

Section Handout  
Feb 11, 2014

Readings:

Schumpeter (1942):

Fiorina (1980)

Downs (1975)

Rosenstone and Hansen (1993)

Duverger (1951)

Schattschneider (1960)

Dahl (1974)

Three main actors this week: **voters, electoral systems and parties**

**Voters:**

1. What does "public opinion" mean? What is its relation to "expressed opinion"?
2. Who votes, and what does it matter?
3. Why do people vote (or participate in other ways), or not? How do people decide whom to vote for? (Rational and "irrational" components)

**Electoral Systems:**

1. The basics: SMD v. multi-member districts; plurality/majority v. PR
2. Representation v. accountability
3. What do elections produce (or what should they produce)?

**Parties:**

1. Why do parties exist? (Schumpeter, Duverger)
2. What do parties do, or what should they do? (Fiorina, R&H, Duverger, Schatt)

**All together: voters, electoral systems, parties and democracy**

1. How is public opinion formed?
2. Schattschneider says that if you want to know who's winning, watch the crowd. Are crowds democratic?
3. What is the proper role of the voter in a democratic system?
4. In a democracy, should parties be democratic too?
5. Should parties be open only to registered party members, or open to the public? Should parties be able to exclude people who are not in their party?