

Study Guide for Unit 3:

Political Parties, Interest Groups, Media

Chapter 7: The Mass Media & The Political Agenda

Questions you should be able to answer:

1. Using examples from presidential politics, explain why image and the use of the media are so important in the American political system.
2. Explain the historical development of the print and broadcast media in the U.S. Use examples to illustrate your answer.
3. How does television define what is newsworthy? Explain where television finds its news stories and how they are presented to the American public.
4. Describe how the media shape public opinion. What are the consequences of the media's influence on public opinion?
5. What is the policy agenda? Who are the policy entrepreneurs and how do they utilize the media to get their issues on the policy agenda?
6. Explain how the news media affect the scope of government and American individualism. How have they helped and hindered the growth of democracy in the United States?

Terms you should be able to identify & describe:

mass media

investigative journalism

narrowcasting

Fairness Doctrine

Horse race coverage

trial balloons

sound bites

factions

spin control

Chapter 8: Political Parties

Questions you should be able to answer:

1. What is the meaning of a political party? What functions do parties in America perform?
2. What are the "three heads" of political parties?
3. How has party identification changed over the years and what affect has it had on elections?
4. Describe the basic organization of American political parties. How do party politics at the local, state, and national levels differ? Which level is most important and why?
5. How did the American two-party system evolve? How were coalitions important to this evolution? Include in your answer a discussion of party eras and critical elections.
6. What are the political and policy consequences of having a two-party system? How have third parties made a difference?
7. In what ways have American political parties declined? What are the principal rivals of the political parties? Speculate on the future of political parties in America.

Terms you should be able to identify & describe:

party identification	ticket-splitting
party machines	patronage
closed primaries	open primaries
national convention	
national chairperson	
critical election	party realignment
party dealignment	
winner-take-all system	proportional representation

Chapter 11: Interest Groups

Questions you should be able to answer:

1. What are interest groups? How do groups differ from political parties?
2. Why are small groups generally more effective than large groups?
3. How do intensity and financial resources affect interest group success? What are single-issue groups and how effective have they been in American politics?
4. What are the principal strategies that groups use to affect policymaking? Which strategy seems to be the most effective, and why? Are certain strategies better suited for different types of interest groups?
5. What impact do political action committees have on interest group behavior? Evaluate the role of political action committees.
6. What are the different types of interest groups? What are their primary goals, what strategies do they use, and how successful have they been?
7. How do interest groups affect democracy and the scope of government in the United States?

Terms you should be able to identify & describe:

interest group	collective good
free-rider problem	single-issue group
lobbying	electioneering
PACs	<i>amicus curiae</i> briefs
class action lawsuits	