

TEST BANK

FOURTEENTH EDITION

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

WALTER E. VOLKOMER

We the People
insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to our Posterity. All ordain and establish this Constitution
Amide!

Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank

to accompany

American Government

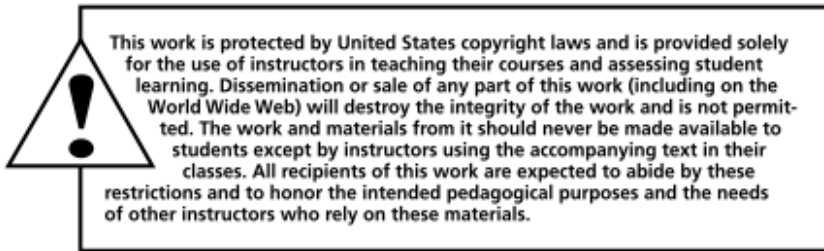
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Chapter 1

Politics, Democracy, and the American People

Chapter Summary

Politics is an inescapable part of social interaction. Politics is the bargaining process by which decisions are made. Since no decision pleases everyone—meaning that there are typically winners *and* losers (persons or groups who feel they have been deprived of something)—politics is often viewed derisively. As Volkmer notes, “Politics has been defined as the art of governing humanity by deceiving it. It has also been seen as the conduct of public affairs for private advantage.” Not everyone has a cynical view of politics, however. Most people appreciate the role it plays in promoting a civil society.

This chapter begins with a discussion about the meaning of politics, its relationship to the concept of political power, and its impact upon governmental policymaking. Next follows an exploration into the nature of our political system and the various philosophical principles upon which it is based. The chapter concludes with an overview of demographic changes in the United States and the political consequences of these changes.

Learning Objectives

1. Define politics, political power, and government and assess the relationship among the three concepts.
2. Explain the sources of a government's legitimacy.
3. Compare and contrast direct and representative forms of democracy.
4. Define referendum, initiative, and recall.
5. Explain the contributions of John Locke, Baron Montesquieu, and James Madison to the philosophical principles of American government.
6. Outline the fundamental principles of American government.
7. Discuss the problems and contributions of diversity in a democratic society.

Chapter Outline

- I. The Nature of Politics
 - A. Politics and Power
 - B. The Bases of Political Power
 - C. Politics and Government
- II. The Meaning of Democracy
 - A. The Bases of Democracy
- III. Democracy and Diversity

Lecture Outline

I. The Nature of Politics

Many people view politics with cynicism and distrust. Media reports of the scandalous private lives of public officials and the occasional abuse of authority no doubt feed such derisive opinions. While the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, resulted in a dramatic shift of public opinion toward the government, this shift proved short-lived, and public trust in government has subsequently declined. The root of such widespread cynicism might lie in the inability to distinguish between politics and government.

A. Politics and Power

Harold Laswell's classic definition of politics posits three questions: "Who gets what, when, and how?" Another popular definition of politics is the authoritative allocation of values. Thus politics is concerned with the authoritative decision-making process that defines the goals of a society, resolves societal conflicts, and determines who will receive the valued things of a society and who will not. Government is both the forum within which such issues are debated and the organization used to enforce the final decision. The link is clear, but it is important to understand that politics and government are not the same thing.

The quintessential element in politics is power. Politics is all about power. So what exactly is power, and why is it so important? Like most concepts, *power* is subject to a number of interpretations. Essentially, power is the capacity to affect the conduct of others.

B. The Bases of Political Power

Legitimacy is the belief that certain principles or rules are right and proper. According to German sociologist Max Weber, there are three sources of legitimacy: tradition, charisma, and legality. Traditional authority is based on historical custom or loyalty to established patterns of social behavior. Political parties might be said to exercise traditional authority. Charismatic authority is based on the presumed special and extraordinary powers or qualities of some individual. Martin Luther King, Jr. exercised tremendous charismatic authority. Legal authority is legitimacy based in law, such as the Constitution.

C. Politics and Government

Government is not the same thing as politics. Rather, government is the set of institutions and processes by which decisions are made and enforced on all members of a society. People may be involved in politics without being part of the government, such as members of labor unions and interest groups.

II. The Meaning of Democracy

Democracy is a form of government in which policy decisions are based on the consent of those being governed. The form of democracy generally practiced in the United States is representative or indirect democracy—an arrangement in which policy decisions are made by a small number of individuals chosen by a larger body of citizens. This model can be contrasted with systems of direct democracy, under which each citizen participates directly and personally in the decision-making process.

Even though American democracy is primarily representative, three forms of direct democracy are common here: the referendum, the initiative, and the recall. Referendums permit voters to participate in the adoption of particular laws. An initiative (sometimes referred to as a ballot initiative) allows voters to place policy preferences directly on the ballot. A recall allows voters to remove a public official from office via a special election initiated by a petition signed by a specific number of registered voters. Some state and local governments permit referenda, initiative, or recall.

A. The Bases of Democracy

American democracy is based upon a number of underlying concepts and principles: self-government, social contract theory, majority rule, minority rights, limited government, democratic institutions, free elections, organized opposition, free expression of ideas, equality, and universal education.

1. Self-Government

As articulated by the English political philosopher John Locke, there exists a *natural law* that provides *natural rights*—such as life, liberty and property—that cannot be altered or taken away by governments. Instead, governments exist to ensure that such natural rights are protected. Locke's thinking on the basis of self-government is reflected in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the writings of the founders.

2. The Social Contract

Locke argued that before the existence of society as we recognize it, human beings existed in a "state of nature," possessing natural rights of which they were fully cognizant, and governed only by natural law. But the State of Nature is also a State of War, as the strong may enslave or kill the weak. In order to protect their natural rights and settle disputes, people came together in a social contract—an agreement to form a civil society that would guarantee protection of the person and property. After the

compact was formed, government was created to enforce the contract. The contract, therefore, comes before government. Thus, the government exists solely to enforce the contract—that is, to protect natural rights—and should have the necessary powers to properly do so. The protection of natural rights is the primary function of government. When government no longer fulfills this mission, the people are free to amend governmental powers as they see fit or to abolish it entirely. Locke's theory of the social contract strongly influenced Jefferson's thinking in the Declaration of Independence.

3. Majority Rule

In a free society where diverse views are freely expressed, the government must seek guidance from the largest number of people. In addition, there must be some agreed-upon method for selecting leaders and choosing among policy alternatives. The decision-making mechanism best suited for a democratic government is majority rule. Under this system the majority is allowed to rule through representatives who exercise power on its behalf. The danger, of course, is the ever-present threat to the rights and liberties of minorities—the “tyranny of the majority” of which de Tocqueville warned.

4. Minority Rights

The framers believed it was paramount that the new government include some protections for minority rights. A strong government in the hands of a majority could prove tyrannical if no safeguards prevented the abuse of unpopular rights.

To address the potential threat to minorities, majority rule is limited by constitutional guarantees of protections for individuals and minorities. Minorities are granted certain basic freedoms, among which are free expression, religious freedom, due process, and the right to associate—or not associate—with whomever one chooses.

5. Limited Government

The idea of limited government is associated with the principle of constitutionalism, which holds that governmental powers should be clearly prescribed in a written document that would serve as the fundamental law. The American Constitution makes clear the idea that governmental powers are not limitless.

The Bill of Rights guards against governmental abuses of power by guaranteeing protections for individual rights.

6. Democratic Institutions

The American political system is a collection of democratic institutions, with power divided into three branches: the executive, legislative, and judicial. A complex system of checks and balances, the foundations of which were developed by French philosopher Montesquieu, keeps each branch from encroaching on the power of the others.

7. Free Elections

Free elections are essential to a democratic system. While the franchise was limited to white male property owners early in its history, the United States has gradually expanded suffrage to include nearly all citizens who are at least eighteen years of age.

Elections give citizens the opportunity to express their policy preferences, select their official representatives, and encourage elected officials to respond to public pressure, all functions essential to the maintenance of a democratic polis.

8. An Organized Opposition

The American political system has historically been dominated by two major political parties. At any point in time, one serves as the organized opposition to the other, free to criticize the policies of the party in power. The two-party system has many critics, according to whom the two parties do not truly oppose one another. Yet, Volkmer notes, each party performs the invaluable service of keeping the other in check.

9. Free Expression of Ideas

The U.S. Constitution guarantees Americans the free expression of ideas through speech, press, religion, petition, and assembly. None of these liberties is absolute, however; they are all subject to frequent challenges and judicial interpretation.

10. Equality

Democratic theory stresses legal and political equality and the right of each person to have an equal opportunity to advance economically. Economic inequality was not a concern to the nation's founders, although it gained some currency starting in the twentieth century. Nonetheless, considerable economic inequality currently exists within the United States.

11. Universal Education

Universal education is important to democratic government. Indeed, as Jefferson noted, a nation cannot be both ignorant and free. Rather, for Jefferson, education is the key to an informed citizenry, and an informed citizenry is the basis for a democratic polity. Democracy requires citizens to have some understanding of public issues and the opportunity to make electoral choices on the basis of that knowledge. It also requires tolerance, respect for the rights of others, and the ability to compromise on public issues. These attitudes are developed through education.

III. Democracy and Diversity

Diversity has been increasing in the United States, resulting in a richer variety of individuals and groups contributing to American political culture. The population of the United States has

increased, with the greatest increase in the South and West. The population has also become older and shifted from urban areas to suburban and metropolitan areas. Hispanics are the largest and fastest-growing ethnic minority group in America.

Critical-Thinking Exercises

1. The tension between majority rule and individual rights is a perennial issue in American politics. Students should debate the problem of reconciling majority rule and individual rights with respect to one or more of the following issues: affirmative action, same-sex marriage, religious freedom, gun control, and freedom of expression.
2. The success of the social contract depends upon the willingness of citizens to obey the government's laws. But does the social contract justify citizens taking the law into their own hands? Is government failing to uphold its duty to protect natural rights when a citizen is a victim of a crime? It may also be interesting to examine the notion of tacit consent, and the right to resist unjust governments.
3. If students live in a locality in which there is representative democracy only, have them explore how governance under direct democracy might work in their community. How do direct democracy and representative democracy each reflect the will of the majority? How does each system protect the rights of the minority? What are the other advantages and disadvantages of both direct and indirect democracy?
4. Students can discuss potential policy debates in a minority-majority government. Under a Hispanic, African American, and Asian president or Congress, what types of political issues might appear on the agenda? How do these issues compare with the types of issues that arise under white-majority government?

Chapter 1

Politics, Democracy, and the American People

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following accurately describes Americans' attitudes about government?
 - a. Americans are confident that the government will do what is right.
 - b. The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks shook Americans' confidence in government.
 - c. Americans do not have much trust in government.
 - d. Most Americans think highly of government and government officials.
 - e. Americans think that government is the solution to most problems.

Answer: C; Page Reference: 2; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

2. Alexis de Tocqueville was
 - a. a British philosopher who argued against democracy.
 - b. a French aristocrat who visited America in the 1830s.
 - c. a Spanish political thinker who wrote a book on government in the twentieth century.
 - d. an American senator who was not fully trusted by the voters.
 - e. an Italian political philosopher who argued against direct democracy.

Answer: B; Page Reference: 8; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

3. Harold Lasswell defined *politics* as the study of
 - a. who gets the support of elites.
 - b. who acquires the most political power in a community.
 - c. who gets what, based on how much they contribute to campaigns.
 - d. who gets what, when, and how.
 - e. a pattern of corrupt or unethical decision making.

Answer: D; Page Reference: 2; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

4. Which of the following is one of Max Weber's sources of legitimacy in politics that also helped Martin Luther King, Jr. attract people to his ideas?
 - a. Charisma
 - b. Tradition
 - c. Force
 - d. Legality
 - e. Perseverance

Answer: A; Page Reference: 3; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

5. Which of the following BEST defines democracy?
 - a. Power is held by a small group of people.
 - b. Governmental powers are held by a single person or group.
 - c. Power is shared by all citizens.
 - d. Government is unnecessary.
 - e. Government consists of three branches: legislative, executive, judicial.

Answer: C; Page Reference: 4; Bloom's Category: Comprehension

6. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. had many followers due to what source of legitimate power?
- Charisma
 - Tradition
 - Force
 - Legality
 - Wealth

Answer: A; Page Reference: 3; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

7. *Government* refers to
- the institutions and processes by which rules are made and enforced for all members of society.
 - the institutions that govern and how these institutions work in concert.
 - the institutions that govern and how citizens determine which ones can enforce the rules.
 - the rules made by citizens and enforced by representatives.
 - organizations that influence policymaking.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 3; Bloom's Category: Comprehension

8. Why are labor unions and corporations NOT considered to be a part of the government?
- Labor unions and corporations do not have elected officials.
 - Labor unions and corporations cannot enforce rules for all of society.
 - Labor unions and corporations cannot create any legitimate rules.
 - Labor unions and corporations rarely involve themselves in politics.
 - Labor unions and corporations do not support political candidates.

Answer: B; Page Reference: 4; Bloom's Category: Application

9. A New England town meeting is a form of
- direct democracy.
 - constitutional democracy.
 - representative democracy.
 - republican democracy.
 - collaborative democracy.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 4; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

10. Which of the following allows citizens to most directly decide policy issues?
- Primary elections
 - General elections
 - Recalls
 - Interest groups
 - Ballot initiatives

Answer: E; Page Reference: 5; Bloom's Category: Comprehension

11. The procedure in some states that allows citizens to put proposed laws and constitutional amendments on the ballots to approve or reject legislative statutes is called a/an
- referendum.
 - initiative.
 - recall.
 - proposition.
 - disposition.

Answer: B; Page Reference: 4; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

12. Representative democracy differs from direct democracy in that in the former, citizens transfer their _____ power to people whom they elect to represent them.

- a. implied
- b. natural
- c. participation
- d. decision-making
- e. constitutional

Answer: D; Page Reference: 5–6; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

13. Locke believed that government's primary role was to

- a. help individuals fulfill their potential.
- b. develop the moral character of its citizens.
- c. protect the life, liberty, and property of those it governs.
- d. preserve the social morality.
- e. create an all-powerful central government

Answer: C; Page Reference: 7; Bloom's Category: Comprehension

14. Which of the following is NOT a basic principle of American democracy?

- a. Self-government
- b. Majority rule
- c. An organized opposition
- d. Economic equality
- e. Free elections

Answer: D; Page Reference: 8–13; Bloom's Category: Comprehension

15. According to the text, Thomas Hobbes and David Hume

- a. agreed with John Locke about natural law.
- b. were skeptical of human reason.
- c. did not think that people were passionate enough about freedom.
- d. were influenced by the thinking of James Madison.
- e. were influenced by the thinking of Alexis de Tocqueville.

Answer: B; Page Reference: 6; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

16. What doctrine is an extension of Locke's idea that people are able to make rational decisions and that they understand what policies would best serve their interests?

- a. Minority rights
- b. Majority rule
- c. Separation of powers
- d. Limited government
- e. Checks and balances

Answer: B; Page Reference: 7; Bloom's Category: Application

17. John Locke wrote that civil society was created by an agreement among citizens in which they accepted existing law and penalties as binding. This agreement was called

- a. the social contract.
- b. majority rule.
- c. direct democracy.
- d. constitutional democracy.
- e. representative democracy.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 7; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

18. Who expressed concern about a “tyranny of the majority” in *Democracy in America*?
- John Locke
 - David Hume
 - Thomas Jefferson
 - Alexis de Tocqueville
 - James Madison

Answer: D; Page Reference: 8; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

19. The filibuster, which permits a minority of U.S. senators to indefinitely postpone or delay a vote in the Senate, is an example of
- minority rights.
 - limited rights.
 - majority rights.
 - basic rights.
 - civil rights.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Application

20. A government that places written legal limits on the power of the majority to act is often referred to as
- representative democracy.
 - constitutional democracy.
 - limited democracy.
 - republican democracy.
 - collaborative democracy.

Answer: B; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

21. Which of the following encourages limited government?
- Economic equality
 - The social contract
 - Constitutionalism
 - Majority rule
 - Minority rights

Answer: C; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Comprehension

22. The principle that holds that the powers of government should be limited and embodied in a basic written law is referred to as
- liberty.
 - the social contract.
 - majority rule.
 - constitutionalism.
 - equality.

Answer: D; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

23. The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments grant important rights to people who are accused of having committed crimes. These rights are examples of
- democratic rules.
 - majority rules.
 - civil liberties.
 - civil rights.
 - social contracts.

Answer: C; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

24. Democratic institutions in the United States are characterized by
- a. hereditary rule.
 - b. coalition governments.
 - c. the separation of powers.
 - d. an authoritarian allocation of resources.
 - e. civil rights and civil liberties.

Answer: C; Page Reference: 10; Bloom's Category: Comprehension

25. Elections for members of the House of Representatives are held every
- a. two years.
 - b. three years.
 - c. four years.
 - d. six years.
 - e. year.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 10; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

26. In the U.S. Constitution, freedom of speech is explicitly protected under the
- a. First Amendment.
 - b. Fifth Amendment.
 - c. Fourteenth Amendment.
 - d. Twenty-first Amendment.
 - e. Third Amendment.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 11; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

27. What type of equality did Thomas Jefferson stress in the Declaration of Independence?
- a. Religious equality
 - b. Moral equality
 - c. Political equality
 - d. Economic equality
 - e. Racial equality

Answer: B; Page Reference: 12; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

28. Jefferson's concept of equality did NOT apply to
- a. black slaves or women.
 - b. people who did not own land.
 - c. individuals who were born with few talents.
 - d. citizens who practiced different religions than his.
 - e. citizens of different colonies.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 12; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

29. Some third-party supporters complain that the Democratic Party and the Republican Party monopolize power in the United States, yet are nearly identical in the way they operate and the policies they pursue. These critics are most likely to believe that American democracy is jeopardized by
- a. the lack of meaningful organized opposition.
 - b. those who own private property.
 - c. an overly limited government.
 - d. partisan squabbles over substantive public policy principles.
 - e. minority rule.

Answer: A; Page Reference: 11–12; Bloom's Category: Application

30. Which of the following states will gain representation in Congress due to having the largest population increase as tracked in the 2010 census?
- a. Pennsylvania
 - b. Massachusetts
 - c. Michigan
 - d. Texas
 - e. New York

Answer: D; Page Reference: 13; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

31. The Census Bureau estimates that the American population in 2010 was about
- a. 30 million.
 - b. 300 million.
 - c. 3 billion.
 - d. 30 billion.
 - e. 300 billion.

Answer: B; Page Reference: 13; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

32. What two regions of the United States have recently had the largest increase in population?
- a. The Northeast and the West
 - b. The South and the Midwest
 - c. The West and the South
 - d. The Midwest and the West
 - e. The Northeast and the Midwest

Answer: C; Page Reference: 13; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

33. According to the U.S. Census, what is the largest minority group within the U.S. population today?
- a. Asian Americans
 - b. Hispanics or Latinos
 - c. African Americans
 - d. American Indians
 - e. Pacific Islanders

Answer: B; Page Reference: 14; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

34. In which of the following areas is the aging American population most likely to pose challenges for the United States?
- a. Paying for health care expenses
 - b. Financing college education
 - c. Owning a home
 - d. Balancing the national budget
 - e. Encouraging charitable giving

Answer: A; Page Reference: 14; Bloom's Category: Analysis

35. Diversity poses challenges to a democracy as it leads to wide differences of opinion thereby making it difficult to
- a. survey public opinion.
 - b. propose solutions to political problems affecting the elites.
 - c. acquire support for minority candidates.
 - d. obtain agreement on proposed solutions to political problems.
 - e. win elections.

Answer: D; Page Reference: 15; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

True or False

1. Political power is the ability to influence the political behavior of others.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 2; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
2. Ordinary people can exercise political power through voting or interest group membership.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 2; Bloom's Category: Application
3. The United States is primarily a direct democracy.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 4; Bloom's Category: Comprehension
4. According to German sociologist Max Weber, legitimacy in politics can be derived through the use of force.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 3; Bloom's Category: Comprehension
5. Ballot initiatives are used by the federal government and by all fifty state governments.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 5; Bloom's Category: Comprehension
6. Natural law is an agreement among members of society in which they accept existing laws and penalties as binding.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 6; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
7. If citizens obtain enough signatures on a petition, a vote is then held deciding whether or not an official may continue to hold office. This is known as a recall.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 4–5; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
8. John Locke believed that the people have the right to replace the government if it fails to protect the people's natural rights.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 7; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
9. One of the rights protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is the right to petition the government.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
10. Majority rule is designed to protect minority rights.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
11. Fewer than 5 percent of Americans live below the poverty line.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 11–12; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
12. Adopted in 1791, the Bill of Rights sought to protect the individual against abuses of power by the government.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
13. In terms of population, the fastest growing states are in the Northeast.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 13; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
14. Majority rule always prevents tyranny.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 7–8; Bloom's Category: Analysis

15. An example of a civil liberty is the freedom to worship or not worship as one chooses.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
16. The United States is referred to as a constitutional democracy, meaning it places written legal limits on the power of the majority to act.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 9; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
17. The median age of the American population has decreased in recent years due to the increased immigration from Central America.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 15; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
18. Poor Americans are often hindered by an inadequate education.
Answer: True; Page Reference: 13; Bloom's Category: Comprehension
19. Presently, African Americans are the largest ethnic minority group.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 14; Bloom's Category: Knowledge
20. Jefferson believed that economic equality is necessary for the existence of a democratic society.
Answer: False; Page Reference: 12; Bloom's Category: Knowledge

Essay

1. What might Locke and Tocqueville say about American government and politics today? Where might they agree and disagree?
Page Reference: 1, 6–9; Bloom's Category: Application
2. Assess social contract theory as the basis for government. In what ways is the theory reflected in the structure of the U.S. government?
Page Reference: 6–7; Bloom's Category: Comprehension
3. Which of the “bases of democracy” (i.e., self-government, majority rule, limited government) is most important? Support your choice by explaining why you selected this base of democracy.
Page Reference: 6–13; Bloom's Category: Analysis
4. Compare and contrast Weber's three sources of legitimacy. Which do you think is the most important in contemporary democratic political systems? Why?
Page Reference: 3; Bloom's Category: Analysis
5. According to Volkomer, “Diversity creates special problems for a democracy.” Assess Volkomer's assertion with reference to the contemporary demographic shifts taking place in the United States today. Is Volkomer correct in his assertion? Why or why not?
Page Reference: 13–15; Bloom's Category: Application

