D.P. Green, B. Palmquist, and E. Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds* (YUP, 2004), chs 2, 7

**Chapter 2: Partisan Groups as Objects of Identification**

**Overview**

Party ID is anything but an ephemeral “doorstep opinion” – partisan identities seem unusually resistant to context effects, for the ranks of partisans remain relatively constant amid the ebb and flow of campaign activity. Despite declining party membership, partisan identification in the US has rebounded since the 1970s, and it is important to consider that the decline in party attachment has by no means driven partisans to extinction. Partisanship is alive and well, as far as the authors are concerned, and it is as influential for us as it was for past generations

**Background**

* Identification has 2 meanings: (1) affinity; and (2) self-categorization – a person may identify with a group but perceive no membership in it
* However much these things can be theoretically distinguished from one another – they often overlap empirically
* Additionally, the criteria by which one judges membership in a social group are often vague and indeterminate – no formal or widely shared standards exist for determining who belongs to these categories
* Why should we believe that citizens harbor genuine and long-lasting attachments to partisan groups? 7 types of evidence exist:

1. Partisan attachments are professed repeatedly during the course of a survey interview, even when these attachments are at variance with vote choice
2. People who use partisan labels to describe themselves also indicate their “identification with” and “identification as” members of these partisan groups
3. People offer the same descriptions of their partisan attachments over long stretches of time, even when the political context has changed
4. The distribution of partisan identification changes slowly over time
5. The proportion of the public identifying with any party tends to be relatively unaffected by whether the survey takes place during an election campaign
6. Despite the marked differences between state and national voting patterns, the distribution of American partisanship does not change appreciably when attention is focused on state rather than national political parties
7. Partisans find politics more engaging than independents

**Chapter 7: Partisan Stability outside the US**

**Overview**

Chapter aims to extend the findings of partisan stability beyond the borders of the US. The principal conclusion to emerge, once measurement error is taken into account, is that rates of partisan change in Britain, Germany, and pre-Mulroney Canada resemble those found in the US. Partisan instability arises from a number of factors including competing identities, or the disappearance/transformation of parties, etc. That race and regional identities can unseat partisan attachments in an environment in which new electoral rules or new parties are emerging is a thesis that comports with the Canadian experience from the early 1980s – early 1990s. As separatist issues concerning region, language, and ethnicity grew in prominence and achieved institutional expression in the emergence of regional parties, partisan attachments to the major parties weakened. In effect, one set of group identifications rooted in nationality unseated another associated with party.