

VOX POP Newsletter of Political Organizations and Parties

An official section of the American Political Science Association
Produced by the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, The University of Akron

ISSUE THEME: THE STATE OF THE PARTIES

STROM THURMOND AND THE POLITICS OF SOUTHERN CHANGE

Nadine Cohodas

On June 17, 1948, forty-five years ago, Strom Thurmond, South Carolina's young governor, stepped to the podium in a Birmingham, Alabama, auditorium to accept the presidential nomination of the States' Rights Democrats. In his now infamous acceptance speech, he promised that there were "not enough troops in the army to force the southern people to break down segregation and admit the Negro race into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our homes, and into our churches."

Thurmond's inflammatory rhetoric secured him a spot in American political history, but the states' rights campaign he led was about more than eye-opening speeches. Often overlooked, it was a pivotal moment in the transformation of white southern politics that would, with Thurmond's help, come into full bloom when the Southern Strategy that propelled Richard Nixon into the White House. The States' rights campaign—or the Dixicrats, as the group came to be known—heralded the beginning of the transformations of both the white and black electorate in the South. Thurmond is the embodiment of the former; he was forced to adjust to the growth and influence of the latter.

The 1948 campaign set Thurmond, who had already established himself as a progressive governor, on an irreversible course of resistance to changing the social status quo. Week by week he was drawn onto the national stage as he joined other southerners to ward off oncoming federal pressure to dismantle segregation.

Though the campaign against President Truman was couched in the deceptively benign rhetoric of states' rights, it was really driven by race—each state's right to preserve segregation. Setting the entrenched white community

against the quietly surging black citizenry, the campaign was the precursor of the racially charged campaigns of George Wallace and illustrated the same racial tensions and fissures that still confront the country.

Thurmond carried only four states on election day 1948—Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina. But those four were important—the first time any southern state had bolted from the regular Democratic Party ranks since the aftermath of the Civil War, when the Republican-led Reconstruction had made that party anathema to white southerners.

Thurmond has won eight other elections since 1948, but he has always maintained that this election, even though he lost it, was the most significant because it

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Chair: L. Sandy Maisel, Colby College

Secretary-Treasurer: Charles Hadley, University of New Orleans

Program Chair: Marjorie Hershey, Indiana University

VOX POP Editor: John Green, The University of Akron

Executive Council: David M. Olson, University of North Carolina-Greensboro; Robert Biersack, Federal Election Commission; Jo Freeman, Brooklyn, NY; Marjorie Hershey, Indiana University; Harold Bass, Quachita Baptist University; John Green, The University of Akron; Anthony Gierzynski, University of Vermont; Kay Schlozman, Boston College.

FROM HEADQUARTERS

To the members of POP:

When the Nominating Committee asked me if I would be willing to stand (certainly one does not run for office in POP) to be the leader of POP for the next two years, I was indeed honored and quickly accepted. Then Gerry Pomper began to tell me what was involved; it was too late to renege.

Seriously, I am truly honored to have been chosen as POP's chair. I am particularly honored to succeed Gerry, one of the true giants in our field. And I do find the job a little daunting. A number of years ago I headed another organized section of the APSA, and the job was mainly ceremonial. Now, largely because of the initiatives undertaken during Gerry's term, real work needs to be done. I hope I can call on all of you for your help.

Elsewhere in *VOX POP*, you will find the names of colleagues who have agreed to serve on various committees for next year. I hope you will take a few moments to think of appropriate nominees for our various awards and forward names (and, I suppose rationales) to the appropriate committees. I would also like to encourage those of you interested in participating in the 1994 Annual Meeting to contact Marjorie Hershey (for the POP portion of the program) or Bob Biersack (for our workshop). In the coming year, we also intend to pursue a proposal to initiate an internship program at the two national

committees and to work further on developing an e-mail network for POP members.

A first letter from a new chair is always full of generalities and vague plans. Mostly, however, this is a plea for help and advice. POP as a section works best if it serves the interests and needs of the members. That can work best if you let us know what would be most helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me with your thoughts, ideas, and even your (hopefully few) complaints.

Sandy Maisel, Chair

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Minutes

Political Organizations and Parties Section American Political Science Association

Washington, D.C. • September 3, 1993

The section meeting was called to order by Gerald M. Pomper, Chair, at 12:33 p.m. The following order of business transpired:

1. **Overview:** Chair Gerald M. Pomper thanked those present for the opportunity to serve and went on to note a number of successful Section activities. The establishment of a scholarly publication through an annual issue of the *American Review of Politics* was noted. The 1993 Workshop, "The Politics of Ideas: Intellectual Challenges to the Parties After 1992," went very well under the direction of John K. White. The Program was a success thanks to its Section Chair Mark Wattier. Finally, he thanked the Secretary-Treasurer, noting the good financial base of the Section.
2. **1992 Minutes:** John Green moved adoption of the September 4, 1992, Minutes as printed in *VOX POP*,

Volume 11, Issue 2, pp. 2-3; Mildred Schwartz seconded the motion. Chair Pomper asked for any corrections. There being none, the Minutes were adopted unanimously.

3. **Treasurer's Report:**

- \$ 5,175.17 Funds on deposit in the University of New Orleans Federal Credit Union September 4, 1992 (statement of June 30, 1992).
- 162.00 Workshop registrations collected by POP.
- (269.05) Awards for the 1992 POP Section Business Meeting (plaques produced and mailed at a later date).
- (292.05) Awards for the 1993 POP Section Business Meeting.

(continued)

- \$(3,000.00) Initial installment for the *American Review of Politics*/POP Section annual special issue.
- 2,000.00 Receipt from the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, The University of Akron, of the second and final installment for the *American Review of Politics*/POP Section annual special issue.
- (2,000.00) Second and final installment for the *American Review of Politics*/POP Section annual special issue.
- 1,517.48 Dues portion from APSA through July 31, 1993 (on deposit in Nations Bank checking account; excludes \$27.62 for checks and service charges).
- 1,684.83 Funds on deposit in the University of New Orleans Federal Credit Union through August 31, 1993 (\$134.97 interest earned since last report).

\$ 3,202.31

4. Membership in the POP Section presently stands at 496.
5. **VOX POP Report:** Editor John Green noted the success of *VOX POP* was due to contributions from Section members and admonished those present to keep the information coming. The first Workshop book was published earlier this year and the second was due out this fall, both through the University Press of America.
6. **Awards Ceremony** (see page 5)
7. **Old Business:** Gary Wekkin, Editor, *American Review of Politics*, circulated the first issue of the journal under its new name, reviewed a number of the articles, and went on to note that the Section's Foundation volume edited by Bill Crotty was excellent and the final manuscripts would be in soon. The Foundation volume, moreover, will be distributed free to all members of the Section with the hope all would subscribe, given its modest subscription cost of \$15.00. He went on to note that the second special issue was under the special editorship of Malcolm E. Jewell and Sarah Morehouse on the topic state political parties; a number of good proposals were accepted to date.
8. **New Business:**
 - A. Bill Ball, commented on the establishment of an E-mail network suggested by Ken Janda. Ball noted his establishment of discussion group re: political science and teaching, position announcements, and calls for papers. All that is needed is a main-frame computer host and some E-mail expertise.

Chair Pomper urged the incoming officers and Executive Council to consider establishing such a network for general coverage of the field.

- B. Denise L. Baer, chaired a committee (including Neil Cotter, Leon D. Epstein, and John J. Pitney) to look into reviving a National Political Party Fellows Program to be patterned after the APSA Congressional Fellows Program. After noting potential FEC and APSA problems, Chair Pomper moved:

The APSA Section of Political Organizations and Parties endorses the creation of a national party fellowship program. It authorizes the POP Executive Committee, and urges the APSA officers and Council, to take appropriate action to resolve any legal, financial and organizational issues involved in an appropriate educational program, reporting regularly to the POP membership. Actual implementation of any program will require approval by the POP Executive Committee and APSA.

Sandy Maisel, seconded the motion. After some discussion, including comments from Kay Lawson, Jo Freeman, Gerry Pomper, Sandy Maisel, Charles Hadley, Denise Baer, and Ruth Joes, the motion passed unanimously.

9. **Nomination Committee Report:** Chair Pomper recognized Ruth Jones, who for the Nominating Committee, recommended for Chair (2-year term) L. Sandy Maisel; for Section Program Chair (1994 APSA meeting) Marjorie Hershey, Indiana University; and for Executive Council (2-year term) Harold Bass, Ouachita Baptist University; John Green, The University of Akron; Anthony Gierzynski, University of Vermont; and Kay Schlozman, Boston College. The recommendations were accepted by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Charles D. Hadley
Secretary-Treasurer

POP 1994 APSA Convention Workshop

Bob Biersack will organize the 1994 POP workshop on the topic of campaign finance in a changing regulatory environment. Federal and state/local regulators, state and national party officials, and perhaps White House and congressional staff (depending on the state of the legislation) will be invited to participate. Those interested should contact Bob at (202) 219-3730.

1994 POP Committee Assignments

Nominating Committee

Larry Longley
Department of Government
Lawrence University
Appleton, WI 54912
(414) 832-6673

Hal Bass
Ouachita Baptist University
Arkadelphia, AR 71923
(501) 245-5168

Penny Miller
Department of Political Science
1607 Patterson Office Tower
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Emerging Scholar Award

Bob Salisbury
Department of Political Science
Washington University, St. Louis
Saint Louis, MO 63130
(314) 935-5881

Gary Wekkin
Department of Political Science
University of Central Arkansas
Conway, AR 72032
(510) 450-5686

Nancy Zingale
Department of Political Science
University of St. Thomas
P.O. Box 4079
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Eldersveld Award (2-year term)

Walt Stone
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University of Colorado, Boulder
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Jo Freeman
410 East 8th Street
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Pomona College
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Epstein and Walker Awards

Alan Gitelson
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Loyola University of Chicago
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**Committee to Explore
National Committee
Internships**

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University of Vermont
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Denise Baer
School of Government and
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Frank Sorauf
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WANTED! Notices, announcements, reports, and short articles for VOX POP.

Send materials to:

John Green, Bliss Institute,
The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-1904

The 1993 POP Awards

Joseph Schlesinger, winner of the Samuel Eldersveld Award for a lifetime of distinguished scholarly and professional contributions to the field.

Maurice Duverger, winner of the Leon Epstein Award for a book that has made a distinguished contribution to the field for *Les Partis Politiques* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1951).

Herbert McCloskey, Rose Mary O'Hara, and Paul Hoffman, winners of the Jack Walker award for an

article of unusual importance and significance to the field for "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers." *APSR* 56:406-429, 1960.

Sean J. Savage, first winner of the Emerging Scholars Award for *Roosevelt the Party Leader 1932-1945* (University of Kentucky Press, 1992).

John C. Green, first winner of the Distinguished Service Award.

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helped set the South on its new course. "The sky didn't fall," he says, when those four states left the mainstream Democrats. On the contrary, the political heavens opened up and revealed an increasingly attractive Republican constellation whose stars, drawing on the themes of the old states' righters, presented themselves to white voters as the best protectors of the status quo.

Indeed, in 1964, after years of dissatisfaction in the Democratic Party, Thurmond became the first southerner of note to switch parties and join Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign. Thurmond did not change his message. He simply spoke from a new platform, opening the way for a host of other white southerners, steeped in the states' rights philosophy of their elders, to march into the welcoming arms of the GOP.

Thurmond was such a committed Republican by 1968 that he aggressively campaigned against George Wallace on Richard Nixon's behalf. As an old third-party candidate himself, Thurmond was the perfect choice to throw a body block against another third party contender. Appalled at the prospect of Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey winning the White House, Thurmond raced around the South arguing that Wallace could only be a spoiler. One of the mantras of Nixon's Southern Strategy came from Thurmond: "A vote for Wallace is a vote for Humphrey."

Political philosophy and party alignments are only part of the story of Strom Thurmond. The senator's long career—county superintendent of education in Edgefield County, South Carolina, state judge, governor, and United States senator—is an illustration of the power of race to shape politics and the power of laws to shape behavior.

The Civil War had ended just 37 years before Thurmond was born, and he shared the fierce pride most southerners felt about the "War Between the States" as they called it. Once he got to the Senate, he saw in every civil rights bill deliberate punishment of his homeland.

He fought each one and he threw his rhetorical might against every Supreme Court decision protecting minorities from discrimination. Thurmond had no patience for the brazen college students who sat down at whites-only lunch counters in southern cities, no sympathy for the freedom riders who were beaten up in Anniston, Birmingham, and Montgomery, and none for the young marchers gassed on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma. They were "outside agitators" who had tried to stir up trouble.

But they had also made the senator an involuntary participant in the civil rights movement. As long as he chose to stay in public life, he had to adjust to public laws, and none was more important than the 1965 Voting Rights Act that gave the franchise back to the black community. Thurmond loved to say that as a politician he is "standing with the people," and from 1928, when he won his first political contest, until 1965, the people who counted were white. By June 18, 1965, when he voted for his first civil rights bill—an extension of the 1965 law—he had redefined "the people" to embrace black South Carolinians as well.

In 1981, when Republicans took over the Senate, Thurmond became chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the birthplace of civil rights legislation. He was neither the harsh ideologue nor obstructionist many had feared. By the time Democrats regained the Senate in the 1986 elections, Thurmond had come to symbolize not only the resistance of the sixties and partisan realignment in the South, but also that adjustment and accommodation were possible.

Nadine Cohodas, formerly a senior writer for Congressional Quarterly in Washington, D.C., wrote about civil rights issues for nine-and-a-half years. She is the author of Strom Thurmond and the Politics of Southern Change (Simon and Schuster, 1993) from which this selection is drawn.

Center for Party Development

The Center was founded in 1992 as a nonprofit organization dedicated to the study of party development. Gifts and grants are tax-deductible.

Among the Center's activities will be the publication of an essay series on topical issues in the field of party development, and *Party Developments*, to be published 10 times a year, a newsletter that will provide its readers with information and analysis about party news in the United States, nations across the globe, and in the transnational arena.

I invite your interest in *Party Developments*. Please contact Ralph M. Goldman, Center for Party Development, P.O. Box 2057, Reston, VA 22090-2057, and we shall advise you when publication begins.

1994 APSA Program

**Marjorie Hershey
Department of Political Science
Indiana University**

I would welcome research on all aspects of political parties, groups, and social movements. I would be particularly interested in research bearing on the causes and consequences of change in political organizations, including:

1. The evolution of third parties, independent candidate organizations, and new group; how and why groups decline and disband; research stimulated by the work of Jack Walker.

2. The internal dynamics of parties, groups, and social movements, including efforts at intra-party or -group democracy (e.g., new looks at the impact of the Democratic party reforms) and opportunities for popular participation.

3. Changing relationships among political organizations: the impact of new groups on the political parties; the impact of independent candidate organizations on parties and groups; effects of media organizations on interest group and party behavior; and their implications for intermediation in American politics.

4. An assessment of the study of political organizations to this point: comparative research methods, innovative methods (whether low- or high-tech) for answering important questions, how research findings on political organizations have been affected by the choice of certain research methods (e.g., questionnaires and survey research) rather than others, the relevance of classics in the field (such as Michaels, Duverger, Downs, Schattschneider and others) for current problems.

Please include a brief discussion of the focus on your paper, the analytical methods used, and your assessment of the topic's significance. And please keep in mind that

the earlier you submit your proposal, the better the chance that I'll be able to give it full consideration.

Margorie Hershey
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Bloomington, IN 47405
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Citizenship in the 20th Century

The Bradley Institute for Democracy and Public Values of Marquette University is seeking applications for Visiting Scholars for a one semester appointment in 1994-95 and a one or two semester appointment in 1995-96. As the Institute's emphasis during this period will be on revitalized citizenship and civil society in America, we seek well-established scholars who are engaged in research and writing in this area.

For further information on our research interests, contact Associate Director Margaret L. Nugent, phone: (414) 288-5134. To learn more about the Bradley Institute for Democracy and Public Values and/or for an application form, contact Programs Assistant Dawn Crowley, the Bradley Institute for Democracy and Public Values, 416 Monitor Hall, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 53233, phone: (414) 288-5546.

Political Science Research and Teaching List

I am the founder and primary editor of the *Political Science Research and Teaching List*, a Bitnet electronic discussion group with about 700 members in 28 countries at present. PSRT-L provides a forum for the discussion of issues and the dissemination of documents related to both the teaching and research activities of professional political scientists. I am currently investigating ways in which PSRT-L can be expanded and restructured to better serve the discipline.

I would also like to invite members of the POP section to participate in PSRT-L by sending the following message to LISTSERV@MIZZOU1

SUBSCRIBE PSRT-L (your first name) (your last name)

Instructions for posting questions and information to PSRT-L are included at the bottom of every issue.

Bill Ball
Trenton State College

The State of the Parties

Daniel M. Shea, The University of Akron

What is the state of the American political parties? How might we explain organizational growth amidst partisan atrophy? What role did the two national party committee play in the 1992 election and what will the Democrats do with the DLC now that Clinton has won? How do parties change? Are local committees still viable and where do legislative campaign committees (both state and national) fit in the traditional party landscape?

These among other queries brought party scholars and practitioners from across the nation to a conference on “The State of the Parties: 1992 and Beyond,” sponsored by the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, The University of Akron, September 23-24. Although consensual answers were scarce, several over-arching themes emerged that may point to a new direction in party scholarship.

Challenges to the “New Orthodoxy”

Perhaps the foremost theme to arise at the conference might be called “challenges to the orthodoxy” of party organizational growth. The first, and possibly most vigorous of these addressed the usefulness of party organization studies. Many who teach and research political parties now believe unidimensional perspectives of party decline, such as those focusing only on party-in-the-electorate, are shortsighted. Growing party organizations—documented since the mid-1980s—at the very least complicate the demise perspective. Although Cotter, Bibby, Gibson and Huckshorn (two of which attended the conference) would surely suggest their goals were more modest, numerous scholars in their footsteps have gone so far as to argue that larger budgets, increasing staffing, full-time headquarters, and expansion of candidates services imply party resurgence (e.g., a “new orthodoxy”). However, as suggested in a sharply worded paper by John Coleman, such variables may be important only if organizational growth and services to candidates are the exclusive goals of parties. Organization scholars may have lost sight of other important party ends—such as educating, linking, and mobilizing the electorate. Why study resource allocation patterns and operating budgets if people do not vote, disdain party labels, and hold even less affinity for governing institutions?

This line of discussion was, of course, filled with normative overtones—certainly nothing new for party scholars. And it received various rebuttals, some defending the organizational approach and others clarifying its objectives. Sandy Maisel, for example, was quick to remind the conference of several important contributions of organizational studies. There appeared to be, never-

theless, a universal call for integrative models linking organization with other, perhaps more relevant, democratic questions. Organization studies surely have their place, but where exactly do they fit?

Along similar lines, several participants, most notably Tim Hames, argued it may no longer be useful to debate whether parties have declined. This exercise implies a comparison. But what do we compare contemporary parties with—those of the 1880s? Our world is very different than even the 1950s. We should move beyond simplistic notions of decline versus resurgence to more pertinent questions of: What are the parties doing in the 1990s? What role will they play in the contemporary political process? And, most importantly, what can we realistically expect them to do?

Nor is it entirely clear that voters have negative attitudes toward the two parties, or that the parties are unable to bring voters—primarily new ones—into the fold. If this is true, dealignment may simply be a temporary condition and not the final one. Voters are ready to be pulled in, suggested Kent Markus, Chief of Staff of the Democratic National Committee, and parties should go out and get them. This can be done by contrasting policy differences and reaching to the grassroots, clearly a responsible-based strategy.

Another challenge addressed long-standing notions of the cause and extent of electoral party cycles. James Reichley suggests rather than linking party change to partisan atrophy brought about by generational turnover (hence the traditional view of 30-40 year spans), it may be more profitable to link party transformation with economic patterns. More than simply doubling the length of party “eras,” this approach ties party adjustment to external, non-party forces. Instead of seeing parties as exogenous variables in the political process, surely a common exercise, this approach implies they are dependent on other forces.

A Sense of Optimism

A second general theme to emerge was optimism. Scholars attending the conference appeared tired of the same old gloom and doom. (The fact that many of the participants were organization scholars may have had something to do with this.) They were not exactly sure where to point, but most seem to sense that parties are on the rebound, and not necessarily in a traditional way. This may be explained by unified national and state governments, or the growing cohesion of party-in-government. It may also be due to the backing away from party-in-the-electorate as the principal indicator of party strength.

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Scholars may realize that party attachments in the 1950s were a time-specific anomaly, or simply one stage of a reoccurring electoral cycle, rather than a standard to measure contemporary party vitality. Papers presented by Alan Gitelson, John Fredreis, Paul Herrnson, and Barbara Burrell and others seemed to echo this feeling of optimism.

Unfortunately, it is also clear that several participants believe local party organizations are in trouble—if not now, certainly in the near future. Distress centered around the centralization of campaign services and finances, and the changing nature of the intermediary process, from direct contact to high-technology, mass communication methods. Michael Margolis and David Resnick's case study of party transformation in Cincinnati could certainly not be viewed as sanguine.

A host of papers, in one way or another, examined how and in what direction parties adapt. Andrew Appleton and Daniel Ward offered an indepth study of how two southern states struggle to develop viable Republican organizations. How do parties cope with aggressive external ideologically-based groups, or with shrinking demographics? Jon Hale added a review on the relationship between the Democratic Leadership Council and the Democratic National Committee.

New Players

A separate group of papers focused on what might be termed "new players" in party politics. Diana Dwyer and Paul Herrnson both looked on the National Hill Committees and their growing import in national politics. These papers were complemented with a look at the timing of party committee contributions and expenditures offered by Janet Box-Steffenmeier.

There seemed to be consensus regarding the growing significance of state-level legislative campaign committees (LCCs). Where these new structures fit in the traditional

party stratarchy, however, was a contested topic. Although Cindy Simon-Rosenthal argues they should be conceptualized as a piece of the "new" party structure, Daniel Shea suggests they are best seen as autonomous, rational-efficient campaign machines. At the very least, all agreed LCCs at both the state and national levels will continue to be important new players.

Finally, a new direction of party advocacy was suggested by Ralph Goldman. Although strong party scholars have found an audience, they have, for the most part, limited their preaching to the choir. Why not spread the word to a larger audience? If we are convinced parties are the most important institution in American Government, suggests Goldman, why do we wince from advocating changes we know would help. Let us forcefully tell the American public why we should abandon primaries, bring back patronage, and dispel flip-flopping legislators. And why not attack the notion that partisan politics is an evil thing.

The State of the Parties?

It may be overly optimistic to expect a group of scholars to agree on very much for very long. Yet party scholars are ready to rethink the traditional notion of decline versus growth, stratarchy, the contours of dealignment, the responsible party model as an analytical tool, and the scope and pace of party change. While the health of parties in the United States may be debated in new terms, and along different conceptual lines in the near future, one thing remains clear: the study of parties is alive and well, as it should be.

Daniel Shea is an assistant professor at The University of Akron and editor of "The State of the Parties," a collection of the 20 papers presented at the conference together with commentary. The volume will be available in the fall of 1994.



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