

Side B, Article 1- What Are the Disadvantages of a Two-Party System?

The Republicans were once a third party. The Founding Fathers of the United States were generally opposed to political parties. George Washington and Alexander Hamilton felt that political parties diminished the political process. Political parties nevertheless sprang up quickly and, except for brief periods, the U.S. has had a predominantly two-party system ever since.

1. Lack of Choice

One of the immediate problems represented by a two-party system is a lack of choice. Voters only have two options at the polling station and their only option, if they don't like either of the choices presented, is to not vote at all. This may, in part, account for the decline in voter turnout in recent decades. In multi-party systems, smaller parties can speak for disenfranchised people and regions, even if they don't ultimately hold power.

2. Limits Potential for Change

In a multi-party system, new ideas have a greater chance of emerging. Parties, especially smaller parties, have a keen interest in new ideas they feel may appeal to the public and increase their standing. Not all of these ideas are good ones, but a greater variety of ideas can be brought before the public for approval. In a two-party system, where there is great competition for moderate "swing" voters, there is a reluctance to embrace new ideas until they have been approved by a sufficient percentage of the public.

3. Need for Compromise

There are times in a two-party system when the two parties need to share power. For example, in the United States, one party can control the White House and the other the Congress, which forces the two parties to compromise. At other times, one party can control the entire government, which means that party doesn't have to compromise with anyone and a significant portion of voters' needs are ignored. In a multi-party system, it's rare for one party to have absolute power. Parties must always compromise with other parties in order to gather the votes needed to pass legislation.

4. Negative Politics

Many people claim to dislike attack ads and negative politics, but politicians keep using them because they've been shown to work. This is especially true in a two-party system. With only two candidates in a race, giving voters a reason not to vote for an opponent automatically earns votes for the candidate doing the attacking. In a multi-party system, it does not because voters, having decided they dislike one candidate, have multiple other options. In a multi-party system, there is a greater need for parties and candidates to give the public a reason to vote for them, rather than against an opponent.

Side B, Article 2- Why voters need a third party option

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sgt-john-bruhns/2012-third-party_b_1178640.html

I'm a citizen who raises a child and works for a living. However, that does not mean that I am unaware of the fact that our current political system has been on an ominous path for quite some time. Unfortunately, both mainstream political parties have been hijacked by money, greed, and power-hungry career politicians who could care less whether or not this country falls off a cliff so long as their political viability is protected. On a daily basis, these political operatives, backed by corporate media hacks, successfully engage in a brainwashing campaign of lies and false dilemmas that lead the American people to believe that they have only two political choices to make.

One lie is that tax cuts, big business, nonexistence of government, and global military conquests make America the land of the free and the home of the brave. The other lie is that America has become a nation that steals tax dollars from working people and redistributes the wealth to undeserving freeloaders, all while being soft on crime and perpetuating social welfare among the masses. These falsehoods, presented by both political parties against each other, have created and perpetuated an atmosphere that does not allow the average person or family to make an informed political decision that reflects the reality of his or her situation. As a result, the majority of Americans will vote to elect candidates that do not represent their political, social, and economic interests.

Believe it or not, the people who decide elections are the independent voters (consisting primarily of rational human beings) who could butcher the policies of George W. Bush one day, then turn around and do the same to the policies of Barack Obama the next day. For some reason, when the political pendulum swings and a new party assumes a majority, the winning party views their victory as a mandate to go nuclear with a partisan agenda. They never seem to learn that it's not a partisan agenda that Americans desired when they voted in a new party. It is simply that the American voter was fed up with the policies of the previous party.

For all my liberal friends who champion the Democrats as being the party of the people, I've got a news flash for them: they're not. The Democrats may tell you what you want to hear, but they won't follow through on most things that help the average American. Instead, they will simply blame Republican obstructionism. It is a good political tactic that allows them to falsely accuse Republicans for being the sole cause of America's current state of disarray. It is sad that their voting blocs buy into the lie. The Republican Party does its fair share of falsely misrepresenting Democrats by leveling similar accusations that blame the Democrats for our current misfortunes. The mainstream media contributes to this juvenile nonsense in a very effective manner. The Democrats shotgun their false and inflammatory messages to the masses from MSNBC, while The Republicans do the exact same thing via Fox News.

Internal conflicts within both political parties take form in political showdown after showdown. This proves that America isn't a nation of people who have two absolutist views of the world. At the end of the day, despite party affiliation, America is a nation where most average people agree on rational political causes. The problem is that the "average" American doesn't have a place to hang his/her political hat. The main problem is that most Americans lack political options and are left only to vote for two candidates -- a Democrat or a Republican. These two political parties have monopolized America's political system for far too long. A political party (a realistic and viable third party) needs to be formed that will genuinely represent the families and working people who have been and remain the steel underpinnings of American society. Americans can no longer afford to be forced to choose between the lesser of two evil candidates who pit the private sector against the public sector, set the rich against the poor, and maintain a climate of political and social unrest. Most average Americans, despite party affiliation, agree on most things. These rational working people are comprised of public school teachers, truck drivers, warehouse workers, roofers, brick layers, construction workers, police officers, firefighters, sanitation workers, public librarians, and U.S. military personnel. They're not comprised of elite Wall Street executives or big money lobbyists who've bought and paid for deceptive politicians from both political parties who endlessly pander to miniscule portions of the electorate with no follow through. It is unequivocally time for a real change in American government.