

A cartoon illustration of a donkey and an elephant, both wearing light blue suits and red ties. The donkey is on the left, and the elephant is on the right. They are both smiling and have their arms raised in a celebratory gesture. The background is white.

Political Parties

Politics in America



We should really try to be more cooperative.



You're right, we need to be more bipartisan.

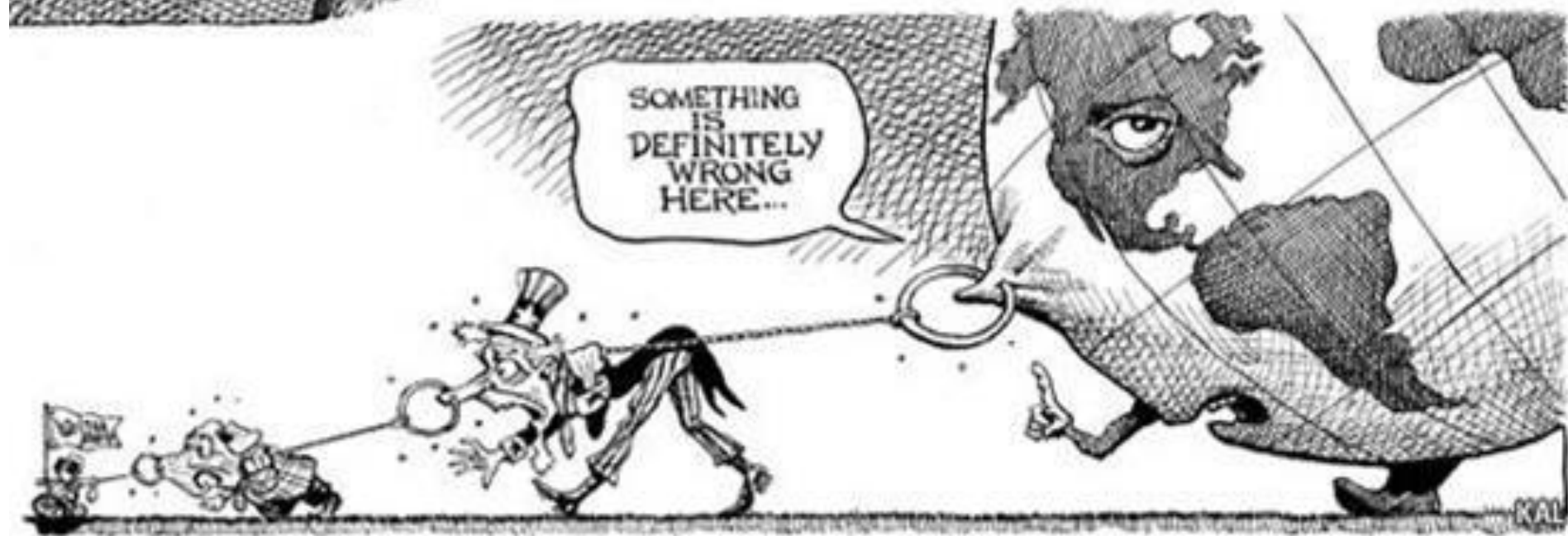
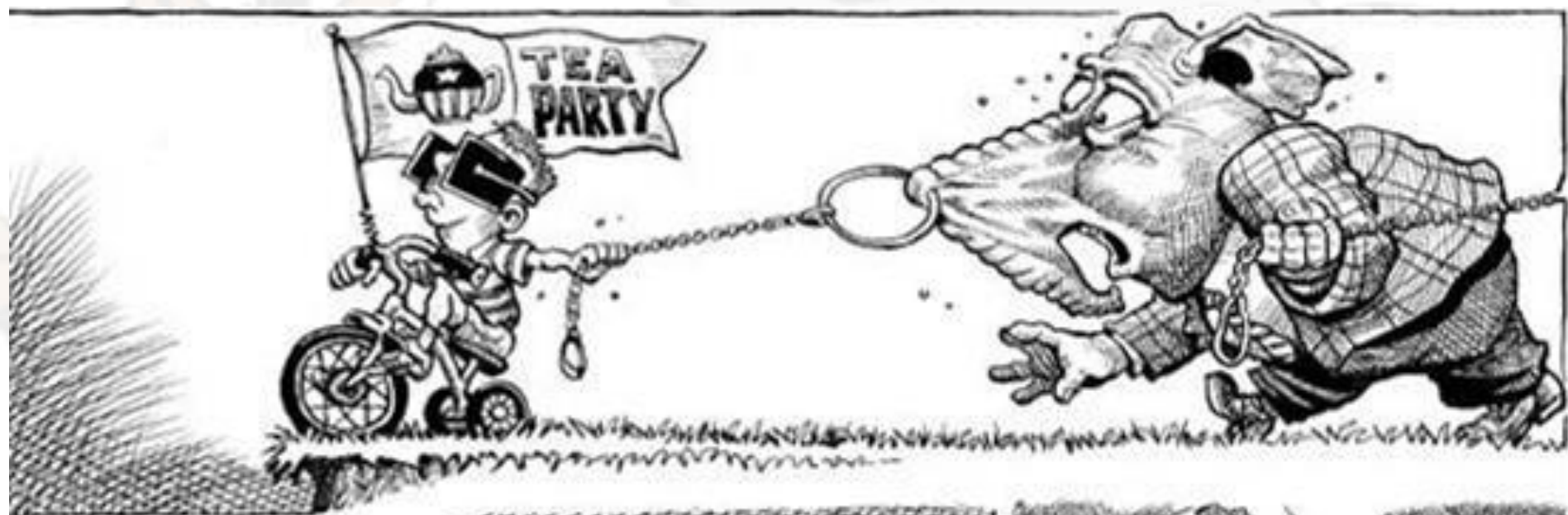


No, I specifically called for 'cooperation'.



But I distinctly proposed 'bipartisanship'.





Party Systems

A cartoon illustration of two anthropomorphic animals, a donkey on the left and a bear on the right, both wearing light blue suits with red ties. They are standing with their arms raised in a celebratory or confident manner. The background is plain white.

- One Party:
 - One Party...total control of country...Examples?
- Multiparty:
 - # of parties compete; often rep. widely diff. ideologies
- Two-party:
 - Examples?

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Political Parties

- **Political Parties:** *group of people organized to influence govt. through the winning of elections and the setting of policy* (LINKAGE INSTITUTION)
 - Group of citizens organized to:
 - Win elections, hold public offices, operate the government, determine public policy

Political Parties

- Functions:
 - Recruit/Nominate candidates
 - Run political campaigns and win
 - Activate members; mobilize/register voters
 - Raise funds
 - Provide cues to their voters; articulate platform on issues
 - Critique policies of opposing party; watchdog;
- How do you join?
 - Declare self a member—register w/ party (closed primary)
 - 3 Types of Party Members:
 - Voter, Party Worker, Elected Official

Political Party Organization

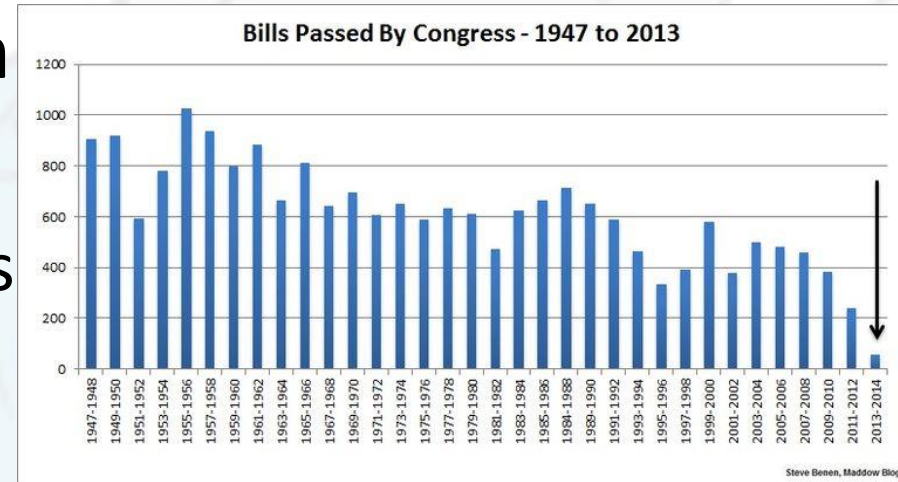
- National Convention:
 - Held Every 4 yrs
 - Nominate Pres. & VP
 - Write Party Platform
- National committee:
 - Made of delegates from states. Manage affairs between conventions
- Congressional campaign committees:
 - Support congressional candidates
- National Chair:
 - Manages daily work of the party
- States & localities:
 - Foundation of party. Have the most people & the greatest involvement.
 - **National, State, Local party organizations are independent and NOT centrally controlled**
 - Leads to fragmentation (Dem. Party WA v. WV)

Pol. Parties and Congress

- Role of Parties in Congress: Leadership/Organization
 - Leadership positions in Congress are assigned on a party basis.
 - Speaker of the House; Senate Majority Leader
 - Majority party appoints and controls all Congressional standing committees
 - Majority party gets to select standing committee chairs in Congress
- Role of Party's in Congress: Promoting Party Agenda
 - Party leaders articulate legislative policy priorities of the party.
 - Party leaders facilitate legislative policy priorities of the party.
 - Committee chairs who promote the party's legislative priorities in committee.
 - Majority party controls floor debates.
 - Majority party controls the rules and legislative calendar; making it favorable to majority party's policy priorities

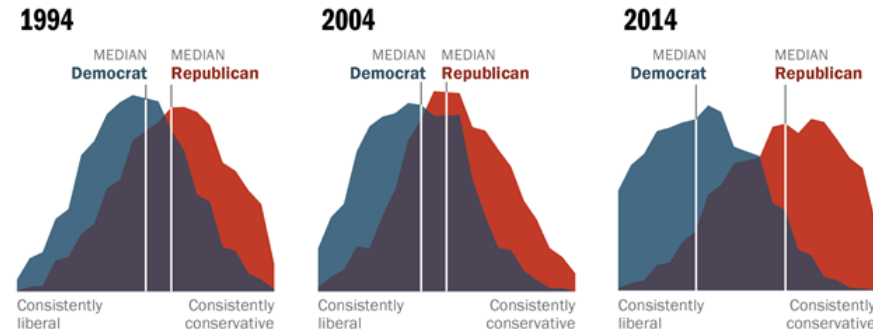
Political Parties and Congress

- Increasing role of Party's in Polarized Climate
 - Members of political parties vote along party line
 - Members today are less likely to cross party lines to vote with the other party
 - What role does gerrymandering play in this?
 - What role does the influence of special interest groups play in this?



Democrats and Republicans More Ideologically Divided than in the Past

Distribution of Democrats and Republicans on a 10-item scale of political values



Source: 2014 Political Polarization in the American Public

Notes: Ideological consistency based on a scale of 10 political values questions (see Appendix A). The blue area in this chart represents the ideological distribution of Democrats; the red area of Republicans. The overlap of these two distributions is shaded purple. Republicans include Republican-leaning independents; Democrats include Democratic-leaning independents (see Appendix B).

Washington's Farewell Address

- Why was Washington against political parties?
- FACTIONS
 - "It serves to distract the Public Councils, and enfeeble the Public Administration....agitates the Community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one....against another" -- G.W.

Party Eras and Critical Elections

Party Era: Period dominated by one political party

Critical Elections (Connects to Party Eras)

- Voters change traditional patterns of party loyalty (new coalitions)
- Usually sign of Realignment
- National Crisis often assoc. w/ Crit. Elec. And Elec. Realign.

Electoral Realignment:

- Switching of voter preference from one party to another...Minority party displaces majority, can lead to new party era
 - **Characteristics of Realignment**
 - High voter turnout...often result of critical election
 - Durable/long lasting electoral groups formed

Party Eras and Critical Elections

Electoral Dealignment:

- Weakening hold of major political parties on electorate; to a more neutral, independent ideological view of party identification
 - Direct Primaries: What role do they play?
- No Single Party is Dominant
 - More split ticket voting
- Most Americans I.D. themselves as moderates
- Older Americans less likely to be indep. though, why?

Party Eras

- **Party Development (1796-1824)**
 - Federalists: John Adams, Alexander Hamilton
 - Democratic-Republicans: Thomas Jefferson, James Madison
 - Election of 1800: 1st Peaceful Transfer of Power
 - Era of Good Feelings
- **Jacksonian Democrats (1828-1856)**
 - The party of the “common man”
 - Increased political participation
 - Convention system replaces old caucus system

[James Madison and the Political Party System](#)

Recent Party Eras

- **Republican Domination (1860-1932)**
 - Why was the Election of 1860 a “Critical Election”
 - Only third party to rise to a major party status
 - Progressive Era: Reaction to Political Machines
 - Institute Primaries; stricter voter registration policies
 - 17th Amendment: Direct Election of Senators
 - Why does this era end?
- **Return of the Democrats (1932-1968)**
 - FDR and New Deal: New Deal Coalition
 - Urban, Labor Unions, Catholics, Jews, Southerners, and African Americans
- **Divided Government (1968-Present)**
 - 1968: Nixon’s Southern Strategy
 - Divided Government: Executive and Legislative branches controlled by opposing parties

Divided Government

- **Divided Government**

- *Executive & Legislative Branches controlled by opposing parties*

- What factors have caused divided government?

- **Dealignment**

- ↓ motivation & participation
 - Fewer est. voting patterns; more split ticket voting
 - No really dominant majority party to displace;

- **Difference in turnout mid-term v. presidential elections**

- No coattails effect
 - Mid-term not viewed as important; thus those who vote are activists or those who strongly dislike president's policies

- **Gerrymandering**

Effects of Divided Government

- *Effects of Divided Government*

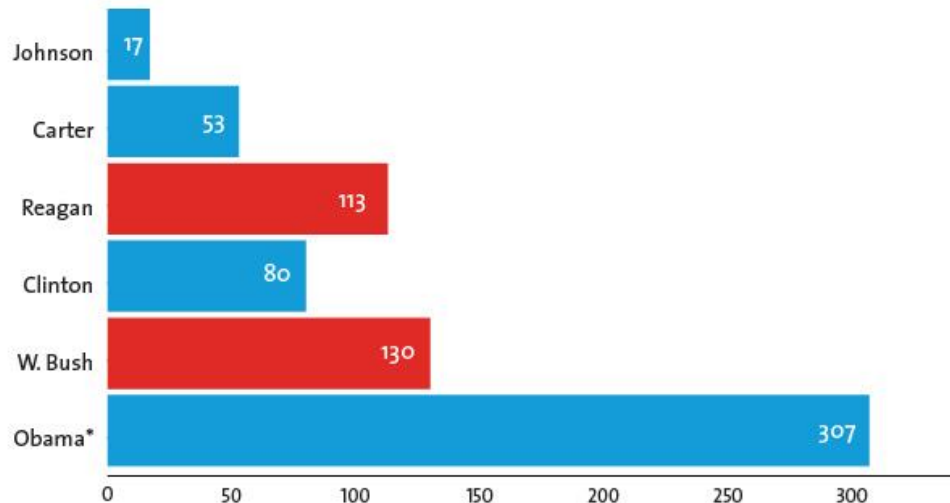
- ↑ partisanship = less compromise...when compromise needed
 - Impact of gerrymandering?
- Legislative Gridlock
 - Can't get anything major passed
 - Gun control; debt ceiling; tax policy; climate change; infrastructure; immigration reform...and the list goes on...
- President difficulties getting nominations approved
- More distrust of govt.

Political Gridlock

- By Constitutional Design or Obstructionism
 - Filibuster used a record number of times by Republican Senators against Pres. Obama
- Current Event; Supreme Court Vacancy

Seeking Cloture

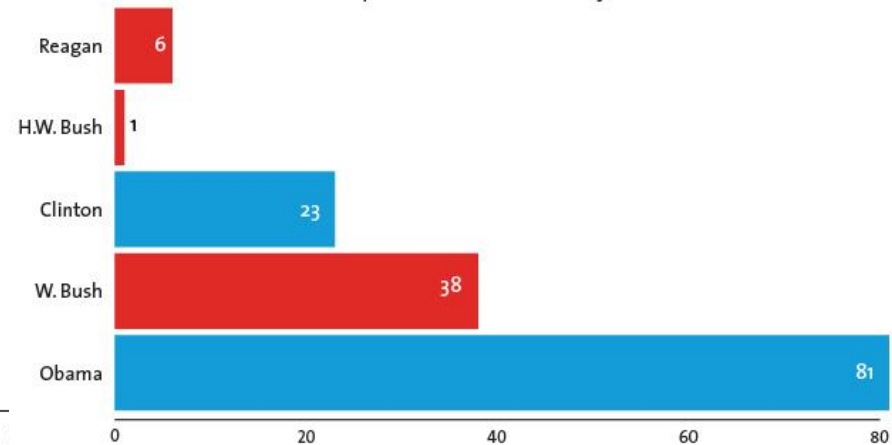
Motions filed to end a filibuster when a single party controlled the White House and Senate



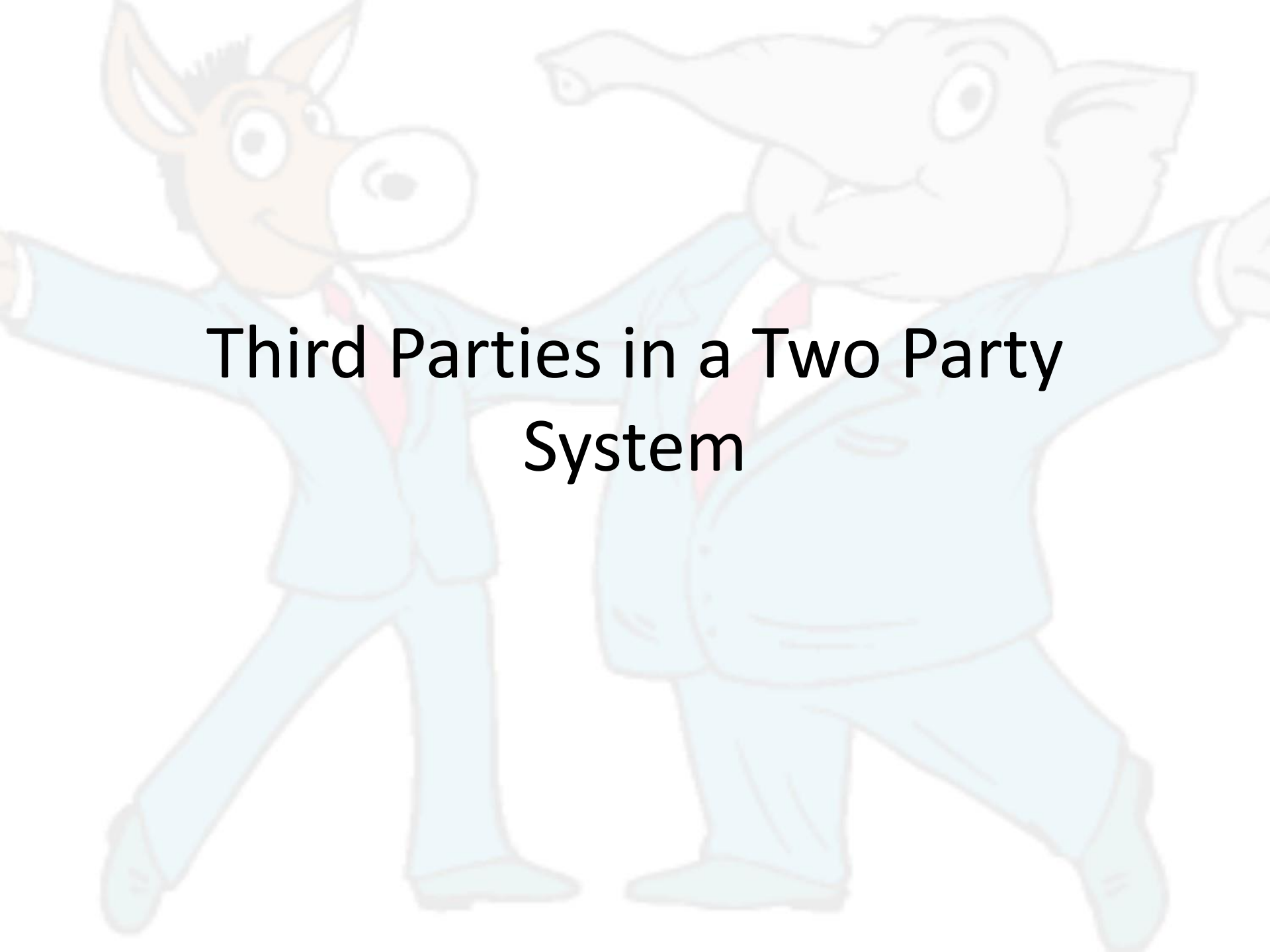
*Does not account for the 3 years remaining in Obama's second term
Source: US Senate

Party Crashers

Motions filed to end the filibuster of presidents' executive and judicial nominations



*Does not account for the 3 years remaining in Obama's second term
Source: US Senate

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Third Parties in a Two Party System

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Third Parties

- Types
 - Ideological
 - Most Enduring/Comprehensive
 - Libertarian Party; Socialist Party
 - Single Issue
 - “Right to Life” Party
 - Economic Protest
 - Often regional; protest economic conditions
 - “Rent is too damn high party”; Populist Party
 - Factional/Splinter
 - Big Influence on public policy
 - Tea Party?

Obstacles to Third Parties

- Winner Take All Single Member Plurality Districts
 - Only one candidate is elected to each office on ballot
 - Candidate who receives a plurality is winner
 - Plurality: Highest Percentage (Majority: over 50%)
 - How does this work against 3rd party candidates?
- Would multimember districts help 3rd party candidates?
- Would a proportional system of representation better reflect the will of the American people than single-member plurality districts (winner take all)
 - www.fairvote.org

www.fairvote.org
Fixing Congress with Fair Representation

Obstacles to Third Parties

- Institutional Barriers

- Democrats/Republicans automatically on state ballots (3rd parties must petition to get on ballot)
- Winner Take All System
- Single Member Districts
- Hard to field full slate of candidates
- Excluded from Presidential Debates/ballots

- Political Barriers

- Party ID for major party is ingrained...political socialization
- Narrower focus than major parties
- Difficulty fundraising
 - Lack of donations from PACs/special interests...why?

Third Parties-Contributions

- **Roles/Contributions**

- Major parties often adopt popular policies of 3rd party
- Safety valve for discontent
- Voice for the fringe/underrepresented
- Spoiler
 - Ralph Nader
- Critic/Innovator
 - Prohibition Party : supported women's suffrage
 - Socialist Party: Social Security

