

EDITION

14

BENJAMIN GINSBERG

THEODORE J. LOWI

MARGARET WEIR

CAROLINE J. TOLBERT

ANDREA L. CAMPBELL

MEGAN MING FRANCIS

ROBERT J. SPITZER

Essentials



CHAPTER 01

Americans & Their Political Values

Chapter Goals

- Differentiate between forms of government.
- Describe the rights and responsibility that citizens have in a democracy.
- Describe the social composition of the American population and how it has changed over time.
- Describe how foundational values of liberty, equality, and justice influence the U.S. system of government.
- Summarize Americans attitudes toward government.

The Citizen and Government

The modern word ‘political’ derives from the Greek *politikos*, ‘of, or pertaining to, the polis’.

The Greek term *polis* translate to ‘city-state’ or in common parlance the state.

The state is a compound containing a particular population contained in a given territory and governed by a constitution. The constitution is fashioned by the lawgivers and administered by politicians, and which defines the aim of the city-state.



Government: Definitions

What is politics?

- The process of resolving conflicts over the leadership, structure, and policies of government. More specifically, politics is the struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant or withhold benefits or privileges.

What is government?

- The term *government* refers to the institutions and procedures through which a land and its people are governed.
- Set of formal institution through which decisions are made, resources are allocated, and conflicts are resolved.

Is Government Needed?

Americans have always harbored some suspicion of government; yet government is needed.

Why is Government Necessary?

- Provide security.
- Protect the citizen from foreign and domestic thugs.
- Protect life, liberty and property of the individual citizen.
- Enforce property rights.
- To provide public goods and services.
- Exercise authority consistent with fundamental values of those who are to be governed.

Is Government Needed?

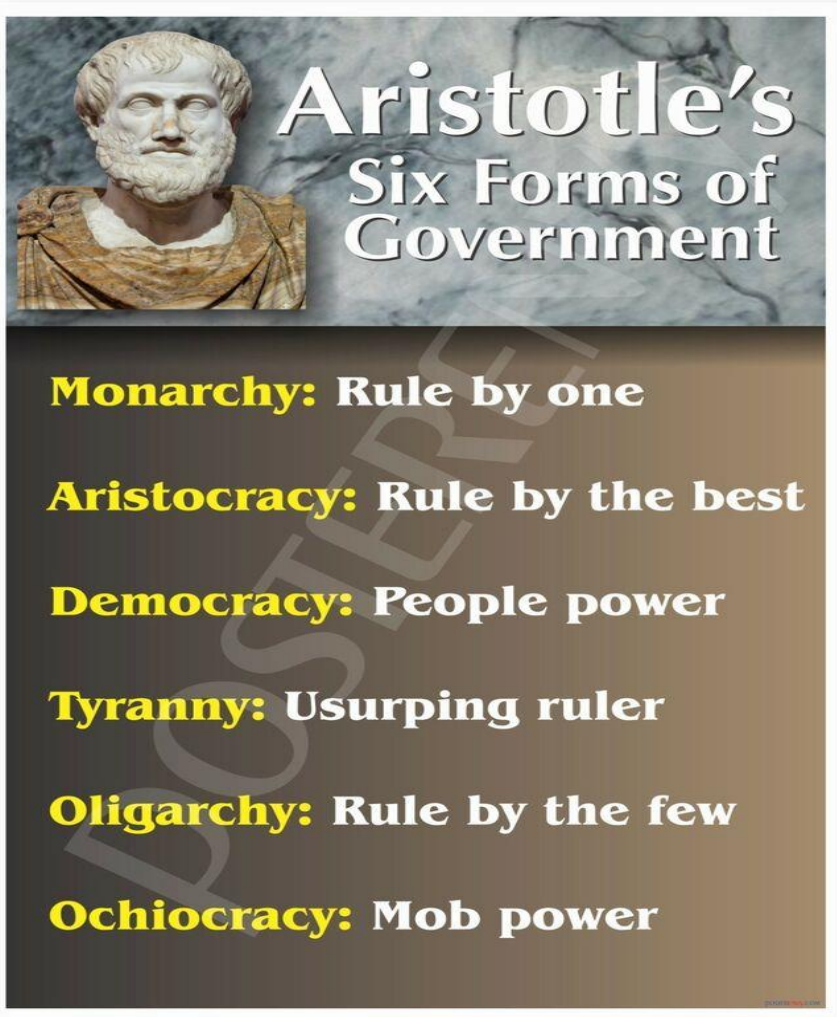
Why is Government Necessary?

- The founders were influenced by political philosophers like Thomas Hobbes and John Locke who believed governments were formed based on consent.
- Individuals, all equal and endowed with reason, give up a portion of their individual liberty in order to gain the protection of government through the social contract.
- Government is formed to provide security and protect life, liberty, and property. Consent to be governed can be withdrawn if government becomes too powerful or abuses fundamental political values such as liberty, equality, popular sovereignty, the rule of law, and limited government.

The Presence of Government in the Daily Life of a Student at “State University”

TABLE 1.1	The Presence of Government in the Daily Life of a Student at “State University”
TIME	SCHEDULE
7:00 A.M.	Wake up. Standard time set by the national government.
7:10 A.M.	Shower. Water courtesy of local government, and supplied by either a public entity or a regulated private company.
7:30 A.M.	Have a bowl of cereal with milk for breakfast. “Nutrition Facts” on food labels are a federal requirement.
8:30 A.M.	Drive or take public transportation to campus. Airbags and seat belts required by federal and state laws. Roads and bridges paid for by state and local governments.
8:45 A.M.	Arrive on campus of large public university. Buildings are 70 percent financed by state taxpayers.
9:00 A.M.	First class: Chemistry 101. Tuition partially paid by a federal loan (more than half the cost of university instruction is paid for by taxpayers), chemistry lab paid for with grants from the National Science Foundation (a federal agency) and smaller grants from business corporations made possible by federal income tax deductions for charitable contributions.
Noon	Eat lunch. College cafeteria financed by state dormitory authority on land grant from federal Department of Agriculture.
2:00 P.M.	Second class: American Government 101 (your favorite class!). You may be taking this class because it is required by the state legislature or because it fulfills a university requirement.
4:00 P.M.	Third class: Computer Science 101. Free computers, software, and internet access courtesy of state subsidies plus grants and discounts from Apple and Microsoft, the costs of which are deducted from their corporate income taxes; internet built in part by federal government. Duplication of software prohibited by federal copyright laws.
6:00 P.M.	Eat dinner: hamburger and french fries. Meat inspected for bacteria by federal agencies.
7:00 P.M.	Work at part-time job at the campus library. Minimum wage set by federal, state, or local government.
8:15 P.M.	Go online to check the status of your application for a federal student loan (FAFSA) on the Department of Education’s website at studentaid.gov.
10:15 P.M.	Watch TV. Networks regulated by federal government, cable public-access channels required by city law. Weather forecast provided to broadcasters by a federal agency.
Midnight	Put out the trash before going to bed. Trash collected by city sanitation department, financed by user charges.

Forms of Government



Aristotle declared that “*man is by nature a political animal*” - He meant that it is only within a political community that human beings can live the good life, that is , politics is an ethical activity concerned with creating a just society.

Miller, Fred, "Aristotle's Political Theory", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/aristotle-politics/>.

Forms of Government

Governments can vary in form depending on who controls the government.

- In a *democracy*, authority is held by the people.
- In *totalitarian* and *authoritarian* regimes, control is exercised by a single individual or a small group. While anarchy is the complete absence of government.
- An *aristocracy* is “rule by the best,” while an oligarchy is “rule by a few,” and democracy is understood as “rule by the people.”
- The United States is a *representative (Republic) democracy*, where the people elect representatives to make the decisions.

Forms of Government: Structure, Size, and Operation

Governments vary by size, structure, and operation based on who governs.

Autocracy: government by a single, nonelected individual (such as a king, queen, or dictator).

Oligarchy: government by a small group that is not accountable to citizens.

- Military officers, landowners, or wealthy merchants

Democracy: a system of rule that permits citizens to play a significant part in the governmental process.

- Usually accomplished through the election of key public officials

Forms of Government: Limiting Government

Governments also vary in how they govern.

Constitutional government

- Limited by law both in the powers it has and how it can exercise them.

Authoritarian government

- Recognizes no limits on its authority, but may be constrained by other institutions, such as business or a church.

Totalitarian government

- Recognizes no limits on its authority and seeks to eliminate other institutions that might challenge it.

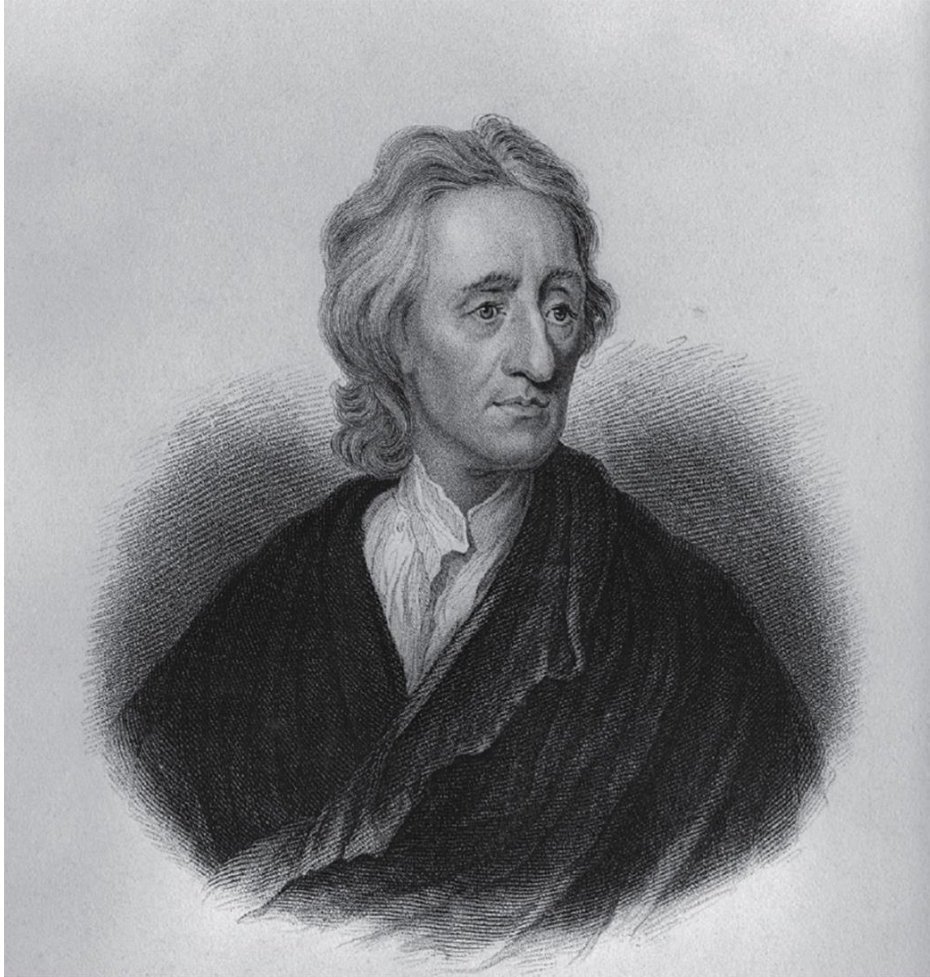
Forms of Government: Limiting Government

The founding generation placed numerous limits on government to encourage freedom.

Established Democratic Republic

- Representatives elected to make and enforce laws
 - Representative democracy
- Principles of Democratic Government
 - Universal suffrage-Right of all legal adults to vote for their representatives.
 - Majority will and majority rule
 - Free, competitive elections
 - Limited government-authority of government set in Article 1 Section 8 of the constitution.

Forms of Government: John Locke



Bettmann/Corbis via Getty Images

Declared that man is by nature free and equal.

Government must have the consent of the civil society

Locke understood that many governments have their origins in force, fraud, conquest, usurpation and patriarchy and as such political institution only source of moral legitimacy is the consent of the govern.

The Social Contract exists between citizen and the government and as such its primary duty is to uphold the inherent rights of the individual.

Democracy in the United States

Direct Democracy as a Model

- Greek city-state model where citizens debated and voted directly on all laws.
- Required high level of participation from the citizens.
- An informed citizen can be trusted to make wise decision that affects the community.

The Limits of Direct Democracy

- Fear of democracy deteriorating into mob rule.
- Concept feared by the Founders- people easily influenced by demagogues leading to political/societal instability.

Democracy in the United States

What type of government exists in the United States?

- Most people respond with one word: democracy. Yet this is not the complete answer.

Direct democracy: a system of rule that permits citizens to vote directly on laws and policies.

- Examples: ballot initiatives, popular referenda

Representative democracy (Republic): a system of government in which the populace selects representatives, who play a significant role in governmental decision-making.

Influencing the Government through Participation: Politics

- Politics is the struggle over “who gets what, when, how.”
- American democracy include majoritarianism, in which the government does what the majority wants.
- Politics is shaped by the system of government in place and the opportunities people have to participate, especially in democratic governments.
- Real political power lies within a series of groups and political elites who make all the important decisions for the nation and where the ordinary citizen is subservient to those entities.

Politics and Pluralism

- Political participation usually requires some type of ideology that is based on a comprehensive set of beliefs about the nature of people and about the role of an institution or government.
- In contrast, *Pluralism* is a theory that all interests are, and should be, free to compete for influence in government. This competition results in compromise and moderation. We can say that the struggle is between one group of elites against another in order to gain benefits for their members.

Citizenship

A republic requires good **Citizenship**, that informed and has active membership in a political community. Has a certain level of **political knowledge** and is an active participant in the political process.

- Citizens need political knowledge: information about the formal institutions of government, political actors, and political issues.
- Citizens should be well versed in the rules, customs and traditions that govern political institution.
- Citizens should utilize the most accurate political information to make informed choices on election day.

Disinformation

Disinformation is false information shared intentionally to reach a political goal.

- Disinformation is problematic in a democracy because it complicates the process of acquiring valid political information.
- Disinformation is in the *eye of the beholder*, truth can be said to be a lie, while a lie can be accepted as the absolute truth.
- Even with greater access to information, most Americans know little about current issues or debates, or even the basics of how government works.
 - In 2021, only 56 percent of those surveyed could identify all three branches of the federal government and only 35 percent knew the term of office for a senator is six years.

Political Efficacy

Political efficacy—the belief that one can influence government and politics—is another ingredient in participation.

Americans' sense of political efficacy is declining:

- 1960 poll
 - One-quarter (25 percent) of respondents said elected officials did not care what citizens like themselves thought.
- 2019 poll
 - Nearly three-quarters (71 percent) felt the same way.

A loss of efficacy is bad for democracy as the relationship between efficacy and participation works in both directions.

American Identity

- The U.S. population has grown from 3.9 million in 1790 to 332 million in 2021.
 - Much of this growth has come from immigration.
- In 1790, when the nation consisted of 13 states along the Eastern Seaboard:
 - 81 percent of Americans traced their roots to Europe, mostly Britain and elsewhere in northern Europe
 - Nearly 20 percent, the vast majority of whom were enslaved, were of African origin, with the rest being indentured servants.
 - There were also an unknown number of Native peoples, they were not counted by the census because the government did not consider them Americans citizens but were considered citizens of their individual tribe.

Immigration Policy: Overview

As the U.S. population grew more diverse, anxiety about Americans' ethnic identity mounted.

- Could the nation absorb large numbers of immigrants?
- Were the immigrants' political and social values compatible with American democracy?
- Could immigrants assimilate to American Culture?
- Could immigrants learn to speak English?

Immigration has been an issue since the Declaration of Independence. One of the complains the colonist had with King George was his obstruction of laws for the migration of people into the colonies. Item 7 in DOI

Immigration Laws

After World War I, Congress passed new laws that limited immigration.

- It passed the Immigration Act of 1924.
 - The new law utilized a national origins quota system, based on the nation's population in 1890, before the wave of eastern and southern European immigrants arrived.
- It established a hierarchy of admissions: northern and western European countries received the more generous quotas.
- By 1970, these guidelines had reduced the foreign-born population in the United States to an all-time low of 5 percent.

Immigration Laws

The use of racial and ethnic criteria to restrict the U.S. population is not new and still use today.

- 1790: The federal government passed the Naturalization Act stipulating that only free Whites could be naturalized citizens.
 - It was not until 1870 that Congress lifted the ban on the naturalization of nonwhites.
- 1882: The Chinese Exclusion Act outlawed the entry of Chinese laborers to the United States.
 - These restrictions were not lifted until 1943.

Immigration Laws

Japanese Americans have been denied basic rights of citizenship.

- After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, virtually all Japanese Americans were incarcerated for the duration of World War II.

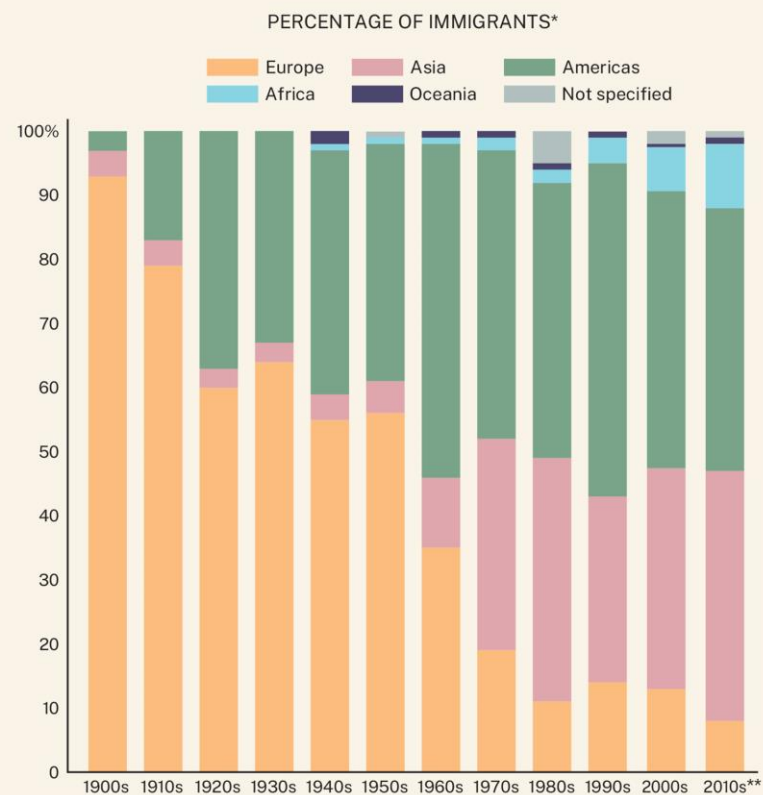
With laws about citizenship linked to racial classification, questions arose about how to classify people of Latino origin.

- In 1930, the census counted people of Mexican origin as non-White, but a decade later it reversed this decision.
- In 1960, the census classified immigrants from Latin America as White.
- The census adopted a “Hispanic” classification category in 1970, noting that people identifying as Hispanic could be of any race.

Immigration by Continent of Origin

FIGURE 1.1 | Immigration by Continent of Origin

Where did most immigrants come from at the start of the twentieth century? How does that compare with immigration in the twenty-first century?



*Less than 1 percent not shown.

**Through 2018.

NOTE: Figure shows those who have obtained "lawful permanent resident status" by continent of origin.

SOURCE: Department of Homeland Security, www.dhs.gov (accessed 1/19/20).

Who Are Americans? Race and Ethnicity

By 1965, Congress had lifted many of the strict immigration limits.

This resulted in new waves of immigration from Asia and Latin America.

- Current population (2020 U.S. census update)
 - White: 61.6 percent
 - Asian: 6 percent
 - Black: 12.4 percent
 - Latinos (any race): 18.7 percent
 - Two or more races: 3 percent
 - Population born outside the United States: 13.2 percent

Who Are Americans? Race and Ethnicity

Large-scale immigration means that many more residents now are foreign-born.

- In 2020, 13.2 percent of the population were born outside the United States, a figure comparable to that in 1900.
 - However, unlike a century earlier, many more immigrants today come from Latin America, the Caribbean, Central America (including Mexico), South America, and Asia.
- Estimates are that 12 million immigrants live in the country without legal authorization—the majority from Mexico and Central America.
 - Today, undocumented immigrants remain ineligible for most federal public benefits, but some states allow them to obtain driver's licenses or in-state tuition at public colleges and universities.

Who Are Americans? Religion

Immigration patterns have led to a more religiously diverse nation.

- The U.S. adult population was 35 percent Protestant in 2021.
- Other religions:
 - Catholic: 22 percent
 - Christian (nonspecific denomination): 10 percent
 - Jewish: 2 percent
 - Mormon: 1 percent
 - Other (includes Muslim identifiers): 6 percent
- A growing percentage of Americans report no church affiliation (21 percent)

Who Are Americans? Age

As life expectancy has increased, so has the number of older Americans.

- In 1900, only 4 percent of people were over the age of 65; today that number is 16 percent.
- America is aging slower than many other advanced industrialized countries.
 - This is largely due to immigration into the United States.
- As the elderly population in the United States grows relative to those of working age, the funding of “safety-net” programs such as Social Security becomes more difficult.

Who Are Americans? Geography

Over the nation's history, Americans have mostly moved from rural areas and small towns to large cities and suburbs.

Increasing numbers of Americans (today, 80 percent) live in urban areas.

- The U.S. Senate overrepresents sparsely populated rural states and underrepresents those with large urban populations.

The population has also shifted regionally.

- During the past 50 years especially, many Americans have left the Northeast and Midwest and moved to the South and Southwest.

Who Are Americans? Socioeconomic Status

For much of U.S. history, America and most Americans were relatively poor working people, many of them farmers.

- An extremely wealthy elite emerged in the late 1800s during a period known as “the Gilded Age.”
 - By 1928 nearly one-quarter of total annual national income went to the top 1 percent of earners.
- The distribution of income and wealth shifted away from the top after New Deal programs of the 1930s.
 - The middle class grew further with the postwar economic boom of the 1950s and '60s.

Who Are Americans? Socioeconomic Status

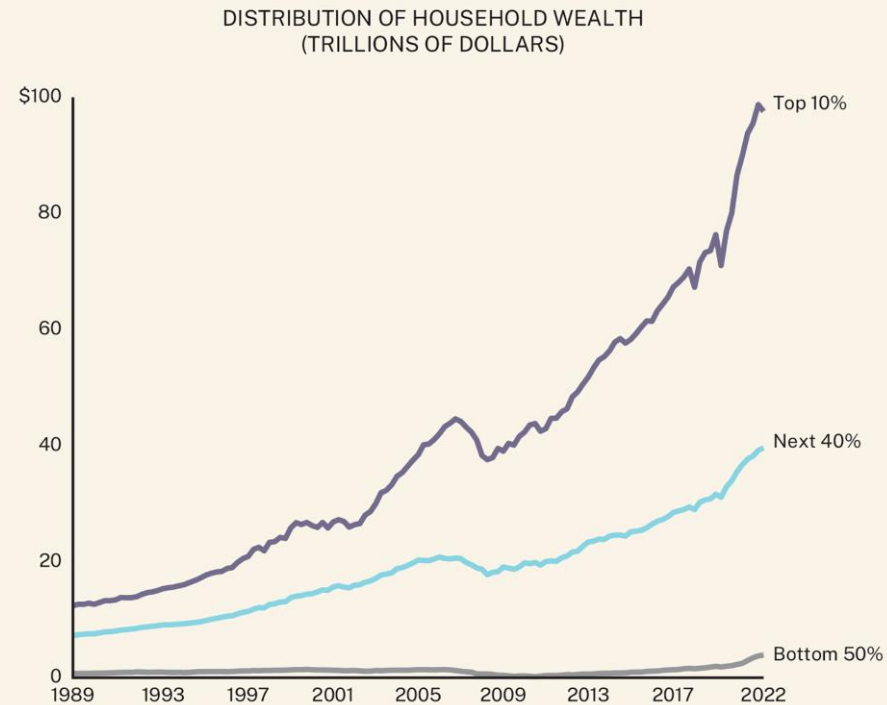
In the 1960s, civil rights legislation and new social programs helped shrink the nation's income disparity between rich and poor.

- Since then, however, economic inequality has again widened in what some call a “new Gilded Age.”
 - Deindustrialization, globalization, slow growth in wages, technological change, and the Great Recession have accelerated this trend.
- There are also racial differences among levels of income and wealth (the difference between a household's assets and debt).

Wealth in the United States

FIGURE 1.2 | Wealth in the United States

While the wealth of most Americans has risen only slightly since 1989, the wealth of the richest Americans (the top 10 percent) has increased dramatically. In 2022, the top 10 percent of Americans had more than double the total amount of combined wealth held by the middle 40 percent and bottom 50 percent of Americans. Does the growing economic gap between the richest groups and most other Americans conflict with the political value of equality?



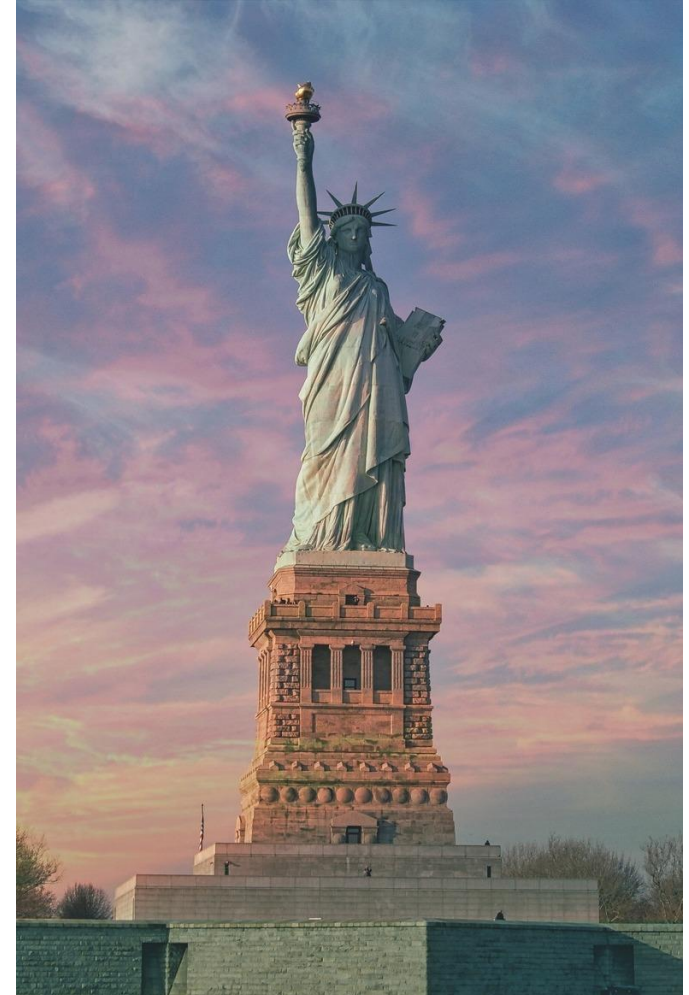
SOURCE: Federal Reserve, "Distribution of Household Wealth in the U.S. since 1989," www.federalreserve.gov/releases/z1/dataviz/dfa/distribute/chart/ (accessed 9/22/22).

American Political Values

- American political culture and fundamental values of liberty, equality and democracy are essential to maintaining the constitutional republic.
- While societal tensions continues to threaten and undermine our shared political values as well as our confidence in government, political socialization helps to maintain a unified America.
- Despite pressures, Americans continue to value liberty, security, the rule of law, limited government, political equality and equality of opportunity, popular sovereignty, and property rights with a strong respect for free market capitalism.
- Families and the educational system are two of the most important forces in the political socialization process on how individuals learn a set of political attitudes and from opinions about social issues.

American Political Values

- Political Values
 - Liberty.
 - Order and the Rule of Law.
 - Popular Sovereignty.
 - Equality before the law.
 - Limited Government.
 - Free-market Capitalism
- These values are reflected in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.



American Political Values

Liberty- A political construct where every man acts within the confine of the civil society enjoying its benefits and not denying them to their fellow man. Freedom from government control and intervention in personal lives, religion, and economy.

Order /rule of law- a state of peace and security. Maintaining order by protecting members of society from violence and criminal activity is the oldest purpose of government.

Popular Sovereignty – A democratic principle in which all political authority ultimately rest with the people of the nation.

American Political Values

Equality- the idea that all people are of equal worth. In a civil society we are to be treated equal before the law.

Limited Government – A government whose powers are specifically defined and limited by a written constitution.

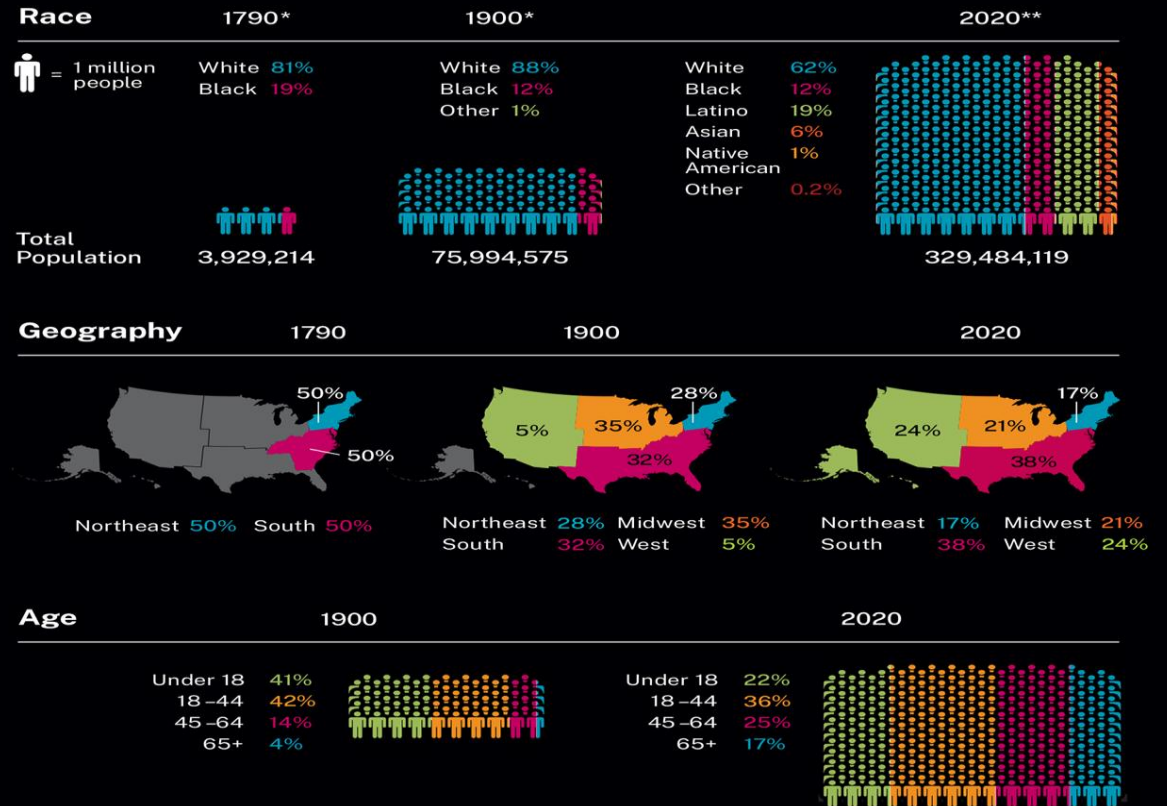
Free Market Capitalism-an economic system characterized by the private ownership of wealth creating assets, free markets, and freedom of contract. It is where the production and distribution of all goods and services are privately owned for the purposes of profit with minimum government interference.

Who Are Americans?

WHO ARE AMERICANS?

An Increasingly Diverse Nation

Since the Founding, the U.S. population has grown rapidly and people living in the United States have become increasingly diverse. Dramatic changes in population, demographics, and geography often drive changes in American government and politics.



* The 1790 census does not accurately reflect the population because it only counted Black people and White people. It did not include Native Americans or other groups. The 1900 census did not count Latino Americans.

** Numbers may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community surveys, data.census.gov (accessed 12/6/21).

Americans' Attitudes Toward Government

Americans have long been reluctant to grant the government too much power.

- However, in 1933, the power of the government began to expand in response to the Great Depression.
- Congress passed legislation that brought government into the businesses of home mortgages, farm mortgages, credit, and relief of personal financial distress.
- When the economy suffered a deep recession in 2008 and 2009, the federal government oversaw the restructuring of failing auto manufacturers and provided billions of dollars in economic stimulus.

Trust in Government

Public trust of government has declined.

- In the early 1960s, three-quarters of Americans said they trusted government most of time.
- By 2021, only 24 percent of Americans expressed the same sentiment.
- Government is no longer seen as a functioning institution concerned with the well being of the American public and the long-term viability of the Republic.
- Trust in government has been found to increase among members of the party that controls the presidency.
- How did we get here??

Readings from Faculty Website

- *What is an American?*
- *Unalienable Rights*
- *The Declaration of Independence*
- *The Declaration Explained*
- *The Constitution of the United States*
- *The Formation of the Constitution*

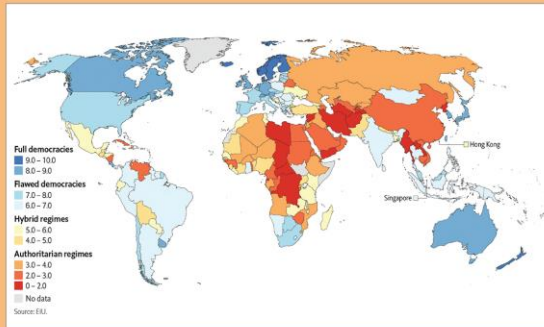
Forms of Government

AMERICA | SIDE BY SIDE

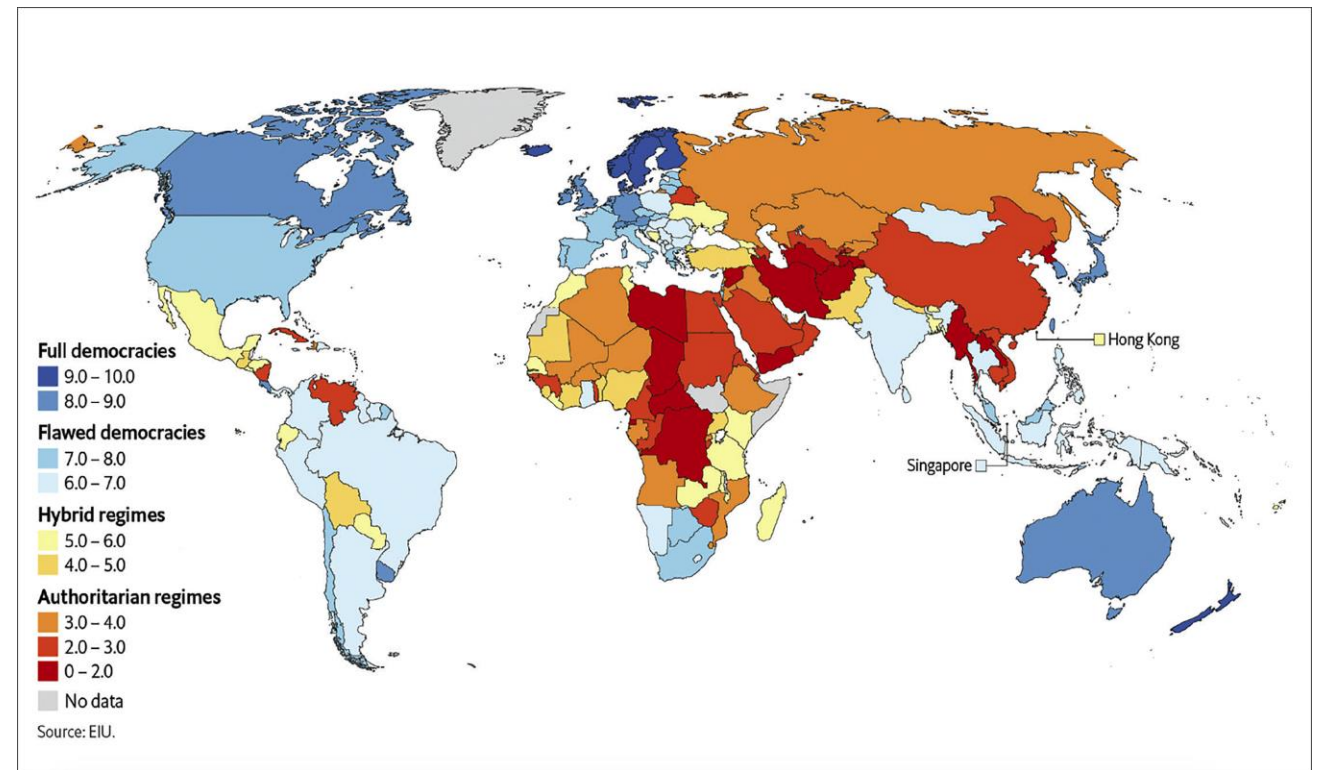
Forms of Government

The question of whether a country is democratic or authoritarian is complex. Every year, countries are rated on a scale from "Full Democracies" to "Authoritarian" systems based on expert evaluations of five factors: electoral processes, political culture, respect for civil liberties, political participation, and functioning of government. In 2016, for the first time, the United States was classified as a "Flawed Democracy" in response to declines in public confidence in governance and a rise in polarization.

1. Is there a geographic pattern between the countries labeled "Full" or "Flawed" democracies and those that are labeled "Hybrid" or "Authoritarian" systems? What factors, historical, economic, geographic, or otherwise, might help explain this pattern?
2. What do you think separates a "Full Democracy" from a "Flawed Democracy"? The United States' categorization as a "Flawed Democracy" happened during the Obama administration and persisted during the Trump and Biden administrations. What changes have you seen in the past few years that might explain this shift? How concerned should Americans be by this categorization?



SOURCE: "Democracy Index 2021," The Economist Intelligence Unit.



Reproduced by permission of The Economist Intelligence Unit

How To: Debate Responsibly, 1 of 2

HOW TO

Debate Respectfully



APRIL LAWSON, THE DIRECTOR OF DEBATES FOR BETTER ANGELS

Government by the people functions best when individuals discuss ideas, share their preferences, and talk about what government is doing. But political discussion and debate can be uncomfortable, particularly among people who disagree or when politics is polarized, as it is in the current era. In order to have a productive discussion, it is important that people are respectful of others from different backgrounds, who might hold different political views.

To learn how to engage others and to debate respectfully, we spoke with April Lawson, the director of debates for Better Angels, a national organization that works with individuals from across the political spectrum to “combat polarization and restore civil dialogue across America.” She offers these tips for successful and civil political conversations:

- 1 The most important thing is the presumption of good faith.** If someone says something you can’t stand, know that the other person is trying, just like you are, to address hard questions. Assume that the other person is smart and that they are moral.
- 2 Say what you actually believe.** Genuineness and sincerity are crucial. You could debate either by making a case no one could disagree with or by sharing what you really feel about the issue. The latter will make for a more productive exchange of ideas.
- 3 How can you launch such a conversation and set the tone?** A good technique is to start with a question of genuine curiosity for the other person, which reassures them that you want to know what they believe. Another tip is to paraphrase what they have said before you respond, to make sure the other person feels heard.

How To: Debate Responsibly, Part 2

4 When you respond, it helps if you express some doubt or nuance in your own argument, or mention that you agree with some aspect of the other person's position. You do not need to agree with everything they have said, but you can pick something reasonable the other person said and affirm, "You said X, which makes sense because of Y."

5 Know that you may need to be the bigger person in the conversation. In order to be an ambassador of civility, you may need the patience to ask several genuine questions of curiosity before the other person believes that you are actually interested in what they have to say. And you need to control your own emotions and triggers, to manage your activation, because you know these rules for civil engagement, and they may not.

6 Finally, realize that you have agency. Prepare yourself for these tough conversations by telling yourself, "I will probably have feelings about this. But I can be patient and manage them." Remember, you're not trapped. You can take a break. You can change topics. Or you may want to have a conversational exit in mind. If it's Thanksgiving and you're speaking with your combative uncle, you might pivot to the football game.

Debating respectfully requires coming to the table with a posture of openness and helping the other person feel heard. In America, at the talking-point level, which is a surface level, we don't agree at all. But if you can go down even one level to political values, or even one more level to moral values, then there's a lot of common ground. With these conversations, we're not trying to change how you see the issue; we're trying to change how you see the other person.

Americans and Their Political Values



Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address (1961)