

Government 30

Lecture 13

Elections and Campaigns #2

March 20, 2006

Announcements

Second papers due this morning, 9AM.

Midterm examination: Weds, March 22. Terms for Concept IDs posted. Will require preparation, but not immense time constraints.

“Primogeniture” will not be required knowledge, though it might be a bonus.

Voting and Elections

Learning about Voting and Campaigns thru 4 National Elections

1. 1992 Election -- retrospective voting
2. 1994 Election -- coalitions and turnout; the case of the vanishing marginals
3. 2000 Election -- rethinking retrospective voting?
4. 2004 election -- retrospective voting, polarization, or some combination?

II. 1992 Election Campaign

A. Perot -- a 3rd Party Emergent?

B. Fluidity

1. Bush's Loss of Support
2. Perot's Rise, then Fall
3. Clinton's Weak Mandate

II. 1992 Election Campaign (cont.)

C. Position Politics versus Valence Politics.

1. Position Politics -- "Spatial Voting"
e.g., the minimum wage, environmental regulation,
abortion, slavery in the 1850s.

2. Valence Politics.
E.g., the economy, war, and character.

V.O. Key-Morris Fiorina: *retrospective voting* ("vote your pocketbook"). Like party, an informational shortcut.

II. 1994 Election Campaign

1. Before 1994, Incumbent and Democratic Power

- Jacobson: avg House incumbent adv in Postwar Era: approximately 9% of vote.

OK, so why are most House elections blowouts?

The Case of the Vanishing Marginals...(Morris Fiorina).

The Case of the Vanishing Marginals

Fact: close races in House districts have become rarer since 1930, very rare since 1960.

Qs: (1) are we really in a democracy? (2) Why?

Explanation #1: Redistricting.

Problem: We've had redistricting for a long time, and members in redrawn districts do no better.

Explanation #2: Knowledge/Frinking. "To be known at all is to be known favorably."

Problem: We've always had frinking. And voter information is no higher now than before.

The Case of the Vanishing Marginals

Explanation #3: Weakening Party ID. "Vote Incumbent" as a shortcut.

Problem: trust in government has declined.

Explanation #4: **The Bureaucracy Did It**

With a bigger bureaucracy, members can bring home the bacon like never before.

Problem: Bureaucracy has been shrinking, but incumbent advantage remains

II. 1994 Election Campaign

2. When Minority Parties Can Win: The Republican Landslide of 1994.

- a. When Incumbents Support an Unpopular President
- b. When the Economy is Poor
- c. When Majority Party Incumbents Retire
- d. When Challengers and Minority-Party Candidates are Known & Well-Financed.
 - Steve Largent, J.C. Watts, Dick Chrysler
 - Fred Thompson, George/Jeb Bush

II. 1994 Election Campaign

3. The Role of Money (PACs, Parties, & “soft” \$)

- “To the victors go the spoils”; incumbents rule
- “Give Early, Give Often.” (EMILY’s List)
- EMILY -- Early Money is Like Yeast
 - (1) can use it to build early notoriety
 - (2) functions as a signal to other donors -- think about early investments in a .com startup, e.g.

Hard v. Soft Money

1. Hard Money -- donated by individuals and parties to campaigns and PACS. Strictly regulated by FEC.
2. Soft money -- raised by parties and then spent on party ads; circumvent fed law.
3. Issue ads -- “tell Ted Kennedy to stop raising our taxes,” “call Senator Santorum and tell him to support the minimum wage increase. PA workers need it.”

III. 2000 and 2004 Election Campaigns

A. Nominations – Party Still Powerful: The Case of South Carolina

B. Iowa and New Hampshire – How They Privilege Quirky Candidates

C. Voting:

1. Issue-Oriented: Prospective
2. Results-Oriented: Retrospective
 - no incumbent president wins w/ growth of less than 2%
 - healthy economy is necessary, BUT not sufficient

III. 2000 and 2004 Election Campaigns

D. Coalitions: Turn out the Core, court the Variables.

What I said six years ago...

- the problem for the Republicans: (1) the core is disenchanted; (2) poor candidates (Dole)

- the problem for the Democrats: (1) candidates stronger than party; (2) what if economic downturn?

What I might say today...

- For Reps, (1) and (2) were solved in 2004. Dems still facing problem (1), but candidate Kerry was part of their problem in 2004.

Other Thoughts on 2004

- Gay marriage ban referenda were IMP, less for changing vote choice, more for turnout. It mattered at the margin.
- Bush has slight gains over his vote and % totals in most states (esp South and FL, also IA). Exceptions: Alaska, Montana, Vermont.
- My prediction: battleground of future is Rocky Mountain and SW states (AZ, CO, MT, NM, NV). What Republicans like: the prospect of Hillary running in 2008. what Republicans don't: Ken Salazar's 2004 victory, Bill Owens' tax raise.

IV. How Elections Have Changed

Or, Some Help with Midterm Concepts

A. Decline of partisan voting

1. Ballot changes

Australian ballot [can split ticket] v. office-bloc ballot [can't].

2. Growth of independent voters

B. Fewer critical elections in U.S. politics

- Critical election: one in which a stable shift in party affiliation results (e.g., 1896, 1932).
