

## Party Emergence

POLS 451  
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# Social Cleavages

We think of parties fundamentally forming from groups with different attributes and therefore shared interests

- Key distinction between attributes and identity categories
- Attributes (religion, class, etc)
  - Hard to change; sticky
  - Not necessarily politicized
- Identity categories
  - Evolves from attribute
  - A politically activated attribute

# Social Cleavages

- Social division
- Collective identity
- Organizational expression

# Common Cleavages

- Urban-Rural
- Confessional (Religious)
- Secular-Clerical
- Class
- Post-materialist
- Ethnic/Linguistic

# Criticizing Social Cleavage Theory

- No political identities, preferences
- Parties shape political divisions
- Lots of potential cleavages

# Institutional Explanations

I.V.                      D.V.  
Electoral system    →    # parties

- Majoritarian SMD elections → 2 party competition
- MMD PR allows multiparty competition

What's the causal mechanism?

Under majoritarian SMD:

- Voters are strategic and don't want to waste votes on a loser
- Politicians are strategic and coalesce into two parties

## Mechanical Effects

- Votes don't produce seats for small parties in majoritarian systems
- Small parties don't thrive in these systems, die off

# Strategic Effects

SMDP and disproportional systems

- Strategic Voting
- Voters vote for realistic parties, not sincere
- Strategic Entry
- Strong candidates will not form or enter new parties



# Historical Party Emergence

- Limited initial franchise
  - 2 parties representing urban and rural elites
- Religious issues
  - Institutions
  - Third party viability
- Social democrats
  - Franchise extended
  - Institutions again
  - Union allegiances