

Chapter 1 : The Idea of a Party System | Ingram Academic

*Perhaps the best book anyone can read on this topic is *The Idea of a Party System*. Richard Hofstadter, explains that America was a novel experiment when founded, and hence the Founding Fathers, lacking governing experience, were highly influenced by classical history and contemporary English political philosophy.*

Other parties are very minor or solely regional. Three-party system or two-and-a-half party system: Party systems by country or region[edit] European Union[edit] Two structures of party system have been identified in the European Parliament since its first universal direct election in , albeit the main EU party groups remained the same: Italy[edit] Italian party systems are usually considered only since the foundation of the Italian Republic as pre- fascist parties lacked a wide popular base. The party system of the so-called First Republic “ , though based on a proportional electoral law, saw the dominance of the Christian Democracy DC and the conventio ad excludendum against the Italian Communist Party PCI. The system was thus a blocked bipolar system; governments were very short in average lasting less than one year and post-electoral, but the supporting parties and personnel could not change. With time, some parties especially the Italian Socialist Party , PSI gained momentum, till reaching the role of government-making in the s. According to Sartori , the two possible degenerations of proportionalism fragmentation and lack of party discipline were reduced by two factors: Therefore, the first republic saw a maximum level of 5 effective parties, with only one dominant party. With time, both sides saw a strengthening of coalitions even if with ups and downs and the birth of unified parties the Ulivo federation and then the Democratic Party on the left, and the People of Freedom party on the right side. Germany[edit] The Bundestag election in Germany was characterized by widespread public apathy and record low voter turnout. The three minor parties each achieved historical bests at the polls with steep losses for the two traditional Volksparteien. They report that the increased volatility and fluidity of the party system is structured along the left-right ideological spectrum with the parties divided into two major camps and vote-switching much more likely within the respective camps rather than between them. The same election also saw the rise of the "Alternative for Germany" AfD party that ran on an anti-Euro platform and failed to enter parliament on their first federal election just barely with 4. Prior to that Germany had only had one big coalition that governed from to , preferring coalitions of one big and one small party at the federal level instead. Whether this shift proves temporary or permanent remains yet to be seen Central and Eastern Europe[edit] Four party systems have been identified in post-communist countries of Central-Eastern Europe: Anti-communist parties split and formed unstable coalition governments. Many parties, with a narrow political base, grew up III system late s: The party system concentrated, while electoral volatility was extremely high IV system s: Fragmentation did not rise again after the fall of many social-democratic parties from government. Finland[edit] Finland was a Grand Duchy controlled by Russia until Nationalistic demands from the peasants and workers for greater use of the Finnish language led to the first political party: In response, the Swedish-speaking aristocracy, landowners and businessmen formed their own political party. Thus emerged the first party system. The second system emerged following the First World War, and had its heyday from and , was characterized by regionalism and saw the emergence of several protest parties, such as the Progressives , the Social Credit Party , and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. The third system emerged in and had its heyday from to and began to unravel thereafter. The two largest parties were challenged by a strong third party, the New Democratic Party. Campaigns during this era became more national in scope due to the electronic media , and involved a greater focus on leadership. The dominant policy of the era was Keynesian economics. It saw most parties move to one-member-one-vote leadership contests, and a major reform to campaign finance laws in The fourth party system has been characterized by market-oriented policies that abandoned Keynesian policies, but maintained the welfare state. It could be argued that a fifth party system has emerged at some point over the past decade as Canadian politics is no longer defined by the regionalism and fiscally conservative orthodoxy of the s and early s. The current make-up of the House of Commons, dominated by three nationally oriented parties Liberal, Conservative and NDP , bears a far more striking resemblance to that of the third party system

rather than the fourth; the governing Liberals have arguably abandoned or loosened their commitment to fiscal conservatism and free market economics by returning to a more Keynesian outlook; and the left of centre New Democratic Party NDP has been a contender in the past two elections, having occupied the role of official opposition in between and . However, it is difficult to pinpoint precisely when the fourth party system came to a close. The Liberals, in opposition to the governing Conservatives after , gradually moved leftwards as centrist parties often do when in an opposition role to a conservative government. Clarkson shows how the Liberal Party has dominated all the party systems, using different approaches. It began with a "clientelistic approach" under Laurier , which evolved into a "brokerage" system of the s, s and s under Mackenzie King. The s saw the emergence of a "pan-Canadian system", which lasted until the s. The election "categorized" by Clarkson as an electoral "earthquake" which "fragmented" the party system, saw the emergence of regional politics within a four party-system, whereby various groups championed regional issues and concerns. Clarkson concludes that the inherent bias built into the first-past-the-post system, has chiefly benefited the Liberals. American Party Systems was a major textbook by Charles Merriam in s. In the most important single breakthrough appeared, The American Party Systems. It brought together historians and political scientists who agreed on a common framework and numbering system. Burnham published numerous articles and books. Closely related is the concept of critical elections introduced by V. Key in , and "realignments. A political science college textbook explains: Jeffersonian Republicans and Federalists; 2. Democrats and Whigs; 3. Republicans and Democrats; 4. Republicans and Democrats; 5. This system can be considered to have developed as a result of the factions in the George Washington administration. The Federalists argued for a strong national government with a national bank and a strong economic and industry system. After the Presidential election, the Democratic-Republicans gained major dominance for the next twenty years, and the Federalists slowly died off. This system developed as a result of the one party rule of the Democratic-Republicans not being able to contain some of the most pressing issues of the time, namely slavery. Wealthier people tended to support the Whigs, and the poorer tended to support the Democrats. The Whig party began to break apart into factions, mainly over the issue of slavery. This period lasted until . Beginning around the time of the start of the Civil War, this system was defined by bitter conflict and striking party differences and coalitions. These coalitions were most evidently defined by geography. The South was dominated by the Democrats who opposed the ending of slavery, and the North, with the exception of some major political machines, was dominated by the Republicans, who supported ending slavery. This era was a time of extreme industrial and economic expansion. The Third Party System lasted until . This era was defined by Progressivism and immigration, as well as the political aftermath of the American Civil War. Northeastern business supported the Republicans while the South and West supported the Democrats. Immigrant groups were courted by both parties. The Fourth Party System came to an end around . Roosevelt in response to the Great Depression. This coalition supporting new social welfare programs brought together many under-privileged, working class, and minority groups including unions, Catholics, and Jews. This era lasted approximately until . The transition to this system appears to have begun with the Civil Rights Act of with the Democrats subsequently losing their long dominance of the South in the late s, leading to a Republican dominance as evidenced by election results. The first party system was not consistently class based, but the second was, with the Radical Party representing the middle classes and the Peronists , workers and the poor. The Effective Number of Parties: Party Politics, 16 2: The West European Party System. Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis. Burbank and Ronald J. Party Politics in America 14th ed. Longman Classics in Political Science. Canadian Parties in Transition 3rd ed. The Changing Irish Party System: Organisation, Ideology and Electoral Competition London, Party Systems in Post-Soviet Countries: A framework for analysis ; reprint in Tan, Alexander C.

Chapter 2 : Second Party System - Simple English Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Richard Hofstadter seeks to explain the development and the acceptance of oppositional party politics in the early American republic. Despite entrenched intellectual opposition to the idea of parties in the eighteenth century, Hofstadter argues that political parties became a practical necessity in American political practice.

One of the enduring American myths we cherish is the two-party system. We must have two parties! To have three parties or more is impossible; to have only one, unthinkable. When Rand Paul beats up on Alexander Hamilton and his doctrine of implied Constitutional powers by invoking James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, does Congressman Paul himself understand that Hamilton was the founder of the Federalists, forerunner of the modern Republican Party? In fact, Madison and Jefferson fathered the present-day Democratic Party, destroying the Federalists and fostering our winner-take-all brand of politics. George Washington ran unopposed in the first two presidential elections but ever since, the first election in which there were two competing candidates, Jefferson and John Adams, one political party has always tried to utterly destroy the other. From the outset, American presidential elections have been vicious. To begin with, the Constitution did not provide for any political parties. They preferred a presidential election, the linchpin of our political system, in which the top vote-getter got to be president; the number two man, vice president. Why would you need parties? Negative references were considered badges of honor and the first party labels. During the civil warfare of the American Revolution, the two warring parties adopted these old English labels. Adherents to the American independence movement were called Whigs. The pro-English party, the Loyalists -- the real Tea Party -- was denominated Tories, the "intestine" enemy which had to be purged and cast out. So deep went the fear that post-Revolutionary party politics would again degenerate into civil warfare that the Founding Fathers understandably shunned the word party, much less the idea. Scottish philosopher David Hume, learning that his old friend, Benjamin Franklin, was armpit deep in American political intrigues, recoiled in horror. Franklin, is a man of faction. Faction, above all, is a dangerous thing. Opposition to the new Constitution, while strong in many states, was so disorganized that it was expected to be short lived. Away in France during this reform convention, Thomas Jefferson objected to the lack of any formal provision for a two-party system. The uneasy honeymoon of the first American political system lasted less than two years. Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton spoke for the prosperous seaport towns of the North, the banking and commercial interests, the creditors. Jefferson, the perennially debt-ridden man from Monticello, spoke for the South and the West, the farmers, the workers, other debtors. To Jefferson, the Federalists were intolerably aristocratic "monocrats. For awhile, James Madison, putative father of the Constitution and major author of the Federalist Papers, upheld Hamilton. They arranged to hire Princeton-educated journalist Philip Freneau to set up the National Gazette, a Philadelphia-based weekly, to combat the Gazette of the United States, backed by Hamilton and his Federalists. They followed up this first step in forming two distinct political parties by spawning Democratic-Republican Clubs all over America. Washington, a thin-skinned chief executive, only decided to stay on for a second term to prevent his lieutenants from, as he feared, splitting the country into two parties. To him, political parties spelled disunion. Supreme Court justices became circuit-riding inquisitors, trying, fining and imprisoning some 25 editors and printers who subscribed to the Jeffersonian party line. Religious groups blessed their favorite candidates and condemned opponents. In the campaign, the Congregational clergy of New England ganged up on candidate Jefferson in sermons reprinted in Federalist newspapers, branding him an atheist at a time when four out of five American newspapers were Federalist-owned. In his turn, when Jefferson became president he instituted what later became known as the spoils system. With his idea of even-handedness, he dismantled the Federalist Party. He fired half of all federal officeholders, the top half. He kept Federalists only in low-level clerical, postal and customs service jobs. Jefferson effectively deprived the Federalists of any chance of rebuilding a power base by excluding them not only from the federal payroll but from political and administrative experience. The Federalists never won another election. They held power, except for a single term, for 60 years. No Democrat would be elected president for another generation. And even though the pendulum swings may be shorter

these days, neither party seems to want to relinquish the possibility of utterly destroying the other. Willard Sterne Randall, formerly an award-winning investigative reporter, is the author of six Founding Father biographies including, most recently, Ethan Allen, His Life and Times, published by W. Do you have information you want to share with HuffPost?

Chapter 3 : A Brief History of the Two Party System

About the Book. This work traces the historical processes in thought by which American political leaders slowly edged away from their complete philosophical rejection of a party and hesitantly began to embrace a party system.

In Connecticut in the state leadership sent town leaders instructions for the forthcoming elections; every town manager was told by state leaders "to appoint a district manager in each district or section of his town, obtaining from each an assurance that he will faithfully do his duty. The returns eventually went to the state manager, who issued directions to laggard towns to get all the eligibles to town meetings, help the young men qualify to vote, to nominate a full ticket for local elections, and to print and distribute the party ticket. The secret ballot did not appear for a century. The Jeffersonians invented many campaign techniques that the Federalists later adopted and that became standard American practice. They were especially effective at building a network of newspapers in major cities to broadcast their statements and editorialize in their favor. But the Federalists, with a strong base among merchants, controlled more newspapers: Every year more papers began publishing; in the Federalists still had a 2 to 1 numerical advantage. Most papers, on each side, were weeklies with a circulation of to The Jacobins owe their triumph to the unceasing use of this engine; not so much to skill in use of it as by repetition. As one explains, It was the good fortune of the Republicans to have within their ranks a number of highly gifted political manipulators and propagandists. Some of them had the ability Beckley of Pennsylvania, an ardent partisan, invented new campaign techniques such as mass distribution of pamphlets and of handwritten ballots that generated the grass-roots support and unprecedented levels of voter turnout for the Jeffersonians. War threats with Britain and France[edit] With the world thrown into global warfare after , the small nation on the fringe of the European system could barely remain neutral. The Jeffersonians called for strong measures against Britain, and even for another war. The Federalists tried to avert war by the Jay Treaty with England. When Jefferson came to power in he honored the treaty, but new disputes with Britain led to the War of The Alien and Sedition Acts clamped down on dissenters, including pro-Jefferson editors, and Vermont Congressman Matthew Lyon , who won re-election while in jail in In the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions , secretly drafted by Madison and Jefferson, the legislatures of the two states challenged the power of the federal government. They were appalled that Hamilton was increasing the national debt and using it to solidify his Federalist base. Burrows says of Gallatin: Not only was it necessary to extinguish the existing debt as rapidly as possible, he argued, but Congress would have to ensure against the accumulation of future debts by more diligently supervising government expenditures. In , a critical election galvanized the electorate, sweeping the Federalists out of power, and electing Jefferson and his Democratic-Republican Party. Adams made a few last minute, "midnight appointments", notably Federalist John Marshall as Chief Justice. The rhetoric of the day was cataclysmic " election of the opposition meant the enemy would ruin the nation. By engineering an embargo of trade against Britain, Jefferson and Madison plunged the nation into economic depression, ruined much of the business of Federalist New England, and finally precipitated the War of with a much larger and more powerful foe. However, they committed a major blunder in That year the semi-secret " Hartford Convention " passed resolutions that verged on secession; their publication ruined the Federalist party. It had been limping along for years, with strength in New England and scattered eastern states but practically no strength in the West. While Federalists helped invent or develop numerous campaign techniques such as the first national nominating conventions in [25] , their elitist bias alienated the middle class, thus allowing the Jeffersonians to claim they represented the true spirit of "republicanism. Some newspaper editors became powerful politicians, such as Thomas Ritchie , whose "Richmond Junto" controlled Virginia state politics from into the s. One historian explains how well organized it was in Connecticut: It was only necessary to perfect the working methods of the organized body of office-holders who made up the nucleus of the party. There were the state officers, the assistants, and a large majority of the Assembly. In every county there was a sheriff with his deputies. All of the state, county, and town judges were potential and generally active workers. This was the Federalist machine. Dissenting groups moved toward the Jeffersonians. The failure of the Hartford Convention in wounded the Federalists, who were

finally upended by the Democratic-Republicans in Era of Good Feelings[edit] The First Party System was primarily built around foreign policy issues that vanished with the defeat of Napoleon and the compromise settlement of the War of 1812. Furthermore, the fears that Federalists were plotting to reintroduce aristocracy dissipated. Personal politics and factional disputes were occasionally still hotly debated, but Americans no longer thought of themselves in terms of political parties. The little state of Delaware, largely isolated from the larger political forces controlling the nation, saw the First Party System continue well into the 1820s, with the Federalists occasionally winning some offices. Legitimacy of a party system[edit] Depiction of election-day activities in Philadelphia by John Lewis Krimmel , Alexander Hamilton felt that only by mobilizing its supporters on a daily basis in every state on many issues could support for the government be sustained through thick and thin. They thought opposition parties would only weaken the nation. By contrast Jefferson was the main force behind the creation and continuity of an opposition party. Men by their constitutions are naturally divided into two parties: Those who fear and distrust the people, and wish to draw all powers from them into the hands of the higher classes. Those who identify themselves with the people, have confidence in them, cherish and consider them as the most honest and safe, although not the most wise depository of the public interests. In every country these two parties exist, and in every one where they are free to think, speak, and write, they will declare themselves. Call them, therefore, liberals and serviles, Jacobins and Ultras, whigs and tories, republicans and federalists, aristocrats and democrats, or by whatever name you please, they are the same parties still and pursue the same object. The last appellation of aristocrats and democrats is the true one expressing the essence of all. Hofstadter shows it took many years for the idea to take hold that having two parties is better than having one, or none. That transition was made possible by the successful passing of power in from one party to the other. Although Jefferson systematically identified Federalist army officers and officeholders, he was blocked from removing all of them by protests from republicans. The Quids complained he did not go far enough. In recent years, Hamilton and his reputation have decidedly gained the initiative among scholars who portray him as the visionary architect of the modern liberal capitalist economy and of a dynamic federal government headed by an energetic executive.

Chapter 4 : Two Parties Emerge [www.nxgvision.com]

In this lively study, Professor Hofstadter suggests that: the national elite passed a Constitution designed to prevent a voter-majority from coalescing and instituting democratic government, and also to disarm factional conflicts within the elite.

Additional Information In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: The field of early American party history has been tillled intensively in recent years, and the good harvests have shown conclusively that the field has lain fallow for too long. Many recent books and articles have told us much about the origins of parties, their organization and leadership, their tactics in opposition, and their policies when in power. This kind of information is indeed essential to the understanding of political parties, but what has been lacking until now is a thorough and systematic discussion of the idea of parties and the development of the belief that they play a necessary, legitimate, and even beneficial role in the American political system. Richard Hofstadter has undertaken to fill this gap in the latest of his many distinguished contributions to our understanding of American history. When parties developed outside the carefully -constructed machinery of the constitution, leaders of both sides found it hard to justify in theory what already existed in actuality. Both sides found it particularly hard to accept the idea of the legitimacy of opposition. Believing that the Republicans wanted, as Washington put it, to "Subvert the Constitution," the Federalists sought to suppress this "illegitimate" opposition by the harsh policy of the Alien and Sedition Acts. Operating on this premise, these new political practitioners never sought to destroy or absorb their opposition; party competition, they believed, was not only essential to society but to the very existence of the parties themselves. This rationale, once developed, became the standard justification for the American party system. Thus, after years of wrestling with the problem, American politicians and statesmen had "evolved a rationale for parties which made it unnecessary for politicians to apologize for doing what the necessities of their trade plainly required them to do. The book is written with the clarity and felicity of style which one has come to expect from Richard Hofstadter. The publication of further detailed studies on various aspects of the early history of American parties may someday make a new synthesis desirable, but I suspect that this book will remain a standard treatment of its subject for many years to come. Thus the island-grabbing interlude following the Spanish-American War did not mark a qualitatively different type of expansion for Americans. Mr. Eblengoes along with this view, only he conceptualizes four empires for the new American nation. The author makes his greatest contribution in pursuit of this thesis as he meticulously details the transformation from first to second stage territorial governments and portrays the relations that developed between particular governors and their federal superiors and local political groupings. Governors of these second stage lost their influence as lobbyists to the territorial delegates in Congress; they also lost much of their power of appointment to the President. They learned to cultivate relations with obdurate legislatures. By and large governors were responsive to the needs of their constituents. They were also something of a nascent colonial service, as many in the first empire served in this capacity in successive territories.

Chapter 5 : Party system - Wikipedia

Either way, the party system will be upended as a result of a party realignment, or a shifting of party allegiances within the electorate. [17] There have been six distinctive periods in U.S. history when new political parties have emerged, control of the presidency has shifted from one party to another, or significant changes in a party's makeup have occurred.

Beginnings[change change source] The United States presidential election in did not have any political parties. There were four main candidates for president: At the end of the race, none of the candidates had enough votes in the electoral college to win, and the United States House of Representatives had to choose the winner. The three final candidates were Adams, Crawford, and Jackson. Even though Clay was not one of these finalists, he was the Speaker of the House , and it was his job to negotiate who would become president. Jackson had the most popular votes votes cast by citizens and the most electoral votes votes cast by the electoral college , but was not elected. Instead, John Quincy Adams was elected president. He immediately chose Clay to be his Secretary of State. He gathered his supporters in politics and the local militias and created the Democratic Party. Van Buren was popular in Virginia and Pennsylvania , and he had the support of their electoral college votes. The new Democratic Party beat Adams in the U. He strongly opposed the Second Bank of the United States. It was very similar to the Federal Reserve System that would be developed later. The bank was controlled by the banker Nicholas Biddle and supported by Henry Clay. Jackson did not like any banks, and he did not believe in paper money. He believed that money should only be gold and silver. As president, he was able to close the Second Bank. He issued his Specie Circular in July Specie is a word that means gold and silver used as money. The Circular said that only gold and silver coins, and not paper money, could be used to buy federal land. This made most businessmen and bankers join the Whig party. Also, cities that depended on commerce trade and industry became supporters of the Whig party. Jackson became more popular with subsistence farmers farmers who grow crops to eat, but not to sell and day laborers. These government jobs were given as rewards and incentives something that makes a person try harder to keep working for the political party. Jackson used the spoils system a lot when he was president. He rewarded his supporters and promised future jobs if local and state politicians joined his team. He believed in the theory of rotation in office , where people would only remain in a position for a short time. Other leaders of the Democratic Party wanted to give civil service jobs to friends and loyal party members. The spoils system was ended in the s.

Chapter 6 : The Evolution of Political Parties- Studying Hofstadter and the Founders

The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, (review) Norman K. Risjord Civil War History, Volume 17, Number 1, March , pp. (Review).

The election of 1796 was the first election in American history where political candidates at the local, state, and national level began to run for office as members of organized political parties that held strongly opposed political principles. This was a stunning new phenomenon that shocked most of the older leaders of the Revolutionary Era. Even Madison, who was one of the earliest to see the value of political parties, believed that they would only serve as temporary coalitions for specific controversial elections. The older leaders failed to understand the dynamic new conditions that had been created by the importance of popular sovereignty "to the American Revolution. The people now understood themselves as a fundamental force in legitimating government authority. In the modern American political system, voters mainly express themselves through allegiances within a competitive party system. The two parties adopted names that reflected their most cherished values. The Federalists of attached themselves to the successful campaign in favor of the Constitution and were solid supporters of the federal administration. Although Washington denounced parties as a horrid threat to the republic, his vice president John Adams became the de facto presidential candidate of the Federalists. Merchants, creditors and urban artisans who built the growing commercial economy of the northeast provided its most dedicated supporters and strongest regional support. This mural, located at the Library of Congress in Washington, D. The opposition party adopted the name Democratic-Republicans, which suggested that they were more fully committed to extending the Revolution to ordinary people. The supporters of the Democratic-Republicans often referred to as the Republicans were drawn from many segments of American society and included farmers throughout the country with high popularity among German and Scots-Irish ethnic groups. Although it effectively reached ordinary citizens, its key leaders were wealthy southern tobacco elites like Jefferson and Madison. While the Democratic-Republicans were more diverse, the Federalists were wealthier and carried more prestige, especially by association with the retired Washington. The election was waged with uncommon intensity. Federalists thought of themselves as the "friends of order" and good government. They viewed their opponents as dangerous radicals who would bring the anarchy of the French Revolution to America. The Democratic-Republicans despised Federalist policies. According to one Republican-minded New York newspaper, the Federalists were "aristocrats, endeavoring to lay the foundations of monarchical government, and Republicans [were] the real supporters of independence, friends to equal rights, and warm advocates of free elective government. Clearly there was little room for compromise in this hostile environment. The outcome of the presidential election indicated the close balance between the two sides. New England strongly favored Adams, while Jefferson overwhelmingly carried the southern states. The key to the election lay in the mid-Atlantic colonies where party organizations were the most fully developed. Adams ended up narrowly winning in the electoral college 71 to 68. A sure sign of the great novelty of political parties was that the Constitution had established that the runner-up in the presidential election would become the vice president. John Adams took office after a harsh campaign and narrow victory. His political opponent Jefferson served as second in command. A History of American Agriculture: While Jefferson ran for office in 1796, 90 percent of the population were farmers. Today, farmers make up less than 3 percent of the population. The Campaign and Election of The American President series presents a summary of the first American election where political parties played a part. See a chart of the candidates and the results; find out the political rationale for why the parties chose their candidates; learn strange facts that made this election unique.

Chapter 7 : The Idea of a Party System by Richard Hofstadter - Paperback - University of California Press

The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, Richard Hofstadter University of California Press, - History - pages.

A Brief History of the American Two Party System Following the publication of the Declaration of Independence and before the successful resolution of the War for Independence , the American colonies decided it would be best to "confederate," at least for the purposes of entering into strategic alliances with European powers and perhaps waging war again with the mother country. This gave the U. But not without a fight. Constitution and for a stronger Federal role. The passage of the Bill of Rights, as a permanent limit to the powers of the Federal government, answered much of that argument. Nonetheless, the struggle between a strong Federal government and state sovereignties has been an important thread in the play of our two-party system from the very beginning. From that beginning in , the U. Jefferson challenged Adams under the banner of the Democratic-Republican party. Interesting that this first real party, alone, should contain the nominal seeds of the present two-party system. The word Democratic implies will of the people, the word Republican implies rule of law protection from a potential tyranny of the majority. The mostly aristocratic and Virginian Democratic-Republicans kept the Presidency from through The Northern Abolitionist Movement gave birth to a new party , the Republicans. Abraham Lincoln was their first successful candidate for President From the beginning, the Republicans have been Northern and pro-business, the Democrats Southern and more populist. So, for all intents and purposes, the Republicans held Presidential power for 72 years but for 16 Democratic years. The Great Depression and forward changed all that. As business had so completely failed the people, the party of the people, the Democrats, under Franklin Roosevelt, won the support of the majority of the voters. Indeed, they kept power through except for the two terms of Dwight Eisenhower, who won his elections not for his politics but for his stature as a war-hero. Poll after poll for the last 70 years show Americans identify with Democratic positions even when they elect a Republican. TV has been a potent force in this phenomenon, as has the increasing role of religion and ignorance in the American political scene. The initial differences were over slavery and industrialism and the dominance of the South poorer and less populous by the North. Roosevelt, then, the parties have divided the electorate, for better or for worse, along economic class lines. How then, you ask, have the Republicans been able to win any national elections at all, as they are the party of the Sheriff of Nottingham, not the party of Robin Hood? The reason is not hard to see. First, the Christian Right has delivered tens of millions of votes to the Republicans every year, as it has served the interests of dozens of Pentecostal movements to be on the side of Wealth and their followers have, of course, followed them. And the poor, who are somewhat often under-educated, are sometimes easily swayed to vote against their own interests. Ever since the debacle of Vietnam divided the nation, Democrats have lost their moorings, their identification with the poor and the unprivileged. So, as Democrats move more and more to the political Right, sparring with Republicans over who is more for tax cuts in a time of gargantuan Federal and state deficits, now may be the time for the emergence of a third-party, representing the interests of the poor and increasingly disenfranchised middle-class, reducing the debt, making the tax structure more equitable and listening to science, Cassandra-like, warn us of planetary catastrophe.

Chapter 8 : Did the Founding Fathers Really Want Two Parties? | HuffPost

REVIEWS *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840.* by F. O. Matthiessen. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1964.

This is enraging because it casts the partisan necessarily as a fool and elevates the disinterested spectator to the position of the only one capable of deriving benefit from the political culture in which she lives. This, I think, is the view that today lauds, in equal measure, bipartisanship and the independent voter. When the parties are not acting in concert with each other, the picture goes, necessarily they act as partisan fools. Do they find common ground to appeal to the independent voter, or does the independent voter find the moderate position by seeing them fight without finding common ground? This model does apply, of course, to the legal system. The adversarial jury trial is exactly this: But it seems a great mistake to apply this to the political system, as Mill does and as the common wisdom about the virtues of bipartisanship seems to do. The Founding Fathers emerge from an 18th century tradition of great hostility to parties. But with the new republic that they fashioned, they found themselves forced to confront the existence of parties and the need to separate organized opposition to the government from sedition and treason. Struggling with these issues led to some missteps, like the notorious Aliens and Sedition Act of 1798 by which the Federalists attempted to crush the opposition rather than live with it. After all, what opposed partisanship, for them, was non-partisanship, not bipartisanship. But some of the 18th century anti-party ideas are certainly mixed up with the Millian justification of parties I described above. When Obama discusses bipartisanship, he seems to use it not as the emergence of a wise moderation from the foolish extremes, but as a stepping stone to a position, for him, above the party fray. A lot depends on what you take a party to be, something which is discussed throughout by Hofstadter but to which he does not give direct attention. Sometimes a party is a faction, a clique, an interest group. Sometimes it embodies a political principle or ideology. I should say, Hofstadter is not at all confused; rather the authors he discusses have very different opinions, and the course of opinion develops through the period he deals with. What I miss in his book is a sense of how the justifications for the party system work better or worse depending on which conception of party is held. But the book is invaluable for providing rich source material for thought on this subject. If and when I do try to write about this, I shall certainly do it better for having read this book.

Chapter 9 : THE IDEA OF A PARTY SYSTEM by Richard Hofstadter | Kirkus Reviews

The Second Party System is a name for the political party system in the United States during the 1820s-1850s. It is a phrase used by historians and political scientists used to describe the time period between 1820 and 1850 when people quickly became more interested in voting starting in 1824.