Professionals vs. Amateurs

- Professionals are politicians who work in politics as a career
  - Richard Nixon
  - Nancy Pelosi
  - Jerry Brown
  - Bill Clinton

Amateurs vs. Professionals

- Amateurs are politicians who briefly work in politics, but for whom it is not a lifetime career
  - Clint Eastwood
  - Arnold Schwarzenegger
  - Michael Bloomberg
  - Donald Trump

Nancy Pelosi
- 1977-81: Chair, No. Calif Democratic Party
- 1981-83: Chair, Calif. Democratic Party
- 1985: DSCC Finance Chair
- 1987: Elected Representative

- 1962: BA, Trinity College, political science major
- College intern in US Senate
- 1969: Party volunteer & campaign worker
- 1976-96: Democratic National Committee member

- 1964: Yale law
- 1969: LA Community College Bd of Trustees
- 1970: Calif. Sec. of State
- 1974: Governor
- 1978: Reelected Governor
- 1982: Lost U.S. Senate bid

- 1983-88: Wilderness years
- 1989: Chair, Calif. Democrats
- 1992: Lost presidential bid
- 1998: Mayor of Oakland
- 2002: Mayor of Oakland
- 2006: Calif. Attorney General
- 2010: Governor

R. Fenno, Congressmen in Committees, Jan. 23 lecture

Professionals vs. Amateur Goals

1. Reelection
2. Power in Congress
3. Good public policy

- For amateurs, who don’t want lifetime careers, good public policy is the main goal
  - Reelection & power matter less
**Professional v. Amateur Legislatures**

**Professional**
- High pay
- Large staff
- Meet most of year
- Rarely hold 2nd job
- Long careers

**Amateur**
- Low pay
- Small staff
- Meet few days a year
- Often hold 2nd job
- Short careers


**Think of the professionalism of a legislature as a continuum**
- U.S. Congress is highly professional
- Calif. State legislature – small staff, term limits
- Idaho, Wyoming meet about 3 months each year
  - Legislators have other jobs
- SimCong is at the bottom of the professionalism scale

**Consequences of Professionalism**
- Professionals gain expertise
  - Years of studying issues, reading reports, talking with experts …
- Staff support increases expertise
  - Personal staff, committee staff, institutional staff
- Amateurs spend less time in office learning and have far less staff support

**The more the MC knows, the less he/she must rely on lobbyists**

**The more staff the MC has, the less he/she must rely on lobbyists**

**Amateur legislatures are weaker than professional legislatures**

**Professional vs. Amateur**

Jesse Ventura  Arnold Schwarzenegger  Ronald Reagan
Professional vs. Amateur

• In professional legislatures, lobbyists have incentives to be honest
  – Lobbyists work with allies
  – Lying is betrayal
  – MCs can retaliate

• In amateur legislatures, lobbyists have longer careers than MCs
  – Lying to a legislator has short term costs, but the MC will leave the legislature in a few years

The Honesty of Lobbyists

Honesty in Deal Making

• Professionals are generally more honest than Amateurs
  – Professionals have long careers, so they can punish dishonest MCs for years
  – Amateurs will be gone shortly and so have less incentive to tell the truth and less time to retaliate

• Result: Professional legislatures are more honest than amateur legislatures

Game theory decision tree of Honesty

• In an infinitely repeated game, Axelrod shows the “tit-for-tat” strategy works best
  – Start by telling the truth (keeping deals)
  – When an opponent lies, you lie in your next turn, then return to telling the truth

• In amateur legislatures, MCs can see the last move

Consider Honesty on the Last Move

• Player B has the last move, so B lies to gain an advantage
• On the previous move, A realizes that B will lie, so A lies, ...

Players A and B move sequentially in a series of deals (e.g., logrolling)

Professionals tend to be more civil than amateurs
- Long-term benefits of working in pleasant job
- Amateurs who are leaving soon have less incentive to be polite

Civility pays off with alliances across party lines
- It’s hard to work with someone who has been rude

Term limits reduce the professionalism of legislatures
- Calif limits: Assembly 6 years; Senate 8 years
  - Staff was also cut by term-limits initiative

Expertise & staff resources reduced
- Governors & lobbyists gained power

Critics claim budget problems are result of amateurs with short career horizons

Term limits increase the no. of women & minorities in office

Increase electoral competition for office by reducing the number of incumbents running for reelection

Professionals are more likely than amateurs to compromise
- Professionals regard compromise as good
- Politicians are socialized to find it acceptable
- Public thinks of compromise as bad

Expertise plays a role in compromise
- Amateurs without knowledge of policy areas look to party leaders for guidance
- Professionals look at facts

Compromise rare on values
- Abortion, school prayer, cannot be compromised easily