

## *Chapter 8*

### More on Voting and Elections

Real voting and elections are much more complex than our simple models might lead us to think. There are many reasons for this, some of which are discussed in future chapters. Two important factors are political parties and pressure groups. Political parties help candidates obtain votes; and some candidates help parties gain votes for other party candidates. Parties are also instrumental in selecting which people will be candidates for which seats. Pressure groups are like clubs. There are different kinds. Some pressure groups mainly bring voters together in voting blocs, others mainly raise funds in an effort to influence elections or politicians' decisions, and still others mainly put collective voting pressure on political parties to only accept or support candidates who express views that are acceptable to them. We discuss political parties and pressure groups in Chapter Twelve.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce three other types of complexities to help us understand voting in everyday life. First, in real elections, candidates must take positions on many issues. We show that to take the center position on each issue may be a less optimal strategy than to take extreme positions on some issues. Second, voting choices can be influenced by advertising. As a result, acquiring money or other resources for a campaign is an important part of a candidate's means of obtaining votes. A politician can acquire such money or resources by adopting a platform that appeals to special interests. Third, some

elections proceed in stages. When this occurs, there is a possibility of what Public Choice scholars have called the voters' paradox. In addition, two forms of strategic behavior may become profitable. The first is agenda manipulation. This occurs when political party leaders try to manipulate the stage sequence, or order of voting, for the purpose of raising the probability that their preferred candidate will be chosen. The second is strategic voting. We say that voters vote strategically when they cast their vote for a candidate who they do not prefer in order to beat out a rival who they regard as the top competitor of their preferred candidate.

Part one of this chapter extends the median voter analysis to situations in which voters elect representatives to vote on multiple issues. Part two presents a model of a candidate's choice of platform in which campaign spending for the purpose of persuasion plays a part. Part three describes the voters' paradox, agenda manipulation, and strategic voting. For simplicity, we continue to assume direct democracy.