POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTIONS, FALL 2012

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE, RECENT HISTORY**

Nelson chapter 8 (Currander), [Bai article “How Much Has *Citizens United* Changed the Political Game?”](https://homepages.gac.edu/~cgilbert/p215/s21extra.pdf)

Friday, September 21

1. Currander (Nelson chapter 8) notes that when Obama broke his initial pledge to abide by general election public funding, McCain argued this should be a big deal to voters but voters in the end did not care (p. 174). Considering the financial advantages enjoyed by Obama over McCain in the general election, is the system of equal public financing for presidential general election campaigns effectively dead for future elections?

2. Considering the outcome of the 2008 presidential race, should McCain have also opted out of the general election public financing and the limits that came with it?

3. What fundraising issues arose in Hillary Clinton’s presidential bid that caused difficulties for her campaign?

4. Matt Bai reports in his [2012 article](https://homepages.gac.edu/~cgilbert/p215/s21extra.pdf) that the conventional narratives about the effects of the 2010 *Citizens United* ruling are “overly simplistic” or “just plain wrong.” In what ways? Bai further reports that “[t]he unintended consequence of McCain-Feingold was to begin a gradual migration of political might from inside the party structure to outside it.” Let’s assume this is true – what are the consequences for political parties, and for the campaign process in general?

5. Considering the material presented in all of the reading for Wednesday and today, what if anything should be done about the campaign finance system? Do you believe money should be equated with free speech? Is limiting campaign finance contributions constitutional at all?

x. Pose your question here!