

# **EQ #8 - How do Minor/Third Parties affect our Two-Party System?**

- What is a minor / third party?

# Read about Minor Parties

- Read the first TWO pages.
- Mark up answers to the following...
- 1. What is a minor / third party? Cite examples in US politics today.
- 2. Why do they form?
- 3. How are they successful?
- 4. What keeps them from being highly successful?

# What is a minor / third party?

A minor / third party is...

- Any party that is NOT D or R
- Does NOT include Independents / unaffiliated
- A party that operates in opposition to the major parties
- May be ideologically based
- RARELY win elections

# Minor Parties- Four Types

## 1. Ideological Parties

- Take a strong stance on social, economic or political issues;
- They're ideals that are NOT mainstream
- Don't win elections but stay around a long time
- Examples: Socialist party, Communist, Green party

# Minor Parties- Four Types

## 2. Single-Issue

- Focus on ONE issue; often moral issue
- Often fade away when issue is resolved or major party takes the issue on
- Examples: Right to Life party, Free Soil, Temperance Party

# Minor Parties- Four Types

## 3. Economic Protest

- Arises during difficult economic times
- Appeals to those angry about \$ issues and upset with the way major parties are dealing with the issues
- Examples: Greenback (later Populist), Tea Party

# Minor Parties- Four Types

## 4. Splinter Parties

- Have broken away from one of the major parties
- Often with a strong leader who was snubbed by major party
- Examples: Bull Moose, Dixiecrats

# How do Minor Parties affect elections?

- Minor parties are important even though they are unlikely to win elections
- Minor Parties play TWO key roles-
  1. **Critic / innovator** because they take strong stands on issues (unlike the major parties)
  2. **“Spoiler”** role- may take away votes from major parties, even causing defeat (Gore’s loss in 2000)



# How are Political Parties Organized?

- The two major parties are NOT highly structured; there are many local differences by state and region.

# What are the **THREE** parts of Political Parties?

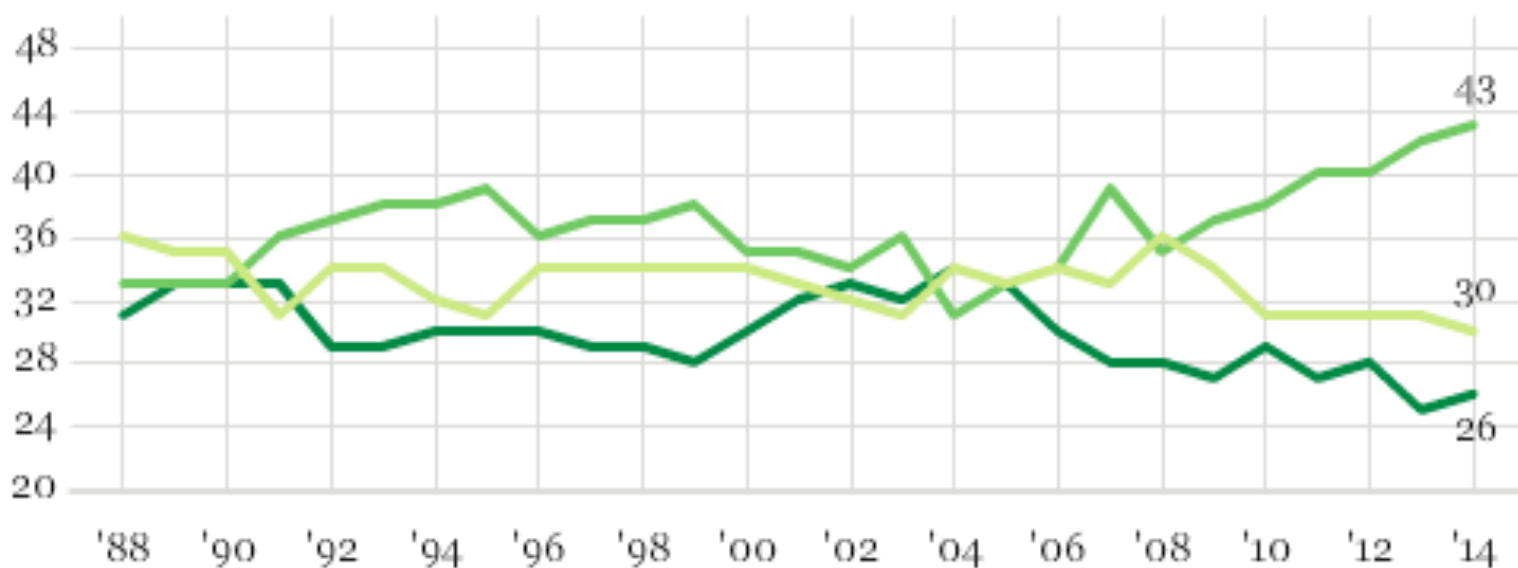
1. **The Electorate-** the Voters who identify as D's or R's
2. **The Organizers-** The national party leaders who work year round on behalf of the party.
3. **In Government-** The elected office holders.

# Is Political Party Strength Declining?

- Are the major parties less important today? Maybe... WHY?
1. Numbers of registered Ds and Rs is down; there are now more Independents (moderates who do NOT consider themselves D or R) than Democrats or Republicans

### U.S. Party Identification, Yearly Averages, 1988-2014

■ % Republican    ■ % Independent    ■ % Democrat



Based on multiple day polls conducted by telephone

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# Party Affiliation by the Numbers

- **Registered Voters in US (2017)**

- About 200,000 MILLION Americans are registered to vote

- **31% are registered DEMOCRATS**

- **29% are registered REPUBLICANS**

- **38% are INDEPENDENTS**

\*In 2016 Presidential Election, 57.9% of registered voters actually voted.

\*Republicans had similar turnout as in 2012; Democrats turnout was much less than 2012.

# Why is political party strength declining?

2. **Split-ticket voting:** Voting for candidates of different parties in the same election has increased.

-EXAMPLE- Vote for Trump (R) for President and Wyden (D) for Senator on same ballot.

# Partisan

- A **partisan** is someone who is extremely loyal to his/her party.
- A strong Democrat or Republican
- Those who are **partisan**, vote for their party consistently.
  - **Partisan** politics- A lack of cooperation/work between Democrats and Republicans
  - **Bipartisan** politics- Cooperation between parties; someone who supports both parties on different issues/candidates.

# What is Party Polarity?

- *Polarity*- like the poles on earth that are far apart.

**Party polarity** describes

- \* The widening gap between Democrats and Republicans on issues.
- \* The LACK of cooperation between the parties to work together to solve problems.  
(example-Health Care)



# EXIT- MINOR PARTIES

1. In the U.S., what is a **minor** (a.k.a. *third*) party? Define it.
2. Describe TWO ways that minor parties have an effect on politics in the US today.
3. Describe TWO ways minor parties are limited in their effect on elections.

# Venn Diagram

- Compare and Contrast MAJOR and MINOR/THIRD Parties in the US system
  - Definitions
  - Goals of each
  - Pros / Cons
  - Examples...more!

**MAJOR**

**MINOR**

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# Venn Diagram

**MAJOR**

**MINOR**

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# Quizlet Activity

- Political Parties Quizlet Activity
- Get a computer and join the game
- Sign in using your first name; the game will make teams at random