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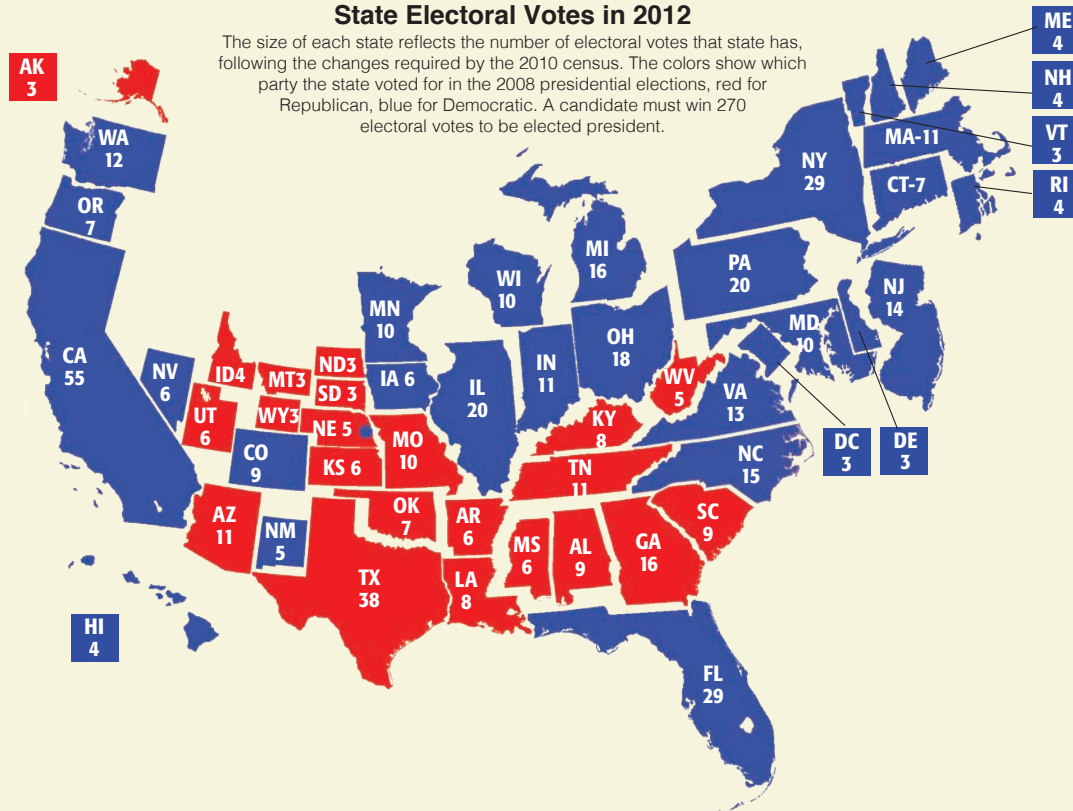
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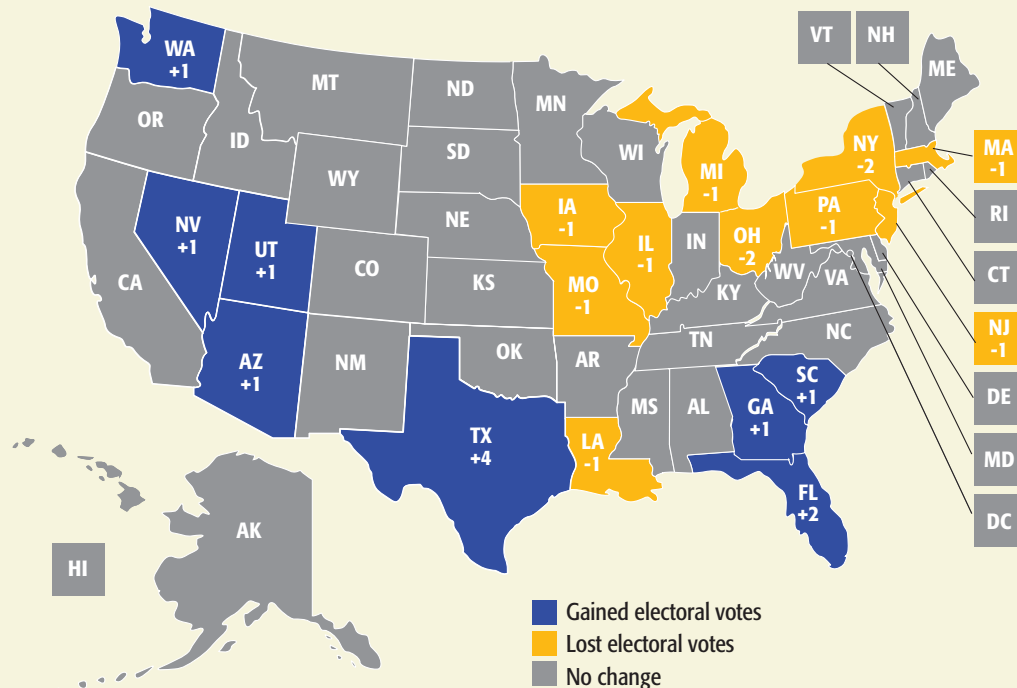
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State Electoral Votes in 2012

The size of each state reflects the number of electoral votes that state has, following the changes required by the 2010 census. The colors show which party the state voted for in the 2008 presidential elections, red for Republican, blue for Democratic. A candidate must win 270 electoral votes to be elected president.



Electoral Votes Gained and Lost after the 2010 Census



American Government and Politics Today

2014–2015 Brief Edition

Steffen W. Schmidt

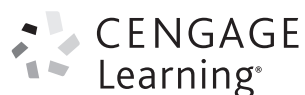
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American Government and Politics Today

2014–2015 Brief Edition

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PREFACE

In 2012, Democratic president Barack Obama was reelected over Republican candidate Mitt Romney by a margin of almost 4 percentage points. The Democrats gained seats in the U.S. Senate. They did not gain nearly enough seats in the House of Representatives to endanger the Republican control of that chamber, however. Did these results mean two more years of political polarization and governmental gridlock? Would confrontation threaten the very workings of the federal government? Or could the parties find the will to adopt new policies on immigration and other major issues? Throughout this Brief Edition of *American Government and Politics Today*, you will read about how our government has responded to past issues and how these responses have shaped American government and politics.

This edition is basically a condensed and updated version of the larger editions of *American Government and Politics Today*. It has been created specifically for those of you who want a text that presents the fundamental components of the American political system while retaining the quality and readability of the larger editions. You will find that this edition is up to date in every respect. The text, figures, tables, and all pedagogical features reflect the latest available data. We have also included coverage of all recently issued laws, regulations, and court decisions that have—or will have—a significant impact on American society and our political system.

Like the larger editions, this volume places a major emphasis on political participation and involvement. This brief, fourteen-chapter text has been heralded by reviewers as the best essentials text for its affordability, conciseness, clarity, and readability.

- Getting straight to the point, this text helps pare down a wealth of material, focusing on the essential events, concepts, and topics of an American government course.
- Strong themes of informed and active participation, along with a critical-thinking approach, spark student interest in wanting to get involved and know more.
- *Learning Outcomes* now open each chapter and are correlated to each major section, providing a roadmap to key concepts. A *Test Yourself* quiz assesses students' mastery of these Learning Outcomes.
- *At Issue* feature boxes focus on a controversial topic to provoke discussion and conclude with a *For Critical Analysis* question to ignite critical thinking.
- *Making a Difference* boxes at the end of each chapter promote student participation by answering the questions "Why Should You Care?" and "What Can You Do?" and offer practical ways for students to get involved in politics by using online resources.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

This new edition has been thoroughly updated and revised to reflect the significant events and explosive changes that have occurred in the last two years.

- The text describes the 2012 elections and their consequences, plus the section on campaign finance is completely revised. We have extended the discussion of conservatism and liberalism. New material makes gerrymandering easier to understand.
- New sections cover American Indians, television versus the new media, and voting restrictions. The section on public opinion polls is heavily reworked to incorporate the latest insights. We now provide a detailed breakdown of the federal budget.
- We cover all the latest United States Supreme Court rulings and provide up-to-date material on same-sex marriage. The politics of the current Court are analyzed.

- The discussion of immigration is current, and the section on energy and the environment describes fracking and the growth of domestic energy production. The foreign policy chapter has the latest on the Arab Spring—including Syria—and also on Iran, North Korea, and cyberattacks. We cover the economic crisis in Europe and its implications for us.

COURSEMATE: INTERACTIVE LEARNING, STUDY, & EXAM PREP TOOLS

For the first time, the Brief Edition of *American Government and Politics Today* comes with CourseMate access as the main text package. CourseMate gives students everything they need to succeed in one place. Read the eBook, take notes, watch videos, study with flashcards, simulations, and timelines, take practice quizzes, and more, all online with CourseMate. Students will also have access to American Government NewsWatch—a real-time news and information resource updated daily—and KnowNow!—the go-to blog about current events in American government. The stand-alone text is also available, with optional CourseMate access available through www.cengagebrain.com.

HIGH-INTEREST FEATURES

In this edition, we have included special features designed to pique your interest. These features are interspersed throughout the text.

Topical Features

Each *At Issue* feature focuses on a controversial topic and concludes with a *For Critical Analysis* question to invite critical thinking. *Politics and Economics* features address current economic developments. Almost all features are new for this edition. They discuss the following topics:

At Issue Features:

- Does Entitlement Spending Corrupt Us? (Chapter 1)
- Just How Christian Were the Founders? (Chapter 2)
- Should the Federal Government Recognize Same-Sex Marriages Performed by the States? (Chapter 3)
- Should We Ban Assault-Type Weapons? (Chapter 4)
- Should Unauthorized Immigrants Be Granted Citizenship? (Chapter 5)
- Is It Time to Get Rid of the Filibuster? (Chapter 9)
- Do We Still Have to Worry about the Federal Deficit? (Chapter 11)
- Should State Judges Be Elected? (Chapter 12)
- Should the Rich Pay Even More in Taxes? (Chapter 13)
- Should America—or Israel—Attack Iran’s Nuclear Sites? (Chapter 14)

Politics and Economics Features:

- Right-to-Work Laws (Chapter 7)
- The Curious Ineffectiveness of the Super PACs (Chapter 8)
- The Economy and the Race for President (Chapter 10)
- Getting Ahead with and without Affirmative Action (Chapter 12)

Making a Difference Features

At the end of every chapter, a feature entitled *Making a Difference* enhances our emphasis on participation. These features provide you with useful information for active citizenship. We give you tips on how to find information on issues, how to learn about your elected representatives, how to join and participate in advocacy organizations, how to protect your civil rights and liberties, and more.

OTHER SPECIAL PEDAGOGICAL AIDS

The 2014–2015 Brief Edition of *American Government and Politics Today* retains many of the pedagogical aids and features of the larger editions, including the following:

- **Learning Outcomes**—These focus on crucial questions the students should learn to address, section by section.
- **Key Terms**—Important terms that are boldfaced and defined in the text when they are first used. These terms are defined in the text margins, listed at the end of the chapter with the page numbers on which they appear, and included in the Glossary at the back of the book.
- **Helpful Web Sites** and **Social Media in Politics**—These new margin boxes direct students to a variety of online resources.
- **Chapter Summary**—A point-by-point summary of the chapter text.
- **Test Yourself**—A quiz and essay question at the very end of each chapter.

APPENDICES

The Brief Edition of *American Government and Politics Today* includes, as appendices, both the Declaration of Independence (Appendix A) and the U.S. Constitution (Appendix B). The text of the Constitution has been annotated to help you understand the meaning and significance of the various provisions in this important document. Also, Appendix C presents Federalist Papers No. 10 and No. 51. These selections are also annotated to help you grasp their importance in understanding the American philosophy of government.

SUPPLEMENTS

Online PowerLecture with Cognero® for Schmidt/Shelley/Bardes Cengage Advantage Books: *American Government and Politics Today, 2014–2015 Brief Edition*

ISBN-13: 9781285775708

- This PowerLecture is an all-in-one multimedia online resource for class preparation, presentation, and testing. Accessible through Cengage.com/login with your faculty account, you will find available for download: book-specific Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations; a Test Bank in both Microsoft® Word® and Cognero® formats; an Instructor Manual; Microsoft® PowerPoint® Image Slides; and a JPEG Image Library.
- The Test Bank, offered in Microsoft® Word® and Cognero® formats, contains Learning Objective–specific multiple-choice and essay questions for each chapter. Cognero® is a flexible, online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content. Create multiple test versions instantly and deliver through your LMS from your classroom, or wherever you may be, with no special installs or downloads required.

- The Instructor's Manual contains chapter-specific learning objectives, an outline, key terms with definitions, and a chapter summary. Additionally, the Instructor's Manual features a critical-thinking question, a lecture-launching suggestion, and an in-class activity for each learning objective. Both the Test Bank and the Instructor's Manual are authored by Professor Mark Hoffman of Wayne County Community College.
- The Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations are ready-to-use, visual outlines of each chapter. These presentations are easily customized for your lectures and offered along with chapter-specific Microsoft® PowerPoint® Image Slides and JPEG Image Libraries.
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M.C.S.

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Bardes's home is located in a very small hamlet in Kentucky called Rabbit Hash, famous for its 150-year-old general store. Her hobbies include traveling, gardening, needlework, and antique collecting.



These children, age six to eighteen, are taking the oath of allegiance at a citizenship ceremony in Chicago. Many of them gained U.S. citizenship when their parents were naturalized. (Scott Olson/Getty Images/AFP)

The Democratic Republic

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The five **Learning Outcomes (LOs)** below are designed to help improve your understanding of this chapter. After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

■ **LO1** Define the terms *politics*, *government*, *order*, *liberty*, *authority*, and *legitimacy*.

■ **LO2** Distinguish the major features of direct democracy and representative democracy.

■ **LO3** Describe majoritarianism, elite theory, and pluralism as theories of how democratic systems work.

■ **LO4** Summarize the conflicts that can occur between the principles of liberty and order, and between those of liberty and equality.

■ **LO5** Discuss conservatism, liberalism, and other popular American ideological positions.

Check your understanding of the material with the Test Yourself section at the end of the chapter.

Politics, for many people, is the “great game,” and it is played for high stakes. After all, the game involves vast sums and the very security of the nation. In the last few years, the stakes have grown higher still. In 2012, the Republicans promised that if they won control of the U.S. Senate and the presidency, they would make dramatic changes to the nation’s tax system, health-care policies, and other domestic programs. In the end, however, Democratic president Barack Obama was reelected over Republican Mitt Romney. The Democrats kept control of the U.S. Senate, adding two seats for a total of fifty-five out of one hundred. Democratic gains in the U.S. House, however, were not even close to the number necessary to take that chamber back from the Republicans. The result of the elections was a nation divided down the middle in its politics.

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

What is politics? **Politics** can be understood as the process of resolving conflicts and deciding, as political scientist Harold Lasswell put it in his classic definition, “who gets what, when, and how.”¹ More specifically, politics is the struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant benefits or privileges.

We can identify many such groups and organizations. In families, all members may meet to decide on values, priorities, and actions. In every community that makes decisions through formal or informal rules, politics exists. For example, when a church decides to construct a new building or hire a new minister, the decision is made politically. Politics can be found in schools, social groups, and any other organized collection of individuals. Of all the organizations that are controlled by political activity, however, the most important is the government.

What is the government? Certainly, it is an **institution**—that is, an ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society and that has a life separate from the lives of the individuals who are part of it at any given moment in time. The **government** can be defined as an institution within which decisions are made that resolve conflicts and allocate benefits and privileges. The government is also the preeminent institution within society because it has the ultimate authority for making these decisions.

Why Is Government Necessary?

Perhaps the best way to assess the need for government is to examine circumstances in which government, as we normally understand it, does not exist. What happens when multiple groups compete with one another for power within a society? There are places around the world where such circumstances exist. A current example is the African nation of Somalia. Since 1991, Somalia has not had a central government capable of controlling the country. The regions of the country are divided among various warlords and factions, each controlling a block of territory. When Somali warlords compete for control of a particular locality, the result is war, generalized devastation, and famine. Normally, multiple armed forces compete by fighting, and the absence of a unified government is equivalent to ongoing civil war.

As the example of Somalia shows, one of the original purposes of government is the maintenance of security, or **order**. By keeping the peace, a government protects its people from violence at the hands of private or foreign armies. It dispenses justice and protects the people from the violence of criminals. If order is not present, it is not possible for the government to provide any of the other benefits that people expect from it. Order is a value to which we will return later in this chapter.

Limiting Government Power

A complete collapse of order and security, as seen in Somalia, actually is an uncommon event. Much more common is the reverse—too much government control. In January 2013, the human rights organization Freedom House judged that forty-seven of the world’s countries were “not free.” These nations contained 34 percent of the world’s population. Such countries may be controlled by individual dictators. Syria’s Bashar al-Assad and North Korea’s Kim Jong-un are obvious examples. Alternatively, a political

1. Harold Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publisher, 1990). Originally published in 1936.

LO1: Define the terms *politics*, *government*, *order*, *liberty*, *authority*, and *legitimacy*.



www

Helpful Web Sites

Searching on “us government” will bring up a page containing sites with information about the federal government and its programs. One is USA.gov, which provides access to all federal government offices and agencies.

Politics

The struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant or withhold benefits or privileges.

Institution

An ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society.

Government

The preeminent institution within a society. Government has the ultimate authority to decide how conflicts will be resolved and how benefits and privileges will be allocated.

Order

A state of peace and security. Maintaining order by protecting members of society from violence and criminal activity is the oldest purpose of government.

party, such as the Communist Party of China, may monopolize all the levels of power. The military may rule, as in Burma (also called Myanmar) until 2011.

In all of these examples, the individual or group running the country cannot be removed by legal means. Freedom of speech and the right to a fair trial are typically absent. Dictatorial governments often torture or execute their opponents. Such regimes may also suppress freedom of religion. Revolution, whether violent or non-violent, is often the only way to change the government.

In short, protection from the violence of domestic criminals or foreign armies is not enough. Citizens also need protection from abuses of power by their own government. To protect the liberties of the people, it is necessary to limit the powers of the government. **Liberty**—the greatest freedom of the individual consistent with the freedom of other individuals—is a second major political value, along with order. We discuss this value in more detail later in this chapter.



This rebel fighter, a member of the Martyrs of Truth brigade, is engaged in combat against the Syrian army. Why would he have taken up arms? (Benoit De Freine/Photonews via Getty Images)

Authority and Legitimacy

Every government must have **authority**—that is, the right and power to enforce its decisions. Ultimately, the government’s authority rests on its control of the armed forces and the police. Few people in the United States, however, base their day-to-day activities on fear of the government’s enforcement powers. Most people, most of the time, obey the law because this is what they have always done. Also, if they did not obey the law, they would face the disapproval of friends and family. Consider an example: Do you avoid injuring your friends or stealing their possessions because you are afraid of the police—or because if you undertook these actions, you no longer would have friends?

Under normal circumstances, the government’s authority has broad popular support. People accept the government’s right to establish rules and laws. When authority is broadly accepted, we say that it has **legitimacy**. Authority without legitimacy is a recipe for trouble.

Events in several Arab nations in 2011 and 2012 can serve as an example. The dictators who ruled Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia had been in power for decades. All three dictators had some popular support when they first gained power. None of these nations had a tradition of democracy, and so it was possible for undemocratic rulers to enjoy a degree of legitimacy. After years of oppressive behavior, however, these regimes slowly lost that legitimacy. The rulers survived only because they were willing to employ violence against any opposition. In Egypt and Tunisia, the end came when soldiers refused to use force against massive demonstrations. Having lost all legitimacy, the rulers of these two countries then lost their authority as well. (Unfortunately, the downfall and death of Muammar Qaddafi in Libya came only after a seven-month civil war.)

Liberty

The greatest freedom of the individual that is consistent with the freedom of other individuals in the society.

Authority

The right and power of a government or other entity to enforce its decisions and compel obedience.

Legitimacy

Popular acceptance of the right and power of a government or other entity to exercise authority.

Totalitarian Regime

A form of government that controls all aspects of the political, social, and economic life of a nation.

Authoritarianism

A type of regime in which only the government itself is fully controlled by the ruler. Social and economic institutions exist that are not under the government's control.

Democracy

A system of government in which political authority is vested in the people.

Direct Democracy

A system of government in which political decisions are made by the people directly, rather than by their elected representatives.

Legislature

A governmental body primarily responsible for the making of laws.

Initiative

A procedure by which voters can propose a law or a constitutional amendment.

Referendum

An electoral device whereby legislative or constitutional measures are referred by the legislature to the voters for approval or disapproval.

Recall

A procedure allowing the people to vote to dismiss an elected official from office before his or her term has expired.

DEMOCRACY AND OTHER FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

The different types of government can be classified according to which person or group of people controls society through the government.

Types of Government

At one extreme is a society governed by a **totalitarian regime**. In such a political system, a small group of leaders or a single individual—a dictator—makes all decisions for the society. Every aspect of political, social, and economic life is controlled by the government. The power of the ruler is total (thus, the term *totalitarianism*). A second type of system is authoritarian government. **Authoritarianism** differs from totalitarianism in that only the government itself is fully controlled by the ruler. Social and economic institutions, such as churches, businesses, and labor unions, exist that are not under the government's control.

Many of our terms for describing the distribution of political power are derived from the ancient Greeks, who were the first Western people to study politics systematically. One form of rule was known as *aristocracy*, literally meaning “rule by the best.” In practice, this meant rule by wealthy members of ancient families. Another term from the Greeks is *theocracy*, which literally means “rule by God” (or the gods). In practice, theocracy means rule by self-appointed religious leaders. Iran is a rare example of a country in which supreme power is in the hands of a religious leader, the Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. One of the most straightforward Greek terms is *oligarchy*, which simply means “rule by a few.”

The Greek term for rule by the people was **democracy**. Within the limits of their culture, some of the Greek city-states operated as democracies. Today, in much of the world, the people will not grant legitimacy to a government unless it is based on democracy.

Direct Democracy as a Model

The Athenian system of government in ancient Greece is usually considered the purest model for **direct democracy** because the citizens of that community debated and voted directly on all laws, even those put forward by the ruling council of the city. The most important feature of Athenian democracy was that the **legislature** was composed of all of the citizens. (Women, resident foreigners, and slaves, however, were excluded because they were not citizens.) This form of government required a high level of participation from every citizen. That participation was seen as benefiting the individual and the city-state. The Athenians believed that although a high level of participation might lead to instability in government, citizens, if informed about the issues, could be trusted to make wise decisions.

Direct democracy also has been practiced at the local level in Switzerland and, in the United States, in New England town meetings. At these town meetings, which may include all of the voters who live in the town, important decisions—such as levying taxes, hiring city officials, and deciding local ordinances—are made by majority vote. Some states provide a modern adaptation of direct democracy for their citizens. In these states, representative democracy is supplemented by the **initiative** or the **referendum**. Both processes enable the people to vote directly on laws or constitutional amendments. The **recall** process, which is available in many states, allows the people to vote to remove an official from state office before his or her term has expired.

LO2: Distinguish the major features of direct democracy and representative democracy.

The Dangers of Direct Democracy

Although they were aware of the Athenian model, the framers of the U.S. Constitution were opposed to such a system. Democracy was considered to be dangerous and a source of instability. But in the 1700s and 1800s, the idea of government based on the *consent of the people* gained increasing popularity. Such a government was the main aspiration of the American Revolution in 1775, the French Revolution in 1789, and many subsequent revolutions. At the time of the American Revolution, however, the masses were still considered to be too uneducated to govern themselves, too prone to the influence of demagogues (political leaders who manipulate popular prejudices), and too likely to subordinate minority rights to the tyranny of the majority.

James Madison, while defending the new scheme of government set forth in the U.S. Constitution, warned of the problems inherent in a “pure democracy”:

A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole . . . and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious individual. Hence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention, and have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths.²

Like other politicians of his time, Madison feared that pure, or direct, democracy would deteriorate into mob rule. What would keep the majority of the people, if given direct decision-making power, from abusing the rights of those in the minority?

A Democratic Republic

The framers of the U.S. Constitution chose to craft a **republic**, meaning a government in which sovereign power rests with the people, rather than with a king or a monarch. A republic is based on **popular sovereignty**. To Americans of the 1700s, the idea of a republic also meant a government based on common beliefs and virtues that would be fostered within small communities. The rulers were to be amateurs—good citizens who would take turns representing their fellow citizens.



These Woodbury, Vermont, residents cast their ballots after a town meeting to vote on the school budget and sales taxes. What type of political system does the town meeting best represent? (AP Photo/Toby Talbot)

Republic

A form of government in which sovereign power rests with the people, rather than with a king or a monarch.

Popular Sovereignty

The concept that ultimate political authority is based on the will of the people.

2. James Madison, in Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, No. 10 (New York: Mentor Books, 1964), p. 81. See Appendix C of this book.