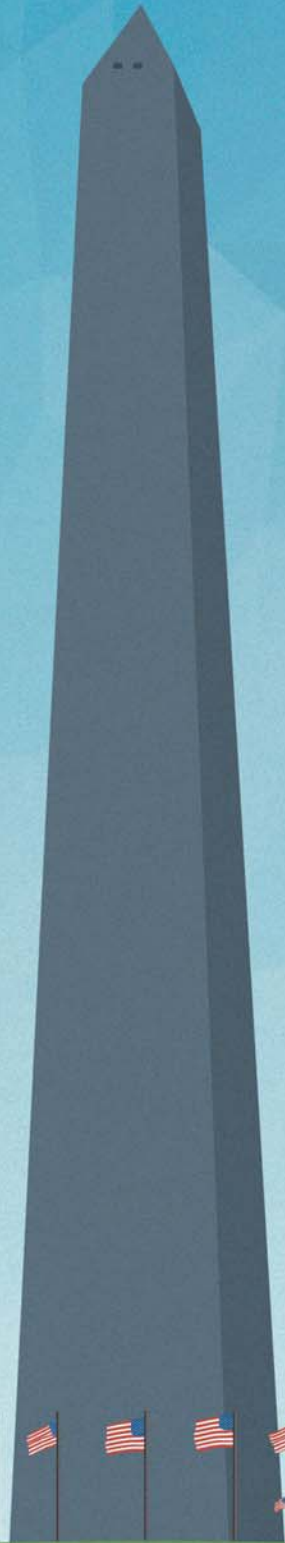


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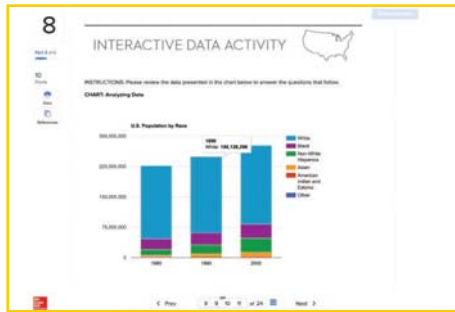


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# AM GOV

2017–2018

**JOSEPH LOSCO**  
*Ball State University*

**RALPH BAKER**  
*State College of Florida*



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# AMGOV

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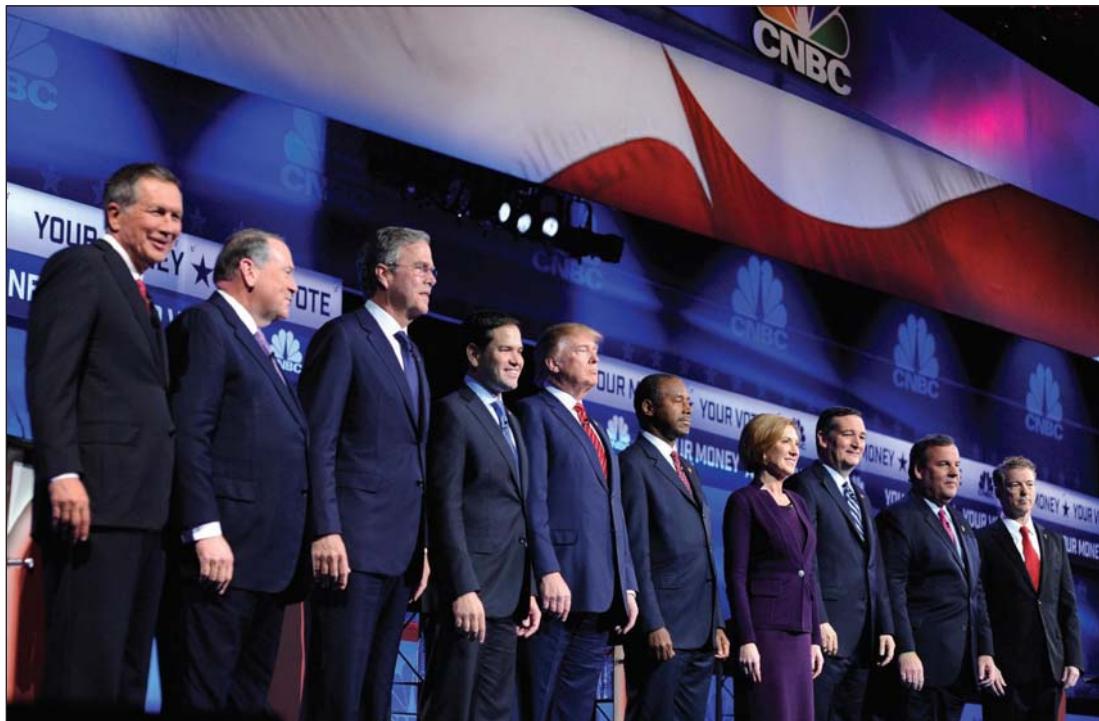
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# What's in AM GOV



Ralph Baker, State College of Florida, and Joseph Losco, Ball State University.

AM GOV was created with one simple premise in mind: Students will learn only if the content is engaging and current, if the design is visually attractive, and if the price is affordable.

With this premise in mind, we, the authors, set out to discover from you—students and faculty—how best to create a program that students would read and faculty would eagerly assign. We interviewed dozens of faculty and hundreds of students at colleges throughout the country. Students told us they wanted resources with innovative visual appeal, interactive digital technology, an integrated approach, and relevant content designed according to the way they learn. Instructors told us they wanted a way to engage their students without compromising on high-quality content.

We listened. The result is AM GOV, an American government program that started a revolution. Our goal in AM GOV is to engage students in the story of people's relationship to government and how an active and informed citizenry is essential in making democ-

racy meaningful. We want students to recognize how their choices about government affect their lives.

AM GOV marries our commitment to scholarly content with the value that currency, presentation, adaptive technology, and reasonable price have for students. Frequent updates of both political events and scholarship keep the program vital and relevant. We gave AM GOV this visually rich design because our research taught us that, in our visual culture, it makes student learning excel and American government memorable. Students even gave AM GOV its name.

And we continue to listen. Using the latest technology to track student usage and comprehension, AM GOV pinpoints those content areas students find most challenging with *heat maps*. This technology is used to help us rework presentations to make the material more comprehensible and meaningful to students. Available adaptive technologies, like LearnSmart® and SmartBook®, put students in control of the learning experience, allowing them to learn from peer responses and create a personal reading experience that's all their own.

You started AM GOV. You convinced us that there had to be a better way to get across the fundamental concepts of American democracy and what it means to be an American citizen.

We listened. And we continue to learn from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Losco".

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph Baker".

# About the Authors

---

**Joseph Losco** is professor of political science at Ball State University and Director of the Bowen Center for Public Affairs. He teaches courses in political theory and American government. Losco has published in the areas of public policy and political theory. His publications include *Political Theory: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford Press) and *Human Nature and Politics*, co-edited with Albert Somit (JAI Press). At the Bowen Center, Losco directs the annual Hoosier Survey of public opinion and shares responsibility for the Voting System Technical Oversight Program (VSTOP) which conducts voting system studies for the Indiana Secretary of State. His research has been funded by grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. Losco received his B.A. and M.A. from Pennsylvania State University and his Ph.D. from Temple University. He has been married to his wife Marcia for over 40 years and has a son, Michael, who practices international arbitration law in New York City.

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He is the author of numerous books and articles including the *The Criminal Justice Game*, *Evaluating Alternative Law Enforcement Policies*, *Determinants of Law Enforcement Policies*, *State Policy Problems*, and *Women Government Officials in Indiana* and articles concerning the Supreme Court, gender policy, the chilly climate in academia, media and politics, and police professionalism. With Joe Losco, Baker produced over twenty political science videos that resulted in *Telly Awards* for “The 1996 Campaign,” “The 2000 Campaign,” and an *Axiem Award* for “Case Studies in American Government.”

At Ball State University, Baker won the Outstanding Teacher Award and served several terms as the President of the Indiana Political Science Association.

# Foundational Content and

*AM GOV* is a **relatable, informative, and visual** introduction to American politics. Designed with **today's students** in mind, *AM GOV* is a **concise, magazine style** program that teaches students *how to think critically, and politically*. With an emphasis on current events, *AM GOV* engages its readers through **approachable content** and **digital tools** that are proven to help students better understand and connect with the concepts and language used in the American Government course.

## Better Data, Smarter Revision, Improved Results

Students helped inform the revision strategy:

**STEP 1.** Over the course of three years, data points showing concepts that caused students the most difficulty were anonymously collected from McGraw-Hill Education's Connect® American Government's LearnSmart for *AM GOV*.



**STEP 2.** The data from LearnSmart was provided to the authors in the form of a **Heat Map**, which graphically illustrated “hot spots” in the text that impacted student learning (see image to left).

**STEP 3.** The authors used the **Heat Map** data to refine the content and reinforce student comprehension in the new edition. Additional quiz questions and assignable activities were created for use in Connect American Government to further support student success.

**RESULT:** Because the **Heat Map** gave the authors empirically based feedback at the paragraph and even sentence level, they were able to develop the new edition using precise student data that pinpointed concepts that caused students the most difficulty.

Heat map data also informs the activities and assessments in Connect American Government, McGraw-Hill Education's assignable and assessable learning platform. Where the Heat map data shows students struggle with specific learning objectives or concepts, we created new Connect assets—Concept Clips, Applied Critical Thinking (ACT), and NewsFlash current event activities—to provide another avenue for students to learn and master the content.

For example, less than 50% of students showed mastery of the **Learning Objective: Explain the legislative process.**

In response we added:

- A new Concept Clip - How does a bill become a law?
- A new ACT assignment – Who is your member of the House of Representatives?
- A related NewsFlash current event article

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# Digital Tools Designed for Today's Student

quickly identify the concepts that require more attention from individual students—or the entire class. SmartBook detects the content a student is most likely to forget and brings it back to improve long-term knowledge retention.

## Informing and Engaging Students on American Government Concepts

Using Connect American Government, student can learn the course material more deeply and study more effectively than ever before.

At the *remember* and *understand* levels of Bloom's taxonomy, **Concept Clips** help students break down key concepts in American Government. Using easy-to-understand audio narration, visual cues, and colorful animations, Concept Clips provide a step-by-step presentation that aid in student retention. New Concept Clips for this edition include the following:

- Explaining ideology
- Constitutional compromises
- Right of privacy
- Restrictions on voting
- Political socialization
- Realignment of parties
- Interest groups
- Legislative process
- Presidential powers
- Supreme Court procedures

Also at the *remember* and *understand* levels of Bloom's, **Newsflash** exercises tie current news stories to key American government concepts and learning objectives. After interacting with a contemporary news story, students are assessed on their ability to make the connections between real life events and course content. Examples include the 2016 election results, transgender bathroom bills, and aftermath of Justice Antonin Scalia's death.

At the *apply*, *analyze*, and *evaluate* levels of Bloom's taxonomy, **critical thinking activities** allow students to engage with the political process and learn by doing.

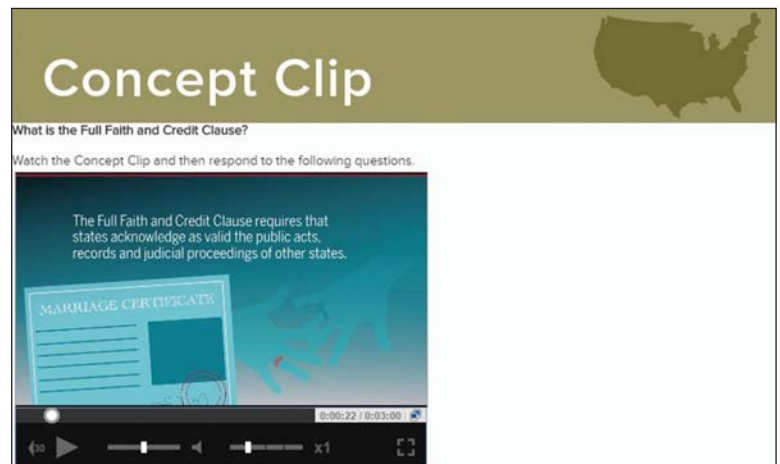
Examples are:

- Quiz: What is your political ideology?
- Poll: Americans Confidence in the Police
- Research: Find your Senator
- Infographic: Compare the Courts

**Interactive Data Analysis** activities should be added here at the *apply*, *analyze*, *evaluate* levels.

Examples include:

- U.S. Population by Race
- Confidence in Government Institutions
- Independent Expenditures by Election
- Incumbency Advantage





Another way students are able to learn by doing is through Government in Action, an award-winning education game where students play the role of a congressperson, from running for election to pass legislation. Government in Action weaves in every aspect of the American government course as students compete for political capital, approval, and awareness. Student play to learn and campaign to win to develop a fundamental understanding of American democracy.

## Approachable Content

AM GOV presents content in approachable and meaningful way designed to engage students.

- **NEW Thinking It Through Activities:** Our discussions at the American Government symposia conducted across the country as well as surveys made it clear that critical thinking is an essential skill for which instructors need additional support. Every chapter now concludes with an activity tied to a learning objective for the chapter that challenges students to go beyond the basics to think through a problem and formulate possible solutions, examples include Chapter 7 “Describe the factors that contribute to political participation” and Chapter 10 “Describe the role of the media in political campaigns.”
- **Citizenship Quizzes:** In these quizzes, students are invited to take the U.S. Citizenship Test to check their understanding of institutions such as the courts, behavior such as voting rights, and number of amendments in the Constitution.
- **Current Controversy:** These features examine controversial issues, ranging from “Transgender Individuals in the Military” to “Failing to Fill Federal Court Vacancies.”
- **Challenges Ahead:** These features examine the political challenges following the 2016 elections and beyond. Topics range from “Living in a Surveillance Society” to “Tamping Down Cost of Campaigns” to “The Fight for LGBT Rights in the States.”
- **Global Perspectives:** These features compare the United States to other nations by interpreting charts and graphs. Topics range from “Changing Patterns of Political Participation” to “Defense Spending.”

As mentioned, the authors revised in response to student heat map data that pinpointed the topics and concepts with which students struggle the most. This heat-map-directed revision is reflected primarily in Chapters 2, 4, 11, and 14. Overall content changes include the November 2016 election results and the following revisions:

### Chapter 1—Citizenship in Our Changing Democracy

- Revised chapter opening vignette Millennials: Finding Their Voices
- Updated examples to explain theories of power
- Global Perspectives: new data on trust in government
- Updated Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond box: After Millennials with discussion of Generation Z
- Updated figures on education and lifetime earnings

## **Chapter 2—The Constitution: The Foundation of Citizens’ Rights**

- New chapter opening vignette: A Couple’s Fight for Constitutional Rights, Focus on *Obergefell v. Hodges*
- New chart detailing the structure and content of each article of the Constitution to aid retention and recall
- Updates on recent attempts to amend the Constitution
- Greater exposition and simplification of language explaining the key events that led to the U.S. Constitution such as why the Framers chose a federal form of government
- Provided more recent examples like same sex marriage to illustrate the relationship among the states in the American federal system
- Added definition of inherent powers to help clarify the definition of implied powers

## **Chapter 3—Federalism: Citizenship and the Dispersal of Power**

- Updated chapter opening vignette on marijuana legalization in states
- New Portrait of an Activist box: Chicago VOYCE (Voices of Youth in Chicago Education)
- Simplified section on federal grants and mandates
- Updated Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond box: The Fight for LGBT Rights in States Is Far From Over since *Obergefell v. Hodges*

## **Chapter 4—Civil Liberties: Expanding Citizens’ Rights**

- New chapter opening vignette: Champions of Our Rights on issues of civil right and civil liberties describing free speech champions of the past and present
- New data on knowledge and support of the First Amendment
- New case on freedom of religion
- Added data on religious affiliations
- New free speech cases involving specialty plates and mandatory union dues, and donation seeking in judicial elections
- Revised section on campaign speech
- Updated search and seizure cases
- Refined United States’ world incarceration rate comparisons
- Updated review of right to counsel and cruel and unusual punishment cases
- New Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond box: Living in a Surveillance Society
- Clarified abortion issue with coverage of Texas abortion case

## **Chapter 5—Civil Rights: Toward a More Equal Citizenry**

- Revised chapter opening vignette: Housing Discrimination in America
- New Portrait of an Activist box: Lilly Ledbetter as advocate of equal pay for women
- Clarified today’s affirmative action policy with discussion of Fisher case
- Explained importance of Supreme Court’s same sex marriage case
- New Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond box: current issue of voter suppression
- Updated role of women in military
- Updated information on gender gap in presidential elections
- Added discussion question on relationship between civil rights and civic engagement
- New Current Controversy box: “The CIA: A Necessary Evil?”

## **Chapter 6—Public Opinion**

- New chapter opening vignette: Public Opinion in Black and White—Focusing on Black Lives Matter and Race Relations
- Simplified discussion of life cycle effects and generational effects
- Updated information about role of voluntary associations, opinion formation, and engagement
- Updated media examples in section dealing with media and public opinion
- New Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond: Is Polling in Crisis?
- New Data on generational differences in political knowledge
- New data on confidence in government
- New data on trust in government
- New data on political toleration
- Information on Britain’s exit from the European Union
- New data on ideology and ideological leanings by generation
- New Current Controversy box: That’s Disgusting! Does Sensitivity to Disgusting Images Reveal Your Ideological Preferences?

## **Chapter 7—Political Participation: Equal Opportunities and Unequal Voices**

- Updated chapter opening vignette: Millennials Rising—with more recent examples of millennial mayors
- Demographic profile of nonvoters
- Update on voter registration laws and impact on turnout
- New data on turnout rate in select Western democracies
- New data on party identification
- New data on issues Americans find most important
- Updated section on Candidate Characteristics to discuss 2016 campaign

## **Chapter 8—Interest Groups in America**

- New chapter opening vignette: Aiming for the White House—describes the efforts of the 2016 Republican presidential candidates to curry favor with the National Rifle Association
- New Portrait of an Activist box: Marian Wright Edelman as an interest group advocate for the Children’s Defense Fund
- Updated revolving number of former officials working as lobbyists
- Clarification of different types of lobbying done in Washington, D.C.
- Described the role of Super PACs in the 2016 presidential election
- Explained the role of dark money in presidential elections
- Clarified the relationship between a presidential campaign and a supportive PAC
- Updated contributions of groups by sector to Republicans and Democrats

## **Chapter 9—Parties and Political Campaigns**

- New chapter opening vignette: The Best Laid Plans—factional elements within the political parties in 2016
- Update on party demographic alignment and political sorting
- Update on party identification

- New Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond box: Tamping Down the Cost of Campaigns
- Updated discussion of party organization
- Updated section on money in political campaigns including impact of funding changes in wake of Citizens United
- Update on use of media in 2016 campaign

#### **Chapter 10—Media: Tuning In or Tuning Out**

- New chapter opening vignette: Trumping the Media—how Donald Trump worked the media during the race for the Republican nomination
- Updated the growing role of the Internet as a campaign news source
- Updated percentage of Americans using social networking sources
- Updated the media environment in the United States
- New Global Perspective box on the World’s Most Censored Countries and discussion of the most censored media institutions in the world
- Discussed the role and impact of the media in the 2016 election
- Recounted the media’s coverage of the presidential debates
- Explained the 2016 election night coverage by the media
- Updated data on whether Americans believe the media protects democracy
- New Current Controversy box on Millennials and the News

#### **Chapter 11—Congress: Doing the People’s Business**

- New chapter opening vignette: Order in the House—the ascension of Paul Ryan as Speaker
- Updates on 2016 House and Senate elections including financing and election results
- New Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond box: To Diversify Congress, Expand the Pipeline, discussing ways to expand diversity
- New Portrait of Activist box: Meet Sara Agate, Fellow at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
- Updated discussion of partisan polarization in Congress
- Revised and added key terms to clarify the enumerated powers granted to Congress
- Added charts on House and Senate Leadership Positions
- Updated section on Congressional powers to reflect actions of 114<sup>th</sup> Congress
- Refined the section on the congressional budget process
- Refined discussion of the effect of electoral reform on civic engagement
- Updated and revised sections on the importance of money in congressional elections and the different types of funding with new examples
- Revised the section on efforts to reform lobbying abuse and clarified examples
- Refined the coverage of the influence of committee staff on members
- Refined the trustee model of representation coverage
- Revised and added key terms to clarify the enumerated powers granted to Congress



- Added key term, advice and consent, to clarify the president’s role in making treaties
- Reworked the sections on the differences in states’ redistricting procedures and impact of racial gerrymandering
- Refined the section on the legislative veto

### **Chapter 12—The Presidency: Power and Paradox**

- New chapter opening vignette: Insurgency and Its Aftermath—the results after both parties are fractured
- Coverage of 2016 presidential election including funding, primaries, conventions, general election, battleground states, and overall results
- Updates on presidential powers reflecting Obama’s initiatives as well as Congressional and court reactions including *United States v. Texas* (2016)
- New Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond: Promises, Promises on campaign promises
- Updates on presidential success with Congress
- Updates on presidential foreign policy action with regard to ISIL and Syria
- Updates on presidential approval ratings
- Updates on Obama’s use of the media
- Latest poll results by scholars and public on ranking U.S. presidents

### **Chapter 13—Bureaucracy: Citizens as Owners and Consumers**

- Updated chapter opening vignette: Student Loans, Debt, and Bureaucracy—discussing various aspects of the student loan issue
- New Current Controversy box on the role of the CIA in the bureaucracy
- Updated 2016 salary table for federal employees
- New Portrait of an Activist box on Julián Castro as a bureaucrat and rising political star
- Updated Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond box: Government Shutdowns discusses the continuing dysfunction within Congress to pass annual budgets
- Updated attacks by 2016 presidential candidates on the bureaucracy

### **Chapter 14: The Courts—Judicial Power in a Democratic Setting**

- Updated chapter opening vignette: Supreme Court and Partisan Conflict, discussing the justice vacancy
- New Portrait of an Activist box: Stephen Schapiro took redistricting for state congressional seats in Maryland to the Supreme Court
- Discussed the Scalia vacancy and the 2016 responses to select a successor
- Included a student portrait on the bringing of a redistricting case before the Supreme Court
- New Current Controversy box on Failing to Fill Federal Court Vacancies
- Related the judicial selection process to the Scalia vacancy
- Updated the Challenges Ahead 2017 and Beyond Box on the popular support numbers for the U.S.
- U.S. Supreme Court

## Chapter 15—Public Policy: Responding to Citizens

- New chapter opening vignette: Whatever Happened to the Middle Class?
- Enhanced discussion of policymaking process, especially policy evaluation
- Updates on climate change, including discussion of Paris Agreement
- New data on world greenhouse emissions and fossil fuel emissions
- Updated data on poverty in U.S.
- Expanded section and new data on income inequality
- New Portrait of an Activist: Muriel Woods and the Spirit of Volunteerism
- Updated data on U.S. budgets and deficits

## Chapter 16—Foreign and Defense Policy: Protecting American Interests in the World

- New chapter opening vignette: The Quest for Security in an Uncertain World
- Updates on threats from ISIL
- Updates on Obama foreign policy
- Global Perspectives new data on global defense expenditures
- Reworked section on roots of Middle East conflict
- New Current Controversy: Should Transgender Individuals Be Allowed to Serve in the Military?

### American Government Symposia

Since 2006, McGraw-Hill Education has conducted several symposia in American Government for instructors from across the country. These events offered a forum for instructors to exchange ideas and experiences with colleagues they might not have met otherwise. They also provided an opportunity for editors from McGraw-Hill Education to gather information about what instructors of American Government need and the challenges they face. The feedback we have received has been invaluable and has contributed—directly and indirectly—to the development of *AM GOV*. We would like to thank the participants for their insights:

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## Chapter 1

# Citizenship

## In Our Changing Democracy

### WHAT'S TO COME

- ★ 3 Politics, Power, and Participation
- ★ 8 American Political Ideals
- ★ 9 The Changing Face of the American Citizenry
- ★ 12 The Future of Citizenship

### MILLENNIALS: FINDING THEIR VOICES

“It’s about lying, cheating, getting nothing done. That’s not how I want to spend my time.”<sup>1</sup>

That’s how Todd, a high school junior, responded to researchers asking if he had ever thought about running for political office. Todd’s attitude toward our political system reflects the views of many young people today. And while Todd’s views may seem unsurprising given the negative images of political leaders portrayed in the media, it seems strangely at odds with the enthusiasm young people showed just eight years ago for the candidacy of Barack Obama. What has happened?

In 2008, young Americans turned out to vote in the largest numbers since 1972, the first election in which 18-year-olds were eligible. They demonstrated an enthusiasm for politics that raised expectations among scholars who had bemoaned a decades-long decline in civic participation by young people. Youth activism in 2008 was fueled by many factors, including an exciting political campaign that included viable African American and female candidates for president, an innovative outreach program that incorporated social media tools popular with the young, serious discussion of policies like education and the environment that resonated with young people, and optimism about the future of the country and of the generation that was coming of age politically.



Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT) attracted strong support from youth in his bid for the 2016 presidential nomination. (© Robyn Beck/Getty Images)



Over the course of the past several years, however, political enthusiasm and optimism among the young faded. Voter turnout in 2012 among 18- to 29-year-olds fell by 6 percentage points over 2008, with nearly two million fewer young voters going to the polls. Youth turnout in the midterm election of 2014 barely reached 20 percent, the lowest rate in forty years.<sup>2</sup> The Great Recession, disappointment over President Obama's job performance, and impatience with political stalemate in Washington took their toll on the political inclinations of the young. The unemployment rate for young adults between ages 18 and 29 surged to a record high, dashing the dreams of many young people and leaving students increasingly anxious about paying off student loans. About half of young adults say that President Obama failed to bring the change he promised to Washington. And a majority of young people now believe the United States is headed in the wrong direction.<sup>3</sup>

## As You READ

- **What kinds of citizen involvement fuel democracies?**
- **What ideals fuel American democracy?**
- **What are some of the changes and challenges facing America today?**

Yet Millennials, young people born in the 1980s and 1990s, who are attending college or who are college aged, remain more civic-minded in many ways than their immediate predecessors in Generation X. More ethnically and racially diverse than previous college generations, they volunteer in their communities at higher rates; they are more tolerant of life style differences; more supportive of equal opportunities for all; and less likely to support military solutions to international problems than their elders.<sup>4</sup> They are also more likely to express support for nontraditional forms of participation. For example, 41 percent of young people engage in some form of participatory politics, defined as interactive, peer-based acts through which individuals and groups seek to exert both voice and influence on issues of public concern. Largely conducted through the use of social media, these activities allow young people to disseminate their views, mobilize like-minded others, and circumvent traditional gatekeepers of information.<sup>5</sup> They are also prone to register their political views through the marketplace; fully one-third have used their buying power expressly to reward or punish companies for social policies.<sup>6</sup> Members of racial and ethnic minorities display their own participatory strengths. For example, Hispanics are more likely than their white counterparts to attend political protests; African American youth are more likely than their non-black contemporaries to contact radio stations, TV stations, and newspapers to express political opinions.<sup>7</sup>

When it comes to electoral politics, however, a majority of Millennials have been turned off by what they see and hear in the political arena. In one study, 60 percent said they believe elected officials are motivated by selfish reasons. Only 15 percent reported that they believe politicians are interested in helping people like themselves.<sup>8</sup> As a result, they actively avoid politics.<sup>9</sup> Yet it is the Millennials who will bear the brunt of political decisions made today. They face an uncertain future threatened by fiscal debt, rising levels of economic inequality, and environmental crisis. For that reason, it is more important than ever that Millennials sustain active interest and participation in the political process and that we find ways to overcome disparities in income, education, ethnicity, and gender to ensure that all sectors of society get a fair hearing.

There is a bit of good news. Researchers have found that the more young people know about the political system, the more likely they are to become politically active. Those who are more active politically are able to see beneath sensationalist headlines to understand how the power of the political process can transform lives for the better. These young people are more likely to follow political events in the news, to discuss politics with friends and family, and to say they have considered running for office. And while young people have turned away from electoral politics, they are more apt than their elders to show support for political issues through the formation of new groups that take on special causes like "Black Lives Matter." This move away from traditional, elite-driven forms of participation is not limited to American youth, but is a global phenomenon that may signify a new era of political activism.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout this text, we will introduce you to young people making a difference in the traditional political arena as well as through new forms of political participation. It is our hope that by providing examples of youth who are changing the face of American politics and promoting greater understanding of the role and purpose of the political systems in our lives, you too will take a greater interest in exercising the powers you have as a citizen to effect change. In a democracy people rule either directly or through elected leaders, and citizenship is a two-sided coin: It confers rights and protections on members of the political community, but in return it requires allegiance and involvement. Each of us must weigh the costs and benefits of participation. The benefits may be policies we support; the costs involve our time and attention. Often, involvement is only achieved through the active encouragement of others.

As you will see throughout this book, citizenship today is in a precarious state. For much of the past half-century, voter turnout has remained well below that of other advanced democracies, and the level of trust between citizens and elected national leaders has reached historic lows.<sup>11</sup> We believe that citizenship today is at a crossroads: We can strengthen the reciprocal bonds of trust between citizen and government, or we can watch these bonds continue to fray. We can either work at finding solutions to the pressing problems that endanger our future or watch these problems worsen. There are signs that young people are ready to open a dialogue about how to construct a more vibrant democracy that works for all citizens. That is the central hope of this book. ■

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## POLITICS, POWER, AND PARTICIPATION

We all live in communities in which we participate in a wide range of activities with our neighbors. We attend school board meetings with some and go to church services with others. We play softball with neighborhood friends, and our siblings may attend scout meetings with others. These relationships make up **civic life**, the constellation of relationships that keep us connected with others and make our communities vital places to live and work. By voluntarily participating in civic life, we build what is called **social capital**, bonds of trust and reciprocity between citizens that form the glue holding societies together. No one forces us to attend a community meeting or to volunteer for environmental clean-up activities, or to contribute to a community foundation; but when we do, our communities are better for it and we feel a stronger connection to our neighbors.

Civic life includes institutions of **government**—the body or bodies charged with making official policies for citizens. Citizens participate in government by acts like voting, attending political meetings, and campaigning for candidates they support for office.

**Politics** is the process by which we choose government officials and make decisions about public policy. In a democracy, citizens play a primary role in this process, but—like being a good neighbor—it is a role they must choose to play. Americans are not forced to leave the pleasures and obligations of private life to engage in political or community service. Yet the vitality of our social and political institutions depends on our willingness as citizens to step outside of our private lives and to work with others voluntarily in making our neighborhoods safe, our communities strong, and our government work effectively for all.

If our engagement in voluntary associations with others builds social capital and gives rise to civic and political involvement, then is it better to be engaged in more voluntary associations? Some social scientists regard the number and kind of voluntary associations sustained in society as a sign of a nation's well-being.<sup>12</sup> That is why some of them, like Harvard's Robert Putnam, worry about what they see as a decline in civic activities ranging from attendance at school board meetings to meeting with one's neighbors. Drawing upon data showing a decline in the number of Americans coming together for a host of activities from PTA meetings to family dinners, Putnam argues that a decline in civic life has led

**civic life** Participation in the collective life of the community.

**social capital** Bonds of trust and reciprocity between citizens that form the glue that holds modern societies together.

**government** The body (or bodies) charged with making official policies for citizens.

**politics** Process by which we choose government officials and make decisions about public policy.

# Citizen Activities in a Democratic Society

## PRIVATE LIFE

## CIVIC LIFE

Functions

Individual activities	Civic engagement activities	
	Nonpolitical activities	Political participation
Family School Work	Recycling Fellowship meetings Service activities	Voting Attending political meetings Political campaigning
Cultivates personal relationships, serves individual needs—e.g., getting an education, earning a living	Provides community services and acts as a training ground for political participation	Fulfills demands of democratic citizenship

Citizens have many opportunities to participate in the civic life of their communities.

**direct democracy** Form of government in which decisions about public policy extend to the entire citizenry.

**representative democracy** Form of government in which popular decision making is restricted to electing or appointing the public officials who make public policy.

**majority rule** The requirement that electoral majorities determine who is elected to office and that majorities in power determine our laws and how they are administered.

ring instead more expressive and individualistic activities like boycotting companies that pollute the environment.<sup>14</sup> They are more prone to take advantage of new technologies to make their voices heard than to rely on older forms of political expression.

No matter which vision of civic health we choose to embrace, it still matters mightily who controls the levers of political power in government. Institutions of government impact almost every facet of our daily lives from the quality of the water we drink to the type and quality of education we receive. Therefore, it is important that the choice of individuals controlling those levers be distributed widely and fairly. Democracy thrives when citizen participation is robust. But political and civic involvement is not evenly spread across the entire population. This has serious consequences for ensuring an equal voice for all citizens.

Your authors believe there is ample reason for optimism about the future of civic life in America; but there is vast room for improvement as well, and we will highlight some promising avenues in the chapters that follow.

## Types of Government

*Whistle-blower Edward Snowden released data he purloined as an NSA contractor showing massive government monitoring of phone messages, leading to a national dialogue about the limits of government authority and how best to balance the interests of personal freedom and national security. Snowden fled to Russia to escape prosecution in the U.S. (© The Guardian via Getty Images)*

Governments may take a variety of forms, but a key distinction between them is how widely power is shared among the citizens. In a monarchy or dictatorship, a single person exercises absolute power. By contrast, in a **direct democracy**, political decision making extends to the entire citizenry. Some ancient Greek city-states, for example, made decisions about the use of power in open-air assemblies involving thousands of citizens. Only free males, however, were counted as citizens. Few modern nations employ direct democracy; most free nations prefer instead to restrict popular decision making to electing or appointing officials who make public policy. This type of government is properly called a **representative democracy**. Citizens in a representative democracy hold public officials accountable



through periodic elections and the rule of law. America's representative democracy is characterized by **majority rule** and protections for **minority rights**. Electoral majorities determine who is elected to office, and majorities in power determine our laws and how they are administered. However, certain rights, like freedom of speech and religion, are beyond the reach of majority control. A majority of citizens may not deny to a minority those rights which are protected for all. We will discuss these features of our political system in more detail in Chapter 2.

Democratic societies also enshrine certain individual rights and place limits on the actions government officials can undertake.



For example, our Constitution's Fourth Amendment outlaws unreasonable searches and seizures. Of course, potential clashes between government authorities and individual rights are legion. Sometimes government actions presumably undertaken for our own protection may threaten individual rights. Revelations by whistle-blower Edward Snowden unearthed a massive effort to monitor phone messages undertaken by the National Security Agency, which the government said was necessary to protect the nation from potential terrorist attacks. Civil libertarians, and many Americans generally, however, believed the government went too far, leading to a national dialogue about the limits of government authority and how best to balance the interests of personal freedom and national security. We will have many occasions to discuss controversies like this throughout this text.

## Political Power

The legitimate use of force and political power by a representative government rests upon either explicit contracts establishing the relationship between governors and the governed—such as the U.S. Constitution—or upon certain shared values and standards that citizens have come to accept over time. Although citizens may not agree with specific government policies, they will support as legitimate, or lawful, policies founded upon accepted contracts and standards. For example, many Americans opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, but few disputed the right of the president and Congress to wage war. Most Americans accept their duty to pay a fair share in taxes; but they would surely balk if the government tried to confiscate all of our wealth.

Even in democratic societies, questions frequently arise about who exercises real **political power** by influencing or controlling the institutions of government. One school of thought, the **ruling elite theory**, argues that wealthy and well-educated citizens exercise a disproportionate amount of influence over political decision making, despite the existence of institutions that encourage widespread participation. These individuals are more likely to have access to government officials or to become government officials themselves. They are also more informed about political issues and more interested in the outcome of these issues. The wealthy have a vested interest, for example, in reducing the amount of taxes they pay and creating favorable political and economic conditions for their investments. Some versions of ruling elite theory, however, suggest that elites actually are an important force for social advancement.<sup>15</sup> Empirical studies demonstrate that wealthier and better-educated citizens show a greater commitment to values such as fair play, diversity, and respect for civil liberties than those with less income or education. They are also more alert to threats to basic democratic values and more likely to insist on enforcement of individual rights.

A competing theory called **pluralism** asserts that various groups and coalitions constantly vie for government favor and the ability to exercise political power, but none enjoys long-term dominance.<sup>16</sup> In this view, groups that get their way today may be on the losing end tomorrow.

When a group of like-minded citizens is determined to change public policy or to fight a proposed policy that it finds threatening, it can organize into interest groups that employ a wide array of tactics from supporting candidates who promise to advance their cause to developing sophisticated public relations campaigns and legal challenges to rally support (see Chapter 8). For example, for years opponents of same-sex marriage prevailed in outlawing the practice in most states. Over the years, LGBT groups were able to mobilize support for their cause and to challenge these laws in court. In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court, reflecting a swift change in political attitudes toward the LGBT community, legalized same-sex marriage nationwide. As long as the rules guiding interest group competition are fair and fairly enforced, pluralists claim, no one group is permanently disadvantaged.

A recent study testing these competing theories proposed a hybrid theory that its authors believe comes closest to describing the actual flow of power in America. Researchers came to the conclusion that economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantially greater independent impact on government policies than average citizens. Yet, it is often the case that the preferences of these economic elites and those of ordinary citizens coincide. In such cases, both groups win when the policies favored by the

**minority rights** Protections beyond the reach of majority control guaranteed to all citizens.

**political power** The ability to get things done by controlling or influencing the institutions of government.

**ruling elite theory** View positing that wealthy and well-educated citizens exercise a disproportionate amount of influence over political decision making.

**pluralism** View positing that various groups and coalitions constantly vie for government favor and the ability to exercise political power but none enjoys long-term dominance.





The recent economic downturn has only intensified the growth in income inequality that has been under way for several decades.

(Left: © RosalreneBetancourt 4/Alamy Stock Right: © Radius Images/Alamy Stock Photo)

**biased pluralism** View that holds power and public policies tilt largely in the direction of the well off.

elite are enacted. But when elite proposals and the interests of ordinary Americans conflict, it is often the economic elite who come out on top. The authors conclude that power in America—at least in recent years—is best characterized as a kind of **biased pluralism** in which the wealthy play a larger role in determining policies—especially economic policies—than do typical citizens, but that both wealthy and average Americans are well served when their interests intersect.<sup>17</sup> What is worrisome, however, is that income inequality is on the rise with wealth becoming concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. As a result, the interests of the wealthy and the average American may begin to diverge more sharply while the influence of the wealthy continues to rise.

In this book, we are most concerned about increasing popular participation in ways that bring us closer to achieving genuinely pluralistic outcomes. Some sectors of the American population already participate at very high levels and can be sure their voices are heard, if not always heeded. Others are barely heard at all; throughout this book, we will identify ways to increase their volume.

## Participation and Democracy

Active citizen participation is a cornerstone of democratic theory. The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 b.c.e.) felt that citizens should not simply sit back and enjoy the benefits of society; they must also take responsibility for its operation. In his time, policy decisions were formulated by assemblies of free citizens numbering in the thousands. Enlightenment thinkers who influenced the Framers of our Constitution generally agreed that democratic success depends on widespread participation. British philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) argued that the power of the government comes from the consent of its citizens and that consent is only possible when the citizenry is informed and engaged. Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), in his more radical moments, called for periodic citizen uprisings to reinvigorate the spirit of democracy. Much of American history confirms the importance of citizen participation. Throughout our nation’s history, many Americans fought long and hard to gain the opportunity to participate in democratic practices that were previously closed to them.



## Declining Social Trust Around the World—Is This the Beginning of a New Generation of Critical Citizens?

**M**any factors influence the bonds of trust between citizens and governments that are vital for effective governance. The chart above tracks levels of trust reported by college-educated adults ages 25 to 64 in the ten nations with the largest economies.

Most nations—especially in the West—have surprisingly low levels of trust in their national leaders. They seem to have experienced “a flight from politics, or what the Germans call *Politikverdrossenheit*: a weakness about its debates, disbelief about its claims, skepticism about its results, cynicism about its practitioners.”<sup>27</sup> Political scientist Pippa Norris believes widespread cynicism about government signals the emergence of a new type of “critical citizen, dissatisfied democrats who adhere strongly to democratic values but who find existing structures of representative government invented in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to be wanting. . . .”<sup>28</sup> But these younger, well-educated citizens are not apathetic; they are more responsive to nontraditional means of participation like demonstrations or product boycotts than more traditional methods like voting because these alternate approaches promote a greater sense of social solidarity.

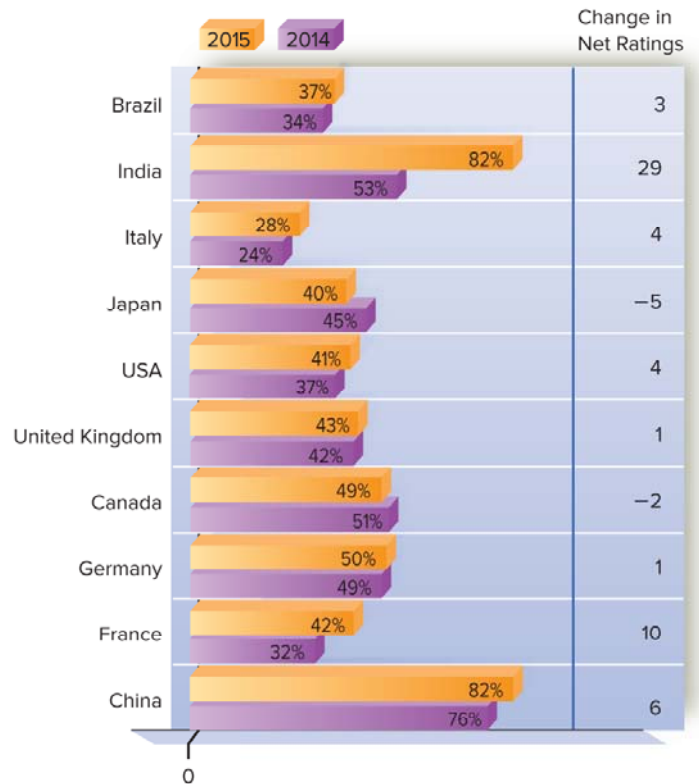
### Questions:

1. What factors do you believe explain generally low levels of trust in most of the world’s richest nations?
2. What short-term factors might account for the changes in each country from 2014 to 2015?
3. Does the graph support Pippa Norris’s arguments? Why or why not?

<sup>27</sup>Pippa Norris, “Introduction: The Growth of Critical Citizens?” in Pippa Norris, ed., *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 6. See also Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).  
<sup>28</sup>Norris, 27.

### Trust in National Government

How Much Do You Trust the National Government to Do What Is Right?



Source: Edelman Trust Barometer, 2014 and 2015. Accessed on August 24, 2015, <http://www.edelman.com/2015-edelman-trust-barometer-2/trust-and-innovation-edelman-trust-barometer/global-results/>

Many states provide expanded opportunities for citizen participation. A procedure called “initiative,” available in twenty-four states, enables citizens to draft their own laws and propose constitutional amendments for voter approval if the sponsors of the measure gather enough signatures. There are two types of initiatives: **direct initiatives**, available in some states, allow proposals backed by a sufficient number of citizen signatures to go directly on the ballot; **indirect initiatives** are first submitted to lawmakers for approval before being submitted to the voters. Similarly, twenty-four states allow for **popular referendum**, which allows citizens to approve or repeal measures already on the books. **Legislative referendum** is another form of referendum, available in all fifty states, that requires legislative bodies to take some proposed measures directly to the voters for approval before taking effect. Changes in state constitutions usually fall into this category. Finally, eighteen states permit **recall**, in which citizens can remove and replace a public official before the end of a term. Wisconsin held recall elections in 2012 for several legislators and the governor following an unpopular effort by these political leaders to limit collective bargaining rights for public employees.

A free society relies heavily upon the voluntary activities of free individuals outside of government as well. Our nation accomplishes many of its social needs through the work

**direct initiative** Procedure that enables citizens to place proposals for laws and amendments directly on the ballot for voter approval.

**indirect initiative** Citizen-initiated procedure for placing proposals on the ballot, requiring legislative action before submission to voters.

**popular referendum** A device that allows citizens to approve or repeal measures already acted on by legislative bodies.

**legislative referendum** Ballot measure aimed at securing voter approval for some legislative acts, such as changes to a state’s constitution.

**recall** Procedure whereby citizens can remove and replace a public official before the end of a term.





It is estimated that over 61 million Americans volunteer their time each year to help those less fortunate than themselves. (© Dan Lamont/Corbis via Getty Images)

of charitable organizations, religious congregations, and professional groups. Thousands of charities and foundations provide money and personnel for programs ranging from support for the arts to sheltering the homeless. Volunteers power these organizations by devoting their time and energy to improve the quality of life in our communities. As we will see, these organizations also serve as training grounds for developing the skills we need to become full and active participants in our nation's political system. Government can encourage civic voluntarism by establishing networks of volunteers like AmeriCorps, the nation's domestic community service program. Though such programs have typically received strong bipartisan support, some believe that providing government incentives for volunteering diminishes the genuine spirit of giving. Whether or not volunteer activities are

sponsored by government, free democratic societies depend on the readiness of individuals to take the time to get involved. They rely on the leadership skills of citizens to help find acceptable solutions to problems. They also require adopting a set of principles or ideals that extol the worth and contributions of citizens.

## AMERICAN POLITICAL IDEALS

**ideology** Ideas, values, and beliefs about how governments should operate.

**liberal democracy** Ideology stressing individual rights and expressing faith in popular control of government.

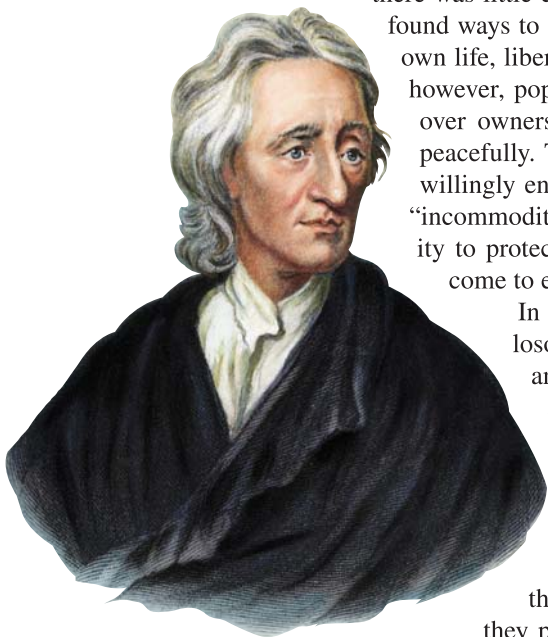
John Locke (1632–1704) argued that the power of the government comes from the consent of its citizens. (© Bettmann/Corbis via Getty Images)

Ideas, values, and beliefs about how governments should operate are known as **ideologies**. Some ideologies like communism, for example, call for an expansive role of government in the everyday life of citizens. Other ideologies, like **liberal democracy**, the ideology that guided the Framers of our constitution, call for a more limited role for government.

In our liberal democracy, the primary role of government is to protect individual rights. It rests upon three essential notions: natural rights, the formation of a social contract by consent of the governed, and majority rule. The most influential advocate of this ideology was John Locke. A physician by training, Locke became involved in the politics of Whig radicals who challenged the authority of the British Stuart monarchy in the late seventeenth century. These radicals, who favored placing more power into the hands of an elected Parliament, succeeded in pulling off a bloodless revolution in 1688.

Locke speculated that humans at one time probably had little need for authority because there was little competition for resources. Resources were plentiful, and most individuals found ways to avoid conflict. Each individual, to the extent possible, guarded his or her own life, liberty, and property to which he had a God-granted natural right. Over time, however, populations grew, creating competition for diminishing resources. Conflicts over ownership of property led to the need for a neutral arbiter to settle disputes peacefully. That arbiter was government. Locke believed that free and equal persons willingly entered into social contracts to establish governments in order to avoid the “incommodities” of war and conflict with others. On our own, we have a limited capacity to protect our life, liberty, and property. If we band together in government, we come to each other's aid in the protection of these natural rights.

In his *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke articulated the underlying philosophy of liberal democracy.<sup>18</sup> He argued that humans are born naturally free and equal; no one is born subject to another's will, and no one can control another without that person's consent. People place themselves under the control of a government because of the mutual advantages it offers its citizens. Under such an arrangement, majority rule provides a reasonable basis for making decisions. In this way, each member of the community has an equal voice in decision making, and decisions reflect the consensus of most citizens. Governments, however, derive authority from the consent of those who form them, and they hold our allegiance only if they protect our life, liberty, and property better than we could on our own. If



government becomes a threat to citizens' rights, the social contract fails, and the people have the option of dissolving it and beginning anew.

The authors of our Declaration of Independence drew heavily on the ideas of Locke in drafting that document and making the case for independence from British rule. Ideas alone, however, do not make history; they must be advanced by proponents with the skills and determination to see them achieved. American history offers many examples of individuals like Susan B. Anthony and Martin Luther King, Jr., who worked tirelessly to bring opportunities for **political participation** like voting and running for office to a wider and more diverse population than originally envisioned by the Framers.

**political participation** Taking part in activities, aimed at influencing the policies or leadership of government.

## THE CHANGING FACE OF THE AMERICAN CITIZENRY

As we seek ways to increase the engagement of today's citizens, we must be aware that our citizenry is rapidly becoming older and more diverse. At the same time, the gap between those with substantial resources and those with few is increasing. Forces of globalization are intensifying these divisions.

### Growing Diversity

When the U.S. Constitution was ratified at the end of the eighteenth century, more than four million white Europeans and their descendants lived in the United States. (This figure does not include Native Americans, as estimates of their total population during this period vary greatly; nor does it include over a half million black slaves and an estimated sixty thousand free blacks.) Today the U.S. population is 320 million, drawn from all corners of the world. Hispanic Americans are the nation's fastest-growing minority group, now making up over 16 percent of the population. African Americans are a close second at about 13 percent, and Asian Americans represent about 5 percent of the population. A growing number represent multiethnic roots. Despite the progress these groups have made in securing civil rights, many are still not well integrated into American civic life.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that minorities from all backgrounds, now roughly one-third of the U.S. population, are expected to become the majority in 2042. The combined minority population in Texas, California, Hawaii, and New Mexico already exceeds the white non-Hispanic population in these states.

Fifty years ago, just over a third of all Americans lived in the suburbs; today that figure is about 55 percent. Once the preserve of mostly non-Hispanic whites, the suburbs today are growing increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. According to a recent report, the number of diverse suburbs in the nation's fifty largest metropolitan areas increased to 1,376 in 2010, a 37 percent jump since 2000 with the greatest diversity found in the nation's older suburbs. During the

## The People in Your Neighborhood Most Likely Look Like You

People Who Live in Your Neighborhood: More Racially Diverse, More Alike Economically (with Growing Income Segregation)

	Living in Racially diverse* Neighborhoods	People living in Predominantly** Lower Income Neighborhoods	People living in Predominantly** Upper Income Neighborhoods
1980	NA	23%	9%
2000	26%	NA	NA
2010	30%	28%	18%

Neighborhood ethnic diversity is on the rise, but so is income segregation.

\*Data from 50 largest metro areas. Diverse defined as non-white population between 20-60% of pop. Source: Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce, *America's Racially Diverse Suburbs: Opportunities and Challenges*. Report of the Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity at the University of Minnesota Law School, July 20, 2012, p. 2. Accessed on September 7, 2013 at: [http://www.law.umn.edu/uploads/e0/65/e065d82a1c1da0bfe7d86172ec5391e/Diverse\\_Suburbs\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.law.umn.edu/uploads/e0/65/e065d82a1c1da0bfe7d86172ec5391e/Diverse_Suburbs_FINAL.pdf).

\*\*Based on census tracts from 942 metropolitan and metropolitan statistical area. Source: Paul Taylor and Richard Fry, *The Rise of Residential Segregation by Income*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, August 1, 2012. Accessed on September 7, 2013 at <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/08/01/the-rise-of-residential-segregation-by-income/>.