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Strategic Positioning and Campaigning

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# 1 Introduction

To give a sense of the politics of extreme parties, the Appendix lists all candidates in U.S. presidential elections who won at least half a percent of the popular vote. For each election year, the table lists candidates by my reading of their ideology, with the most conservative candidate listed at the top, and the most liberal candidate listed at the bottom. Candidates not belonging to one of the two major parties are shown with an asterisk after the party affiliation. Also shown is the percentage of the popular vote each won. The data begin with the election of 1832, the first election in which virtually all states chose presidential electors by popular vote.

Ordering parties by ideology entails some subjective judgment. A principal difficulty is that for much of the nineteenth century slavery and the consequences of the Civil War were the main issues, whereas in the twentieth century economic issues can distinguish parties. I classify Republicans as more liberal than Democrats through the election of 1872. From 1876 (when Reconstruction ended) and thereafter I classify Republicans as more conservative than Democrats.

Two features are of note.

- Third parties, even popular ones, rarely become major parties. Indeed, only one minor party, the Republican party, ever became a major party.
- Most small parties have extreme ideologies, in the sense of not lying between the ideologies of the two major parties. Of the 41 elections, 28 had small parties which won at least 0.5 percent of the vote. Of these 28 elections, only four had a moderate party. Two of these four elections occurred in elections just before the Civil War. Summing the number of small parties running in these elections, shows that 44 were extreme, and only 4 moderate. It is thus fair to say that moderate third parties rarely appear in the United States.

Why the pattern of extremism among third parties? One approach to understanding lies in looking at the appeal of parties to voters.<sup>1</sup> But here

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<sup>1</sup>Another approach may also be important in studying parliamentary democracies with coalition governments. A large moderate party may avoid dealing with an extreme party, and even more so if it campaigned against it. A small party may then choose its position with coalition bargaining in mind (cf. Baron (1991)). That may explain the prevalence in Europe of small parties with moderate platforms.

I pursue a different approach: to understand the electoral strength of an extreme party we must understand the conditions under which major parties will and will not campaign among persons attracted to the extreme party.

## 2 Literature

This paper builds on the work of Skaperdas and Grofman (1995), who consider negative campaigning with three candidates. They show that were the two weaker candidates to engage in negative campaigning, they would both attack the front-runner. A front-runner who engaged in negative campaigning would attack the stronger opponent. As Skaperdas and Grofman note, a similar result appears in game-theoretic models of a three-way duel: the most accurate duelist has a lower probability of survival than the second-best (or even the third-best) shooter. The reason is that the optimal strategy of either of the other duelists is to shoot at the duelist who has the best shot. By analogy, small extreme parties will not be attacked by large parties. But the same model would also predict that an extreme party could grow almost to the size of a major party without being attacked. That conclusion appears unrealistic, motivating my analysis that predicts immunity for an extreme party only for some small size. My reasoning for the conclusions presented below also differ from earlier analysis: Skaperdas and Grofman ask where the most votes are, whereas I ask about the comparative opportunities for attracting voters. That is, even if the extreme party were large, the mainstream parties may choose not to campaign against it.

One of my results is that an extreme party may do worse when it moves towards the center. The result appears because it would thereby increase campaigning against it. The explanation thus differs from recent literature which asks how a party in power in the current period can increase its electoral chances by adopting extreme positions.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>For instance, the incumbent may commit to a policy because he wants to remove an issue from the electoral agenda. See Aghion and Bolton (1990), Milesi-Ferretti and Spolaore (1994), and Glazer and Lohmann (1999). The incumbent may also adopt an extreme policy to reduce the benefits from electing an opposing party that would want to incur a costly reversal of that policy; see Glazer, Gradstein, and Konrad (1998).

## 2.1 Expressive voting

I shall consider below instrumental voters—they vote for a party to give it the power of implementing the policies it announces. But other motives for voting can explain some features of extremism in politics—why a voter may support a party whose positions he opposes, and why he may be more willing to support an extremist party he expects will lose.

Voting is a peculiar activity since any one vote is highly unlikely to change the outcome of the election. Several authors (see Brennan and Lomasky (1993), Kuran (1995), Glazer (1987), and Brennan and Hamlin (1998)) argue that people may therefore vote not to affect outcomes, but for expressive reasons, showing their anger or emotions. They may therefore vote for an extremist party even though they hope it will not win office. A voter, however, who thinks that his vote can significantly affect policy will not support the extreme party. The appeal of an extremist party may thus be self-limiting.

A related idea sees voting as an act of communication. Consider a voter who expects party  $X$  to win office, and who prefers its position over the position of an extreme party. Suppose, however, that he prefers a policy that lies somewhere between the positions of party  $X$  and the extreme party. Suppose further that party  $X$  is uncertain about the preferences of the voters. Then a person who votes for the extreme party signals his preferences to the winning party, inducing the party to adopt a different position once in government or in anticipation of the next election.

Although undoubtedly some persons vote for such expressive reasons, to explain why an extreme party's appeal to moderate voters often declines as the number of its supporters grow, models of expressive voting must also consider instrumental voting. It is therefore worthwhile to see how well a model of instrumental voting can explain elections with extreme parties. Moreover, since my interest lies largely in understanding political campaigns, it appears useful to extend the standard Downsian model in one way, rather than in several.

## 3 Campaign strategies

### 3.1 Assumptions

#### 3.1.1 Parties

I start with the standard Downsian model. Each party aims to maximize the number of votes it wins. But unlike the Downsian model, I let the positions of some parties be fixed.<sup>3</sup> I also let parties make non-policy choices to attract voters. In particular, a party can campaign (either to its right or to its left) by offering bribes, promising jobs to supporters, emphasizing its competence and honesty, and so on.<sup>4</sup> The assumption that a party campaign in only one direction simplifies the analysis. And it is a plausible assumption under some conditions. A politician who is reported to be campaigning both to his left and to his right may be viewed as speaking from both sides of his mouth, confuse voters about his message, and lose credibility among them. Or the media through which voters learn about candidates may simplify and dramatize the contest by reporting it as a simple left-right contest. Lastly, in the years before mass communication and air travel, a candidate might have to decide in which region of the country to campaign, thereby limiting his ability to campaign among any set of voters he wishes.

The election is contested by two Big parties and one Small party. The Big party on the left, party  $L$ , has position  $p_L$ . The Big party on the right, party  $R$ , has position  $p_R$ . The Small party's position is at  $p_S$ .

Each party aims to maximize the number of its votes. Under a plurality system, where the candidate with the largest number of votes wins office, such maximization is equivalent to maximizing the chance of winning. Of course, under some conditions a party may care not only about its vote, but also about the distribution of votes among the other parties. For example, in a parliamentary democracy a liberal party may prefer to form a coalition with a left-wing party; it may then avoid campaigning against its likely coalition partner, even if such campaigning could win it more votes. But even in parliamentary systems, vote maximization is a reasonable goal. For example,

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<sup>3</sup>Perhaps because parties selected platforms as the result of their interaction with the groups which offered position-induced contributions in a previous period.

<sup>4</sup>More generally, a campaign may reduce support by some voters—a liberal voter may object to a putatively liberal candidate who campaigns among conservatives. For simplicity, I ignore here such effects.

it is common in parliamentary democracies for the largest party to be called on first to form a coalition, or to be viewed as the party with the greatest legitimacy to head a government. A party would therefore aim to maximize its share of the vote.

### 3.1.2 Voters

A voter's utility from voting for party  $i$  varies with the voter's ideal point, with the position of the party, and with the party's campaigning.<sup>5</sup> The first two effects are captured by the function  $U(v, p)$  with the voter having ideal point at  $v$  and considering a party with position at  $p$ . At times I use a quadratic utility function,  $U = -(v - p)^2$ . The distribution of voters' ideal points is given by  $F(x)$ . That is, the fraction of voters with ideal points to the left of  $x$  is  $F(x)$ .

The effect of campaigning is captured as follows. If the party campaigns to the left, and the voter's ideal point lies to the left of the party's position, then he is targeted. If his ideal point lies to the right when the party campaigns to the left, he is not targeted by that party. Similar statements hold for other possible combinations. A targeted voter gets additional utility from voting for the targeting party of  $B(p - v)$ , with  $B > 0$  and  $B' < 0$ . I shall at times more specifically assume that the function is  $\alpha/(p - v)$ , with  $\alpha$  a positive constant. This captures the idea that campaigning is ineffective when directed at voters with preferences very different from the party's. The difference between a Big and a Small party is that a Big party has the resources to campaign; the Small party does not.

Combining a voter's policy preferences and the effects of campaigning gives the utility of a targeted voter in voting for a party with position  $p$ :

$$U(v, p) + B(v, p), \tag{1}$$

or more specifically

$$U = -(v - p)^2 + \frac{\alpha}{|p - v|}. \tag{2}$$

The utility of a non-targeted voter does not include the last term.

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<sup>5</sup>For evidence that campaign expenditures increase support for a candidate, see Banaian and Luksetich (1991). For theoretical analyses of campaigning see Mueller and Stratmann (1994), and Myerson and Weber (1993).

## 3.2 Campaign strategies

### 3.2.1 Two Big parties

With only two big parties, the Nash equilibrium strategies are simple. The conservative party campaigns to its left; the liberal party campaigns to its right. Campaigning may have no net effect: when the median voter's ideal point lies midway between the two parties' positions, his utility from each party increases by the same amount, and so he is still indifferent between them.

### 3.2.2 One Big party and one Small party

Let the Big party's position be at  $p_B$ , and let the Small party's position lie to the left of  $p_B$ , at  $p_S$ . Critical to determining the votes each party wins is determining the position of the voter who is indifferent between them. Describe this voter by the distance,  $d$ , of his ideal point from the Small party's position. Then with the utility function (2)  $d$  satisfies

$$-(p_s - d)^2 + \frac{\alpha}{p_s - d} = -d^2, \quad (3)$$

with the solution

$$d = \frac{3p_s^2 - \sqrt{(p_s^4 + 8p_s\alpha)}}{4p_s}. \quad (4)$$

More generally, what matters to the determination of  $d$  is the distance between the positions of the two parties. Let this distance be  $p_B - p_S$ . Then the voter who is indifferent has a position at

$$p_S + \frac{3(p_B - p_S)^2 - \sqrt{(p_B - p_S)^4 + 8\alpha(p_B - p_S)}}{4(p_B - p_S)}. \quad (5)$$

To find the Small party's vote-maximizing position, assume that voters' ideal points are uniformly distributed on  $(0, 1)$ , and solve the first-order condition to obtain

$$p_S = p_B - \sqrt[3]{\alpha}. \quad (6)$$

The first result, then, is that the Small party will not position itself next to the Big party, but instead some distance from it, with the Small party's

position more extreme the greater is  $\alpha$ , or the greater the effectiveness of campaigning.

To determine which voter is indifferent between the two parties at this solution substitute (6) in (5) to obtain

$$p_S + \frac{3(p_B - p_B + \sqrt[3]{\alpha})^2 - \sqrt{(p_B - p_B + \sqrt[3]{\alpha})^4 + 8\alpha(p_B - p_B + \sqrt[3]{\alpha})}}{4(p_B - p_B + \sqrt[3]{\alpha})} = p_S. \quad (7)$$

This yields a second result, that the most successful extreme party will attract the support only of voters with preferences more extreme than the party's position; it will attract no voters with ideal points that lie between the positions of the extreme party and the moderate one. Put differently, a successful party that cannot campaign will attract only extreme voters. That also implies that if the extreme party moved in the direction of its supporters, it would lose votes.

### 3.2.3 Two Big parties and a moderate Small party

Consider a Small party with a position between  $p_L$  and  $p_R$ . Clearly, party  $L$  will campaign to the right of  $p_L$ , and party  $R$  will campaign to the left of  $p_R$ . Both Big parties may therefore attract voters who in the absence of campaigning would support the Small party. An instructive case occurs with  $p_L$  and  $p_R$  arbitrarily close, bracketing the ideal point of the median voter. Clearly, if  $\alpha$  is sufficiently large, the Small party in the middle wins no votes. It therefore wins more votes with a position to the left of  $p_L$  or to the right of  $p_R$ . Assuming again that ideal points are uniformly distributed and using equation (6), this means that the Small party may choose an extreme position.

### 3.2.4 Two Big parties and an extreme Small party

Accordingly, consider an extreme Small party, with a position  $p_S$  to the left of  $p_L$ . Party  $R$  will campaign to its left. Party  $L$  must choose whether to campaign to its right or to its left.

Suppose first that  $L$  campaigns to its right (so that it does not campaign among the Small party's backers). With the utility function (2), the voter with ideal point at  $(p_S + p_L)/2$  is indifferent between parties  $S$  and  $L$ .



Some voter to the left of  $p_L$  may prefer  $R$  over  $L$ . Again using (2), the ideal point of this voter is determined by the value of  $d$  satisfying

$$-d^2 = -(p_R - p_L + d)^2 + \alpha / (p_R - p_L + d), \quad (8)$$

with the solution

$$d = \frac{-3p_R^2 - 3p_L^2 + 6p_R p_L - \sqrt{p_R^4 + 6p_R^2 p_L^2 - 4p_R^3 p_L + p_L^4 - 4p_L^3 p_R + 8\alpha(p_R - p_L)}}{4(p_R - p_L)}. \quad (9)$$

For simplicity, I ignore such jumping over; I instead assume that campaigning by party  $R$  is ineffective among voters to the left of  $p_L$ . And if  $\alpha$  is not too large, or if  $p_R - p_L$  is sufficiently large, even without such a constraint each voter with an ideal point to the left of  $p_L$  will prefer  $L$  over  $R$ .

What is the best the extreme party can do? That depends on how  $L$  campaigns. We saw in (6) that if  $L$  campaigns to its left, then  $S$ 's share of the vote is greatest when its position is at  $p_S = p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha}$ , and that the voter indifferent between  $L$  and  $S$  has his ideal point there.

If party  $L$  campaigns to its right while  $S$  is at  $p_L$ , then  $L$ 's vote is  $F((p_L + p_R)/2) - F(p_L)$ . If party  $L$  campaigns to its left while  $S$  is at  $p_L$ , then  $L$ 's vote is

$$\frac{F\left(p_L + \frac{3(p_R - p_L)^2 - \sqrt{(p_R - p_L)^4 + 8\alpha(p_R - p_L)}}{4(p_R - p_L)}\right) - F\left(p_S + \frac{3(p_L - p_S)^2 - \sqrt{(p_L - p_S)^4 + 8\alpha(p_L - p_S)}}{4(p_L - p_S)}\right)}{F\left(p_S + \frac{3(p_L - p_S)^2 - \sqrt{(p_L - p_S)^4 + 8\alpha(p_L - p_S)}}{4(p_L - p_S)}\right)}. \quad (10)$$

Thus if

$$\frac{F((p_L + p_R)/2) - F(p_L)}{F\left(p_L + \frac{3(p_R - p_L)^2 - \sqrt{(p_R - p_L)^4 + 8\alpha(p_R - p_L)}}{4(p_R - p_L)}\right) - F\left(p_S + \frac{3(p_L - p_S)^2 - \sqrt{(p_L - p_S)^4 + 8\alpha(p_L - p_S)}}{4(p_L - p_S)}\right)} > \quad (11)$$

then  $S$  does best when its position is  $p_L$ .

What if the inequality is reversed? Then with  $L$  campaigning to its left,  $S$  does best at  $p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha}$ , and the number of votes it wins is  $F(p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha})$ . But  $S$  may do even better with a position to the left of  $p_L$ , if it can thereby induce  $L$  to campaign to its right. Let  $S$  be at  $p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta$ , with  $\delta > 0$ . If  $L$  campaigns to its left its vote is  $F\left(p_L + \frac{3(p_R - p_L)^2 - \sqrt{(p_R - p_L)^4 + 8\alpha(p_R - p_L)}}{4(p_R - p_L)}\right) -$

$F(p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta)$ . If, given  $S$ 's position at  $p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta$ , party  $L$  instead campaigns to its right, then  $L$ 's vote is  $F((p_L + p_R)/2) - F((p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta + p_L)/2)$ . That is, suppose

$$F\left(p_L + \frac{3(p_R - p_L)^2 - \sqrt{(p_R - p_L)^4 + 8\alpha(p_R - p_L)}}{4(p_R - p_L)}\right) - F(p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta) < F((p_L + p_R)/2) - F((p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta + p_L)/2).$$

holds for sufficiently small  $\delta$  but does not hold when  $\delta = 0$ . The reversal can happen if  $F'(p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta) > F'((p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha} - \delta + p_L)/2)$ . Then the Small party may maximize its vote when its position is to the left of  $p_L - \sqrt[3]{\alpha}$ .

The next task is to compare support for  $S$  when it is to the left of  $L$  to support for  $S$  when its position lies between  $L$  and  $R$ . I cannot obtain an analytic solution. But clearly as  $p_R - p_L$  approaches zero, the share of the vote won by a moderate Small party also approaches zero, but the share of the vote won by an extreme party does not. Thus, a Small party may do better when its position is extreme.

To review, when the Small party positions itself to the left of  $L$ , a movement to the left has three opposing effects. First, in the absence of campaigning by party  $L$ , party  $S$  attracts fewer votes. Second, if  $L$  does campaign against  $S$ , the campaigning may switch fewer votes. Third, by moving to the left, party  $S$  makes it less attractive for party  $L$  to campaign to  $L$ 's left, and so may induce  $L$  to campaign to  $L$ 's right.

Note that I do not merely say that a Small party is more likely to be targeted the more popular it becomes. What is critical for my results is that a Big party's campaigning is more effective when the Small party's position is close. Thus, my results would continue to hold if a Small party which moved to the right lost voters on its left.

If the Big party on the right is far to the right, then campaigning by  $L$  to its right will switch few votes. The indifferent voter under no campaigning, with ideal point  $(p_L + p_R)/2$ , is far from either party, so that campaigning by either of the Big parties will little affect voters near him, and will thus switch few votes. Thus, if the Big parties are far apart, the Big party on the Left has incentive to campaign to its left. That drives the Small extreme party to an even more extreme position, but also reduces the share of the vote won by the Small party.

### 3.3 Extensions

I assumed that a Big party must choose between campaigning to its right or to its left. This can be generalized in several ways. If campaigning in either direction entails a fixed cost, then a party may find it optimal to campaign to its right, to its left, or to allocate its resources between campaigning in both directions. Such a generalization will not affect the qualitative results obtained here—a Small party still does better when its position reduces a Big party’s incentive to campaign in its direction, and when its position reduces the effects of any such campaigning.

To determine some comparative statics, let the effectiveness of campaigning by party  $L$  differ when it campaigns to its right (against the Big party) from when it campaigns to its left (against the Small party). Call the parameters  $\alpha_R$  and  $\alpha_L$ . What happens when  $\alpha_L$  increases? Party  $L$  benefits more from campaigning to its left. The Small party, if it can choose its position or if selection effects cause a change in the position of such a party, will therefore move further to the left. Thus, increased effectiveness of political campaigns against an extreme party will reduce support for the extreme party, but will also cause the extreme party to become even more extreme.

The extremist-moving effect of campaigning also means that data on how an extreme party fares as it moves to the right or to the left may give little evidence of voters’ preferences, but may instead reflect the effects of campaign decisions by a Big party. For example, as the Small party moves to the right, the effectiveness of  $L$ ’s campaign against it will increase, and  $L$  will find it more attractive to campaign against  $S$ . The Small party’s support will therefore decline. And it will decline even if no voter finds  $S$ ’s new position less attractive than before.

## 4 Hide information on popularity of Small party

We saw that a major party may choose not to campaign against a small one. That is one reason for the success of some small parties. To check for robustness, we can ask what happens when voters are imperfectly rather than perfectly informed about the Small party. The immediate intuition is that support for a Small party will decline, since with the quadratic utility

function I have been assuming voters are essentially risk averse, and therefore will find a party with unknown positions less attractive. But as shown above, more than voters' preferences must be considered. We must also look into the campaign decisions of a Big party. Here I will outline how uncertainty can reduce campaigning, and thus increase support for an extreme party.

Since I examine the informational content of an action, my approach necessarily relates to the classic signaling model (see Spence (1973)). Several works, which do not refer to signaling, consider how a candidate may gain from imperfect information about himself. Shepsle (1972) shows that ambiguity pays when voters are risk-loving. Glazer (1990) shows that if each candidate is uncertain about the median voter's preferred policy (and therefore faces the risk of stating an unpopular position), then in equilibrium both candidates may adopt ambiguous positions. The benefits of ambiguity are even larger if the position announced by one candidate allows the other candidate to estimate more accurately the preferences of the voters. Similarly, Alesina and Cukierman (1990) show that a party can increase its popularity by hiding from voters its preferences.

We saw above that a Big party may campaign against the other Big party rather than against the Small party, thereby increasing the success of the Small party. The above analysis was made under the assumption of complete information. But an important characteristic of small parties is that voters are unsure about their positions. A Big party that campaigns against the Small party thereby signals that it believes the Small party is a threat, with a position that may appeal to many voters. Campaigning against that party may therefore backfire.

To see how backfiring can arise, suppose voters are of two types. A fraction  $f$  are perfectly informed about the position of the Small party. A fraction  $1 - f$  are imperfectly informed—they believe that with probability  $\pi_1$  the Small party's position is  $p_1$ , and that with probability  $\pi_2$  its position is  $p_2$ . Let  $p_2 > p_1$ , so that  $p_2$  represents a more moderate position.

Suppose for the moment the Small party is at  $p_1$ , that party  $L$  knows it, and that the informed voters know it. As shown above, party  $L$  may gain little from campaigning against  $S$ —few voters would support the extreme party anyway. Suppose next the Small party is at  $p_2$ . In terms of gaining votes from informed voters, party  $L$  has greater incentive to campaign against  $S$  than were  $S$  at  $p_1$ .

If party  $L$  adopted such a campaign strategy, then it would signal unin-

formed voters about party  $S$ 's position—uninformed voters would infer that if  $L$  campaigns against  $S$  then  $S$ 's position must be at  $p_2$  rather than at  $p_1$ , or that party  $S$ 's position is relatively moderate. That signal would then increase support for party  $S$  among initially uninformed voters. This signaling effect thus reduces the benefits to  $L$  of campaigning against  $S$ , and can thus increase the electoral support of an extreme party. Moreover, since knowledge about a party's position will most hurt the most extreme party, the absence of campaigning by the Big party differentially helps an especially extreme party.

## 5 Conclusion

The results obtained here can be summarized by thinking of how a party that cannot campaign should position itself to maximize votes. Surely it must consider the preferences of voters, and these considerations are extensively studied in the literature. The novel effect discussed here is that a party can reduce the effectiveness of a major party's campaign against it by adopting a position that strongly appeals to extremist voters. Indeed, the Small party may want to appeal only to voters more extreme than itself.

In addition, the Small party must consider how its position affects the campaign strategy of a large party. The Small party has an interest in inducing large parties to campaign against each other rather than against itself. This consideration may drive the Small party even further to the extreme. We reached the paradoxical result that effective campaigning by a major party against a small one may drive the small party to extreme positions. The existence of very extreme rather than moderately extreme parties may point to the difficulty the extreme may have in increasing its vote, and point to the success or potential for success of campaigns against it.

## 6 Appendix: Candidates in U.S. presidential elections

Election	Candidate	Party	Percentage vote
1832	Henry Clay	National Republican	37.63
	Andrew Jackson	Democratic	54.54
	William Wirt	Anti-Masonic*	7.83
1836	Daniel Webster	Whig	2.74
	Martin Van Buren	Democratic	50.87
	William H. Harrison	Whig	36.66
	Hugh L. White	Whig	9.73
1840	William H. Harrison	Whig	53.05
	Martin Van Buren	Democratic	46.95
1844	James K. Polk	Democratic	49.58
	Henry Clay	Whig	48.12
	James G. Birney	Liberty*	2.30
1848	Lewis Cass	Democratic	42.54
	Zachary Taylor	Whig	47.33
	Martin Van Buren	Free Soil*	10.13
1852	Franklin Pierce	Democratic	51.04
	Winfield Scott	Whig	44.03
	John P. Hale	Free Soil*	4.93
1856	James Buchanan	Democratic	45.32
	Millard Fillmore	American*	21.55
	John C. Fremont	Republican	33.13
1860	John C. Breckinridge	Southern Democratic*	18.10
	Stephen A. Douglas	Democratic	29.46
	John Bell	Constitutional Union*	12.61
	Abraham Lincoln	Republican	39.83

1864	George B. McClellan	Democratic	44.97
	Abraham Lincoln	Unionist	55.03
1868	Horatio Seymour	Democratic	47.34
	Ulysses S. Grant	Republican	52.66
1872	Ulysses S. Grant	Republican	55.77
	Horace Greeley	Democratic-Liberal	43.94
		Republican	
1876	Samuel J. Tilden	Democratic	51.06
	Rutherford B. Hayes	Republican	48.03
	Peter Cooper	Greenback*	0.90
1880	James A. Garfield	Republican	48.30
	Winfield S. Hancock	Democratic	48.28
	James B. Weaver	Greenback-Labor*	3.32
1884	John P. St. John	Prohibition*	1.47
	James G. Blaine	Republican	48.27
	Grover Cleveland	Democratic	48.52
	Benjamin F. Butler	Greenback-Labor/ Anti-Monopoly*	1.74
1888	Clinton B. Fisk	Prohibition*	2.20
	Benjamin Harrison	Republican	47.86
	Grover Cleveland	Democratic	48.66
	Anson J. Streeter	Union Labor*	1.29
1892	John Bidwell	Prohibition*	2.25
	Benjamin Harrison	Republican	42.99
	Grover Cleveland	Democratic	46.08
	James B. Weaver	People's*	8.50

1896	Joshua Levering	Prohibition*	0.90
	William McKinley	Republican	51.01
	John M. Palmer	National Democratic*	0.96
	William J. Bryan	Democratic	46.73
1900	John G. Woolley	Prohibition*	1.50
	William McKinley	Republican	51.69
	William J. Bryan	Democratic	45.54
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist*	0.62
1904	Silas C. Swallow	Prohibition*	1.91
	Theodore Roosevelt	Republican	56.42
	Alton B. Parker	Democratic	37.60
	Thomas E. Watson	People's*	0.84
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist*	2.98
1908	Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition*	1.70
	William H. Taft	Republican	51.58
	William J. Bryan	Democratic	43.05
	Thomas L. Hisgen	Independence*	0.55
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist*	2.82
1912	Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition*	1.38
	William H. Taft	Republican	23.19
	Woodrow Wilson	Democratic	41.85
	Theodore Roosevelt	Progressive*	27.39
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist*	5.99
1916	J. Frank Hanly	Prohibition*	1.19
	Charles E. Hughes	Republican	46.20
	Woodrow Wilson	Democratic	49.33
	A. L. Benson	Socialist*	3.19



1920	Aaron S. Watkins	Prohibition*	0.71
	Warren G. Harding	Republican	60.42
	James M. Cox	Democratic	34.16
	P. P. Christensen	Farmer-Labor*	0.99
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist*	3.42
1924	Herman P. Faris	Prohibition*	0.19
	Calvin Coolidge	Republican	54.04
	John W. Davis	Democratic	28.83
	Robert M. La Follette	Progressive*	16.61
1928	Herbert C. Hoover	Republican	58.25
	Alfred E. Smith	Democratic	40.78
1932	Herbert C. Hoover	Republican	39.65
	Franklin D. Roosevelt	Democratic	57.44
	Norman Thomas	Socialist*	2.23
1936	Alfred M. Landon	Republican	36.55
	Franklin D. Roosevelt	Democratic	60.80
	William Lemke	Union*	1.95
1940	Wendell L. Willkie	Republican	44.79
	Franklin D. Roosevelt	Democratic	54.74
1944	Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	46.03
	Franklin D. Roosevelt	Democratic	53.55
1948	Strom Thurmond	States' Rights Democratic*	2.41
	Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	45.07
	Harry S. Truman	Democratic	49.56
	Henry Wallace	Progressive*	2.37
1952	Dwight D. Eisenhower	Republican	55.14
	Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	44.38
1956	Dwight D. Eisenhower	Republican	57.58
	Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	42.10

1960	Richard M. Nixon	Republican	49.77
	John F. Kennedy	Democratic	49.94
1964	Barry M. Goldwater	Republican	38.60
	Lyndon B. Johnson	Democratic	61.26
1968	George C. Wallace	American Independent*	13.54
	Richard M. Nixon	Republican	43.43
	Hubert H. Humphrey	Democratic	42.73
1972	John G. Schmitz	American*	1.42
	Richard M. Nixon	Republican	60.72
	George S. McGovern	Democratic	37.55
1976	Gerald R. Ford	Republican	48.04
	Jimmy Carter	Democratic	50.10
	Eugene J. McCarthy	Independent	0.93
1980	Ronald Reagan	Republican	50.78
	John B. Anderson	Independent	6.62
	Jimmy Carter	Democratic	41.04
1984	Ronald Reagan	Republican	58.79
	Walter F. Mondale	Democratic	40.57
1988	George Bush	Republican	53.40
	Michael S. Dukakis	Democratic	45.67
1992	Ross Perot	Independent	18.91
	George Bush	Republican	37.46
	Bill Clinton	Democratic	43.02
1996	Ross Perot	Independent*	8.48
	Harry Browne	Libertarian*	0.50
	Bob Dole	Republican	40.86
	Bill Clinton	Democratic	49.15
	Ralph Nader	Green*	0.63

Sources: *New York Times* (various issues), *Encyclopedia Britannica* 1998 CDROM edition, *Running for President, The Candidates and Their Images*, Vols. I & II, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.; *The Encyclopedia of the American Presidency* (1994), New York: Simon Schuster.

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