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Miller, Warren E. and M. Kent Jennings, in association with Barbara G. Farah. *Parties in Transition: A Longitudinal Study of Party Elites and Party Supporters*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1986. Pp. xxv, 284, \$22.95 hardbound.

More than 25 years ago, Herbert McClosky and associates published a seminal study of "conflict and consensus among party leaders and followers" that compared opinions of delegates at the 1956 nominating conventions with public opinion (*American Political Science Review*, June 1960). McClosky's article stimulated other research on convention delegates, including Jeane Kirkpatrick's book, *The New Presidential Elite* (New York: Russell Sage, 1976), which focused on the 1972

slightly less for partisan reasons. On a number of measures of political involvement, the 1980 delegates in both parties were closer than Republican and Democratic delegates in 1976 and especially in 1972 (p. 92). Miller and Jennings conclude that this finding suggests "a pervasive sharing of political cultures on the part of these elites who, in turn, do so much to shape the course of national politics" (p. 95).

On the other hand, the parties moved apart over time on most measures of ideology. The Republican cohorts became more conservative from 1972 to 1980 (p. 133), while the Democrats did not show any pronounced ideological drift over time (p. 135). Miller and Jennings explain changes in the party elites' ideological attitudes between 1972 and 1980 as resulting from two processes: "replacement" of the disengaged by the mobilized and "conversion" of attitudes held by the continuously active. They conclude that while the Republicans' drift to the right in 1980 was due to both replacement and conversion, most of the ideological shift came from conversion toward conservatism among the continuously active Republicans. The subset of panel data on the same delegates in 1972 and 1980 was particularly helpful in documenting attitude conversion.

Part III concludes by exploring the systemic implications of the study for inter-party conflict and mass-elite linkages. Although delegates in both parties became more similar over time on motivations for political involvement, they grew further apart in attitudes toward issues and groups. For example, the Republicans scored virtually no liberal group above 50% on the feeling thermometer, and the Democrats returned the insult for all conservative groups. Miller and Jennings characterize this marked polarization of attitudes as "truly antagonistic" (p. 167).

Paralleling McClosky's findings of "issue conflict and consensus among party leaders and followers" in 1956, Miller and Jennings found that the ideological attitudes of Democratic delegates in 1980 were closer to their followers than Republican delegates were to theirs (p. 201). This finding contrasts with Kirkpatrick's data for delegates to the 1972 convention, which showed more ideological distance between Democratic delegates and their identifiers than between Republican delegates and identifiers. Miller and Jennings note that this "gap" between leaders and followers seemed to affect the election in 1972 but not in 1956 and 1980. They simply observe, "Much more is involved in winning elections than ideological proximity between particular elite cohorts and mass public followers" (p. 204).

Parties in Transition furnishes many important insights into presidential campaign elites, far more than can be mentioned in this review. The book does so without using complicated techniques for statistical analysis. Except for simple product moment correlations in Chapter 8 to 10, all of the analysis is conducted by comparing percentages and by effective graphing of differences by analytical groups. Nevertheless, it is not an easy book to follow. Readers will have trouble keeping the different analytical groups straight, and after a while the different analyses (with similar results) will blur together.

Despite the effort they must exert to pay attention, serious students of American political parties should read this book to understand points of continuity and change in presidential campaign activists from 1972 to 1980. Its contribution to the literature clearly lies in the longitudinal nature of the study, compared with the

research snapshots of convention delegates that were previously available. Readers will probably agree with Miller and Jennings that even their eight-year time span “now seems too brief for the mapping of the dynamics of mass-elite linkages through national party politics” (p. 249).

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