**Chapter 9 Campaigns and Elections**

Free elections are the cornerstone of the American political system. Voters and candidates frequently criticize the American electoral process, though. They argue it favors wealthier candidates, furthers the aims of interest groups, and is dominated by older voters and those with more education and income. Additionally, free elections mean little if electoral procedures make it difficult to ensure that each person’s vote will count.

I.      Who Wants to Be a Candidate? There are thousands of elective offices in the U.S. Recruiting candidates is easier for some offices than others. Campaigns are often long and obstacle filled. Presidential candidates need to raise sufficient funds to participate in the primaries, create an organization and plans to win the nomination, and then raise more funds to campaign for president.

A.    Why They Run. There are two categories of individuals who run for office: the self-starters and those who are recruited by the party. Self-starters may choose to get involved to gain publicity to further a career, because of a commitment to a specific policy issue, or because of a political cause. Recruited candidates have been chosen by party leaders because they appear to have qualities that are necessary to gain the support of the voters.

B.    The Nomination Process. Depending on the office and on state law, candidates can be placed on a party’s general election ticket by submitting a petition to the local election board. The American system of nominations and primary elections is one of the world’s most complex.

C.    Who Is Eligible? Qualifications for candidates vary from office to office, but few offices have restrictive limitations. Residency requirements are common for legislative positions. Some offices have age requirements (25 years of age for the U.S. House, 30 years of age for the U.S. Senate, and 35 years of age for the presidency). Presidential and vice-presidential candidates must be natural-born citizens, while congressional candidates need only be naturalized.

D.    Who Runs? While there are few restrictions on being a candidate, most candidates are not demographically representative of the general population. Traditionally, the overwhelming majority of candidates are white, male, and relatively well off.

1.     Women as Candidates. In recent years, more women have run for office. Women are more likely to run for local and state offices, though the number of women elected to Congress recently has increased significantly (Fig. 9-1).

2.     Lawyers as Candidates. A very large number of elected officials at all levels are lawyers. These professionals enjoy more flexible schedules and have careers that can be aided by serving in elected positions.

II.         The Twenty-First Century Campaign

A.    The Changing Campaign. Campaigning for public office has changed dramatically over the past forty years. In the years before most households had televisions, campaigning was personalized. Voters received information about a candidate from an individual, either from the candidate or a person who was working on behalf of the candidate or the party of the candidate. Campaigns today are often less personal, with voters receiving information through the media, usually in the form of advertising. In the recent decades campaigns have become less party-centered and more candidate-centered, particularly as fewer voters identify with the parties. Candidates typically form their own political organizations and rely less on the party organization for campaign support.

B.    The Professional Campaign. It is now commonplace for candidates even for local offices to hire consultants for their campaigns. Political consultants devise a campaign strategy that begins months before the general election. This strategy will include raising contributions, seeking endorsements of organized groups, arranging for the candidate to speak at meetings of organized groups, the formation of groups for grassroots neighborhood support, and an extensive advertising campaign.

C.    The Strategy of Winning. Given the winner-takes-all (or plurality) system in the U.S., a candidate’s strategists must cast a wide net to maximize their candidate’s chances of winning all the party supporters’ votes, most independent votes, and a few votes from the other party.

1.     Candidate Visibility and Appeal. A key issue is the candidate’s name recognition. If the candidate is well known (most likely if the candidate is an incumbent), then the strategy will be to remind voters of the candidate’s accomplishments and to mobilize them to vote. If the candidate is unknown (if she or he is a challenger or a candidate for an open seat), then the strategy will be to get the candidate known to the voters. After this is accomplished, challengers frequently will opt to criticize the incumbent or his or her positions. If the candidate is an independent candidate, or from a third party, the strategy must also include a rationale for voters to abandon the major parties and to support the third party and its candidate. Typically, the major party candidates will label third party candidates as unworthy of consideration.

2.     The Use of Opinion Polls. Polls are a major source of information for both the media and the candidates. Candidates for president and other major offices use private polls to fine-tune their campaign strategy. Tracking polls are conducted nearly every day as Election Day nears.

3.     Focus Groups. Consultants may organize focus groups. This technique relies on fewer people than a poll, but goes into far greater depth. The focus group is led in a discussion of the candidate’s character and positions. An attempt is made to discern underlying emotions of the participants.

III.       Financing the Campaign

The change in the structure of campaigning has created a greater dependence upon campaign contributions. As campaigns have focused on advertising through the media to reach voters, the cost of campaigning has increased dramatically. Over $3.5 billion was spent at all levels of campaigning in the 2003-2004 election cycle, and total spending is likely to reach unprecedented heights during the 2007-2008 election cycle. Candidates without the ability to raise large sums of money for their campaign war chests have little chance of winning.

A.    Regulating Campaign Financing. The first attempts to control campaign financing were legislated in 1925 and 1939. The 1925 corrupt practices acts were ineffective. The Hatch Act of 1939 was not much more effective. (The Hatch Act also restricted the political activities of government employees, and it was very effective at accomplishing that.)

B.    The Federal Election Campaign Act. The Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) of 1971 replaced all previous legislation. It attempted to limit spending on advertising and required disclosure on contributions of over $100. In principle, unions and corporations were limited in their campaign roles. The FECA also created the voluntary income-tax check-off for contributing to presidential campaigns.

1.     Further Reforms in 1974. With its amendments to FECA, Congress:

       Created the Federal Election Commission (FEC), charged with overseeing the enforcement of federal election campaign law.

       Provided for public funding of presidential primaries and general elections.

       Limited presidential campaign spending for those who accept public funding.

       Placed limitations on contributions. Individuals could contribute $1,000 per candidate per election, with a maximum total of $25,000. Groups are limited to $5,000 per candidate per election. (Some of these limits would change in 2002; see below.)

       Required disclosure of the source of contributions and for what the expenditures were spent.

2.     Buckley v. Valeo. The 1971 act had placed limits on how much money a candidate could spend on his or her own campaign. In 1976, the Supreme Court ruled that this provision was unconstitutional.

C.     PACs and Political Campaigns. Political Action Committees (PACs) are set up to represent a corporation, a labor union, or an interest group. They raise money and provide candidates with contributions.

1.     Laws Governing PACs. To be legitimate, a federal PAC must obtain donations from a minimum of 50 people and contribute to at least five candidates in a federal election. PACs can contribute up to $5000 to each candidate in each election. Corporate PACs obtain funds from executives and managers in their firms, and union PACs obtain funds from their members.

2.     PACs and Campaign Financing. The number of PACs registered with the FEC has increased significantly since 1976. The amount of money being contributed to campaigns by PACs also has increased significantly, and incumbents receive the lion’s share of contributions.

D.      Campaign Financing Beyond the Limits. Within a few years after the establishment of tight limits on contributions, new means were developed that skirted the reforms.

1.     Contributions to Political Parties. The legislation of 1971 and 1974 placed no restrictions on money given to parties for voter registration, general publicity about a party’s positions, and the national conventions. Contributions for such purposes were called “soft money.”

2.     Independent Expenditures. It was soon discovered that it was legal to make independent expenditures that were not coordinated with the candidates’ campaigns.

3.     Issue Advocacy. A major tactic is for interest groups to buy advertising that advocates positions on issues and either attack or praise candidates on the basis of the issues. As long as no candidates are actually endorsed, the tactic is legal.

E.     The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002

1.     Key Elements of the New Law. The act banned soft money contributions to the national party committees. It also placed limitations on issue advocacy advertisements and increased the individual contribution limit to $2000 (from $1000).

2.     Challenges to the 2002 Act. Almost immediately, groups negatively affected challenged the constitutionality of the Act. In December, 2003, the Supreme Court upheld almost the entire Act. Wisconsin Right to Life argued that the 2002 act infringed on legitimate grassroots lobbying, and in 2006 the Supreme Court allowed their challenge to go back to court.

3.     The Roberts Court and Campaign Financing. The Roberts Court showed skepticism concerning the constitutionality of campaign-financed regulation in a case decided in June 2008. The Court concluded that the “millionaire’s amendment” was unconstitutional.

4.     The Rise of the 527s. These loopholes prompted interest groups to form “527” organizations, tax-exempt organizations that rely on soft money contributions and focus on voter registration and running issue ads. More than $600 million was spent by 527s in the 2003-2004 election cycle.

F.      Campaign Financing and the 2006 Elections. The 2006 campaigns set a record for political spending because of so many closely contested issues and races. The total spending, about $3.1 billion, was estimated to be almost twice that spent in the 2002 midterm election.

IV.       Running for President: The Longest Campaign

The American presidential election is the culmination of two different campaigns: the primary and the final campaign following the party’s national convention. Traditionally, both campaigns took place during the first ten months of an election year. Increasing, though, the states are holding their primaries earlier in the year.  The first primary election was held in Wisconsin in 1903. It was a way to open up the process to the ordinary voter and reduce the power of political “bosses.” Until 1968, however, only a minority of states had binding primaries. Some primaries were “beauty contests” that did not actually select delegates.

A.    Reforming the Primaries. After riots outside the 1968 Democratic Convention, the party created the McGovern-Fraser Commission to recommend reforms. Under the new rules, delegates had to be chosen by primaries, open caucuses, or elected state conventions, and not by party leaders. In 1984, however, elected officials re-won the right to attend conventions as voting superdelegates. The Republicans also instituted most of these reforms.

B.    Primaries and Caucuses.   The most common types of primary elections are as follows:

1.     Proportional and Winner-Take-All Primaries. Proportional primaries are used to elect delegates to the national conventions of the two major parties. However, most primaries are winner-take-all. During the 2008 Democratic primary season, neither candidate actually accumulated enough delegates to win and the nomination had to be settled by superdelegates. If they had used the winner-take-all system, Hillary Clinton would have been the Democratic candidate.

2.     Open Primary. Voters are restricted to voting for candidates of one party. The voter selects which party primary to participate in at the voting booth.

3.     Blanket Primary. Voters may participate in the primaries of both political parties. In 2000, the Supreme Court ruled the California blanket primary unconstitutional.

4.     Runoff Primary. In some states, if no candidate receives an absolute majority in a primary, a second primary is held between the top two contenders

5.     Conventions. The Virginia Republican Party chose its 2008 candidate for the U.S. Senate at its state convention.

6.     Caucuses. Twelve states relied entirely on the caucus/convention system.

C.    Front-Loading the Primaries. Each state determines the date for its primary or caucus.

1.     The Rush to Be First. Because early primaries are more influential, states have competed to schedule their primaries as early as possible (key concept: front-loading).

2.     The National Parties Try to Regain Control of the Process. The parties adopted rules to prohibit states from holding primaries and caucuses before February 5th to cut down on front-loading.

3.     The Unintended Consequences of Early Primaries. Serious candidates have to start their campaigns earlier than in the past. Also, the primary season is very short. This means that only those candidates with the largest war chests can survive in the race and that voters will have less time to become acquainted with the candidates and their positions.

4.     Are Regional Primaries the Solution? A private commission proposed a plan to eliminate the state primaries and hold four regional presidential primaries. These would be held at monthly intervals with the order of regions rotated every four years. Each state, then, would have a chance to be among the first states to hold primary elections.

D.    On to the National Convention. Each state sends delegates to the national convention for each party. The number of delegates a state receives is roughly in proportion to the population of the state, with extra delegates if the party’s candidate carried the state in the last presidential election.

1.     Seating the Delegates. A credentials committee approves all delegates. This is usually not controversial but there have been disputed delegations in the past.

2.     Convention Activities. The highlight of the convention is the nomination of the presidential candidate. Because the identity of the nominee is a foregone conclusion, the TV networks have drastically curtailed their coverage of the conventions in recent years.

E.     The Electoral College. The electoral college is set forth in the Constitution, in Article II, Section 1; Amendment XII; and Amendment XXIII. Voters who participate in presidential elections are not truly voting for a presidential candidate, but rather for a slate of party electors who then vote for that party’s candidate.

1.     The Choice of Electors. Each state chooses its electors in accordance with that state’s law. A state receives electors equal in number to the number of representatives and senators the state has at the time of the election. The District of Columbia also chooses three electors. Currently there are a total of 538 electors. For a candidate to be elected president, he or she must win a minimum of 270 electoral votes.

2.     The Electors’ Commitment. In all but two states, there is the winner-take-all system. That is, if a candidate receives a plurality of the votes cast he or she wins all of the electoral votes from the state. This is the unit rule. Electors are pledged but not constitutionally required to vote for their party candidate. Electors vote on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December in their state’s capital.

3.     Criticisms of the Electoral College. As a result of the unit rule, presidential candidates often ignore states where the result is not in doubt. Also, in four different elections (including 2000), the presidential candidate who received a plurality of the popular vote did not receive a majority of the electoral vote. There have been numerous arguments against the electoral college, including the above. Additionally, it can be argued that small states are overlooked in campaigns because of their low electoral vote count or, paradoxically, that small states are given too much weight by being granted three electoral votes despite their size. To change how the president is elected, however, an amendment to the Constitution would have to be proposed and ratified. Such an amendment is not likely to pass. The unit rule, however, could be altered by national legislation.

4.     Proposals to Reform the Electoral College. Abolishing the Electoral College would take a constitutional amendment and this is not likely to happen. The National Popular Vote Movement advocates an end-run around the Electoral College by the states.

V.         How Are Elections Conducted?

All states have used a secret, or Australian, ballot since 1888. But while every state uses a secret ballot, not all states’ ballots are the same style.

A.    Office-Block and Party-Column Ballots. The office-block (or Massachusetts) ballot groups candidates for elective office together under the title of the office. The office-block ballot discourages straight-ticket voting. States that use the party-column (or Indiana) ballot list candidates in columns arranged by political parties. This type of ballot makes voting for all candidates of one party easier. In general elections where a president or a governor is elected, voters who are not knowledgeable about candidates for lower offices may be swayed to support candidates of the same party as the president or governor. This is referred to as the coattail effect.

B.    Voting by Mail. Increasingly, voting by mail has been used in the states. This has been done to make it easier for people to vote. Oregon is the only state in which all votes are cast by mail.

C.    Vote Fraud and Mistakes. Voting fraud is regularly suspected but seldom proved. Fraud was probably more of a problem in the historical past.

1.     The Danger of Fraud. Failure to purge the electoral rolls of voters who have died or moved opens up possibilities of fraud.

2.     Mistakes by Voting Officials. On the other hand, in some locales voting officials have purged many legitimate voters from the rolls by mistake. The victims of this kind of action are largely African Americans.

3.     Voter ID Requirements. Many states are adopting laws requiring proof of identity before voters can cast their ballots.

4.     Reforming the Voting Process. Outdated or malfunctioning voting equipment and questionable practices at some polling places have raised questions about the accuracy of vote counts. The Help America Vote Act of 2002 provided funds to reform the system by replacing outdated equipment, creating statewide computerized voter lists, issuing provisional ballots in certain circumstances, and increasing access to polling places for disabled voters.

VI.       Turning Out to Vote

In 2008, the number of people in the  voting-age population was about 228.4 million people.  Voter turnout in the United States is low compared with other countries. In congressional elections in years when a president is not elected, the turnout rates are lower. Turnout rates are even lower still for most local elections.

A.    The Effect of Low Voter Turnout. Some observers believe that low turnout reflects a dangerous disaffection with our political system. Others believe that nonvoting means satisfaction with the status quo.

B.    Is Voter Turnout Declining? The voting-age population is not quite the same as the population that is eligible to vote. The former count includes noncitizens and ineligible ex-felons and does not include overseas citizens (who can vote absentee). Correcting for eligibility, the turnout in 2004 was actually 58.8 percent. It may be possible to entirely explain recent declines in voter participation (as measured by the voting-age population) by an increase in immigration.

C.    Factors Influencing Who Votes. The decision to vote appears to be influenced by the following factors:

       Age. Individuals who are older are more likely to vote.

       Educational attainment. Individuals who have more formal schooling are more likely to vote.

       Minority status. Despite a decreasing gap, African Americans are still less likely to vote than whites. Turnout for Hispanics and Asian Americans is low because many are not yet citizens.

       Income level. Individuals who have higher incomes are more likely to vote.

       Two-party competition. States that have two strong parties, as opposed to one strong and one weak party, tend to have higher voter participation.

D.    Why People Do Not Vote. There are several explanations why people do not vote.

1.     Uninformative Media Coverage and Negative Campaigning. This theory says that voters are not given the kind of information that would provide an incentive for them to vote. For example, a 2006 study found that more than two-thirds of nonvoters cited a lack of information about the candidates as one of their reasons for not voting.  Many voters are also turned off by the negativism of campaigns.

2.     The Rational Ignorance Effect. Key concept: the rational ignorance effect, which states that many individuals rationally calculate that their vote is not important and that the effort to seek information to cast an informed vote is not worthwhile. One explanation for those who do vote is that they receive personal satisfaction from voting—it makes them feel they are fulfilling their duty as citizens.

3.     Plans for Improved Voter Turnout. Mail-in voting, Internet voting, registering to vote when you apply for a driver’s license, and same-day voter registration are all ideas that have been suggested or implemented. Other ideas include greater use of absentee ballots and early voting as well as declaring Election Day a national holiday.

VII.     Legal Restrictions on Voting

A.    Historical Restrictions.

1.     Property Requirements. By the 1850s, individuals who did not own land were allowed to participate in most states.

2.     Further Extensions of the Franchise. In 1870 African Americans were granted the right to vote, though obstacles to their participation remained until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. By 1920 women were granted suffrage. The last major extension of suffrage occurred in 1971 when the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18.

3.     Is the Franchise Still Too Restrictive? The principal argument is over ex-felons who have served their sentences but are barred from voting, often for life. Most other democracies do not impose this rule and not all U.S. states have it. This restriction alters the shape of the electorate because ex-felons are often members of minority groups, poor, or both.

B.    Current Eligibility and Registration Requirements. In most states, in order to participate in the electoral process an individual must complete a registration process. While this process varies from state to state, it is considered important to prevent voter fraud. Some have argued that the registration process is too complicated and therefore reduces the number of people who vote. In 1995, Congress passed a bill that allows individuals to complete the registration process when they apply for a driver’s license, assuming they are at least 18 years of age. It is now considerably easier for citizens to register.

C.    Extension of the Voting Rights Act. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was extended in 2006. Certain amendments were also clarified, including two measures concerning discrimination at the polls: first, the attorney general is empowered to appoint federal observers if there is evidence of intimidation of minority voters and second, any new voting practices or procedures enacted by districts with histories of discrimination must first pass muster with the U.S. Justice Department.

VIII.   The Media and Politics

There are at least six functions of the media identified in the United States, and almost all of them can have political implications.

A.    Entertainment. The bulk of radio and television hours are, by far, devoted to entertaining the audience and though this is not directly linked to politics, the subject matter of programming can often stimulate thought and discussion.

B.    Reporting the News. The media provide words, pictures, and opinions about events, people, and ideas.

C.    Identifying Public Problems. The media also reveal what the government ought to be doing; in this way, they help to set the public agenda. There is a long journalistic tradition in America of investigative reporting.

D.    Socializing New Generations. By presenting the history, culture, and diversity of regions and groups of people in America, the media teach young people and immigrants what it means to be American. The Internet is taking on a larger role in socialization.

E.     Providing a Political Forum. This is an extension of the news function. Candidates and officeholders can present information on their positions or showcase their leadership abilities. The public can be involved through letters to the editor, televised editorials, or electronic communications.

F.     Making Profits. Profits come from advertising revenues, which are usually directly related to circulation or viewer/listener ratings.

IX.        The Primacy of Television

A.    The Increase in News-Type Programming. By 2007, networks will devote about three hours each day to news-type programming, up from 11 minutes daily in 1963.

B.    Television’s Influence on the Political Process. Television, by nature, focuses on the visual and so the pictures or video chosen for news reports can veer towards the dramatic. Additionally, critics charge that the media is pressured to produce news with a “plot.” Time is short, and the news media are often satisfied with sound bites crafted for immediate impact on the viewer. The constraints of television can, some say, unduly influence political events.

1.     The Impact of Video. Sound bites or bits of video can be used to exaggerate the

importance of an event by the news media.

2.     Cable News Channels. 24 hour news channels have changed the way political leaders

address crises.

X.          The Media and Political Campaigns

All forms of the media have a significant political impact on American society. Almost all national political figures plan every public appearance and statement to attract media coverage.

A.    Television Coverage. Because of the primacy of television, campaign strategists make wide use of three types of TV coverage: political and negative advertising, news coverage management, and campaign debates.

1.     Political Advertising. Broadcast TV still dominates media spending during campaigns, and the amounts spent continue to rise. In addition to typical print ads, online advertising has been on the rise.

2.     Negative Advertising. The “daisy girl” ad, from Lyndon Johnson, was groundbreaking in political advertising; since then, negative advertising has come into its own. The public claims to dislike negative ads, but as one consultant put it, “Negative advertising works.”

3.     Management of News Coverage. It is important that a candidate’s news coverage be favorable and accurate. Staffers arrange events that are both photogenic and interesting enough to make the news. Key concept: spin, and the spin doctors who advocate for certain interpretations of events.

4.     Going for the Knockout Punch—Televised Presidential Debates. Challengers have much to gain in debates; incumbents are reluctant to meet challengers in debate, since it puts those challengers on equal footing and represents them as viable officeholders. Debates are expected and anticipated, and the public can be influenced by the outcomes.

B.    The Internet, Blogging, and Podcasting. The Internet has become an important vehicle for campaign advertising and news coverage. Candidates have also begun to raise substantial funds online, with some arguing that the ability to raise money quickly and easily using the Internet will ultimately level the playing field for candidates.

1.     Blogging. Through their official websites, some candidates keep blogs. More influential, however, are the independent political blogs that address campaign issues and, in some cases, break legitimate news. Blogs and podcasting (below) threaten the mainstream media because they can be cheap, specialized, entertaining, and unapologetically political.

2.     Podcasting. Podcasting, essentially a spoken blog, has spread extremely quickly and will likely gain broader participation and influence.

        3.    Are Candidates Losing Control of Their Campaigns? The Internet is threatening to make

               it difficult, if not impossible, for campaigns to manage their news coverage. Short video

               clips of candidates’ bloopers and embarrassing remarks can be propagated with lightning

               speed over the Internet. “Netroots” supporters may also engage in campaigning that is at

              odds with the candidate’s own agenda or campaign ethics.

XI.        Government Regulation of the Media

Many aspects of media regulation were covered in Chapter 4, with the examination of the First Amendment. Recall that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates communications by radio, television, wire, and cable.

A.    Controlling Ownership of the Media. When Congress passed the Telecommunications Act in 1996, it not only opened up the market for telecommunication services to competitors, but also cleared the way for large corporations (like Time Warner) to control media ownership.

1.     Media Conglomerates. A single entity may own a chain of media from top to bottom: the television network, the studio that produces shows for that network, and the means to deliver that content via cable, satellite, or the Internet.

2.     Increased Media Concentration. The FCC stipulates that one conglomerate cannot exceed a certain “audience-reach cap,” and Congress has pushed their limit to 40 percent. A corporation can still own up to three television stations in its largest market, a situation that has led to the disappearance of localism in the news and might, by some accounts, lead to a decline in democratic debate.

B.    Government Control of Content. Though the First Amendment would seem to apply to all media, the Supreme Court has been slower to extend free speech and free press guarantees to new media.

1.     Control of Broadcasting. The Supreme Court has never extended the full protection of the First Amendment to radio and television. The FCC, therefore, has the authority to assess fines for indecency and profanity.

2.     The Government’s Attempt to Control the Media during the  War on Terrorism. In the wake of September 11, 2001, the government has called more information “secret” and restricted access to certain documents in the name of national security.

C.     Bias in the Media. Many Americans believe the mainstream media has a liberal bias. The rise of the blogosphere and other online outlets has complicated the picture of media bias.

XII.      Features

A.    What if …….No Limits were Placed on Campaign Contributions? In the early 1990s, a typical presidential primary campaign required about $20 million. During the 2008 campaign, Barack Obama raised over $235 million by the end of March. One set of campaign reforms after another have tried to “take money out of politics” but they have been full of loopholes.

B.    Elections 2008. Campaign Financing and the 2008 Elections.

C.    Which Side Are You On? Are Stiff Voter ID Laws a Good Thing? Almost all states require that voters show some type of ID and Indiana requires proof in the form of a government–issued photographic ID at every election.

D.    Politics and Voting. Are Voter Choices Rational? Voter’s emotional responses to candidates may be more important than rational responses to the candidates’ positions in determining how people will vote. Specialists show that emotion rules after reason, which is why strong partisan beliefs that are emotionally tied are extremely hard to change.

E.     Elections 2008. The Media and the 2008 Elections. Although leading Republicans in Congress believed the party’s reverses were attributed to the abandonment of traditional conservative principles, it was most likely because of the disapproval of the war in Iraq.

F.     Politics and the Cypersphere. Private Companies Try to Regulate the Web. Although federal and state governments generally support unregulated information on the Internet, some major telecommunication companies, such as Verizon and AT&T, do not. Telecommunication companies reserve the right to censor text-messaging but cannot interfere with anything people say with their voice.

G.    Why Should You Care About the Media? In order to be sure you are voting for the candidate that supports what you believe, you need to obtain accurate information from the media. Critics of the media believe that a substantial amount of what we hear and read is colored by the editors, producers, or by the demands of profit makers.