

AMERICAN POLITICS

Magruder's American Government - Chapters 5-8

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Unit Outcomes

1. Understand the nature and function of parties in American politics.
2. Understand the reason for the existence of the American two-party system.
3. Trace the evolution of American political parties.
4. Understand the nature and role of minor parties in American politics.
5. Understand the organizational structure and composition of the two major parties.
6. Understand the historical development of the right to vote in the United States.
7. Recognize the diversity of voter qualifications among the states.
8. Understand the necessity for civil rights laws and the effects of these laws on suffrage.
9. Understand voter turnout and nonvoting in American elections.
10. Analyze those factors that effect the behavior of the American voter.
11. Understand the methods by which candidates are nominated to run for public office.
12. Understand the conduct of elections in the United States.
13. Evaluate the role of money and the regulation of its use in the electoral process.
14. Understand public opinion and its role in American politics.
15. Identify the means by which opinions are expressed and measured.
16. Recognize the impact of mass media on politics.

Readings & Resources

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|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| _____ 1. pgs. 98-107 | _____ 5. pgs. 138-144 | _____ 9. pgs. 173-179 |
| _____ 2. pgs. 109-114 | _____ 6. pgs. 144-151 | _____ 10. pgs. 184-189 |
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Unit Outline

- I. political parties
 - A. What is a party?
 - B. What do parties do? (five functions)
 - C. reasons for the two party system
 - D. multiparty systems
 - E. one party systems
 - F. membership of the parties
 - G. the two-party system in American history
 1. the nation's first parties
 2. the eras of one-party domination
 - H. minor parties in the United States (ideological, single issue, economic protest, splinter)
 - I. the role of minor parties
 - J. the organization of political parties
 1. the reality of political parties
 2. national party machinery
 3. state and local party machinery

4. three elements of the party
 5. the future of the major parties
- II. voters and voting behavior
- A. the history of voting rights
 - B. the power to set voting qualifications
 - C. voter qualifications
 - D. suffrage and civil rights
 - E. voter apathy
 - F. voter behavior
- III. the electoral process
- A. the nominating process
 - B. money and the electoral process
- IV. mass media and public opinion
- A. the role of public opinion
 - B. the measuring of public opinion
 - C. mass media and politics

Terminology (names and quotations)

"motor voter"	injunction	polling place
ballot	interest group	precinct
blanket primary	mandate	presidential/midterm/off-
coalition	medium	year elections
coattail effect	minor (third) party	runoff primary
consensus	nonpartisan	sample (random, quota,
constituents	one/two/multi-party system	probability)
direct/open/closed primary	opinion leader	single member district
electorate	plurality	sound bite
Federal Election	political action committee	split-ticket voting
Commission	(PAC)	straight ticket voting
franchise	political efficacy	straw vote
general election	political socialization	suffrage
gerrymandering	poll tax	ward

In this and like communities, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed. Consequently he who mold public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed.

Abraham Lincoln in the *Lincoln-Douglas Debates*, 1858