

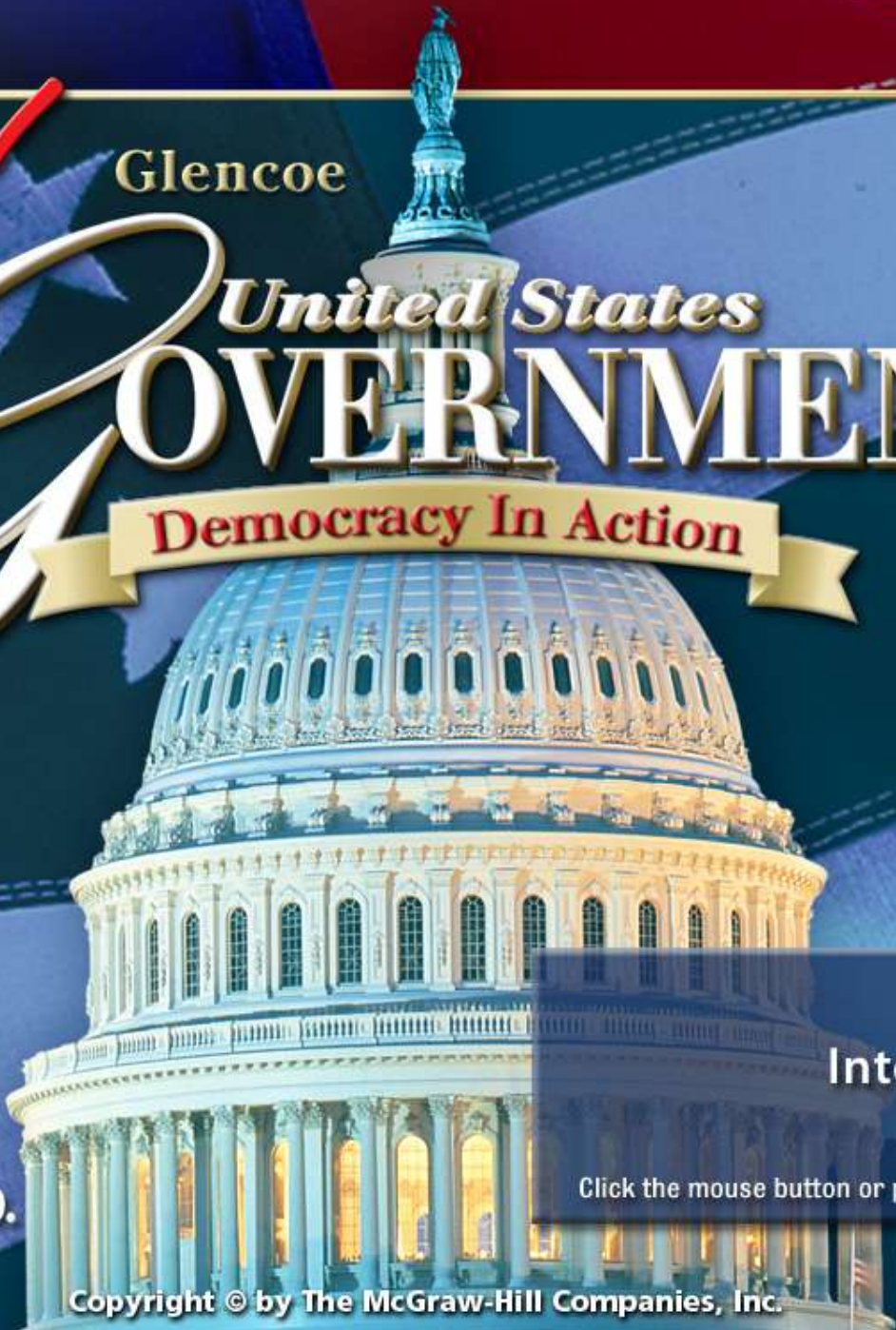
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Richard C. Remy, Ph.D.

Chapter 18

Interest Groups and
Public Opinion

Click the mouse button or press the space bar to continue.



Chapter Focus

Section 1 Interest Group Organization

Section 2 Affecting Public Policy

Section 3 Shaping Public Opinion

Section 4 Measuring Public Opinion

Chapter Assessment

**★ Why It's
Important**



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MAKING IT
RELEVANT

EXTRA CREDIT
PROJECT

Chapter Objectives

- **Interest Group Organization** Define the types of interest groups in the United States.
- **Affecting Public Policy** Explain how lobbyists affect public policy.
- **Shaping Public Opinion** Investigate how public opinion is formed in the United States.
- **Measuring Public Opinion** Evaluate the methods used to measure public opinion.



End of the Chapter Focus

Click the mouse button to return to the Chapter Menu.

Interest Group Organization

Key Terms

interest group, public-interest group

Find Out

- Why are interest groups powerful agents in influencing public policy?
- What are the main categories of interest groups?



Interest Group Organization

Understanding Concepts

Civic Participation Why do you think many people choose not to participate in an interest group?

Section Objective

Define the types of interest groups in the United States.



Daily Lecture Notes
Did you know?



In the 2000 presidential election, labor unions spent \$56 million dollars supporting candidates they favored. Large corporations contributed even more money to the two major political parties.



I. Power of Interest Groups (pages 503–504)

- A. Members of **interest groups** share common goals and organize to influence government.
- B. Interest groups are concerned only with a few issues or problems; they unite people with common values or attitudes from various regions.
- C. Interest groups help bridge the gap between citizens and the government.
- D. Interest groups draw their strength from the financial resources, numbers, and expertise of their members.



I. Power of Interest Groups (pages 503–504)

Discussion Question

Should the influence of interest groups on government policies and programs be expanded, limited, or remain the same as it is now? Explain your reasoning.

Answers will vary. Students should be aware of the purpose served by interest groups.

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II. Leadership and Membership (page 505)

A. Interest groups help promote their members' economic self-interest, beliefs, values, or attitudes to help create group unity.

B. Although membership in interest groups is a right of all, many people do not belong to such groups, even the people who might benefit most.



II. Leadership and Membership (page 505)

Discussion Question

Why do you think some Americans belong to interest groups while others do not?

Note: Most members are from upper socio-economic levels. Those who might benefit most are least likely to join.

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III. Business and Labor Groups (page 505)

A. Business groups such as the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) are among the oldest and largest interest groups.

B. The AFL-CIO and other large unions are important interest groups that play a major role in national politics.



III. Business and Labor Groups (page 505)

Discussion Question

Based on the principle “There is strength in numbers,” which interest groups do you think will be the strongest? Explain your reasoning.

Labor-related groups, gun-owners. Note: Other factors may be more important than numbers.



IV. Agricultural Groups (page 505)

A. Three major interest groups represent almost 6 million farmers.

B. Agricultural interest groups include: the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers' Union, and the Grange.



IV. Agricultural Groups (page 505)

Discussion Question

Why do think American farmers support three major interest groups?

One speaks for larger farms, one for smaller; one began as primarily a social group.



V. Other Interest Groups (pages 506–507)

A. The American Bar Association and the American Medical Association are interest groups that include members of specific professions.

B. Hundreds of environmental groups are concerned about the environment and the impact of environmental regulation on private property.

C. Groups concerned about the public interest, such as Public Citizen, Inc., and Common Cause, seek policy goals that they believe will benefit all citizens.



V. Other Interest Groups (pages 506–507)

D. Officials of state and local governments also form organizations that seek to influence the president and Congress.

E. Many other interest groups promote a particular cause, support the aims of large segments of the population, or support civil rights.

F. Foreign governments and private interests of foreign nations also seek to influence the government of the United States.



V. Other Interest Groups (pages 506–507)

Discussion Question

Which interest groups do you think match your own attitudes and values? In what ways might you help to support their goals?

Answers will vary. See Additional Groups on text page 507.

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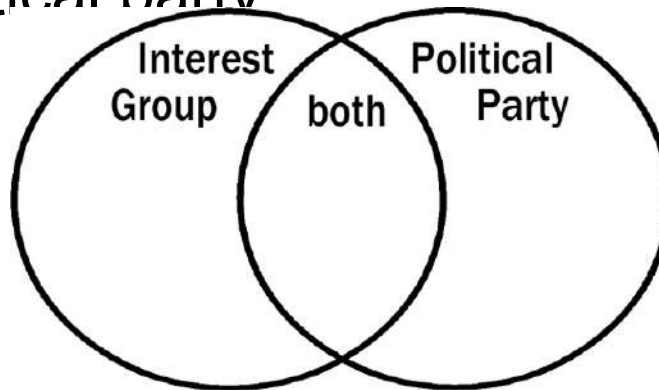
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Section 1 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

1. Main Idea Use a Venn diagram like the one below to compare the goals of an interest group and a political party



interest groups—influence public officials to support certain policies, concerned with a few issues; **political parties**—nominate candidates to win elections, concerned with a broad base of issues; **both**—work to help their constituents



Section 1 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

2. Define interest group, public-interest group.

An **interest group** is a group of people who share common goals and organize to influence government.

A **public-interest group** is a group that seeks policy goals that it believes will benefit the nation.



Section 1 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

3. **Identify** factions.

Factions are groups of people united to promote special interests.



Section 1 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

4. Why are interest groups more effective in influencing the government than are individual citizens?

They represent more than one person, are organized, and are equipped with sufficient resources.



Section 1 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

5. List six categories of interest groups.

Six categories of interest groups are business, labor, agricultural, professional associations, environmental, and public-interest.



Section 1 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

6. What are three reasons why citizens join interest groups?

Reasons why citizens join interest groups include to help promote an individual's self-interests, to support a certain political principle, and to be social.



Section 1 Assessment

Critical Thinking

7. Analyzing Information Do interest groups help make representative government truly “government by the people”? Explain. “Yes” answers may point out that interest groups help citizens to be heard; “No” answers may point out that interest groups might not represent the will of the people.



Section 1 Assessment



Civic Participation Create a promotional brochure describing an interest group that you would like to see formed to address some interest or concern that you have. Include a description of the concern or interest, goals of the group, the kinds of people likely to be members of the group, and the methods your group would use to attain its goals.



End of the Section

Click the mouse button to return to the Chapter Menu.

Affecting Public Policy

Key Terms

lobbying, lobbyist

Find Out

- By what methods do interest groups' lobbyists influence policymakers?
- How do political action committees influence elections?



Affecting Public Policy

Understanding Concepts

Public Policy Why do members of Congress rely on lobbyists to provide them with information?

Section Objective

Explain how lobbyists affect public policy.



Daily Lecture Notes
Did you know?



In November 1997, President Clinton suffered a major defeat when Congress denied him “fast-track” authority to negotiate trade agreements without Congress’s being able to amend them. Many members of his own party voted against him. Labor lobbyists were hard

at work during the special House session called to consider the bill, reminding Democratic members that labor unions strongly opposed such agreements with other nations because they could cost

American workers their jobs. T

their efforts was revealed in the



I. The Work of Lobbyists (pages 508–509)

A. Most interest groups use **lobbying**, or making direct contact with lawmakers or other government leaders, to influence government policy.

B. Since 1995 **lobbyists** must register, report their activities, and disclose the amount of money spent to influence lawmakers.

C. Many lobbyists formerly worked for government and know its politics and people; other lobbyists are lawyers or public relations experts.



I. The Work of Lobbyists (pages 508–509)

D. Lobbyists can:

- 1) provide lawmakers with useful information supporting an interest group's position;
- 2) give testimony before congressional committees; and
- 3) help draft bills.



I. The Work of Lobbyists (pages 508–509)

Discussion Question

Members of Congress and their aides, upon leaving office, often become lobbyists, commanding high salaries for their government connections and expertise. Should the one-year ban on this practice be extended, be reduced, or remain the same? Explain.

Answers will vary. Students should understand why lobbying is attractive to congressional members and aides and support their conclusions with evidence.

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II. Interest Groups Seek Support (pages 509–511)

A. Interest or pressure groups use the mass media to inform the public and create support for their views.

B. Interest groups encourage their members to write letters to government officials to demonstrate broad support for or against a public policy.

C. While interest groups have influence, their effectiveness is limited because many different groups compete, and thus no single group can control lawmakers or other public officials.



II. Interest Groups Seek Support (pages 509–511)

D. The larger the interest group, the more diverse are the interests of its members, making it difficult for the group to adopt broad policy goals.

E. Most interest groups do not have a large financial base and must struggle just to pay their staffs.



II. Interest Groups Seek Support (pages 509–511)

Discussion Question

Which of the techniques used frequently by interest groups to seek support do you think is the most effective? Explain.

Answers will vary. Besides lobbying, interest groups run media campaigns and mail letters.



III. The Rise of Political Action Committees

(pages 511–512)

- A.** Interest groups provide a large percentage of the funds used in candidates' election campaigns, collecting these funds mostly through political action committees (PACs).
- B.** When campaign laws were reformed in 1974, new laws limited the amounts that individuals could contribute to federal candidates but permitted the PACs of labor unions and corporations to make direct contributions.
- C.** PACs grew to more than 4,000 in the 1990s, although during the 1970s new laws regulated and limited the funds they raised.



III. The Rise of Political Action Committees

(pages 511–512)

D. PACs can give only \$5,000 directly to each candidate per election, but PACs' spending is not limited as long as they do not work directly with the candidates.

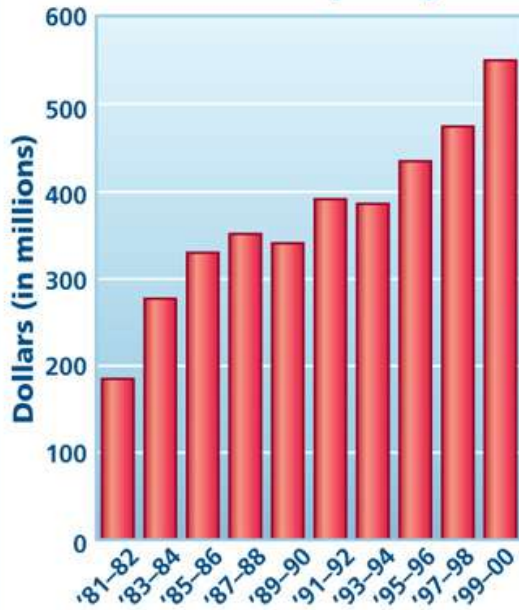
E. In 1976 the Supreme Court ruled any independent group could give money to a political candidate as long as it did not have legal ties to that candidate, resulting in a great increase in PAC spending.



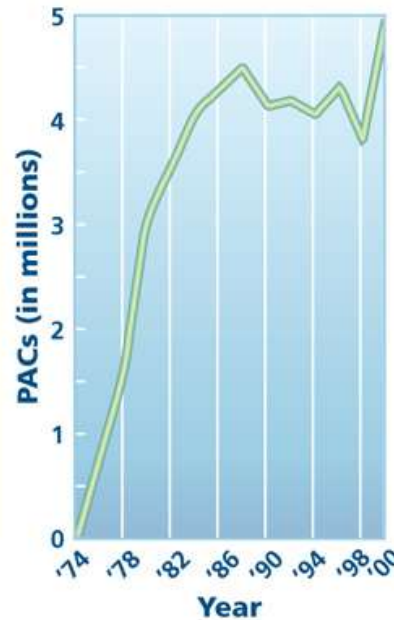
III. The Rise of Political Action Committees

Contributions by PACs

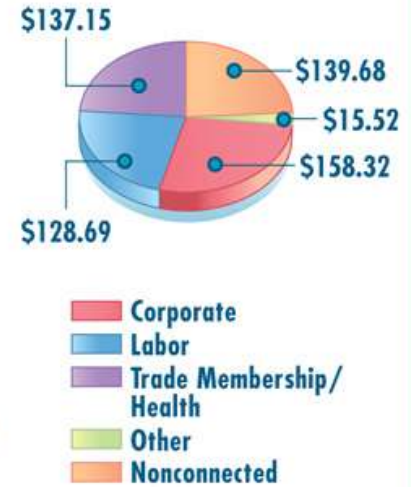
Total PAC Spending



Number of PACs



Total Spending by Type of PAC
1999-2000 (in millions)



Sources: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2002; Federal Election Commission, 2001.

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III. The Rise of Political Action Committees

(pages 511–512)

- F.** The Federal Election Commission ruled in 1975 that corporations could administer their own PACs and use payroll deductions to raise money from employees, resulting in a far larger increase in corporate PAC spending than in labor PAC spending.
- G.** Several decisions by the Supreme Court, such as *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), promoted the growth of PACs; in 1996 the Court held that spending in support of federal candidates was a form of free speech and thus such spending could not be limited.

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III. The Rise of Political Action Committees

Discussion Question

Do you agree or disagree with the Supreme Court's decision equating unlimited spending by political organizations in support of federal candidates with "free speech"? Explain.

Answers will vary. Students should be aware that after the ruling, spending for campaigns soared.

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IV. PACs and the Groups They Serve

(pages 512–513)

A. Affiliated PACs, or PACs tied to corporations, labor unions, trade groups, or health organizations, make up about 70 percent of all PACs; they raise money from voluntary contributions.

B. Independent PACs, or PACs interested in particular causes, such as abortion, farm subsidies, or the environment, are not connected to any existing business or organization; they raise money largely through direct-mail appeals.

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IV. PACs and the Groups They Serve

Discussion Question

What are some guidelines you might use to decide whether or not to make a financial contribution to support a PAC?

Answers may include the PAC's record of success and the candidates or issues it supports.



V. Strategies for Influence (page 513)

A. Interest groups may promise to provide campaign support or to withhold such support in order to influence lawmakers to favor their policies.

B. Interest groups, especially PACs, raise much of the money spent in political campaigns, usually supporting incumbents.

C. With interest group support, incumbents generally have a good chance of reelection.



V.Strategies for Influence (page 513)

- D. Some members of Congress acknowledge the power of PACs but claim PACs' influence does not determine their votes; interest groups, too, sometimes question the value of lobbying and funding candidates.
- E. It is difficult to determine whether special-interest lobbies have an overall positive or negative effect on government.



V.Strategies for Influence (page 513)

Discussion Question

Do you think special-interest lobbies have an overall positive or negative effect on government? Explain.

Answers will vary. See Strategies for Influence on text page 513.



Section 2 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

1. Main Idea Use a graphic organizer like the one below to list two methods lobbyists and PACs use to influence public policy.

Lobbyists	PACs
1.	
2.	

lobbyists—provide information to legislators, help write bills;

PACs—use money to gain access to lawmakers, use money to directly influence election outcomes



Section 2 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

2. Define lobbying, lobbyist

Lobbying is direct contact made by a lobbyist in order to persuade government officials to support the policies their interest group favors. A **lobbyist** is an interest group representative.



Section 2 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

3. Identify political action committee.

A **political action committee**, or PAC, is an organization formed to collect money and provide financial support for political candidates.



Section 2 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

4. What kinds of backgrounds do people who become lobbyists often have?

Former government officials, people who have friends in government, and those who know Washington politics usually become lobbyists.



Section 2 Assessment

Critical Thinking

5. Making Generalizations What qualities of a lobbyist would make that person successful in furthering the goals of democratic government? Answers should describe qualities such as the ability to represent the majority view while protecting minority rights, to listen to all citizens, to inform the public, and so on.



Section 2 Assessment



Public Policy Members of Congress rely on lobbyists to provide them with information. Write a job description for a professional lobbyist. Include the skills and experience required for the position and the list of duties the position will involve.



End of the Section

Click the mouse button to return to the Chapter Menu.



Shaping Public Policy

Key Terms

public opinion, peer group, mass media,
political culture

Find Out

- What are the patterns of political ideology in the United States?
- Which of the forces in political socialization are most influential?



Shaping Public Policy

Understanding Concepts

Cultural Pluralism By what process does American democracy begin with diverse opinions and end with acceptable public policy?

Section Objective

Investigate how public opinion is formed in the United States.



Daily Lecture Notes
Did you know?



The first political parties held beliefs comparable to today's parties. Like many conservatives today, Jefferson held that the purpose of government was to protect the freedom of individuals to pursue their personal goals without government interference. Like many liberals today, Hamilton insisted that government should have a strong role in carrying out programs needed to benefit the people. Like moderates today, Washington's beliefs fell somewhere between these two.



I. The Nature of Public Opinion (pages 514–515)

A. Public opinion includes the ideas and attitudes of diverse citizens.

B. Many different groups hold different opinions on almost every issue.

C. Interest groups and polls help inform government officials of public opinion.

D. Significant numbers must hold an opinion to influence public officials.



I. The Nature of Public Opinion (pages 514–515)

Discussion Question

In what ways has public opinion played a role in shaping public policy?

Answers will vary. Students should suggest specific examples.



II. Political Socialization (pages 515–516)

A. Political socialization involves learned political beliefs and attitudes.

B. The parents' political party often becomes the party of their children.

C. Schools also play an important part in political socialization.

D. Close friends, religious groups, clubs, work groups, and economic and social status influence political socialization.



II. Political Socialization (pages 515–516)

E. The **mass media**, especially television, can directly affect political attitudes.

F. The president, members of Congress, and interest groups try to influence opinions.



II. Political Socialization (pages 515–516)

Discussion Question

Which factors shape people's political beliefs?

Families, schools, economic and social environment, the media, and other influences shape beliefs.



III. Political Culture (pages 516–517)

A. A **political culture** is a set of shared values and beliefs about the nation.

B. Belief in and support for liberty and freedom, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, political equality, private property rights, and individual achievement are part of United States political culture.



III. Political Culture (pages 516–517)

Discussion Question

What role does American political culture play in influencing public opinion?

The political culture sets the boundaries within which opinion develops.



IV. Ideology and Public Policy (page 517)

A. Ideology is a set of beliefs about life, culture, government, and society.

B. Most Americans determine their positions on an issue by issue basis rather than by ideology.

C. A liberal believes the national government should be very active in helping individuals and communities promote health, justice, and equal opportunity.



IV. Ideology and Public Policy (page 517)

D. A conservative believes the role of government in society should be very limited and that individuals should be responsible for their own well-being.

E. Since the 1970s most Americans consider themselves political moderates.



IV. Ideology and Public Policy (page 517)

Discussion Question

Do you favor a liberal, conservative, or moderate ideology? Explain.

Answers will vary. Students should evidence understanding of political ideology.



Section 3 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

1. Main Idea Use a graphic organizer like the one below to contrast liberal and conservative ideologies.

	Social Policy	Economic Policy
Liberals		
Conservatives		

social policy—liberals favor individual freedom, conservatives favor government support of traditional moral values;

economic policy—liberals willing to curtail economic freedom to increase equality, conservatives oppose government limitations on businesses



Section 3 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

Match the term with the correct definition.

- D ___ public opinion
- B ___ peer group
- A ___ mass media
- C ___ political culture

- A. means of communication, such as television, newspapers, movies, books, and the Internet
- B. an individual's close friends, religious groups, clubs, or work groups
- C. a set of shared values and beliefs about a nation and its government
- D. the ideas and attitudes a significant number of Americans hold about issues



Section 3 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

3. Identify political socialization, political efficacy, liberal, conservative, moderate.

Political socialization is the process by which individuals learn their political beliefs and attitudes through personal background and life experience.

Political efficacy is an individual's feelings of his or her effectiveness in politics.

A **liberal** is one who believes the national government should be active in promoting health, education, justice, and equal opportunity.

A **conservative** is one who believes government should be limited, excepting in supporting traditional values and promoting freedom of opportunity.

A **moderate** is one whose beliefs fall somewhere between liberal and conservative views.



Section 3 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

4. What five social characteristics can influence the opinions a person holds?

Family and home influences, schools, peer groups, economic status, and social status all influence the opinions a person holds.



Section 3 Assessment

Critical Thinking

5. Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment Do you think that the mass media have too much influence on American public opinion? Explain why or why not.

Possible “yes” answers may include that the media control public opinion by what they choose to tell the public; possible “no” answers may point out that the media are biased, but the public can filter the news accordingly.



Section 3 Assessment



Cultural Pluralism Use library resources or the Internet to find examples of situations in which public opinion has caused an elected official to change his or her position on an issue. Present your findings in the form of a poster to your classmates.



End of the Section

Click the mouse button to return to the Chapter Menu.



Measuring Public Opinion

Key Terms

biased sample, universe, representative sample, random sampling, sampling error, cluster sample

Find Out

- By what methods is public opinion measured?
- Why is the phrasing of the questions in an opinion poll so important?



Measuring Public Opinion

Understanding Concepts

Cultural Pluralism In conducting a national poll, why is it important to have a variety of racial, ethnic, and religious groups represented in the sample?

Section Objective

Evaluate the methods used to measure public opinion.



Daily Lecture Notes
Did you know?



During the presidential election in 1948, public opinion polls heavily favored Thomas E. Dewey over Harry S Truman. The news editors at the Chicago Tribune had been so confident of a Dewey victory that they had printed a “Dewey Defeats Truman” headline and distributed their early edition before the election results were fully tabulated.



I. Traditional Methods (pages 519–520)

A. Political parties inform party leaders about voters' attitudes.

B. Members of interest groups contact public officials about specific issues, such as gun control, health care, auto safety, and so forth.

C. The mass media measure program ratings to gauge public interest.

D. Politicians use newspapers, magazine cover stories, editorials, letters to the editor, talk shows, and television newscasts to keep track of public interests.



I. Traditional Methods (pages 519–520)

E. Relying solely on mass media sources can distort information.

F. Letter writing campaigns to public officials by mail, fax, and E-mail indicate levels of support and opposition for specific issues.

G. Straw polls organized by media provide responses to specific questions.



I. Traditional Methods (pages 519–520)

Discussion Question

Which of the traditional methods of measuring public opinion do you think is most accurate? Explain.

Answers will vary. All traditional methods are somewhat unreliable.



II. Scientific Polling (pages 520–522)

A. In a scientific poll the term universe refers to the group of people that are to be studied, such as all Texans or all women in the United States.

B. A **representative sample** is a small group of people typical of the universe.

C. Most pollsters use representative samples to measure public opinion.

D. Using a **random sample** gives everyone in the universe an equal chance of being selected.



II. Scientific Polling (pages 520–522)

E. A **sampling error** defines how much the results may differ from the sample universe.

F. A **cluster sample** is a group of people from the same geographical area.

G. Pollsters may weight their results for race, age, gender, or education.

H. The way a question is phrased can greatly influence people's responses.



II. Scientific Polling (pages 520–522)

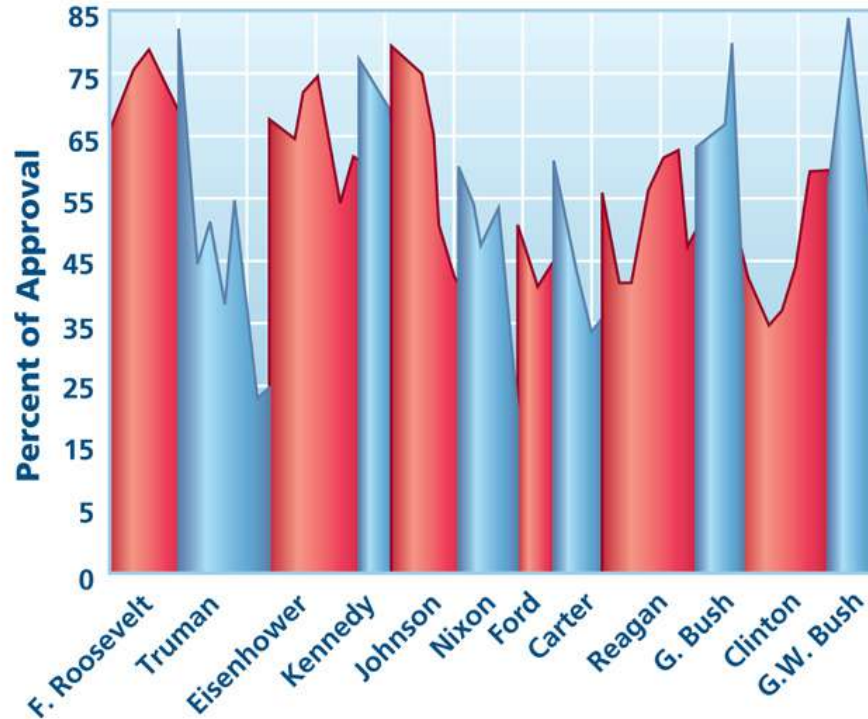
I. Polls conducted through telephone interviews and questionnaires sent by mail are cheaper and more convenient than face-to-face interviews.

J. Poll results are only a snapshot of public opinion; poll results can be influenced by an interviewer's appearance or tone of voice and the interviewee's need to seem knowledgeable or socially acceptable.



II. Scientific Polling (pages 520–522)

Presidential Approval Ratings Since 1940



Sources: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research; Gallup Poll, 2004.

Reference Atlas

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II. Scientific Polling (pages 520–522)

Discussion Question

Should more or fewer public opinion polls be taken during national elections? Explain.

Answers will vary. Students should cite the positive and negative effects of polling.

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III. Public Opinion and Democracy (page 522)

- A.** The Framers of the Constitution recognized that large numbers of citizens could not run the day-to-day government; they created a government in which people have an active voice by voting for lawmakers.
- B.** The resulting government is responsive to the people but is not subject to the shifting whims of public opinion.



III. Public Opinion and Democracy (page 522)

Discussion Question

What are the benefits and drawbacks of having public opinion shape public policy?

Benefit: government more responsive to the people.

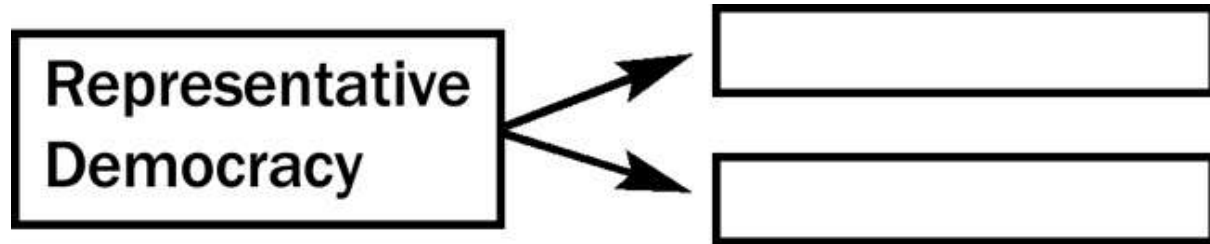
Drawback: less informed decision making.



Section 4 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

1. Main Idea Use a graphic organizer like the one below to identify two goals the Framers of the Constitution wanted to meet by creating a representative democracy.



representative democracy: provide for popular rule; insulate government from shifting whims of public opinion



Section 4 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

Match the term with the correct definition.

- F ___ biased
- C ___ sample
- A ___ universe
- ___ representativ
- D ___ e sample
- ___ random
- E ___ sampling
- B ___ sampling
- ___ error
- ___ cluster
- ___ sample

- A. a small group of people, typical of the sample universe, that a pollster questions
- B. a polling method that groups people by geographical divisions
- C. in polling, the group of people to be studied
- D. a polling technique in which everyone in the “universe” has an equal chance of being selected
- E. a measurement on how much the sample results may differ from the sample universe
- F. in polling, a group that does not accurately represent the larger population



Section 4 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

3. Identify straw poll, sample.

A **straw poll** is an unscientific attempt to measure public opinion.

A **sample** is a group surveyed in an opinion poll.



Section 4 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

4. Identify seven sources that public officials use to determine public opinion.

Sources include political parties, interest groups, mass media, letter writing, electronic access, straw polls, and scientific polling.



Section 4 Assessment

Checking for Understanding

5. List reasons that poll results may not accurately reflect public opinion.

Reasons include that the sample may not be representative of the population, questions may be interpreted differently, questionnaires are not returned, pollsters may fail to reach the person being called, interviewer's appearance or tone of voice can influence answers, individuals sometimes answer the way they think they should, and the respondent may know little about the topic.



Section 4 Assessment

Critical Thinking

6. Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment Why do politicians pay closer attention to the results of polls conducted through personal interviews rather than through the mail?

Mail interviews are not as reliable as personal interviews because only 10 to 15 percent of mail recipients respond, and their replies cannot be clarified.



Section 4 Assessment



Cultural Pluralism Find a public opinion poll in a newspaper or newsmagazine. Analyze the poll by focusing on the following questions: How many people were contacted? Does the poll include a random or representative sampling? What is the sampling error? Are the questions presented in an unbiased, effective way? Present your answers in an analytical report.



End of the Section

Click the mouse button to return to the Chapter Menu.

Chapter Summary

Interest Groups

- **Who** Groups of people who share common goals and organize to influence government.
- **What** Major categories of interest groups include business and labor groups, agricultural groups, environmental groups, public-interest groups, government groups, and professional associations.
- **How** Most groups try to influence government policy by lobbying lawmakers, running publicity campaigns, and providing funds for candidates' election campaigns.

Public Opinion

- **What** The ideas and attitudes a significant number of Americans hold about government and politics; factors such as family, schools, peer groups, economic and social status, the mass media, and government leaders shape one's political beliefs.
- **Who** In America, most people fall into the categories of liberal, conservative, or moderate, depending on their basic beliefs about government and society.
- **How** Officials measure public opinion by meeting with leaders of interest groups and talking with voters, as well as through scientific polling methods.



Reviewing Key Terms

Match the following terms with the descriptions below.

- A.** interest group **F.** political culture
B. peer group **G.** universe
C. lobbyist **H.** sampling error
D. random sampling **I.** mass media
E. public opinion **J.** representative sample

- C** 1. representative of an interest group
 D 2. everyone in the group sampled has an equal chance of being selected
 B 3. close friends, church, social, or work groups
 A 4. people who share common policy goals and organize to influence government
 F 5. basic values and beliefs about a nation and its government that most citizens share



Reviewing Key Terms

Match the following terms with the descriptions below.

- A.** interest group **F.** political culture
B. peer group **G.** universe
C. lobbyist **H.** sampling error
D. random sampling **I.** mass media
E. public opinion **J.** representative sample

- J** 6. small group of people typical of the universe
- E** 7. the ideas and attitudes a significant number of Americans hold about certain issues
- I** 8. television, radio, newspapers, movies, books
- H** 9. measurement of how much the sample results may differ from the universe being sampled
- G** 10. group of people from which samples are taken for polls or statistical measurements



Recalling Facts

1. Identify three reasons or concerns that cause people to join interest groups.

Reasons people join interest groups include to help promote an individual's economic self-interests; because a group shares an individual's beliefs, values, or attitudes; and for social reasons.

2. How do interest groups try to influence public opinion to support their policies?

They run mass media and letter-writing campaigns.



Recalling Facts

3. What seven forces influence a person's political socialization?

Forces that influence a person's political socialization include family and home, schools, peer groups, economic and social status, mass media, government leaders, and interest groups.

4. What is the relationship between political culture and public opinion?

Political culture sets the general broad boundaries within which citizens develop and express their opinions.



Recalling Facts

5. For what reasons may the results of scientific polls not be accurate?

Any or all of the following reasons: sample may not be representative of the population as a whole, questions on poll may be interpreted differently by different people, questionnaires are not returned, pollsters may fail to reach the person being called, the interviewer's appearance or tone of voice can influence answers, individuals sometimes answer the way they think they should, the respondent may not know anything about the topic.



Understanding Concepts

1. Civic Participation Analyze how an interest group can influence local government.

A local interest group can unite large numbers of people to attend a local meeting to influence government policy. Specific examples may include parents attending a school board meeting, children and parents attending a planning meeting for a new town park, and so on.



Understanding Concepts

2.Cultural Pluralism Explain the relationship between voting, public opinion, and public policy. Answers may include that voting is the true expression of public opinion. Who and what people vote for affects the types of public policies that will be supported by the elected officials.



Critical Thinking

1. Understanding Cause and Effect Studies have shown that people in lower socioeconomic levels are less likely to contribute to, lead in, or even join special-interest groups. Why do you think that this is so?

Answers may include that people of lower socioeconomic levels have less leisure time than other groups, may not have the financial resources needed to participate, have to worry more about basic needs than political needs, and so on.



Critical Thinking

2. Making Comparisons Use a graphic organizer like the one below to compare the AFL-CIO with an environmental interest group in the areas of size, composition of membership, and methods used to accomplish their goals.

	<i>AFL-CIO</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>Size</i>		
<i>Members</i>		
<i>Methods</i>		

Answers may include: **AFL-CIO**—largest labor organization, membership includes union workers with economic interests from many industries, holds fundraisers and voter registration drives and supports political candidates; **Sierra Club**—small size, interested in the environment, monitors the environment and brings lawsuits against those who violate regulations



Interpreting Political Cartoons Activity



1. What do the oxen's words suggest about politicians?

Answers will vary. Possible answer: They are uncertain about their direction and believe that someone else (interest groups) will show them what to do.

Interpreting Political Cartoons Activity




2. What is about to happen in the cartoon?

The lobbyists are about to crack the whip to direct the politicians toward where the lobbyists want to go.

Interpreting Political Cartoons Activity



3. What does the choice of a wagon and oxen suggest about the cartoonist's viewpoint?
Answers may vary. Possible answer: The cartoon suggests that politicians are yoked to and work for lobbyists.



Chapter Bonus Test Question

What Supreme Court case became the basis for many campaign finance loopholes?

Buckley v. Valeo

Reference
Atlas

GOVERNMENT
Online

DATA
BANK

Gallery of
Presidents

End of the Section

Click the mouse button to return to the Chapter Menu.



Interest Groups

1 Would all of these interest groups be concerned with the same issues? Explain.

2 Do you think the largest of these groups would be the most effective in influencing legislation? Explain.

3 Do you think the AFL-CIO and the NAM have many members in common? Explain.

1) No; many of these groups focus on specific interests or even have conflicting interests

2) Probably not since AAA focuses on providing services to its members

3) No, because NAM members would probably support the manufacturers while the AFL-CIO supports the workers

ORGANIZATION	MEMBERSHIP
American Association of Retired Persons — AARP	35,000,000
American Automobile Association — AAA	44,000,000
American Civil Liberties Union — ACLU	400,000
American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial Organizations — AFL-CIO	13,100,000
American Medical Association — AMA	300,000
Chamber of Commerce of the U.S.A.	3,000,000
National Association of Manufacturers — NAM	14,000 companies
National Education Association — NEA	2,700,000
National Farmers Union — NFU	250,000
National Wildlife Federation — NWF	4,000,000

Source: All data received from respective organizations



PACs and Congressional Elections

1 Which graph better shows the importance of PAC contributions in congressional campaigns? Explain.

1) the bar graph shows what percent PAC contributions were of total congressional campaign spending.

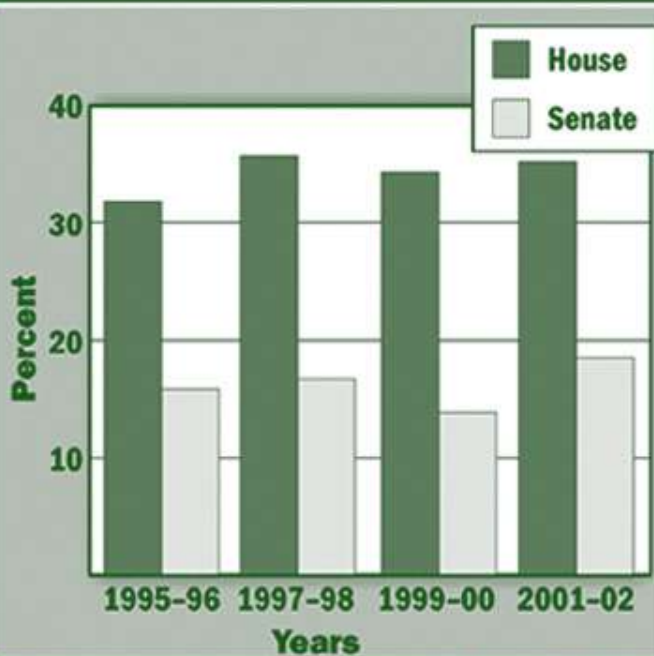
2 Did total contributions by PACs increase or decrease in the years shown?

2) They increased slightly.

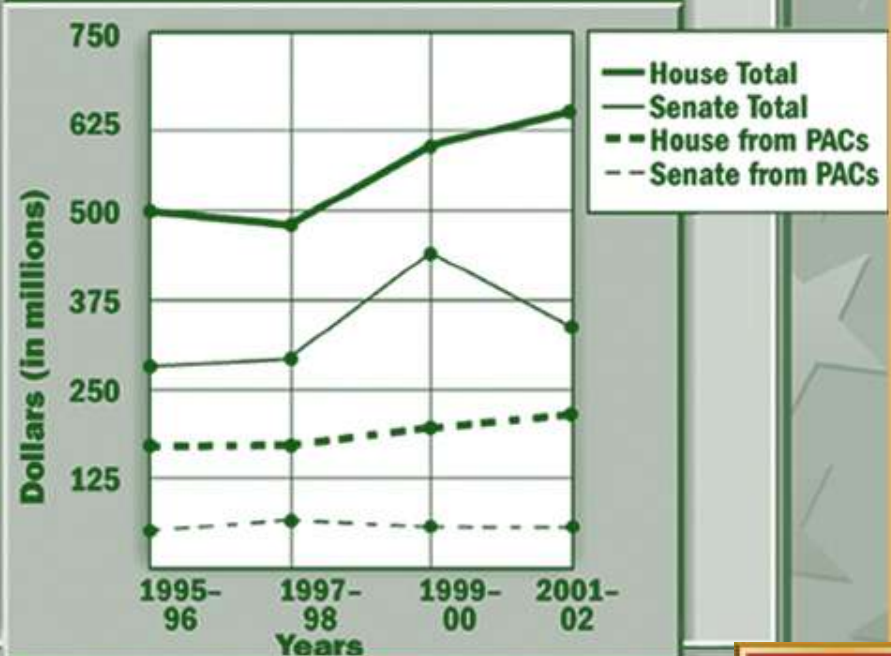
3 Did the total amount contributed to House campaigns between 1995 and 1998 follow the trend shown by the other categories? Explain.

3) No, the amount contributed to the House decreased and the other amounts increased.

PAC Contributions as a Percentage of Congressional Campaign Spending



Contributions to Congressional Campaigns



Sources: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2001; Federal Election Commission



Influences on Opinion Formation

★ **1** Which of these influences do you think would be the strongest on children under age ten?

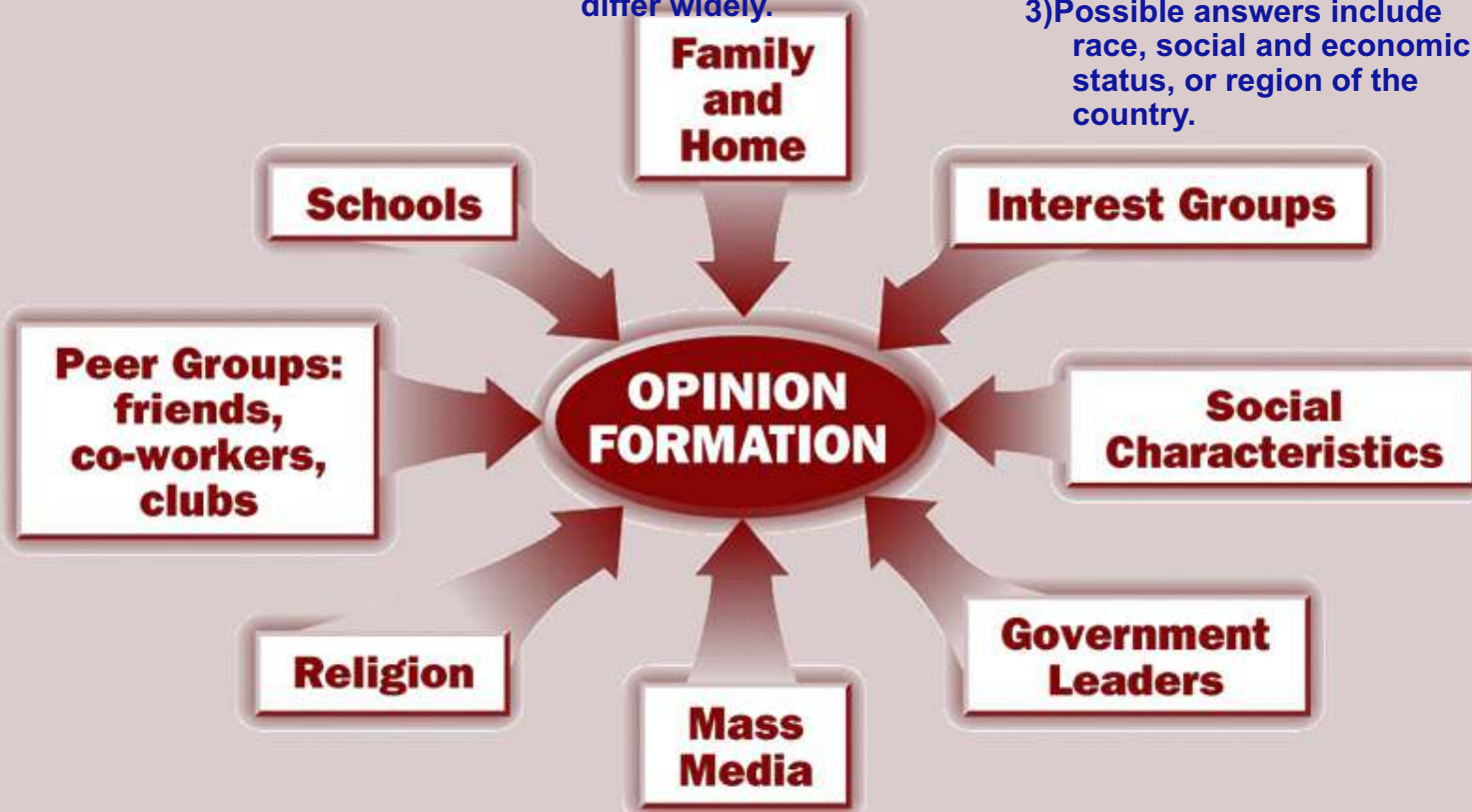
1)Answers will vary.

★ **2** Do you think all the influences have equal effects on young adults? Explain.

2)No; people and conditions differ widely.

★ **3** Name some social characteristics other than age and gender that might influence opinion formation.

3)Possible answers include race, social and economic status, or region of the country.



Public Confidence Levels

1 How did respondents to this poll rate business organizations?

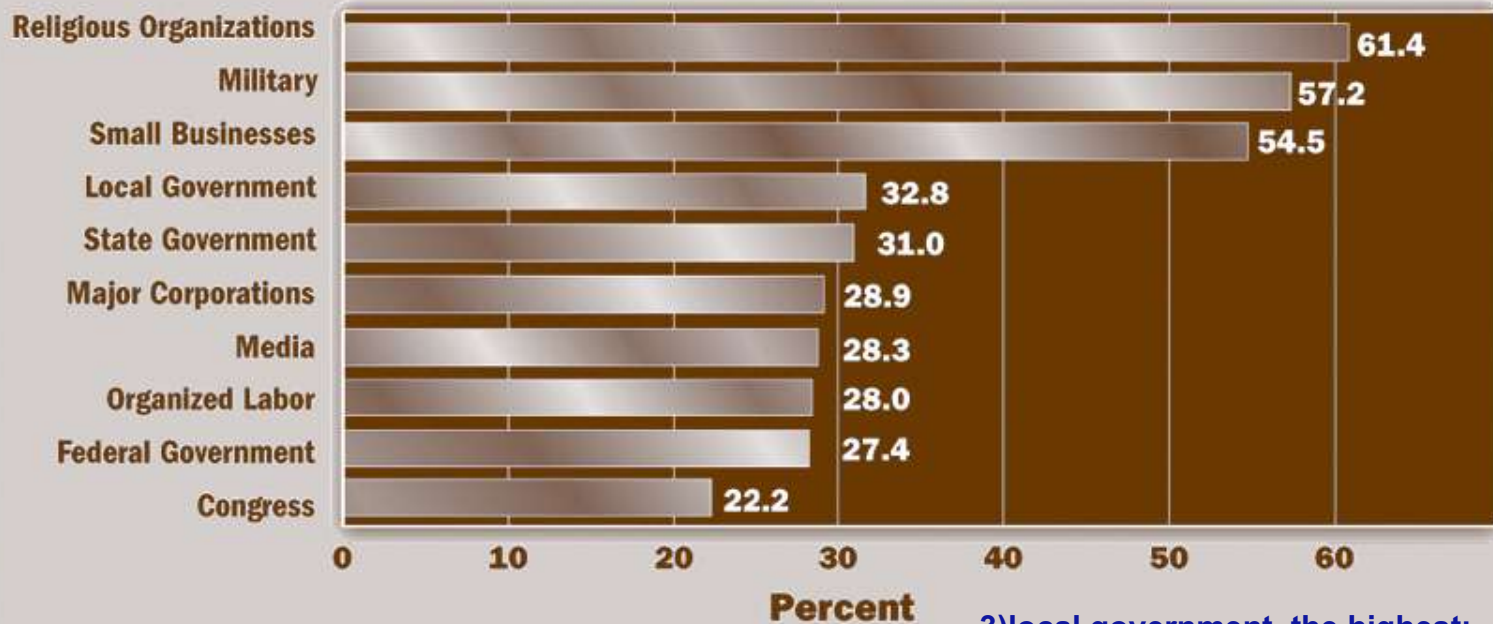
1) Small business received one of the highest confidence level rankings; major corporation ranked much lower.

2 How did the military and religious organizations compare in confidence level?

2) about the same

3 What level of government had the highest confidence level rating? the lowest?

Percent of Respondents Expressing a Great Deal or Quite a Lot of Confidence



3) local government, the highest; federal government was ranked toward the bottom of the list





Source: Cartoon by Mike Peters. United Feature Syndicate, Inc. Reprinted with permission.





Journaling As you read through this chapter, record in a journal how you feel about each topic mentioned in the text. Include in your journal how each topic affects your personal life, if at all.



COVER STORY

MADD Issues Grades

DALLAS, TEXAS, APRIL 2001

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), a nonprofit organization with 600 chapters nationwide, has announced its support of House Bill H.R. 1509 and Senate Bill S. 866, both of which would establish a “National Media Campaign to Prevent Underage Drinking.” The bills would provide money to allow the Department of Health and Human Services to identify the extent of underage drinking and create a media campaign to communicate to children and parents the dangers of underage drinking. The campaign would include radio, television, print, and Internet advertisements.

**MADD**

COVER STORY

Too Many Amendments?

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 26, 1996

The present practice of turning causes into constitutional amendments is a troubling development, says political analyst John Leo. The Framers established a difficult amendment process, Leo notes, because they wanted amendments to be well-founded, necessary, and rare. However, an explosion of proposals to change the Constitution has come from interest groups who use the process to call attention to their cause, he says. Proposed amendments on school prayer, the budget, an official language, term limits, flag burning, abortion, victims' rights, and campaign finance are currently before Congress. These are all important issues, but few are legitimate constitutional necessities, Leo observes.



**Balancing
the budget**



COVER STORY

Channel One Is Big

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, JULY 2001

On the air for over a decade, Channel One News, owned by Primedia, provides 12,000 schools across America with televisions, video recorders, and satellite dishes. In exchange, each school contracts to show the 12 minute Channel One News program to students. Approximately eight million students view the show daily, roughly the same amount who watch ABC, CBS, CNN, and NBC news combined. The show is not without its detractors, however. Some parent organizations have argued that students are a captive audience and only 60 percent of the show's air time is devoted to news, with too much emphasis on commercials.



**Channel One News
correspondent**



COVER STORY

What Do Polls Show?

WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 2000

A poll is usually conducted by asking 1,000 or more people a question or series of questions. Their answers are compiled and assessed, providing insight into public attitudes and opinions. For example, a recent study by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press on issues of national importance revealed that the greatest concern among Americans was “crime/violence.” This was cited by 15 percent of those surveyed (down from 32 percent in a similar 1994 poll). The second most important issue was “moral decline/decline of family values” at 14 percent. Such information can be used by elected officials to align legislation with public concerns.

**Burglary in progress**



The First White House Pollster President Lyndon B. Johnson was the first president to hire a pollster, Albert Cantril, for the White House staff. Cantril provided President Johnson with polling data from every state. Johnson used the polls to defend his escalation of the Vietnam War and his decision in 1968 not to seek another term in the face of mounting opposition to the war.



Did you
know



The largest national organization after the Roman Catholic Church is the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). With 32 million members it has defined the term “gray power.” The AARP has its own ZIP code and 18 registered lobbyists.





The political action committee of the National Education Association—a teachers' union—is one of the largest in the nation. Founded in 1857, the NEA currently claims more than 2.7 million members.





One of the most important traditional measures of the president's standing with the public is the Gallup presidential approval survey. Since 1945 the Gallup Organization has polled members of the public monthly—and sometimes more often—about whether they approve or disapprove of the president's handling of the job.





More About Charitable Contributions In 1995 Americans donated \$23.5 billion to charities, with the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross, and the Catholic Charities USA receiving the most generous contributions. Donations were up five percent from the previous year. Donations to community foundations, which raise and distribute money in a single geographic area, had the biggest gain at 93 percent. Donations to museums and libraries increased by 25 percent. The sharpest decrease was in donations to public affairs groups.





Poll Position

The Gallup Poll has been finding out what Americans think about social, economic, and political issues since the 1930s. The Gallup Organization, the company behind the poll, was founded by Dr. George Gallup. He worked as a market researcher for a New York advertising agency, where he developed many techniques for opinion polling. He put those techniques to the test in the 1936 presidential election between Franklin D. Roosevelt and Alfred Landon. Most polls had predicted Landon would win in a landslide, but Gallup correctly picked Roosevelt as the winner. Soon after, syndication by national newspapers and frequent mentions in the press helped to make the Gallup Poll an American institution. Today, the Gallup Poll's reputability is based on the fact that it is not paid for or sponsored by any special interest group. Since 1992, however, the Gallup Organization has been in partnership with CNN and USA Today.





Tactics of Interest Groups Discuss the most effective tactics of interest groups. Consider the following strategies:

- (1) Go on the attack—make public officials fear you.
- (2) Concede nothing—compromise only when you have to.
- (3) Manipulate the media—get them to present your case in a positive way.
- (4) Kill the opposition with information—seize control of discussion of the issues.

How effective is each of these approaches? Would you be swayed by them? Why or why not?



*P*articipating
IN GOVERNMENT

Understanding Political Culture Work in small groups to create lists of 10 widely shared political values. Then interview 10 people about their feelings toward each value, asking each interviewee to rank his or her feelings from one to five, with one being “do not feel strongly about” to five being “feel very strongly about.” Then tabulate your members’ results in a group table listing the question, the number of respondents, and the average ranking. Share your findings with the class.



David Laughery

The Pennsylvania helmet law states that “A person under 12 years of age shall not operate a pedalcycle or ride as a passenger on a pedalcycle unless the person is wearing a pedalcycle helmet. . . .” It identifies the penalty for failure to comply as “. . . punishable by a fine, including all penalties, assessments and court costs imposed on the convicted person not to exceed \$25.”

Activity: Write in your journals about what the last quote from David Laughery about rights and responsibilities means to you.





Ralph Nader

Ralph Nader is a well-known consumer advocate and citizen activist. He founded and then led the movement of working Americans fighting for what he called “economic self-determination.” In 1965 he forced General Motors to acknowledge and correct the safety-deficient Corvair. He has outlasted several presidents and numerous Congresses with his philosophy that “You’ve got to keep the pressure on, even if you lose. The essence of the citizens’ movement is persistence.” In 2000 Nader received 2.7% of the popular vote as the Green Party’s presidential candidate, running on a platform of corporate and environmental responsibility. In 2004 he ran again as an Independent, despite strong opposition from many Democrats and liberals.



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