>Number of countries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Majoritarian</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative Vote</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Ballot</td>
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<td>3.20</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>FPTP</td>
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<td>3.09</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>All Combined</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.85</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.52</strong></td>
<td><strong>46.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>49.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
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<td>6.17</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ALL Proportional</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4.74</strong></td>
<td><strong>45.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>43.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
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<td>2.50</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Party List</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>43.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.05</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.12</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>50.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>143</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proportionality

Majoritarian formula

Proportional formula

Combined formula

Rsq = 0.8128

Rsq = 0.9532

Rsq = 0.9291
II. Parties in the mass public

Function of partisan identification
- Cognitive short-cut or cue for evaluating new issues, policies, candidates, and leaders

Affective orientation measured by direction and strength
- “People associate themselves psychologically with one or other of the parties, and this identification has predictable relationships with their perceptions, evaluations and actions.”
- Campbell et al 1954.
Classical literature

- First campaign surveys by the Columbia school in Erie county in 1940s – Paul Lazarsfeld et al.
- 1948 first U.S. national election surveys (NES) ; The Michigan school
- Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes *The American Voter* (1960)
- Philip Converse 1964 ‘The nature of beliefs systems’.
“The electorate is almost completely unable to judge the rationality of government actions; knowing little of the particular politics and what has led to them, the mass electorate is not able to appraise its goals or the appropriateness of the means chosen to secure these goals.”

Campbell et al. p543.
Ref: Campbell et al *The American Voter* 1954
[Party identification] “Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?” (A3004)

[Direction] If ‘yes’, “Which party is that?” [A3005_1]

[Strength] “Do you feel very close to this [party/party block], somewhat close, or not very close?” (A3012)
The America Voter: Conclusions

- Low levels of cognitive knowledge and civic engagement in American electorate
  - Most Americans unable to name their elected member of Congress
  - Most unfamiliar with government institutions
  - Most do not understand the policy process
  - Irrational voter

Yet Americans cast a ballot due to the cognitive shortcut of affective party identification
Does party id anchor voters elsewhere?

Britain – Butler and Stokes – (1972)
- Many ‘non-attitudes’ with unstable opinions over time and little consistency among issues

France – Converse and Dupeaux (1963)
- Less interest than the US

Almond and Verba (1963)
- 5 nation study - few discussed politics frequently or read about government

Stouffer (1955)
- Support for democracy as an ideal but not in practice eg social tolerance, freedom
Dealignment

- Widespread evidence of weakening partisan identification since 1950s & 1960s.
- Why?
- Russ Dalton: Due to societal modernization
  - Improved educational levels
  - Growth of mass media
  - Fragmentation of interest groups
  - Long-term and steady process
  - Lead to new forms of democratic politics such as expansion of direct democracy, expanding use of the courts, greater public consultation
Alternative explanations

Or due to ‘top down’ shifts in party strategies

- Schmidt and Holmberg - *Citizens & the State*
- Cross-national variations in dealignment
- ‘Catch-all’ (Kirchheimer) or ‘bridging’ parties
  - Party strategies generate weaker party links to capture broad coalition of floating voters
  - Esp. true in majority electoral systems
Trends

Russell Dalton and Marty Wattenberg

*Parties without partisans* (OUP 2000)

Regress year on party id in 19 OECD nations

- Partisan attachment weakened in 17
- Sig. fall (.10 level) in 13
- Weaker by age and education (political sophistication)
- Not concentrated among those dissatisfied with government performance
Consequences

1. Greater electoral volatility
2. Growth in party fragmentation (ENPP)
3. Growth in split-ticket voting
4. Later timing in voting decisions
5. Move towards candidate-centered politics (leader v. party)
6. Decline in party-based campaign participation
Note: Q: “Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?” (%‘Yes’).
Attitudes of partisans

% With party identification

- ALL
- Voted
- Did not vote
- High efficacy
- Low efficacy
- High democratic satisfaction
- Low democratic satisfaction
- Last election fair
- Last election not fair
- Parties care
- Parties don't care
- Parties are necessary
- Parties are not necessary
- 0 Most Left
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 Most Right
III. Parties as organizations

- Maurice Duverger – Ideal types
  - Mass-branch eg German SDP, Norwegian Labour
  - Caucus-cadre
  - Militia
  - Is mass-branch still functional today?
  - Mair: Decline in mass membership

- Katz and Mair
  - The cartel party – fall in mass membership but increased public subsidies for party finance and staffing
  - Do members matter?
## Party Membership

Mair and Biezen: Official membership figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Party Membership</th>
<th>Total Party Membership as Percentage of Electorate (M/E)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1,031,052</td>
<td>17.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>400,615</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>242,022</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>600,000</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>480,804</td>
<td>6.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>293,000</td>
<td>6.38</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>365,588</td>
<td>5.54</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>205,382</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1,974,040</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>346,504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>319,800</td>
<td>3.94</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,131,250</td>
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<td>Ireland</td>
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<td>86,000</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1,780,173</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>294,469</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>173,600</td>
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### Trends in older democracies

Official membership figures: Mair & Biezen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Change in M/E Ratio</th>
<th>Change in Numbers of Members</th>
<th>Change in Numbers as Percentage of Original Membership*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1978-1999</td>
<td>-3.48</td>
<td>-1,122,128</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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# Trends in Newer Democracies

**WVS 1990-2001 – Reported membership**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>2001</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<td>7.0</td>
<td>44.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep</td>
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<td>33.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
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<td>16.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>14.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
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<td>Philippines</td>
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<td>+</td>
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IV: Party-in-government

- Persistence (or even strengthening) of party cohesion in legislative voting
- Only parties can organize parliaments and government, control bureaucracy and administer public policies
- Parties-in-government persist unchanged but with weaker links to members and voters
Parties have declining legitimacy, mixed patterns as organizations, yet persistent strength in government.

Implications for representative democracy?

Implications for your project research?