

DOES A PARTY SYSTEM PRODUCE INGENUINE AND BAISED VOTES IN ELECTIONS?

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Abstract

Party systems have existed since 1789, with all credit to Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson. The existence of political parties was unsettling to George Washington prior to the creation of them, predicting division within our democracy. The Federalist and Anti-Federalist Parties were the first two parties to exist, which fostered inspiration for the creation of other parties and sub-parties that now exist within the American Party System. Since the creation of party systems, ingenious voting and harmful party loyalty have raised questions regarding whether our democracy and government are divided due to the creation of party systems. What was the purpose of creating different parties? Is there any value in demanding party loyalty? What is needed in order to promote non-biased, policy driven voting?

Introduction

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loyalty have raised questions regarding whether our democracy and government are divided due to the creation of party systems. What was the purpose of creating different parties? Is there any value in demanding party loyalty? What is needed in order to promote non-biased, policy-driven voting?

The History of our Party System

The first president of the United States, George Washington, did not involve or associate himself with any political party. In fact, he rejected the idea of political parties, predicting division within democracy. The party system was not intended by the Founding Fathers, which was addressed in the Federalist Papers No. 9 and 10.¹ In Washington's Farewell Address, he made it clear that he was opposed to the political party system because he believed that such a system would create division and conflict.²

The Federalist Party and the Anti-Federalist Party were the first two political parties to exist within American politics.³ Alexander Hamilton and James Madison are considered founders of these first two rival parties, which is ironic since they wrote the Federalist Papers which were against political parties. Partisanship within the government became a reality following the leadership of Hamilton, Madison, and Jefferson.

The ideals of the Federalist Party consist of a preference for centralized banking and government with a close relationship with Britain. Madison and Hamilton did not agree with this part of the Federalists Party platform.⁴ So,

¹ Roy Franklin Nichols, *The invention of the American political parties*. 1967, Macmillan, ISBN 9780029229200, archived from the original on 6/17/2016, retrieved 10/31/2015.

² Rosino, M. L., & Hughey, M. W., *Who's invited to the (political) party: race and party politics in the USA, 2016*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(3), 325-332, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283534149_Who%27s_invited_to_the_political_party_Race_and_party_politics_in_the_USA, (last visited April 5, 2021.)

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

these men created the Democratic-Republican party to run a government that fit their ideals.

From the 1820s to the 1850s changes and additions to the American Political Party System were realized, including the separation of the Democratic-Republican Party and the creation of the Whig Party. The Whig Party was created by Henry Clay, who expressed values that did not align with the Separation of Powers and capitalistic protections.⁵ At the time, the Whig Party was popular, but shortly thereafter it became obsolete due to inconsistent advocacy and leadership. The newly formed and separated Democratic Party views were not aligned with the separation of power balances within the branches of government, however, the Party continued to remain popular and relevant. From 1854 to the 1890s, the Republican Party was deemed the anti-slavery party, having ideals and policies of the vanished party, the Whig Party.⁶ Around this time, the Democratic Party was opposed to almost everything the Republic Party valued.

The Compromise of 1877 ignited the Republican Party and Democratic Party to turn into broad-based voting coalitions, in which the Republican Party catered more to recently enslaved African Americans, while white southerners were more into the Democratic Party.⁷

In the 1930s, political progression and liberalism began to arise, which initiated the swap of ideology between the Republican Party and the

⁵ Robert J. Dinkin, *Campaigning in America: A History of Election Practices*, 1989, Greenwood Press, archived 4/20/2010 at the Wayback Machine.

⁶ Roy Franklin Nichols, *The invention of the American political parties*. 1967, Macmillan, ISBN 9780029229200, archived from the original on 6/17/2016, retrieved 10/31/2015.

⁷ Rosino, M. L., & Hughey, M. W., *Who's invited to the (political) party: race and party politics in the USA, 2016*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(3), 325-332, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283534149_Who%27s_invited_to_the_political_party_Race_and_party_politics_in_the_USA, (last visited April 5, 2021.)

Democratic Party.⁸ Democrats became more appealing to minorities, progressives, and some white southerners, while Republicans became more conservative, a well-known, right-winged subgroup resembling today's political divide.

Party Loyalty and Ingenious Voting

When it comes to political party systems within the U.S, some factors impede voters from making a real choice of how to vote. These factors including demographics and cultural values, party loyalty, and Primary elections. The idea and existence of a party system prompt division between the people and the government, which does not promote a unified society. Congress is a great example of how the government is divided. Congress is also an example of the harmful effects of “party loyalty,” which seemingly prioritized what is good for the party more than actual considerations of policy and ways of governing.

Party loyalty can mean many things. It can involve “race” and “cultural” loyalty, resulting in an election based on bias, not an election based on the office holder’s work record or policy preferences. This is where demographics and cultural voting come into play. Despite concerns about actual policy preferences and ways of governing, most people tend to vote for those with whom they share cultural and/or demographical similarities.

The voter turnout for the 2008 election between Obama/Biden and McCain/Palin is an example of immense and probable demographic and/or party loyalty.⁹ Records indicate that 95% of African Americans voted for Obama/Biden, whereas 5% of African Americans voted for McCain/Palin.¹⁰

⁸ Id.

⁹ *How Groups Voted in 1992*, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-2008>, (last visited April 5, 2021.)

¹⁰ Id.

On the other hand, 43% of white Americans voted for Obama/Biden, whereas 55% of white Americans voted for McCain/Palin.¹¹ Then, we see that 67% of Hispanics voted for Obama/Biden, whereas 31% of Hispanics voted for McCain/Palin.¹² Looking at party practices, 89% of Democrats who voted, cast their votes for Obama/Biden, whereas 9% of Democrats voted for McCain/Palin.¹³ And on the Republican side, 90% of the Republicans who voted, cast their votes for McCain/Palin, whereas 9% of the Republicans voted for Obama/Palin.¹⁴

Another example is the voter turnout for the 2012 election between Obama/Biden and McCain/Palin.¹⁵ Those records indicate 93% of African Americans voted for Obama/Biden, whereas 5% of African Americans voted for McCain/Palin.¹⁶ While 39% of white Americans voted for Obama/Biden, and 59% of white Americans voted for McCain/Palin.¹⁷ Then 71% of Hispanics voted for Obama/Biden, while 27% of Hispanics voted for McCain/Palin.¹⁸ Finally, out of the Democrats who voted, 92% cast their votes for Obama/Biden, whereas 7% of Democrats who voted, voted for McCain/Palin.¹⁹ Then, 93% of Republicans who voted, cast their votes for McCain/Palin, whereas 6% of Republicans voted for Obama/Palin.²⁰

Voter turnout for the 1992 election between Clinton/Gore and Bush/Quayle showed a similar pattern. Clinton/Gore was very popular with minorities and people of color. Records indicate that 83% of African Americans voted for

¹¹ Id.

¹² Id.

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ Id.

¹⁵ *How Groups Voted in 2012*, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-2012>, (last visited April 5, 2021.)

¹⁶ Id.

¹⁷ Id.

¹⁸ Id.

¹⁹ Id.

²⁰ Id.

Clinton/Gore, whereas 10% of African Americans voted for Bush/Quayle.²¹ While 39% of white Americans voted for Clinton/Gore, and 41% of white Americans voted for Bush/Quayle.²² Then 61% of Hispanics voted for Clinton/Gore, while 25% of Hispanics voted for Bush/Quayle.²³ Finally, 77% of Democrats who voted, cast their votes for Clinton/Gore, whereas 10% of Democrats voted for Bush/Quayle.²⁴ And for the Republicans, 73% of Republicans who voted, cast their votes for Bush/Quayle, whereas 10% of Republicans voted for Clinton/Gore.²⁵

There exists a pattern of likely party loyalty and demographic voting instead of genuine votes for specific policies and ways of governing. Many individuals believe that without party systems in politics, American politics would become disordered and tumultuous. However, since America has almost always had a party system, proving whether or not that assumption is correct would be nearly impossible.

Primary elections

Primary elections do help narrow down the number of candidates for the general elections. A primary election itself is not the problem, but how primary elections operate may provide impediments to genuine, non-biased voting. Primary elections only allow individuals that are members of that particular party to vote, while others who are not associated with that particular party or not associated with a party, in general, must wait to vote in the general elections. Primary elections do not choose who will be a front-runner in the general elections, only in primary elections because the list changes after the primary elections. “Hardliners” are more likely to vote in the primaries, to begin with, and are also likely to vote loyally for their party.

²¹ *How Groups Voted in 1992*, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-1992>, (last visited April 5, 2021.)

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

Primary elections focus on personality cults instead of party policies and ways of governing. A solution to this two-party madness would be non-partisan primaries, followed by non-partisan general elections to promote genuine voting instead of party loyalty and demographic voting. The Constitution does not require a two-party system, therefore a plurality voting system could be a legal replacement within the primary and general elections.

Conclusion

The creation of political party systems has evolved and changed throughout the centuries. Even with the evolution and creation of many political parties, the party system, in general, divides the country into two to four massive political groups. This divide provides space for individuals to vote with bias and party loyalty. As mentioned before, the Constitution does not express, nor does it exempt, the existence of political parties. The Constitution also does not express, nor exempt, primary elections or general elections to be non-partisan. Having non-partisan elections may be the solution to generate votes that are non-biased or based solely upon party loyalty.