

Political Behaviors (Chapter 4)
Lecture Outline

- I. Shared Values
 - a. Political Culture: Distinct set of beliefs on how economic and political life should be carried out
 - 1. Losers of elections accept results, etc.
 - 2. Rule of law/democratic consensus
 - 3. nationalism/optimism/idealism
 - a. “Rally around the flag”
 - 4. “The American Dream”
 - a. US is land of opportunity, individual initiative and hard work can bring success.
 - b. Essence can be found in capitalism (private property)

How would you describe the American Dream?

- 5. Do not always practice principles (SLAVERY), but strength of principles overcomes deviations
- b. POLITICALLY SHARED VALUES
 - i. Liberty – protective of our rights (Fought Rev. War OVER!)
 - 1. Willing to let people disagree, give great latitude to expression
 - 2. some argue we are being too tolerant and trace civic problems on breakdown of morals
 - ii. Equality – equal vote and participation
 - iii. Democracy – government is accountable to the people
 - iv. Civic duty – community affairs matter
 - v. Individual responsibility – people are responsible for their own well being
- c. Economically SHARED VALUES
 - i. Liberty – free enterprise system w/some regulation
 - ii. Equality of “opportunity” – not necessarily results
 - iii. Individualism – personal responsibility, skeptical of aid
- d. Religion
 - i. Growing importance – Gallup poll showed 54% of Americans attend church of some kind, 82% consider themselves “religious”
 - ii. Moral Majority movement (1980s)
 - iii. Christian Coalition (1990s)
- e. Mistrust of Government
 - i. Since 1950s, nation has seen continual decline in trust of government
 - ii. People are commenting on government officials, not the system of government

- iii. Some argue events such as Watergate and Clinton sex scandal have eroded confidence, others argue that the 50s was a high water mark (end of Depression, win WWII)
- iv. Quick decline after Sept. 11th
- f. Where come from?
 - i. HISTORY!!! – Evolves
 - ii. Industrial transformation of early 20th Century
 - iii. Great Depression/New Deal shaped new political culture
 - 1. Roosevelt’s Second Bill of Rights
- g. How different from other Western Democracies?
 - i. More likely to support FREEDOM over EQUALITY
 - ii. More contentious, but homogeneous in beliefs
 - iii. Why? - Not a homogeneous society?
 - 1. No Socialist movement (to challenge limited government)
 - 2. No feudalistic aristocracy (to argue in favor of inequality)

II. IDEOLOGY

- a. Complex and interrelated set of beliefs that form a philosophy about government
- b. Values – deep rooted goals, aspirations and ideals, basic political orientation
- c. “ideologue” – someone totally committed to a specific political viewpoint
- d. LIBERAL
 - i. Social/political reform, government intervention in economy, social services, concern for minorities, consumers and protecting the environment
- e. CONSERVATIVE
 - i. Support status quo, suspicious of new political formulas and large government
 - ii. Large government = threat to freedom
 - iii. Solutions from the private sector are preferable, oppose efforts to regulate business

Are the majority of people your age liberal or conservative?

What is the fundamental difference between modern liberals and conservatives?

- f. Difficult to find LOGICAL CONNECTIONS among positions
 - i. Relationships are POLITICAL rather than LOGICAL

Dionne argues that Americans don’t hate “Big Government”, they hate “Bad Government”, is he right?

How might libertarians increase their political attractiveness?