

Voting and Elections

Voting

And

Elections

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The Electorate

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1. Changes in the Electorate

- a. Expanding over time
- b. Blacks, women, 18-year olds
- c. New challenges?



- Study: ID laws could trip up young minority voters
- by Sonya Ross, Associated Press 2:04 pm on 09/13/2012

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2. Who Votes?

Education



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Income



Age



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Employment



Region

AP

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Minority Status



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3. Recent Trends in Voter Turnout

Declined markedly from 1960 to 1990.



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...Low-income whites
not voting.

...Declining strength of
party identification.

...Lowered feelings of
political efficacy.



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The Structure of Elections

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2 Central Obstacles:

1. Getting Nominated – win your parties nomination in the primary.

2. Getting Elected – win your campaign against your opponent.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$????????????????

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“New Style” in campaigning?

Focus is now on the candidate, not the party and is carried out by professionals (consultants, PR experts, media specialists, pollsters, and advertising people).

Better or worse???



Linda Clarizio, president of AOL's Platform A, said of Barack Obama, 'I think he did a great job of going from a relative unknown to a household name to being a candidate for president.'

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Presidential Elections

3 Key Steps

Primaries / Caucuses / Conventions

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1. Primaries

Party primary the summer before the general election.
Open or closed.



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2. Caucuses

Party members meet at local level to select delegates to a county convention, who select delegates to a state convention, who select delegates to the national nominating convention.



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3. Nominating Convention

Majority of delegates normally pledge to a single candidate before the conventions begin.



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**What Shapes
Voter's
Choices?**

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1. Three-Factor Explanation

Party Identification
(long-term force)

Issue Positions
(short-term force)

Candidate Evaluation
(short-term force)



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2. Six-Factor Explanation

Past Performance
Future Performance
Past Issue Positions
Future Policy Stands
Candidate Attributes
Party Identification



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**Voting, Elections, and
Public Policy:
Do Elections
Influence Government
Decisions?**

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Only if these conditions are met:

1. Candidates must take different positions on the issues of the day. If the candidates hold the same basic views, it makes little difference who gets elected.



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2. Candidates have to try to carry out their campaign promises. If they do not, then those that vote for them on the basis of those promises will not have their preferences enacted.

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3. Voters must be able to discern differences between candidates and vote on the basis of issue positions.

