

## Why we still need real political parties

1. How does Lawson define a political party?
2. Why does Lawson suggest that parties “have little or no reality for most American citizens?”
3. According to Lawson, how did modern political parties come about?
4. Why does Lawson believe that parties are “the agencies that made democracy possible?”
5. What were the four functions performed by political parties?
6. Where does the political process begin today?
7. Why does Lawson conclude that “[a] party’s nomination is no longer its own to bestow?”
8. What is now the reward for party activism?
9. What does Lawson refer to as a “rush to the center?”
10. What makes parties “reasonably efficient electoral machines?”
11. What are “the other determinants of congressional votes?”
12. What “devices of direct democracy” are supported by a majority of Americans?
13. Why is it that Lawson says at times “the fewer who take part in politics the better for the parties?”
14. Can you reconcile Lawson’s insistence that there is a “rush to the center” to capture votes with her insistence that parties are opposed to mass participation?
15. Who do you suppose are those nasty people Lawson says are “more interested in taking power for personal advantage than in resolving the problems from which we as a nation suffer?”
16. Do you agree that our political system is unable to treat problems successfully?
17. How does the fact that the “religious right” has been successful in seizing considerable influence, if not total control, of the Republican Party square with Lawson’s thesis?