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Boss Tweed: All I ever wanted to be was a boss
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- Official gov’t printed ballot – included names of all candidates competing in general election – eventually this led to split-ticket voting.
Civil Service Reforms – Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics

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These reforms led to loss of patronage-based political system (although still have it a bit today – i.e., ambassadors). Rather than motivate workers with tangibles, party organizations forced to motivate volunteers based on ideology and principle.

By 1970s, political consultants began playing a more dominant role in campaigns – production of ads, polling, media mail, etc., highly specialized jobs.

These reforms and developments led to a candidate-centered system – eroded the role of boss politics once so dominant in American politics.

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Contemporary State Party Organization

- State parties are now more about fundraising than they once were – by 2008, Dem/Reps state party dogs raised $479 million – a huge increase from 20 years prior.
- Larger budgets/more stable funding produced more full-time headquarters (legit rented office space, etc.)
- Volunteer base – mixed with professional staff skilled in fund-raising, voter targeting, polling, and communication
- By 1999, all but one party state central committee were housed in permanent headquarters – all but 7 employed full-time executive director
- Thus, while nature of state party has changed – still relevant – parties still recruit candidates, coordinate efforts with national and local party organizations, allied interest groups (pluralism), consultants, and activists
- Publish newsletters, employe voter-identification programs
- State parties organize seminars and campaign assistance programs for candidates for statewide office and state legislature, annual dinners, fund-raisers, etc.


Contemporary State Party Organization

- State party development does vary from state to state
- A state’s history and political culture are important
  - States that have long history of formidable party orgs tend to continue to have vibrant orgs – NJ, NY, IL (Chicago!). Traditionally weaker states include KS, NE, ND, and SD
  - Political competition in state – FL GOP has a very strong party organization, and Dems are ok too
  - State laws – some states limit party’s ability to support candidates – as of 2012, 32 states restricted amounts state central committees can contribute directly to statewide, leg, and judicial candidates