INTEREST GROUP POLITICS EDITION 9

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INTEREST GROUP POLITICS

Ninth Edition

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SAGE was founded in 1965 by Sara Miller McCune to support the dissemination of usable knowledge by publishing innovative and high-quality research and teaching content. Today, we publish more than 750 journals, including those of more than 300 learned societies, more than 800 new books per year, and a growing range of library products including archives, data, case studies, reports, conference highlights, and video. SAGE remains majority-owned by our founder, and after Sara's lifetime will become owned by a charitable trust that secures our continued independence.

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Preface

This, the ninth edition of *Interest Group Politics*, continues the work begun with the first edition, published by the then-fledgling CQ Press in 1983. Thirty-plus years later, CQ has changed, becoming part of the Sage publishing group. And so has the collaboration between Al Cigler and Bird Loomis; we welcome to our editorial team Tony Nownes, our former student, a professor at the University of Tennessee, and for many years a leading scholar of organized interests and lobbying.

As always, this edited volume seeks to offer a wide range of scholarly perspectives on interest group politics. With a mix of veteran and new contributors, we continue to explore the internal politics of organized interests and their impact—actual and attempted—on electoral politics and the nexus of lobbying and policymaking across an array of issues.

Darren Halpin begins at the beginning, as he addresses the question of how organized interests choose issues to address; their agendas help direct which issues rise and fall in national politics. Peter Francia and Allen Hertzke use their considerable expertise to examine labor unions and religious lobbying, respectively; these scholars have published extensively on these subjects over their careers, and their over-time perspectives provide real insights in these two corners of the interest-group world. Likewise, Don Haider-Markel, one of the discipline's most distinguished LGBT scholars, joins with Steve Sylvester to provide a similar long-term take on organizing and lobbying within this community, where change has increasingly become the order of the day.

From his perch at the center of research on the growth in outside funding of campaigns, Lee Drutman offers both a primer on the dramatic changes in campaign finance and how contemporary interests take advantage of an environment in which there are almost no meaningful limits on campaign spending. With their focus on congressional campaigns, the chapters by Brian Richter and Tim Werner and by Bob Boatright give us sophisticated insights into how organized interests help fund campaigns and engage in primary challenges. To an extent, these are "dogs that don't bark" chapters that clear away some of our assumptions about how politics currently operates.

Turning to lobbying, Dorie Apollonio, a new contributor, also provides a long-term perspective on group behavior, in this instance an examination of how tobacco interests have weathered fifty years of attacks by the government and by other groups. To an extent, her analysis fits with the conclusion in emphasizing the considerable resources that the tobacco sector can muster, even in the face of great adversity.

Tim LaPira has emerged as one of the most important (and most quoted) lobbying analysts over the past year, as he has published several pathbreaking

articles from a truly remarkable data set on Washington lobbyists. Here, he explores the nature of the Washington lobbying community and how it differs considerably from its formal dimensions. In short, a lot of lobbying is done by those who claim not to lobby, and that has consequences. His analysis is complemented by Bob Healy's hands-on discussion of how corporate lobbyists work. A longtime DC lobbyist with a PhD, he successfully bridges the scholar-practitioner divide in offering a ground-level take on representing corporations.

Jim McCormick contributes another of his first-rate chapters on foreign policy lobbying, in this instance focusing on domestic interest groups. In a piece that addresses low-visibility policymaking, Tony Nownes and Josh Cole examine lobbying that is essentially invisible, but yet most important, in their chapter on special districts, where many significant local policies are made. And Amy McKay continues her work on negative lobbying, which constitutes a tremendous amount of activity and which helps account for the power of the status quo.

Finally, Scott Ainsworth, Erik Godwin, and Ken Godwin return to our pages, this time with an incisive look at intergovernmental lobbying, which is remarkably common and important.

We also include an examination of the idea of an "interest," which allows Bird Loomis to link Arthur Bentley to the Tea Party in searching for how the "interest" of the Tea Party is expressed. And we conclude with a consideration of lobbying and interest group politics in a world of great inequality.

As always, it has been an adventure putting this collection together, and we offer our profound thanks to all our contributors. In addition, Beth Cigler, Michel Loomis, and Elsa Nownes deserve their full share of gratitude for putting up with us as we wrangled one more edition.

Of course, the editors at CQ/Sage—Charisse Kiino, Sarah Calabi, and Raquel Christie—have been helpful, encouraging, and demanding, a great combination. We greatly appreciate all their efforts and support.

It has been most gratifying to produce these books over the years, and we hope the readers enjoy the book as much as we enjoy editing it.

Allan J. Cigler, Lawrence, KS
Burdett A. Loomis, Lawrence, KS
Anthony J. Nownes, Knoxville, TN
November 2014

About the Contributors

Scott H. Ainsworth is a professor of political science in the School of International and Public Affairs at the University of Georgia. He has published widely on lobbying, rulemaking, and the U.S. Congress. His books include *Abortion Politics in Congress: Strategic Incrementalism and Policy Change*, *Lobbying and Policymaking*, and *Analyzing Interest Groups*.

Dorie Apollonio is an associate professor of health policy in the Department of Clinical Pharmacy at the University of California, San Francisco, focusing on tobacco control and policymaking. Her research considers the role of scientific evidence and interest group lobbying in decision making on public health. Her work has been published in peer-reviewed journals in multiple fields, including public health, political science, policy, and law.

Robert G. Boatright is associate professor of political science at Clark University, in Worcester, Massachusetts. He is the author of *Interest Groups and Campaign Finance Reform in the United States and Canada* (University of Michigan Press, 2011), *Getting Primaried: The Changing Politics of Congressional Primary Challenges* (University of Michigan Press, 2013), and *Expressive Politics: Issues Strategies of Congressional Challengers* (Ohio State University Press, 2004). He has published many articles and book chapters on campaign finance, electoral politics, and primary elections.

Allan J. Cigler is Chancellors Club teaching professor of political science at the University of Kansas. His research and teaching interests focus on parties and interest groups in the United States. In recent years his research activity and publications have explored the role and consequences of organized interest money in federal elections, especially money outside of regulation by the Federal Election Commission.

Josh Cole is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Tennessee. His research interests include interest groups, service delivery, and public service motivation.

Lee Drutman is a senior fellow at New America Foundation in the program on political reform. His work on politics and money is widely cited among journalists, and he is the author of the 2015 book *The Business of America Is Lobbying*. He also teaches at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Advanced Governmental Studies.

Peter L. Francia is professor of political science and codirector of leadership studies at East Carolina University. He is the author of numerous academic

publications on the political activities of organized labor, including the book *The Future of Organized Labor in American Politics*. His insights on the labor movement have been included in the press accounts of national media outlets such as CNN, National Public Radio, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

Erik K. Godwin began his career as a consultant to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Justice, conducting financial and economic analyses on environmental issues. From there he joined the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Office of Management and Budget, where he was the principal White House regulatory analyst on policies involving energy (fossil, renewable, and nuclear), pesticides, radiation, and indoor air. He left at the end of the Clinton administration to become an executive-branch lobbyist on environmental, petrochemical, nuclear, pharmaceutical, and health issues. Most recently, he was an assistant professor of political science at Texas A&M University. He continues to consult for federal agencies on regulatory policy, benefit-cost analysis, environmental policy, budgetary systems, and strategic information control.

R. Kenneth Godwin is an emeritus professor of political science at the University of North Carolina–Charlotte. He has published widely on public policy, interest groups, and lobbying, including the 2009 book *Lobbying and Policymaking*.

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Darren R. Halpin is associate professor and reader of policy studies in the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University. He also holds the post of visiting professor at the Robert Gordon University, United Kingdom. He has published widely on interest groups, representation, and public policy, including his most recent book, *Organization of Political Interest Groups: Designing Advocacy* (Routledge, 2014).

Robert Healy has spent a forty-year career as a corporate lobbyist along with political science teaching as an adjunct professor at American University. His book—*Corporate Political Behavior: Why Corporations Do What They Do in Politics*—was published in 2014. Healy can be reached at rlhealy@earthlink.net.

Allen D. Hertzke is David Ross Boyd professor of political science and faculty fellow in religious freedom for the Institute for the American Constitutional Heritage at the University of Oklahoma. He is also cochair of Georgetown University's research project on Christianity and Freedom. He is author of *Freeing God's Children: The Unlikely Alliance for Global Human Rights* and *Representing God in Washington*, which has been issued in a Chinese language translation, and editor of *The Future of Religious Freedom: Global Challenges* and *Religious Freedom in America: Constitutional Roots and Contemporary Challenges.* As visiting senior fellow at the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life in Washington, DC, he directed the 2011 study "Lobbying for the Faithful: Religious Advocacy Groups in Washington DC." From 2008 to 2010 he served as lead consultant for the John Templeton Foundation to develop strategic recommendations for advancing religious freedom around the globe. He is a member of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences.

Timothy M. LaPira is associate professor of political science at James Madison University. He teaches and conducts research on interest groups and lobbying. He is currently writing a book on the so-called revolving door with Herschel F. Thomas III that explores how common it is for people to move from government service to private sector lobbying, who does so, and why it matters for interest representation.

Burdett A. Loomis is professor of political science at the University of Kansas, where he has taught since 1979. He has published extensively on interest groups and legislatures. He was an APSA Congressional Fellow (1975–1976) and has worked for former Kansas governor Kathleen Sebelius. He edited *The U.S. Senate: From Deliberation to Dysfunction* (2011) and is currently working on *Kansas Pastoral*, which focuses on state-level political change, 1960–1975. He is also a founding editor of *Interest Groups & Advocacy.*

James M. McCormick is professor and chair of the Department of Political Science at Iowa State University. He has authored or edited ten books, including the fifth edition of *American Foreign Policy and Process* (2010) and the fifth edition of *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence*, coedited with Eugene R. Wittkopf (2008). In addition, he has published more than sixty book chapters and articles in such journals as *World Politics*, *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *The Journal of Politics*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and *Legislative Studies Quarterly* on American foreign policy and international politics.

Amy Melissa McKay is senior lecturer (associate professor) of politics at the University of Exeter, where she studies and teaches American politics, interest groups, and money in policymaking. Previously she earned tenure at Georgia

State University, held a visiting assistant professorship at the University of Iowa, and graduated from Duke University with a PhD in political science. In 2009 she worked for a senior U.S. senator on the Affordable Care Act as an American Political Science Association congressional fellow.

Anthony J. Nownes is professor of political science at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. His most recent research focuses on interest group populations, interest group survival, and lobbying. His latest book, *Pressure and Power: Interest Groups in American Politics*, was published by Routledge in 2013.

Brian Kelleher Richter is assistant professor of business, government, and society at the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin. His interdisciplinary research—published in leading political science, economics, and management journals—is focused on the nonmarket strategy area broadly and encompasses both corporate social responsibility and corporate political activity. He is the author of a recent literature review on lobbying focused on methodical approaches, coauthored with John M. deFigueiredo, titled "Advancing the Empirical Research on Lobbying" in the *Annual Review of Political Science* (2014).

Steven Sylvester is a PhD student in the Political Science Department at the University of Kansas. His research interests primarily focus on state and health policy, more specifically, the role of the state in implementing the Affordable Care Act. He received his BA and MA in political science from California State University–Chico.

Timothy Werner is assistant professor of business, government, and society at the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin. His research explores the role of business in American politics and public policymaking, as well as the financial consequences of business's political activity. He is the author of *Public Forces and Private Politics in American Big Business* (2012).

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Introduction

The Changing Nature of Interest Group Politics*

Burdett A. Loomis and Allan J. Cigler

From James Madison to Madison Avenue, political interests have played a central role in American politics. But this great continuity in our political experience has been matched by ambivalence toward interest groups from citizens, politicians, and scholars. James Madison's warnings of the dangers of faction echo in the rhetoric of reformers from Populists and Progressives near the turn of the century to the so-called public interest advocates of today.

If organized special interests are nothing new in American politics, can today's group politics nevertheless be seen as having changed fundamentally? Acknowledging that many important, continuing trends exist, we seek to place in perspective a broad series of changes in modern interest group politics. Among the most substantial of these developments are these:

- A great proliferation of interest groups since the early 1960s
- A centralization of group headquarters in Washington, DC, rather than New York City or elsewhere
- Major technological developments in information processing that promote more sophisticated, more timely, and more specialized communications strategies, such as grassroots lobbying and the message politics of issue-based campaigns
- The rise of single-issue groups
- Changes in campaign finance laws (1971, 1974) and the ensuing growth of political action committees (PACs) and, more recently, the sharp increases in soft money contributions to parties and issue advocacy campaign advertisements for individual candidates
- The increased formal penetration of political and economic interests into the bureaucracy (advisory committees), the presidency (White House group representatives), and the Congress (caucuses of members)

*This overview chapter remains unchanged from its revision circa 2000 of a piece first written in 1983. Thus references to the "health care debate" address the Clinton-era proposals, and some material does not reflect subsequent developments, especially for campaign finance.

- The continuing decline of political parties' ability to perform key electoral and policy-related activities, despite their capacity to funnel soft money to candidates
- The increased number, activity, and visibility of public interest groups, such as Common Cause and the Ralph Nader–inspired public interest research organizations
- The growth of activity and impact of institutions, including corporations, universities, state and local governments, and foreign interests
- A continuing rise in the amount and sophistication of group activity in state capitals, especially given the devolution of some federal programs and substantial increases in state budgets

All these developments have antecedents in earlier eras of American political life; there is little that is genuinely new under the interest group sun. Political action committees have replaced (or complemented) other forms of special interest campaign financing. Group-generated mail directed at Congress has been a tactic since at least the early 1900s.[1] Many organizations have long been centered in Washington, DC, members of Congress traditionally have represented local interests, and so on.

Still, the level of group activity, coupled with growing numbers of organized interests, distinguishes contemporary group politics from the politics of earlier eras. Group involvement trends lend credence to the fears of scholars such as political scientist Theodore Lowi and economist Mancur Olson, who have viewed interest-based politics as contributing to governmental stalemate and reduced accountability.[2] If accurate, these analyses point to a fundamentally different role for interest groups than those suggested by Madison and group theorists after him.

Only during the past thirty years, in the wake of Olson's path-breaking research, have scholars begun to examine realistically why people join and become active in groups.[3] It is by no means self-evident that citizens should naturally become group members—quite the contrary in most cases. We are faced, then, with the paradoxical and complex question of why groups have proliferated when it can be economically unwise for people to join them.

Interest Groups in American Politics

Practical politicians and scholars alike generally agree that interest groups (also known as factions, organized interests, pressure groups, and special interests) are natural phenomena in a democratic regime—that is, individuals will band together to protect their interests.[4] In Madison's words, "The causes of faction . . . are sown in the nature of man." But controversy continues as to whether groups and group politics are benign or malignant forces in American politics. "By a faction," Madison wrote, "I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting

to a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community."[5]

Although Madison rejected the remedy of direct controls over factions as "worse than the disease," he saw the need to limit their negative effects by promoting competition among them and by devising an elaborate system of procedural "checks and balances" to reduce the potential power of any single, strong group, whether that interest represented a majority or minority position.

Hostility toward interest groups became more virulent in industrialized America, where the great concentrations of power far outstripped anything Madison might have imagined. In the early twentieth century many Progressives railed at various monopolistic "trusts" and intimate connections between interests and corrupt politicians. Later, in 1935, Hugo Black, then a senator and later a Supreme Court justice, painted a grim picture of group malevolence: "Contrary to tradition, against the public morals, and hostile to good government, the lobby has reached such a position of power that it threatens government itself. Its size, its power, its capacity for evil, its greed, trickery, deception and fraud condemn it to the death it deserves."[6]

Similar suspicions are expressed today, especially in light of the increased role of money in electoral politics. The impact of groups on elections has grown steadily since the adoption of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 and its 1974 amendments—reform legislation originally intended to limit the impact of organized interests. Instead, such interests accelerated their spending on campaigns. Until the 1990s most concerns focused on PACs; indeed, direct PAC contributions to congressional candidates rose from less than $23 million in 1975–1976 to nearly $260 million in the 1999–2000 election cycle. The number of PACs has leveled off at about 4,000, and only a few are major players in electoral politics. Moreover, PACs encourage large numbers of contributors to pool their funds, a tactic that enhances Americans' political participation.

More worrisome over the past decade have been the growing amount and impact of essentially unregulated money from organized interests. "Soft money" contributions to national political parties totaled nearly $600 million in 2000, almost doubling the amount in the 1996 presidential year. Democrats received 98 percent more, and Republicans upped their totals by 81 percent. Even more troublesome may be issue advocacy advertising by organized interests, which does not fall under the expenditure limits and disclosure requirements of the Federal Election Commission. Thus in the 2000 campaign, the drug industry group called Citizens for Better Medicare spent more than $40 million on advertisements designed to help congressional allies, both past and prospective.[7] At the time, this group and many like it did not need to disclose where their funds came from. Nor was there any limit on the amount of expenditures, as long as they did not "expressly advocate" a preference for a

candidate (that is, use the words *vote for* and similar words) or coordinate efforts with a candidate or party committee.

By focusing on "hard money" activity (largely reported contributions to candidates), "the [Federal Election Commission] . . . could no longer restrain most of the financial activity that takes place in modern elections."[8] Such an environment has renewed calls for additional campaign finance reform. So far, however, Congress has resisted changing laws that regulate group activity in national elections, and public cynicism about special interest influence will likely continue.

Pluralism and Liberalism

Despite popular distrust of interest group politics, political scientists and other observers often have viewed groups in a positive light. This perspective draws on Madison's *Federalist* writings but is tied more closely to the growth of the modern state. Political science scholars such as Arthur Bentley, about 1910, and David Truman, forty years later, placed groups at the heart of politics and policymaking in a complex, large, and increasingly specialized governmental system. The interest group becomes an element of continuity in a changing political world. Truman noted the "multiplicity of co-ordinate or nearly co-ordinate points of access to governmental decisions" and concluded that "the significance of these many points of access and of the complicated texture of relationships among them is great. This diversity assures various ways for interest groups to participate in the formation of policy, and this variety is a flexible, stabilizing element."[9]

Derived from Truman's work and that of other group-oriented scholars is the notion of the pluralist state, in which competition among interests, in and out of government, will produce policies roughly responsive to public desires and no single set of interests will dominate. Interest group scholar Carole Greenwald summarizes:

> Pluralist theory assumes that within the public arena there will be countervailing centers of power within governmental institutions and among outsiders. Competition is implicit in the notion that groups, as surrogates for individuals, will produce products representing the diversity of opinions that might have been possible in the individual decision days of democratic Athens.[10]

In many ways the pluralist vision of American politics corresponds to the realities of policy making and the distribution of policy outcomes, but a host of scholars, politicians, and other observers have roundly criticized this perspective. Two broad (although sometimes contradictory) critiques have special merit.

The first argues that some interests habitually lose in the policy process, while others habitually win. Without endorsing the contentions of elite theorists that a small number of interests and individuals conspire to dominate