Introduction to the American Political Process

Elections

The Dynamics of the Electoral Campaign
- Winnowing
- The “Big Mo”
  - Election – The horserace
  - Pre-Election: Name recognition and money
- The Horserace
  - Creating Momentum

CNN/USA Today Poll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1/17-1/19</th>
<th>1/20-1/22</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kerry</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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Money Raised

Money Spent

Presidential Elections
- Electoral College
- Strategy
  - Series of Local Elections
  - NY vs. PA
  - Battleground States
Congressional Elections
- House Elections
  - Name recognition
  - The advantages of incumbency
    - Franking
    - Fundraising
- Senate Election
  - Lessened incumbency advantage

How Do Voters Decide
- The Multiple Bases of the Vote
  - Party identification
  - Issues and policies
  - Candidate attributes
  - Retrospective evaluations

Party Identification
- Measurement and predictive ability
  - "Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, or an independent?"
  - High loyalty
- The psychological perspective
- The rational perspective
- Bringing it together
  - Theories not exclusive
  - Party identification is the baseline for the vote

Other Bases of the Vote
- Issues and Policies
  - Elect candidates who share your views
  - Issue conflicts
- Candidate Attributes
  - Voting for a person, not policies
  - Less "rational"?
  - Attribute components
- Retrospective Voting
  - "Throw the bums out"
Candidates

- Candidates and Campaigns
  - How do candidates attract supporters?
- Candidate Strategies
  - Adapt to voter sentiment
  - Move to the middle
  - Framing
  - Defining the race

Negative Advertising

- How do candidates attract supporters?
- Effects of negative campaigns
  - Turnout effects
  - Cynicism

Campaigns (continued)

NJ 12 – DCCC

![Poster: Women's Health Research Is Important to Me Because My Mom's Worth It.]

NRCC – NJ 12

![Poster: "Tasteless." Rush Holt... You Should Be Ashamed.]

Campaigns

- Negative Campaigns (cont)
  - Are things getting worse?

- Poster: "The Truth About Dick Zimmer's Record."
Campaigns

- Campaign Effects
  - Predictive Models
  - Mobilization vs. Conversion

Campaign Finance

- The importance of money
- Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA)
- Circumventing the system: Soft Money
- Issue ads and “magic words”
  - “vote for,” “elect,” “support,” “cast your ballot for,” “Smith for Congress,” “vote against,” “defeat,” and “reject”

### Soft Money Activity

#### Non-Federal Disbursements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>DSCC</th>
<th>DCCC</th>
<th>NRSC</th>
<th>NRCC</th>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
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NRCC – WA 2

- Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002
- McConnell v. FEC
  - Ban soft money and limit issue ads
  - Through out bans on contributions from minors, non-candidate party spending
- New definition of issue ads
  - Magic words or depicting a federal candidate within 60 days of a federal election
- 527 organizations – MoveOn.org
Millions of 2000 GDP Dollars
Deflated by Current GDP/2000 GDP

Year

1900
1920
1940
1960
1980
2000

0
500
1000
1500
2000
2500
3000

Spending Over Time Deflated by GDP

General, President
Congress
Total, President
PAC, Congress