

GOVERNMENT IN AMERICA

PEOPLE, POLITICS, AND POLICY



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MyPoliSciLab®

2012 ELECTION EDITION

Introducing Government in America

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Video: The Big Picture

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http://media.pearsoncmg.com/ph/hss/SSA_SHARED_MEDIA_1/polisci/presidency/Edwards_Ch01_Introducing_Government_in_America_Seg1_v2.html

Learning Objectives

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1.1

Identify the key functions of government and explain why they matter

1.2

Define politics in the context of democratic government

Learning Objectives

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1.3

Assess how citizens can have an impact on public policy and how policies can impact people

1.4

Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today

Learning Objectives

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1.5

Outline the central arguments of the debate in America over the proper scope of government

Video: The Basics

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http://media.pearsoncmg.com/ph/hss/SSA_SHARED_MEDIA_1/polisci/presidency/Seg2_IntroAmrGov_v2.html

- ▣ What is government?
 - How should we govern?
 - What should government do?
 - Maintain a national defence
 - Provide public goods and services
 - Preserve order
 - Socialize the young
 - Collect taxes

Transfer of Power

1.1



Afghanistan

1.1



1.1 Which of the following is not a duty of government?

- a. Collecting taxes
- b. Providing for national defense
- c. Promoting religion
- d. Preserving order

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- ▣ What is politics?
 - Who gets what, when, and how
- ▣ Political participation
 - More than just voting

FIGURE 1.1: Political apathy among young and old Americans, 1972–2008

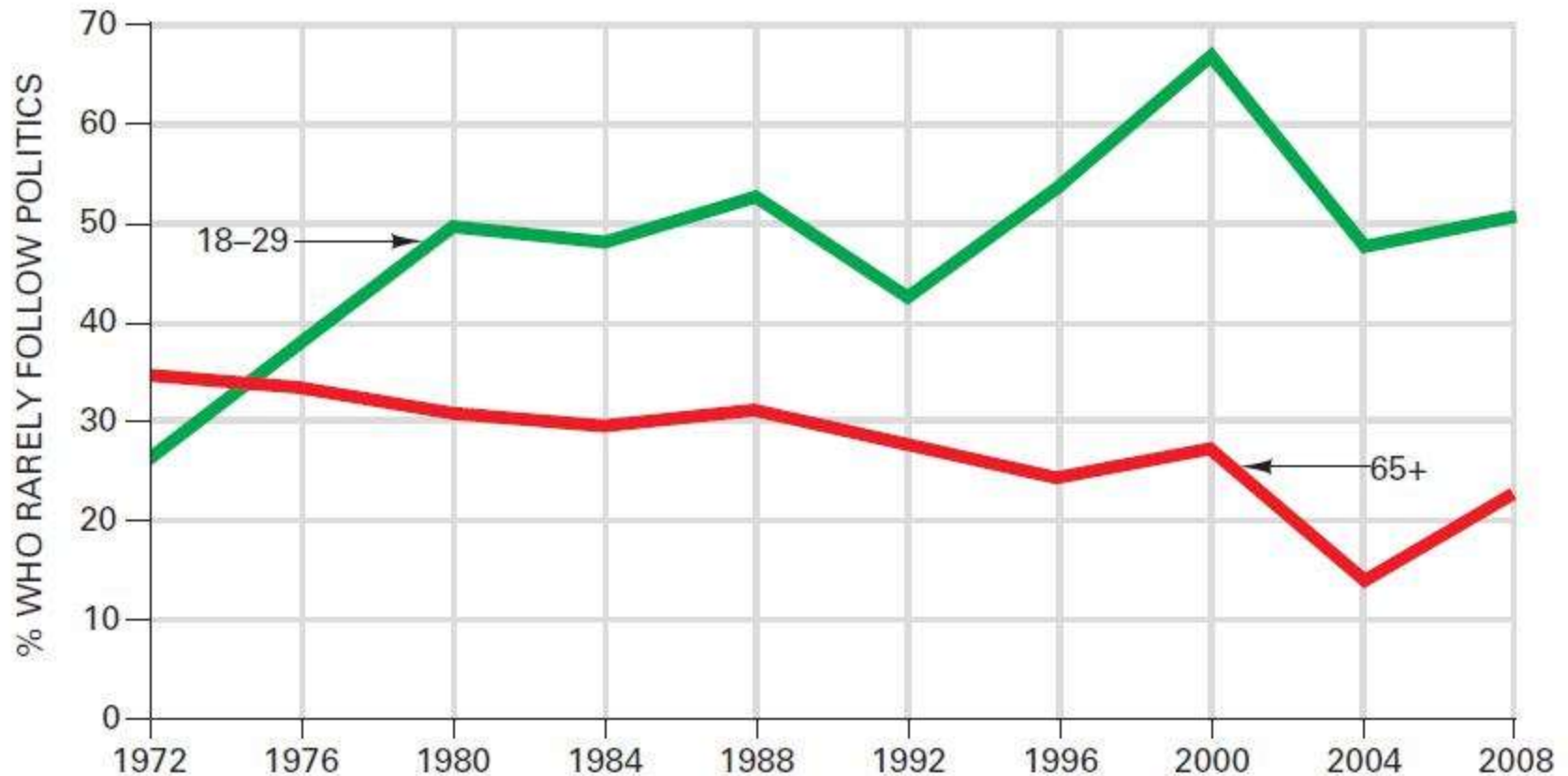


FIGURE 1.2: Age and political knowledge, 1972 and 2008

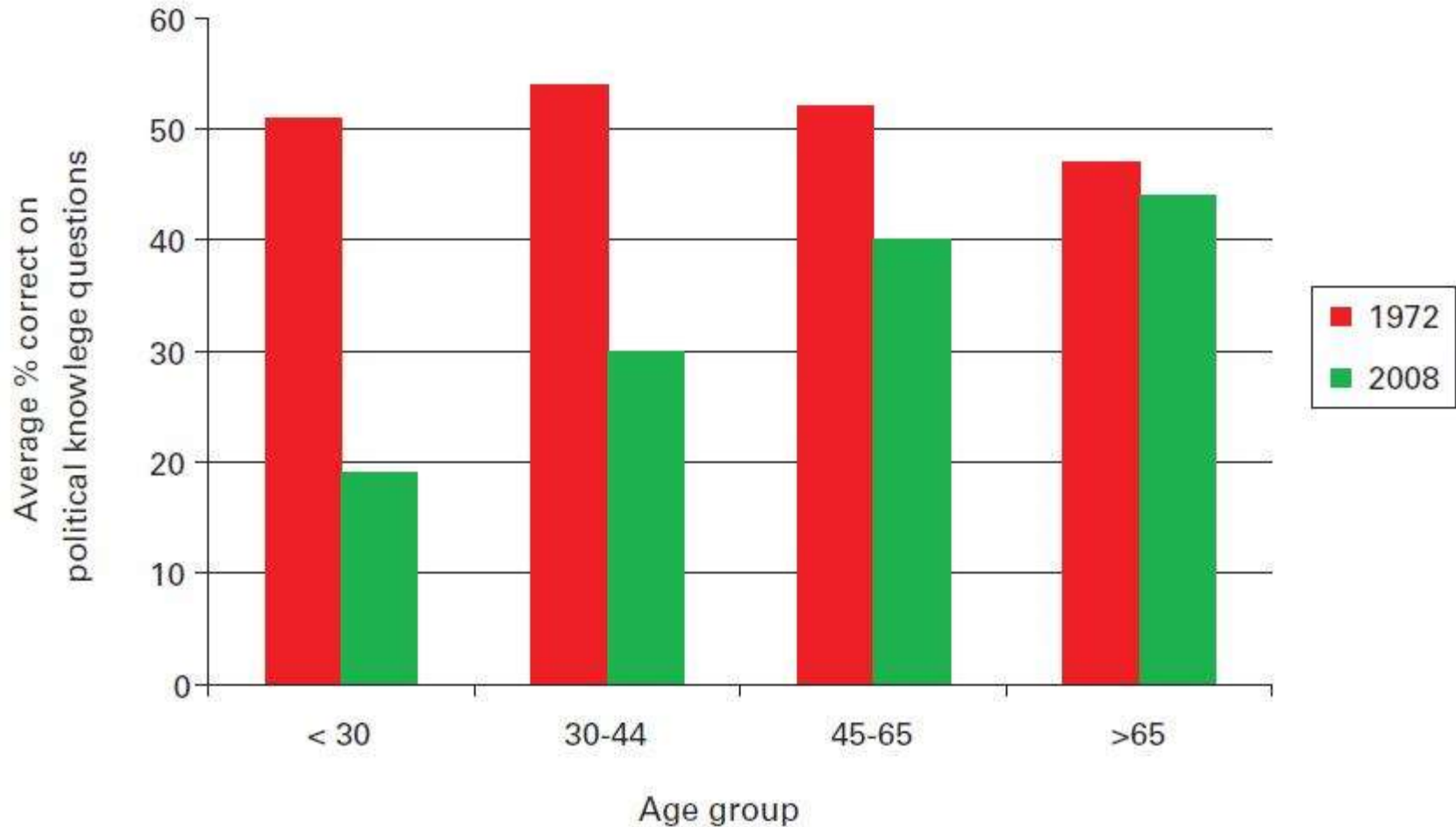
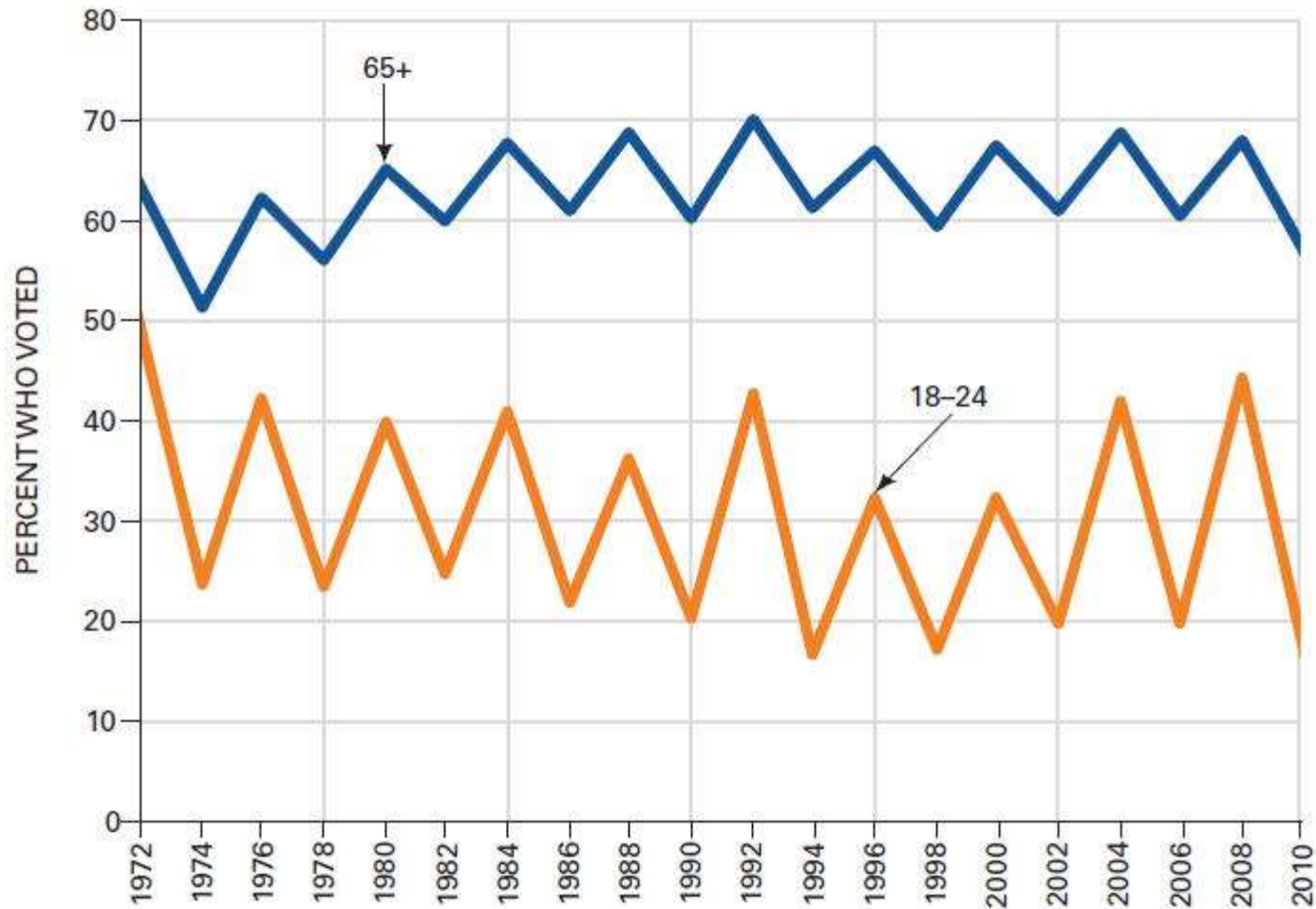


FIGURE 1.3: Election turnout rates of young and old Americans, 1972–2010



- ▣ Single-issue groups
 - e.g., abortion

Abortion rally

1.2



1.2 Which is true of single-issue groups?

- a. They increase voter participation.
- b. They negatively affect voter turnout.
- c. They vote just for politicians who support their issue.
- d. They force politicians to consider compromises.

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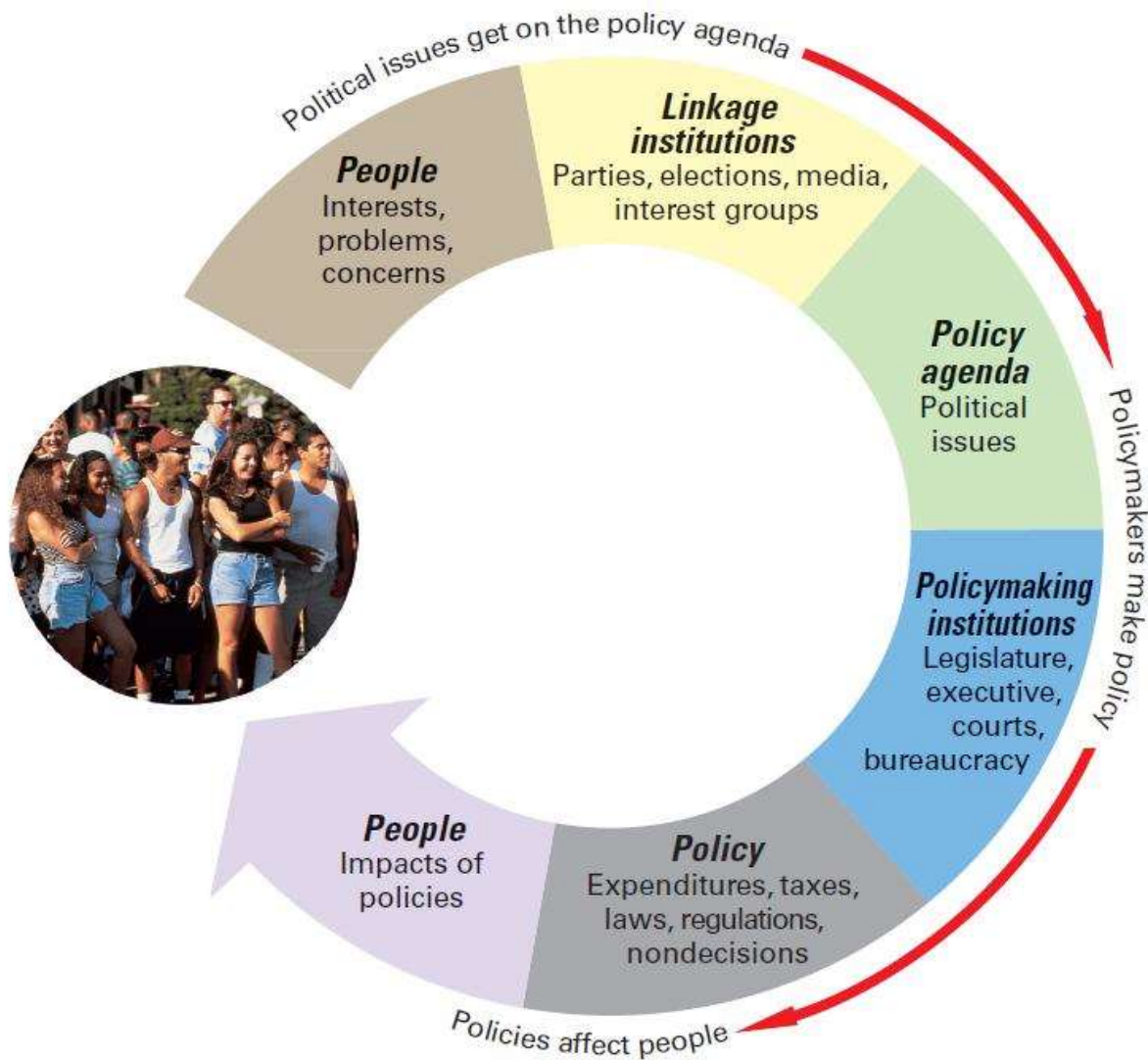
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Policymaking System

1.3

- ▣ People Shape Policy
- ▣ Politics Impact People

FIGURE 1.4: The policymaking system



People Shape Policy

- ▣ Linkage institutions
- ▣ Policy agenda
- ▣ Political issue
- ▣ Policymaking institutions
 - Congress
 - Presidency
 - Courts

Politics Impact People

- ▣ Public policy
 - Statute
 - Presidential action
 - Court decision
 - Budgetary choice
 - Regulation
- ▣ Policies should be effective
- ▣ Policies must have a goal

Table 1.1: Types of public policies

1.3

Type	Definition	Example
Congressional statute	Law passed by Congress	The \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is enacted.
Presidential action	Decision by president	American troops are withdrawn from Iraq.
Court decision	Opinion by Supreme Court or other court	Supreme Court rules that individuals have a constitutional right to own a gun.
Budgetary choices	Legislative enactment of taxes and expenditures	The federal budget resolution is enacted.
Regulation	Agency adoption of regulation	The Department of Education issues guidelines for qualifying for the federal student loan forgiveness program.

1.3 Which of the following is an example of public policy?

- a. Personal conviction
- b. Parental rule
- c. Congressional statute
- d. Religious edict

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Democracy in America

1.4

- ▣ Traditional Democratic Theory
- ▣ Three Contemporary Theories of American Democracy
- ▣ Challenges to Democracy
- ▣ American Political Culture and Democracy
- ▣ A Culture War

Traditional Democratic Theory

- ▣ Key principles of the democratic process (according to Dahl):
 - Equality in voting
 - Effective participation
 - Enlightened understanding
 - Citizen control of the agenda
 - Inclusion
- ▣ Majority rule and minority rights
- ▣ Representation

Three Contemporary Theories of American Democracy

- ▣ Pluralism
 - Groups of minorities working together
- ▣ Elitism
 - Power is held by the wealthy
- ▣ Hyperpluralism
 - Too many groups try to control policy

Challenges to Democracy

- ▣ Increased complexity of issues
- ▣ Limited participation in government
- ▣ Diverse political interests
 - Policy gridlock
- ▣ Escalating campaign costs

Super PAC contributions

1.4



American Political Culture and Democracy

- Political culture based on American creed
 - Liberty
 - Egalitarianism
 - Individualism
 - Laissez-faire
 - Populism

New Hampshire license plate

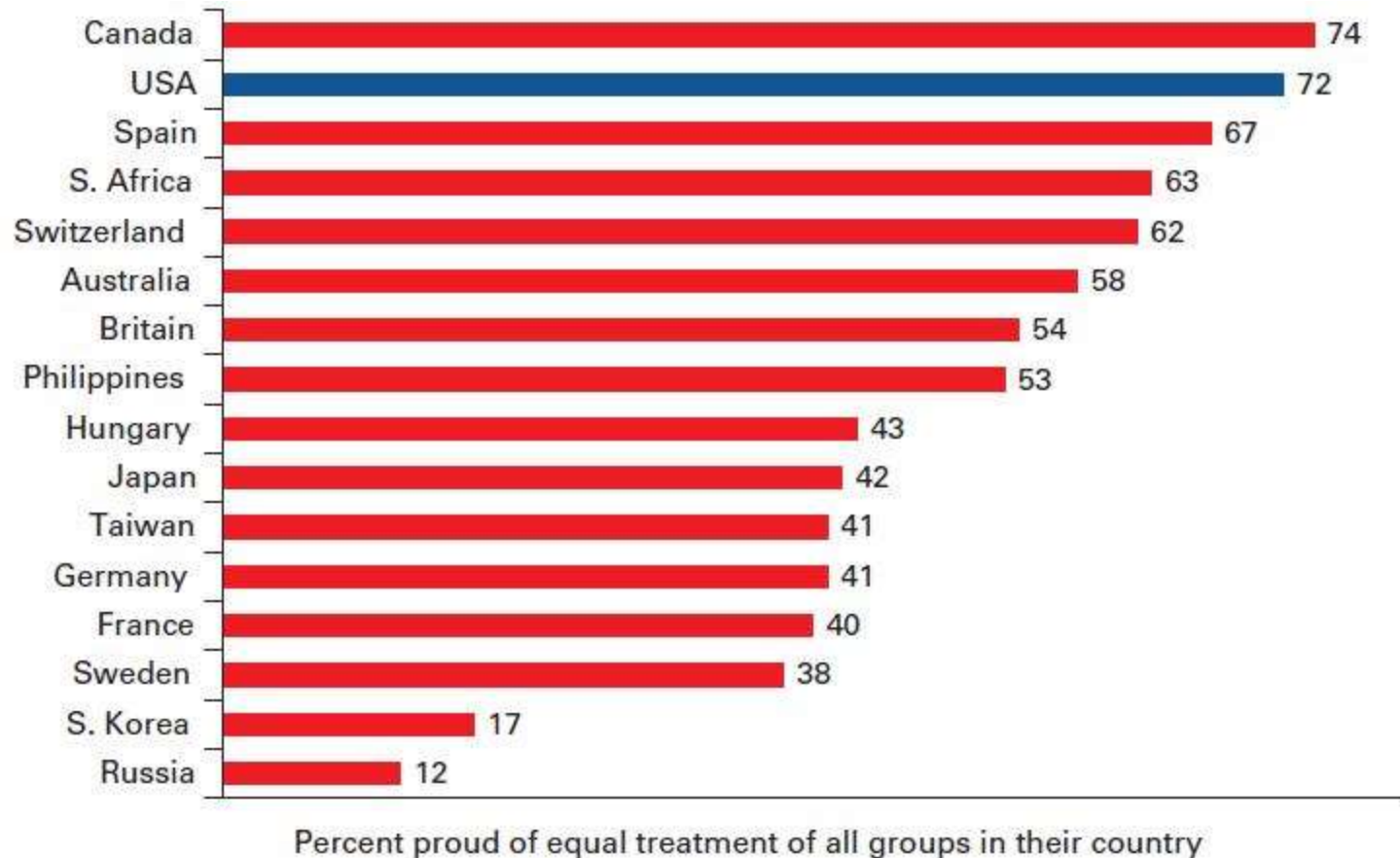
1.4



American Political Culture and Democracy

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FIGURE 1.5: Pride in equal treatment of groups in the U.S. and other established democracies



American Political Culture and Democracy

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A Culture War?

- ▣ Polarization of liberal and conservative political culture
 - Is it happening?
- ▣ Testing a crisis of values
 - Loss of traditional values
 - Less patriotism
 - Irreconcilable differences

Video: In Context

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 http://media.pearsoncmg.com/ph/hss/SSA_SHARED_MEDIA_1/polisci/presidency/Seg3_PoliticalCulture_v2.html

1.4 Which of the following illustrates hyperpluralism?

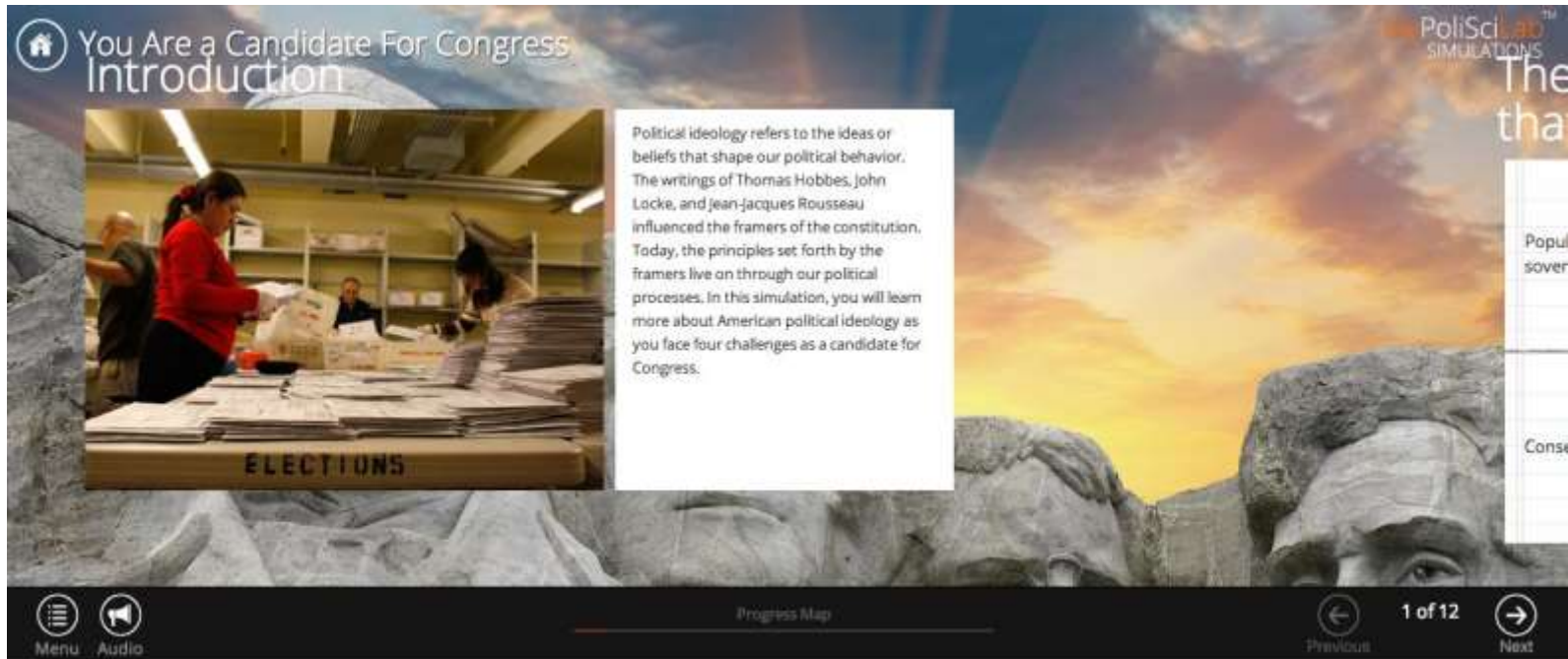
- a. Use of the court system to try to set policy
- b. Decrease in patriotism
- c. Reliance on Congress to limit special interests
- d. Diversity in political interests

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Explore the Simulation: You Are a Candidate for Congress

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 http://media.pearsoncmg.com/long/long_longman_media_1/2013_mpsl_sim/simulation.html?simulaURL=1

Explore American Government: Can You Get Ahead in America?

Political Culture

Can You Get Ahead In America?



http://media.pearsoncmg.com/long/long_edwards_mpslgi_a_16/pex/pex1.html

Scope of Government in America

- ▣ How Active Is American Government?

Video: Thinking Like a Political Scientist



http://media.pearsoncmg.com/ph/hss/SSA_SHARED_MEDIA_1/polisci/presidency/Seg4_Intro_v2.html



How Active Is American Government?

- ▣ Gross domestic product (GDP)
 - Government spends 1/3
 - Government employs 24 million people
- ▣ Americans expect government to solve problems
 - Unemployment, terrorism, illegal immigration, energy, education, lack of access to health care

Video: In the Real World

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 http://media.pearsoncmg.com/ph/hss/SSA_SHARED_MEDIA_1/polisci/presidency/Seg5_IntroAmrGov_v2.html

1.5 About one-third of the GDP is spent by

- a. The federal government
- b. State governments
- c. Local governments
- d. All three governments combined

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Discussion Question

What are the three theories of policymaking in the United States? Which theory seems most plausible to you? Why?

Video: So What?

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 http://media.pearsoncmg.com/ph/hss/SSA_SHARED_MEDIA_1/polisci/presidency/Edwards_Ch01_Introducing_Government_in_America_Seg6_v2.html

Further Review: On MyPoliSciLab

- ▣ Listen to the Chapter
- ▣ Study and Review the Flashcards
- ▣ Study and Review the Practice Tests