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CHAPTER 30

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LINKING
POLITICAL
PARTIES AND
INTEREST GROUPS

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THE ongoing contest between political parties and interest groups is one of the epic struggles of American politics. Political parties strive to craft platforms that will draw the support of majorities of voters, while interest groups pressure the government to enact policies that advance the substantive agendas or ideological perspectives of narrower constituencies. In negotiating these tensions, parties and groups may work cooperatively or they may find themselves at cross-purposes. Groups sometimes prop up parties by supplying them with essential volunteers and financial resources, thus enabling a group to dictate key parts of a party's agenda. At other times, a group may find itself "captured" by a party such that the group must accept a party's weak efforts on its behalf because the other major party refuses (or is unable) to bargain for its loyalty. Occasionally, groups find themselves wedged between the parties in such a way that they become decisive on selected policy matters. On the other hand, groups may be on the sidelines sometimes as the major parties clash on the great issues of the day.

A substantial body of political science research explores the linkage between political parties and interest groups. However, the perspective that parties and

groups are inextricably bound has not been a part of the dominant paradigm either in the study of parties or in the study of groups in recent years. Instead, scholars tend to divide the subjects according to scale, seeing parties as concerned primarily with the large-scale endeavor of winning elections and seeing interest groups as concentrating on the small-scale task of organizing narrower constituencies. For example, party scholars give scant attention to interest groups in their effort to understand how parties' electoral coalitions form and evolve over time. Similarly, interest group scholars generally ignore the role of parties in examining the logic of collective action among citizens or interest groups. Indeed, the study of interest groups and parties has not been unified under a common paradigm since the heyday of pluralism in the mid-twentieth century.

This chapter argues that political parties and interest groups are intricately and inextricably linked to one another for at least four reasons. First, parties and groups *co-evolve* with one another. Both entities emerged out of the protean factions that existed at the nation's founding. Since that time, parties and groups have grown, declined, and changed form in tandem and in response to one another. Second, parties and groups have attempted to *discipline* each other. Groups weigh into the electoral process to influence which kinds of candidates represent parties. Parties pressure groups to become the kinds of organizations that naturally support a party's cause. Third, interest groups and parties are key *brokers* within one another's networks and between other actors in the policy process. Interest groups may serve to bring actors in competing parties together or drive them apart. Parties may help to put some interest groups into key positions of influence or exclude others from decision making. Parties and groups cooperate and compete to intervene between citizens and lawmakers. Fourth, parties and groups serve to fashion interlinked political *identities* for individuals and organizations. Political loyalties are forged out of both ideological, partisan alignments and committed membership in groups. The bonds between organized labor and the Democratic Party, for example, or between Christian conservatives and the Republican Party, create, reinforce, and potentially break down group and party loyalties. Thus, the study of parties necessitates the study of groups, and vice versa; the political dynamics and behavior of both kinds of organizations ought to be part of a common research program.

This chapter begins by exploring *co-evolution*, *discipline*, *brokerage*, and *identity* as mechanisms that link parties and groups. It explains the theoretical perspective behind each of these mechanisms in the context of empirical research that documents their relevance to organizational strategies and behaviors. The chapter then considers how a research program that more explicitly addresses the party-group linkage might revise our understanding of parties and groups, and the nature of their dynamic interaction.

CO-EVOLUTION

At the time the Constitution was ratified in 1789, parties and interest groups did not exist in the United States in a form that we would recognize today (Hofstadter 1969). Americans were aware of parties and other factional groupings from their experience with the British system. Rather than embracing parties and groups, however, they sought to stymie these entities. Indeed, as James Madison (1982, 45) argued in *The Federalist*, No. 10, the Constitution itself was designed to root out the mischiefs of faction. In Madison's day, factions were loosely formed groupings of citizens, business leaders, politicians, and others, but not the well-organized machines that we encounter today (Yoho 1995). As a result, Americans were left to invent a system of parties and groups over time as political situations demanded them.

Just as species evolve, parties and interest groups change form over time. Parties and groups grow and contract in size, adopt and shed tasks, and serve different roles in the political system. For example, the presidencies of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren helped to transform the Democratic Party from a disorganized faction into a mass organization designed to mobilize the electorate to win elections, thus imbuing the party with a new set of institutions and functions (Aldrich 1995). Interest groups similarly metamorphose as political conditions change. For example, between the 1950s and the 2000s, many interest groups transitioned from chapter-based, member-oriented federations to centralized organizations run by professional managers out of Washington, DC (Skocpol 2003). This move from membership to management fundamentally changed the nature of representation performed by groups. Thus, the basic form and function of parties and groups is contingent on the historical era in which they exist.

As parties and groups evolved over time, they adapted to one another. Parties sprung up to routinize electoral competition, groups developed to compensate for the deficits of parties, and then parties demanded new services from groups. The biological metaphor of co-evolution is apt to describe this process. In biology, co-evolution occurs when the development of one species influences the evolution of another species (J. Thompson 1994). For example, bees and flowers co-evolved as pollination by bees facilitated the sexual reproduction of flowers and as bees' morphology adapted to improve the transfer of pollen. Co-evolution may involve a variety of types of dynamics. One species may consume the resources of another species, driving it out of existence. Or, a species may enable the growth of another by performing a task it cannot accomplish alone. Regardless of how species impinge on one another, their mutual presence alters the evolutionary path taken by both species. Analogously, parties and interest groups co-evolve over time, continuously redefining the political roles played by one another.

The co-evolution of parties and groups is fostered by both competition and cooperation. Parties and groups compete with one another because they are alternative ways to represent interests. Citizens care about what the government does or does not do, but not necessarily about who pressures it to do so. If political parties represent citizens' interests, then citizens may be willing to give their loyalty and support to parties. But if political parties fail to deliver, then citizens may look elsewhere to get what they want from government. This process of searching for better representation leads to new organizations—and new types of organizations—that seek to mobilize interests.

An example of the co-evolution of parties and groups through competition for representation is provided by Elisabeth Clemens (1997) in *The People's Lobby*. Clemens argues that what we understand today as the modern "interest group" was created during the Progressive era by political entrepreneurs who were frustrated with party politics. These entrepreneurs sought to organize politics on the basis of issue—rather than on party, class, or some other factor—and struggled to realign political identities with key issues. They adopted the reviled model of corporate lobbying, but adapted it to promote its organizational legitimacy using preexisting political structures, such as labor unions, agricultural associations, and women's groups.

Clemens's argument has three parts. First, she notes that the major parties of the late nineteenth century had failed to address issues facing several well-organized constituencies. The subsequent failure of third parties (such as the Greenback Party and the Populist Party) to win control of government left issue activists increasingly doubtful of parties as an effective mechanism to achieve policy change. Second, Clemens argues that issue advocates resolved to create a new organizational form to pressure government directly on specific policies, rather than indirectly, through the party system. The "invention" of interest group politics came when the methods of corporate lobbying were adopted by grassroots organizations, such as the American Federation of Labor, the American Farm Bureau Federation, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Third, Clemens posits that nascent interest groups demonstrated their legitimacy by combining lobbying with other organizational models that were widely perceived as legitimate. Once their legitimacy was secured, these citizens' groups exploited opportunities to become directly involved in the politics of state legislatures and displaced some of the activities of political parties. Interest groups thus became a direct competitor to political parties for citizens' loyalties.

Clemens's analysis demonstrates that the interest group arose as a new "species" of political organization because of strategic responses to the party system. Interest groups evolved to compete with parties over policy. Alternatively, co-evolution may be driven by a desire for party-group cooperation. For example, parties and groups co-evolved as they mutually adapted to changes in campaign finance laws. The Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) of 1971, its 1974 amendments, and the

Supreme Court's 1976 ruling in *Buckley v. Valeo* established a regime in which interest groups created Political Action Committees (PACs) and political parties came to rely on PAC contributions to finance electoral campaigns (Rozell, Wilcox, and Madland 2006, 80–112). As the campaign finance system evolved in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, parties and groups responded by altering their strategies and structures.

The emergence of 527 organizations in the wake of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA) of 2002 is an example of cooperatively driven co-evolution. 527s are a type of tax-exempt organization designed to influence the selection of candidates for public office. They are known for the section of the Internal Revenue Code that gives them their name (specifically, title 26, subtitle A, chapter 1, subchapter F, part VI, section 527). Section 527 is a longstanding provision of the tax code, but it became politically relevant only once soft money became controversial in the 1990s.

By the 1990s, the system of campaign finance established by FECA and *Buckley* had begun to break down (Malbin 2003, 7). Rather than directing their contributions exclusively through PACs, a norm developed of giving unregulated donations—known as “soft money”—directly to parties, thus creating an “unparalleled linkage between interest groups and parties” (Franz 2008b, 4). One of the major goals of BCRA was to place strict limitations on donations of soft money to parties. These limitations posed a problem for parties in the 2004 election because they had learned to rely on this source of financing (Ansolabehere and Snyder 2000). Consequently, their repertoire of electoral tactics catered to the peculiarities of soft money requirements (e.g., advertisements that do not explicitly advocate the election or defeat of a particular candidate). Funding through 527 organizations—which could still raise and spend soft money—became a method for the parties to adjust to BCRA's soft money limits. Parties thus required the creation of new 527 organizations to implement their campaign strategies, concomitantly requiring interest groups that would support these new organizations.

Seeking to jump on the 527 bandwagon in the 2000s, a number of prominent interest groups (such as the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU), the Sierra Club, and MoveOn.org) modified their organizational structures to add (or expand) an affiliated 527 (Boatright 2007, 5). While many 527s are affiliated with an established interest group, others were created as freestanding organizations intended to advance the overall fortunes of a specific party, such as America Coming Together (Democratic Party) and Progress for America (Republican Party). Still other 527s were designed with more specific missions. Swift Boat Veterans and POWs for Truth, for example, infamously was created in 2004 to debunk Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry's wartime record in Vietnam (Rutenberg 2004).

527 organizations differ significantly from preexisting political organizations. They are not party organizations in the sense that they do not nominate candidates

for public office. However, in some ways, they do appear to act collectively *as if* they are parties. Boatright (2007) notes that there are no bipartisan 527s and argues that within-party 527s cooperatively divide tasks into functional niches—advertising, voter mobilization, network brokerage, and candidate recruitment—much as would likely be done by a unified party organization. Skinner (2005) went so far as to argue that 527s form “shadow parties” that “subcontract” services from parties. From the interest group perspective, freestanding 527s (e.g., the Media Fund, the November Fund) differ from typical groups in that they do not advocate for a specific policy agenda and are more ephemeral, often existing only for a single election cycle. Yet 527s are often attached to well-established interest groups with specific legislative goals in mind. So, are 527s parties, interest groups, or what?

The emergence of 527 organizations reflects a genuine hybridization of typical party and group forms (Chadwick 2007). Some 527s bear a strong resemblance to parties (e.g., America Coming Together, Progress for America), while others share a greater likeness with interest groups (e.g., SEIU Political Education and Action Fund, MoveOn.org Voter Fund). Within the framework of co-evolution, 527s can be viewed as a new species that has resulted from cooperation between parties and groups. Understanding 527s systematically ought to involve some combination of party and group theories.

The birth of a new species is no guarantee of its survival. Republicans found that 527s were less appealing to start with than did Democrats, with the majority of large 527s favoring Democratic interests (Boatright 2007). 527s were viewed by Democrats as a way to catch up with Republicans’ money advantage in 2004. However, John Kerry’s loss in the presidential election led many Democrats to question whether the reduced control suffered by outsourcing key party functions to 527s was a fair trade-off for their greater fundraising potential. Further, Barack Obama’s fundraising prowess and robust grassroots campaign vitiated the Democratic advantage in relying heavily on 527s in 2008. As a result, 527s were considerably less visible players in the 2008 election than they were in 2004, with spending by the top ten 527s falling from \$216 million to \$73 million (Center for Responsive Politics 2008). Several influential organizations, such as MoveOn.org, severed their 527s altogether in 2008 (J. Jones and Rosado 2008).

Whether or not 527s will retain a strong presence in American elections remains to be seen. They may shortly become extinct. Or, they may remain abeyant in the toolkits of parties and groups, waiting for the right opportunity to arise. Republicans may seek to counter President Obama’s expected fundraising advantage in 2012 by turning to 527s. Regardless of whether 527s ultimately flower or decay in the coming years, the case of 527 organizations provides insight on the nature of party—group co-evolution. This case might provide clues to whether the Democratic and Republican parties co-evolve differently with interest groups. Further, it may suggest how core activities of parties and groups—such as getting

out the vote and lobbying—are changed by becoming more or less intertwined with a particular 527.

DISCIPLINE

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Parties and interest groups tend to see each other as a means to an end. Each seeks to use the other to fulfill its own goals. Interest groups would like parties to install group agendas as part of their platforms and to carry out the group's wishes when in control of government (Clifton 2004). Parties would like interest groups to give money to support the party in the next election and to lend other resources to keep the party in power.

The effort of parties and groups each to get the other to do its bidding is an intense power struggle that has several faces. The so-called “first face of power” may show itself through threats or coercion (Bachrach and Baratz 1962). For example, a party may tell a group that it must support a party's presidential candidate or it will not be included in the set of groups consulted when the party controls the government. The second face of power is about setting the agenda so that some issues are actively considered and others are avoided (Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 1963). For example, if members of a particular interest group hold the balance of power on a party's platform committee, they may force the consideration of a controversial abortion provision that party leaders would prefer to avoid. The third face of power—sometimes called “hegemony”—is about influencing the language, preferences, and basic assumptions of politics such that challenging certain positions is seen as outside the rules of politics (Gaventa 1980; Gramsci 1992). For example, the American Medical Association may engender the belief that only medical doctors have the legitimate authority to make medical judgments about patient care, thus making a wide range of policy reform options unimaginable (Starr 1982).

The fourth face of power—sometimes called “discipline”—is the ability to influence what kinds of agents participate in politics (Digeser 1992; Foucault 1978). Discipline is about gaining control by putting agents into place that act in a certain way without having to be asked. For example, if the elected representatives of a party are all predisposed to support a group's point of view, then the need to influence the party to do the group's bidding is reduced—the party is inclined to do so anyway. Consider that Christian conservatives would not need to pressure the Republican Party to oppose abortion and same-sex marriage if all Republicans were already born-again Christians. Of course, this type of control

is extraordinarily difficult to achieve. Parties and groups attempt to discipline each other, though their degree of success is highly limited.

Interest groups may attempt to discipline parties by trying to control who receives party nominations for key elected positions. Murakami (2008) points out that some interest groups form explicitly with the goal of selecting party nominees, with some groups operating as “party purity groups” and others serving as “big tent groups.” Party purity groups work to make sure that a party’s nominees satisfy an ideological or issue-based litmus test. The Club for Growth is the most prominent group of this type. Founded by Stephen Moore in 1999, the Club for Growth is a fiscally conservative interest group that helps to mount primary challenges against Republicans that it perceives to be too moderate, nicknaming them RINOs (Republicans In Name Only). EMILY’s List and MoveOn.org are Democratic-leaning organizations that play a similar role on the political left. Big tent groups, on the other hand, press to keep a party closer to the ideological center. The Main Street Partnership is an example of a group that works to keep the Republican Party closer to the ideological center. It gives money to pragmatic, business-oriented candidates, often supporting the very candidates attacked by the purity groups.

The extent to which party purity groups and big tent groups are able to discipline the parties is not entirely clear. The Club for Growth gained attention through its efforts in a handful of House and Senate races. It unsuccessfully sought the ouster of moderate Senator Arlen Specter (Republican, Pennsylvania) when it supported Pat Toomey in the 2004 primary against him. However, the Club ultimately prevailed when Specter left the Republican Party in 2009 due to an anticipated Club-sponsored primary challenge in 2010. The Club helped to weaken moderate Senator Lincoln Chafee (Republican, Rhode Island) in the 2006 Republican primary, setting the stage for his defeat in the general election by Sheldon Whitehouse (Democrat, Rhode Island). Andy Harris, the Club’s candidate for Congress from the first district of Maryland, defeated incumbent Congressman Wayne Gilchrist (Republican, Maryland) in the 2008 primary. Thus, the Club has demonstrated some success in knocking Republican moderates out of their seats. By posing a potential threat to incumbents who do not follow the party line, then, the existence of the Club may inspire some prospective and sitting Republican officeholders to stick more closely to “true conservative” principles. The Club may also make some legitimate claims to helping a much larger group of candidates for open seats win their primary races (Horrigan 2006). Because of these electoral practices, the Club and other party purity groups may be partly responsible for hastening the polarization of parties within Congress (Murakami 2008).

Interest group discipline over parties may take place less overtly through the conscious efforts of groups to select one nominee rather than another, but more subtly through the influence of institutions on how groups play into the nominating process. Masker’s (2007) study of partisanship in the California state legislature

suggests that the existence of partisanship itself among officeholders may be partially dependent on how interest groups' participation in nominations is moderated by institutional rules. California's adoption of rules in 1914 that allowed candidates to cross-file their candidacies with multiple parties undermined the ability of interest groups to influence the nominating process. When cross-filing was banned in 1952, the role of groups—and partisanship—returned to the legislature.

Masket's (2007) work demonstrates that groups influence the selection of nominees, not only through their support of any one particular nominee, but through their very presence in the system. The case of California suggests that the behavior of parties is quite different when institutions permit interest groups a role in nominations than when they do not. While Masket's empirical study is specific to California, his approach could be applied to other states or to the American party system more generally. For example, the McGovern–Fraser reforms of the 1970s changed Democratic Party nominations to make them more open to interest groups (Atkeson and Maestas 2009; M. Cohen et al. 2008; Shafer 1983). These considerations suggest that groups play a more extensive role in disciplining parties than may be gleaned from their direct involvement in the specific elections.

Political parties may attempt to discipline interest groups by trying to control who holds key positions of leadership within groups. Since the selection of group leaders resembles a closed oligarchy more than an open democracy (Michels 1949; Truman 1951), parties have only limited means to shape group choices. One avenue of control is through the norm that lobbyists generally require experience working for (or serving as) members of Congress or the administration before they go to work for interest groups. Individual lobbyists usually identify as members of either the Democratic or the Republican Party, depending on the politician for which they served (Kersh 2002). Thus, in selecting their candidates and their staffs, the parties are selecting the universe of future lobbyists. The fact that lobbyists have to pass through the party's hands in this informal training process provides an opportunity to define the kind of lobbyists that they will eventually become. Surely, the nature of lobbying is much different than it would be if there were no expectations that lobbyists have previous congressional or administrative experience.

Parties could take a more direct approach and attempt to encourage interest groups to select certain kinds of people to work for them. The Republican Party undertook just such an effort during the late 1990s and early 2000s with its so-called "K Street Project," named after the street in downtown Washington, DC, where many large lobbying firms have their offices. When the Republican Party gained control of both houses of Congress in the 1994 election, it inherited a community of lobbyists that had grown up under forty continuous years of Democratic domination of the House of Representatives and thirty-four years of intermittent Democratic control of the Senate since 1954. Confessore (2003)

reported that high-level officials within the Republican Party began to work strategically to change the composition of lobbyists on Capitol Hill. They worried that the Democratic-leaning pool of lobbyists would stymie their agenda. Instead, a more supportive cohort—chosen with the encouragement of Republican leaders—was thought to be necessary.

The idea that a new congressional and administrative majority demands a different cadre of lobbyists is not unusual. The notable feature of the K Street Project, however, was the effort by Republican leaders to exert *centralized* control over the shift to a Republican-leaning bias (J. Hacker and Pierson 2005; Loomis 2007). The efforts were coordinated on the K Street side by Republican lobbyist Grover Norquist, president of the interest group Americans for Tax Reform. On the Capitol Hill side, Majority Leader Tom DeLay (Republican, Texas) took the lead for the House and Republican Conference Chairman Rick Santorum (Republican, Pennsylvania) weighed in for the Senate. Together they set out to cajole interest groups to turn more reliably to Republican lobbyists.

Norquist, DeLay, and Santorum developed an array of tactics to promote an increased Republican presence on K Street. First, they created and published a database of lobbyists for interest groups that were supposed to favor Republicans, especially those in the business community (Chaddock 2003; Hamburger and Wallstein 2006). The database added some transparency to the lobbying process so that Republicans could see which groups had “properly” hired Republican lobbyists and which had not. The implication was that those groups out of compliance might not receive equal treatment from Republican officeholders. Second, they formed a coalition-like structure to coordinate lobbying and legislative activity. This coalition generally met once a week on Capitol Hill or K Street while Congress was in session (Confessore 2003; Loomis 2007). Coalition forces were marshaled more actively when must-pass legislative items were on the agenda. For example, when the party sought the passage of a new prescription drug benefit under Medicare, the group employed former Tom DeLay staff member Susan Hirschman to help round up support for the bill (Heaney 2006). This army of Republican lobbyists was summoned to lobby wavering legislators, thus creating an unusually circular chain: a congressional party actively pressured interest groups to, in turn, lobby Congress. Interest groups had become an informal part of the Republican Party’s congressional whipping operation. Third, DeLay and others associated with the K Street Project are alleged to have put direct pressure on interest groups to choose specific leaders. For example, DeLay prodded the Electronics Industry Alliance to name a Republican president if it expected favorable treatment in the provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (Dubose and Reid 2004, 163–8). These efforts were aimed at cementing Republican congressional majorities, along with their control of the presidency and the Supreme Court, into an unchallengeable political machine (Confessore 2003; Hamburger and Wallstein 2006).

With a new Democratically dominant government having taken power in Washington in 2009, and with DeLay and Santorum having left Congress, the K Street Project quickly faded into political history. Projects that intentionally and centrally seek to dictate which agents join any system are problematic, as the power that creates such discipline is defused widely throughout society, rather than being concentrated in any one place (Foucault 1978). Nonetheless, the very attempt by Republicans to achieve such discipline is especially revealing of the way in which parties and interest groups think about each other, even if it is an extreme example. The K Street experiment demonstrates that parties see the leaders of groups as tools that they can use—and potentially manipulate—to achieve specific political ends.

BROKERAGE

Information and trust are scarce commodities in politics. For information to be valuable, it must be timely, relevant, and, sometimes, kept in confidence. For politicians to trust each other, they have to know that today's agreement will not be exploited tomorrow for political gain. Brokers are actors that stand between others who have difficulty sharing information and/or trusting one another (R. Gould and Fernandez 1989). Therefore, brokers are vital to passing on sensitive information. They may help to negotiate agreements between those who lack trust in one another. In essence, brokers help to grease the wheels of politics.

Brokerage is a key function of political parties and interest groups—one that assures that they remain closely linked to one another. Parties and groups engage in at least four different types of brokerage relationships. First, interest groups may act as brokers within party coalitions. Second, interest groups may act as brokers between parties, or between parties and other actors. Third, parties may act as brokers among interest groups, or between interest groups and other actors. Fourth, parties and interest groups may compete with one another to act as brokers among other actors. This section explores these four relational types and then considers the notion of “network” on which they are premised.

A first type of brokerage relationship exists when interest groups act as brokers within party coalitions. These relationships may manifest themselves over shorter or longer time horizons. For example, over a relatively short time, interest groups may broker within a party's factions to promote a particular piece of legislation. Heaney (2006) details how the Archer Medical Savings Account (MSA) Coalition—composed of a swath of socially and fiscally conservative interest groups—was vital to bringing conservative Republicans on board to support the passage of the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) of 2003. The coalition brokered

discussions of the Bush administration and big business conservatives who were pushing the MMA with the small business conservatives who objected to the Act's broad expansion of the Medicare entitlement. The coalition's strategy was to persuade small business conservatives that the victory, produced by adding Health Savings Accounts (HSAs—the name that replaced the original "MSAs") to the healthcare system more broadly, vastly outweighed any damage to conservatism caused by entitlement expansion. The coalition largely achieved its goal, almost singlehandedly persuading enough conservative members of the House to vote for the measure to ensure its passage.

Over the longer term, interest group brokerage within a party may lead to the creation of permanent structures and enduring relationships. Greenstone's (1969) analysis of the place of organized labor within the Democratic Party of the 1960s exemplifies such a long-term relationship. Organized labor—as represented by the AFL—CIO (American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations)—worked closely with the Democratic caucus during these years. The AFL—CIO aided Democratic campaigns through its Committee on Political Education. It helped to mobilize Democratic sympathizers at the local level by working through district-level organizations. Working within Congress, the AFL—CIO undertook a whipping function to aid the party in overcoming its collective action problems and in passing landmark social welfare legislation, including the creation of Medicare in 1965.

The extensive involvement of the AFL—CIO in Democratic Party affairs permitted "the labor movement [to] act as a disinterested broker among some of the Democrats' competing or suspicious leadership factions" (Greenstone 1969, 356). In recognizing labor's expanded role, Greenstone concurred with Schattschneider, who saw a breakdown in the delineation between parties and groups:

a shift in the locus of power or a revision of party functions may leave the formal structure untouched, or new structures may arise without being recognized as parts of the party system. Thus, pressure groups may become so partisan that they might properly be described as ancillary organizations of one or the other major parties. (Schattschneider 1956, 213)

Thus, groups' brokerage roles within parties extend from occasional, episodic interventions to a sustained integration between party and group functions.

A second type of brokerage relationship exists when interest groups act as brokers between the parties, or between parties and other actors. If interest groups are able to manage these relationships successfully, the parties may benefit greatly, since their high level of distrust with one another makes negotiations necessarily difficult. Simultaneously, interest groups may exploit this brokerage position to their own gain because they are uniquely able to play the parties off against one another (Burt 1992; Simmel 1955). The AARP (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons) seized exactly this opportunity when negotiating between the

Democratic and Republican parties during the debate over the MMA (Heaney 2006). AARP traditionally has aligned closely with the Democratic Party, which has been the party of the elderly in the United States since the New Deal. In recent years, AARP's membership has grown younger (into the fifties, rather than the sixties and seventies) and more affluent. This changing base is consistent with AARP becoming closer with the Republican Party. During the MMA debate, AARP played both sides of the aisle and helped to ensure passage of the measure in exchange for the key items that it wanted in the legislation.

While AARP found itself uniquely wedged between the parties during the MMA debate, this brokerage position is not a common one in which interest groups find themselves. Securing the genuine trust of both parties is a delicate balancing act in an era of polarized parties. Indeed, there are strong indications that AARP may have irreparably damaged its reputation among Democrats in supporting the Republican-sponsored Medicare law (Heaney 2007; Sinclair 2006). As AARP watched its brokerage position dissolve, it found itself as part of a trend. As Roof (2008, 85) points out, "there are few organizations with ties to both parties to help broker compromise and more groups trying to pull away from the center." A brokerage position of groups between the parties is highly desirable for both entities, but became more fleeting in the 1990s and 2000s.

A third type of brokerage relationship exists when parties act as brokers among interest groups, or between interest groups and other actors. Cohen et al. (2008, 34) argue that parties are, in their essence, coalitions of groups that have chosen to use parties as brokers between themselves and government. From this perspective, parties are often the best means for groups to extract the gains that they seek. To be good brokers, then, parties need to select the nominees that best balance the interests of members of the coalition. Changes in the nature of a party's nominees and the behavior of its officeholders may be explained in part by the evolution of the groups in the party's coalition. For example, the inclusion of the Christian Right in the Republican Party coalition in the late 1970s and early 1980s partially accounts for why nominees and officeholders—such as presidents Ronald W. Reagan and George H. W. Bush—advanced policies on abortion and school prayer that previously had not been a part of the Republican Party platform.

Parties may act as brokers between groups and candidates for elected office. For example, McCarty and Rothenberg (2000) maintain that the system of campaign finance through soft money contributions relied on the party to act as brokers between groups and candidates. The existence of a soft money regime allowed groups which had maxed out their hard money limits in contributions directly to candidates to instead donate soft money to parties. The implicit assumption of such donations was that parties would use these funds to the benefit of the candidates favored by the groups, thus making the party a conduit between the candidate and the group (Franz 2008b, 4).

A fourth type of brokerage relationship exists when parties and interest groups compete with one another to act as brokers among other actors. Hansen (1991) recounts the rise and fall of the farm lobby's access to Congress between 1919 and 1981 to illustrate this competition. Hansen explains that both groups and parties sought to provide Congress with the information that it needed to represent its constituents on agricultural policy. The political question at hand was whether member–constituent relations would be brokered by groups or parties. Hansen argues that Congress chose to rely on the broker that could provide information with a competitive advantage (e.g., greater efficiency and electoral value) that recurs over time. Hansen shows how groups snatched the brokerage role from parties by the early 1930s, but then began to lose it in the 1950s as agricultural interest groups gradually became more fragmented. When farm groups were trusted brokers, they were given access to key leaders and decision processes within Congress. However, as their brokerage value faded, farm groups were marginalized relative to other interests and parties were trusted to a greater extent to judge the political winds in agriculture. This study illuminates not only the competition between parties and groups for brokerage opportunities, but also how the advantages in carrying out brokerage evolve over time with economic, political, and organizational change.

The four types of brokerage relationships discussed here all presuppose the existence of a common political network shared by parties and groups. A map of this network would reveal what opportunities for brokerage are present and absent in the political system. Who is connected to whom? Who is disconnected from whom? What are the determinants of these connections and disconnections, such as alliances, ideology, and issues?

A number of scholars have investigated the “extended party networks” that unify parties and groups. These scholars assume that interest groups are integral parts of the network:

An interest group can group can be treated as part of a party network when its political actions are directed solely or largely on behalf of a given party. . . . We can expect a bias toward a single party to be true of many . . . organized interest groups whose lobbying efforts generally are spent disproportionately with one party. (M. Schwartz 1990, 5)

Working through informal networks—rather than as formal, hierarchical organizations—allows parties to adapt swiftly to local conditions in a decentralized system and to change as circumstances require it (J. Monroe 2001). Recent studies have used social network analysis to map the structure of these networks and to compare them with other kinds of alliance networks (M. Grossman and Dominguez forthcoming; Kogerf, Masket, and Noel forthcoming).

Moving toward a broader definition of parties and party networks—as has been done in the extended party network studies—significantly advances the understanding of the brokerage relations between parties and groups. Terming these

networks “extended party networks,” however, presupposes a dominant role for parties in these interactions and draws artificial boundaries along the lines of party affiliation. Much could be learned from instead treating network dominance and network boundaries as empirical questions: Under what conditions are these networks dominated by parties or by groups? Are the networks split between the Democratic and Republican parties, or are there significant bipartisan (or third party) ties that define these relationships? Richer accounts of party–group brokerage would likely result from developing more nuanced and complete mappings of political networks structures.

IDENTITY

Individuals often have multiple political identities. They may strongly identify with a political party and orient their political life around that attachment (D. Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). They may strongly identify with a group or groups (Truman 1951), potentially relating to their sex or gender, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, occupation, class, religion, issue concerns, or some other basis. These identities may occasionally clash with one another. African American and homosexual identities may sometimes be incompatible within black associations (C. Cohen 1999). The poor may find themselves marginalized within an organization created to represent women (Strolovitch 2007). Or, identities may mutually reinforce one another, as labor union membership promotes loyalty to the Democratic Party, and vice versa (Finifter 1974).

When individuals show up to participate in group or party politics, they bring their other political identities with them. The organizational structures of parties and groups may even encourage them to do so. For example, the Democratic Party institutionalized special-interest caucuses for women, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, gays, liberals, and business at its 1980 national nominating convention (Jo Freeman 1986, 330). These caucuses developed institutional structures that prompt party activists to raise interest group considerations at the conventions and in their other dealings with the party. The Republican Party, in contrast, does not give special-interest groupings as prominent a place in its rules, diminishing the importance of its caucus-like structures, even though its ideological groupings are critical to its party politics (Jo Freeman 1986, 331). Thus, group and party identities have the potential to interact in ways that are consequential to both organized entities, while the nature of this interaction may vary from party to party and from group to group.

This section explores four types of interaction between partisan and group identities. First, parties' identities may be a source of conflict within groups, as was the case for many antiwar organizations opposed to the US–Iraq War of 2003 on. Second, group identities may be a source of conflict within parties, as with the experience of the Log Cabin Republicans within the Republican Party and African Americans within the Democratic Party. Third, partisan identities may strengthen groups, as Democratic affiliations did for the National Organization for Women. Fourth, group identities may facilitate the success of a party, as the Republican Party benefited from the insurgency of Christian Right activists in its ranks in the early to mid-1990s. While these four types of interaction by no means exhaust the range of possibilities, they provide clues to the major implications of interacting identities.

When individuals bring their partisan identifications to group politics, conflicts may erupt. Heaney and Rojas (2007) consider the antiwar movement as an instance of this kind of conflict. Antiwar activists disagree fervently about whether there is a place for Democratic partisanship within the peace movement. Some movement partisans attempt to use the antiwar cause to advantage the Democratic Party and to use the party to end the Iraq War. These actors form a kind of “party in the street.” In contrast, other activists are concerned that partisan commitments lead to an unending series of compromises that dilute group goals. A principal division within the antiwar movement, then, is over the degree to which it should connect with the Democratic Party. This division is managed to some degree by segregating activists into organizations that favor one philosophy on party politics or another (e.g., the Democratic-leaning activists may join MoveOn.org, while non-partisans join World Can't Wait). Yet, peak antiwar interest groups, such as United for Peace and Justice, find that their ranks are split among the partisans and the non-partisans. These splits potentially complicate intra-organizational decision making, such as the degree to which the organization should engage in lobbying versus civil disobedience.

When individuals bring their group identifications to party politics, they may disagree with the party's goals or believe that their interests are insufficiently represented within the party. The Log Cabin Republicans, for instance, have struggled to fit within the Republican Party, though the fit has been incongruous. Founded locally in California in 1978 and established nationally in 1993, Log Cabin exists to represent gay and lesbian Republicans (Rimmerman 2000). While members of the organization are firmly supportive of Republican causes, such as lower taxes and strong national defense, they come into conflict with the party line on same-sex marriage. At times, Log Cabin's disagreements with the national party were strong enough that the organization withheld its endorsement of the party's presidential nominee (Kuhr 2005).

African Americans organizations, in contrast, may believe that they are not in a strong position to deny their endorsement to the Democratic Party even when they

disagree with the party. The structure of national politics is such that African American interests feel “captured” by the party, since the Republican Party is an untenable alternative representative (Frymer 1999). Democratic leaders have, at times, attacked blacks as a way to court white support, as was the case in 1992 when Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton famously rebuked rap artist Sister Soulja during a Rainbow Coalition-sponsored event. These kinds of incidents occur because the electorally incentivized “party system exacerbates rather than diminishes the marginalized position of a historically disadvantaged minority group” (Frymer 1999, 6). It remains to be seen whether (and, if so, how) the election of Democrat Barack Obama as the first African American president of the United States will fundamentally and permanently alter the relationship between black interest groups and the Democratic Party.

Party and group identities need not be in conflict but, instead, strengthen and reinforce each other. For example, a close identification of many women with the Democratic Party contributed to the institutionalization of the National Organization for Women (NOW) from a social-movement-like entity to a traditional interest group. The Democratic Party’s adoption in 1980 of a rule guaranteeing equal representation for women and men at all levels within the party’s organization—a provision championed by NOW leaders—helped NOW to grow in strength (Barakso 2004, 78). By 1988, leaders of NOW and other women’s interest groups could claim to be “insiders” within the party, even if tensions remained with the party’s mainstream (Hershey 1993; Jo Freeman 1988). NOW’s victories within the Democratic Party demonstrated the efficacy of the organization and emboldened its supporters at a time when the Equal Rights Amendment had been derailed and abortion rights were widely under attack.

Group identifications of a party’s members at times may prove to be enormously beneficial to a party. The 1994 congressional elections are a case where the activities of Christian Right interest groups (such as the Christian Coalition of America) are widely believed to have contributed significantly to the Republican takeover of Congress. In a comparison of Christian Right activism in four states (Virginia, Minnesota, Washington, and Texas), Green, Rozell, and Wilcox (2001) uncover a conditional relationship between the Christian Right and Republican success. They find that when the Christian Right was able to generate general support in the electorate, it was helpful to Republican fortunes. However, when the Christian Right sparked divisions within the party, it tended to undercut Republican candidates. The potential benefits of Christian Right involvement were contingent on tactics: “confrontation among party activists was harmful while consolidation was helpful to the party” (J. Green, Rozell, and Wilcox 2001, 418). Thus, while parties are not uniformly boosted by strong group identification within their ranks, under the right conditions, a party may be able to harness a group’s enthusiasm to promote its cause.

The intersection of partisan and group identities, in general, has the potential to alter party and group politics in unexpected ways. Parties and groups are competing objects of loyalty for individuals. They may motivate a party's members to act against the interests of the party, as when the Log Cabin Republicans failed to endorse George W. Bush's reelection in 2004 (Kuhr 2005). Or, groups may motivate people to promote the fortunes of a party, as when antiwar interest groups and their supporters worked to elect a Democratic Congress in 2006 (Heaney and Rojas 2007). Party and group identities spark new organizational dynamics by altering constituencies, raising new issues, and motivating members to act out in instances where they might have otherwise remained quiescent. Party and group scholarship, therefore, could benefit from expanded investigations of activist attachments to a wider range of organizations in the political system.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The broad range of scholarship referenced in this chapter indicates that party—group linkages certainly have not been ignored by political scientists. At the same time, however, this topic has not been a well-defined subject of inquiry by either party scholars or group scholars, as has been the case for subjects such as interest group coalitions and party primaries. The topic has been investigated almost entirely as a series of case studies, often designed with another question in mind. However, if parties and groups are essentially and systematically linked, as I have argued here, then this subject is worthy of more focused attention by party and group scholars alike. Scholars should conduct research that moves toward the creation of general theories about how groups and parties relate. In this concluding section, I suggest a number of avenues for future inquiry that would help to build more systematic knowledge about the ties between parties and groups.

A first direction for research would be more attention to historical interactions between parties and groups. One approach would be to search for co-evolution in places where evolution has already been observed. For example, Skocpol (2003) describes the evolution of interest group structures from a membership orientation to a management orientation, but does not highlight how this shift related to the party system. It is reasonable to suspect that some of the evolution observed by Skocpol was caused by, or had effects on, evolving party structures. Another approach would be to devote closer scrutiny to seemingly banal modifications in party and group organizational structures. While changing structures may, at first glance, appear to be organizational minutia, they may be signals of important adjustments of organizations to other political actors in their environments.

A second research direction would be greater attention to the personal biographies of party and group activists. Such research would be revealing both for how parties and groups discipline each other and for how partisan and group identities become interconnected. While an activist may have a relatively small set of organizational affiliations or responsibilities at any one point in time—for example, she may hold only one office at a time—her entire career may reflect a broader range of affiliations. This history may suggest deeper linkages between partisan and group identities and how each entity shapes other's agents. One-time party officials become the presidents of interest groups. Yesterday's grassroots activists are tomorrow's political candidates. Systematic investigations of these career paths and vacancy chains would illuminate further the origins of party–group connections.

A third area where more research is needed is on party–group networks. Both party and group scholars began to follow this path more aggressively in the mid- to late 2000s, but the current state of work on this topic has only begun to scratch the surface of what is possible. More care should be given to the measurement of network ties, specification of network boundaries, and analysis of multiplex relationships. While much work to date has focused on networks generated through campaign contributions and spending, the wider range of party–group ties—among lobbyists and activists, for example—would be revealing of the subtle and profound connections between parties and groups.

A final suggestion is to seek greater unification between the analysis of party and group coalitions. Studies of interest group coalitions almost entirely ignore the role that parties play in encouraging or blocking collective action within these entities (cf. Hojnacki 1997; Hula 1999), though recent events sparked by the K Street Project hint that such interventions may be very important. Research on party coalitions pays greater attention to the place of groups (cf. M. Cohen et al. 2008), but more often as “groupings” within parties (e.g., women, fiscal conservatives) than as formal organizations (e.g., NOW, Americans for Tax Reform). Perhaps it is time to move beyond thinking about “interest group coalitions” and “party coalitions” toward the analysis of “political coalitions,” which, no doubt, must include both group and partisan elements in order to be viable.

In conclusion, a new agenda for party–group linkages should recognize that the subject requires more than merely “more research.” Instead, a reorientation to the topic is required. The study of parties and groups has become unnecessarily polarized, with most scholars in these fields identifying either with parties or with groups, but rarely with both. Many of the seminal works in the field—such as Key (1942), Truman (1951), and Schattschneider (1960)—did not draw the bright lines that are often drawn today. Much of the division may be attributed to academic specialization and professional institutionalization. The cost has been to leave systematic lacunae in the theories of parties and groups. A first corrective step would be for every investigation on parties to address “What is the group angle to this question?” and vice versa. A second corrective step would be to envision the

boundaries between parties and groups to be more porous than is currently assumed. Parties and groups are not so radically different from one another. Rather, they are marginally variant institutions that set out to accomplish similar ends for the citizens that constitute them. Embracing these steps would move scholarship productively toward a more dynamic view of parties and groups, thus creating new explanations for organizational change, the shifting structure of party–group networks, and the evolution of personal political identities.