

Unit 4 – Active Citizenship



Objective 1

Explain the process of naturalization, as well as the rights and responsibilities of American citizens.

Objective 2

Analyze the role of political parties, the media, and interest groups in elections and public policy.

Social Contract

- Citizens: members of a community who owe their loyalty to the government of the community and are entitled to government services.
 - *Why do citizens need their government?*
- Government: the ruling authority for a community that oversees distribution of resources and provides order in a society.
 - *Why does government need its citizens?*



“Of the people”

the government rules by consent of the governed; it gets its power from the citizens.

– *Specific examples?*

“By the people”

regular citizens are the people who participate in government.

– *Specific examples?*

“For the people”

the actions of the government should benefit the citizens.

– *Specific examples?*

Fourteenth Amendment

In addition to Equal Protection...

“All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.”

- Former slaves
- *Native Americans?*



Citizenship by Birth

- *Jus sanguinis*
 - “By blood”
 - Parents are U.S. citizens
 - *What if you are adopted from a foreign country?*
- *Jus soli*
 - “By soil”
 - Born in U.S. territory
 - *Where does the U.S. have territory?*



Nation of Immigrants

- Almost everyone in the US is an immigrant or the descendant of an immigrant.
- “E Pluribus Unum”: Out of many, one
- *How do we often describe this aspect of American society?*
- *What is the difference between an immigrant and an alien?*



Aliens in America

- Only about 675,000 aliens are allowed into the U.S. each year.
 - People with family members already in the country or with a special skill get preference. *Why?*



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

www.uscis.gov

- Legal Aliens
 - CAN: work, own property, attend school, receive government services
 - CAN'T: run for office, vote, serve on a jury
 - MUST: follow laws, pay taxes, carry ID.
- Undocumented Residents: at least 5-6 million, get deported if caught.
 - *Why are there so many?*
 - *What reforms are being debated?*



Naturalization

1. Be a Lawful Permanent Resident of the United States
 - First apply for a Visa to be allowed temporary visitation
 - Later apply for a Green Card for permanent residence
 - While here: follow laws, work, and pay taxes
2. Live in U.S. for 5 years (only 3 if married to a citizen)
 - Learn English and Civics to prepare for naturalization test
3. Go through Naturalization process
 - Apply for Citizenship
 - Interview with USCIS
 - Pass the Naturalization Test
 - Attend ceremony and take oath of allegiance

Do you think it should be easier or more difficult to become a citizen?

Duties and Responsibilities

Duties =
Things you must
do or face
punishment

- Obey the law
- Pay taxes
- Defend the nation
(Selective Service)
- Serve in court
(Jury duty, witness)
- Attend school
(Until age 16)



Responsibilities = Things you
should do for greater good

- Be informed and vote
- Respect rights and
property of others
- Respect different
opinions and ways of life
- Volunteer time, resources

What do you do now?

What will you do later?

*To what extent should we make
sacrifices for others?*

Political Parties

- Definition
 - Association of voters with broad common interests who want to influence or control decision making in government by electing the party's candidates to public office
- Main roles
 - Nominate candidates for office through primary election process
 - Raise funds and campaign to get them elected



Do you think political parties help or hinder the democratic process?

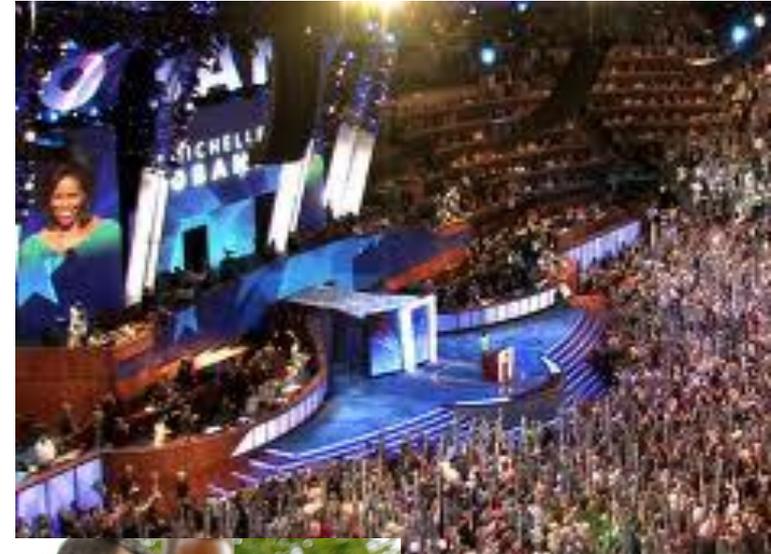


GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM

- Inform citizens
 - Parties call, send mail, and advertize to notify voters of important issues
 - *Personal examples?*
- Watchdog
 - Losing party will watch what the winning candidate does in office in order to recognize and point out any mistakes.
 - *Examples?*
- Link levels of government
 - Members of the same party at different levels of government often work together to get things done.

Organization of Political Parties

- National Level
 - Main focus is fundraising
 - Every four years the national party provides a National Convention to nominate and announce the party's candidate for the President
- State and Local Level
 - Run primary elections to decide nominee
 - Register new voters
 - Grassroots: political ideas and movements that start at the local level
 - *Examples?*



The American Two-Party System

- Since 1854, either a Republican or Democrat has been elected to the Presidency.
 - *Why?*
 - *Pros/Cons?*
 - *What does bipartisan mean?*
- **Democratic** = Donkey
 - (Jackson the “Jackass”)
- **Republican** = Elephant
 - (GOP = Grand Old Party)



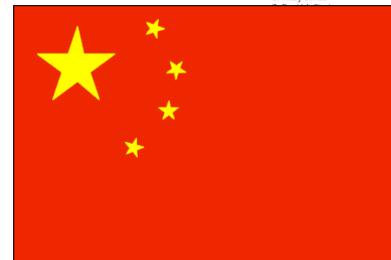
Other Party Systems

- Multi-party system: many more than one party. Often, no single party wins a majority of seats so several parties join together to form a coalition government.
 - Pros?
 - Cons?
 - Examples?
- One-party system: only one political party is legally allowed to exist. Citizens vote, but only have one candidate to choose.
 - Pros?
 - Cons?
 - Examples?

Election for the European Parliament North West

Vote once (X) in one blank box

1	BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY 1. Nick Griffin 2. Martin Wingfield 3. Steven Greenhalgh 4. Edward Richard James O'Sullivan 5. Jean Parry 6. Michael Elliot 7. Derek Adams 8. Gary Anonson		<input type="checkbox"/>
2	CONSERVATIVE PARTY 1. Eilish O'Brien MEP 2. Sajjad Karim MEP 3. Jacqueline Foster 4. Alex Williams 5. Gregory Morgan		<input type="checkbox"/>
3	GREEN PARTY 1. Peter Coates 2. Cllr. Mairi Whitelegg 3. Ruth Bargan 4. Samir Chatterjee 5. Jill Perry 6. Justine Hall 7. Margaret Westbrock 8. Geoff Smith		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	LABOUR PARTY 1. Arianna McCarthy 2. Brian Simpson 3. Theresa Griffin 4. Stephen Carter 5. Jane Clarke 6. Rizq Ahmad 7. Claire Johnston 8. Brian Elog		<input type="checkbox"/>
5	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS 1. Chris Davies 2. Helen Foster-Girno 3. Sam McCallum 4. Qasim Atzal 5. Neil Corlett 6. Mark Clayton 7. Stephen Cooke 8. Peter Hirst		<input type="checkbox"/>
6	UKIP 1. Greg Beaman 2. Nigel Brown 3. Graham Cannon 4. Terry Dunnington 5. Philip Griffiths 6. Hilary Jones		<input type="checkbox"/>

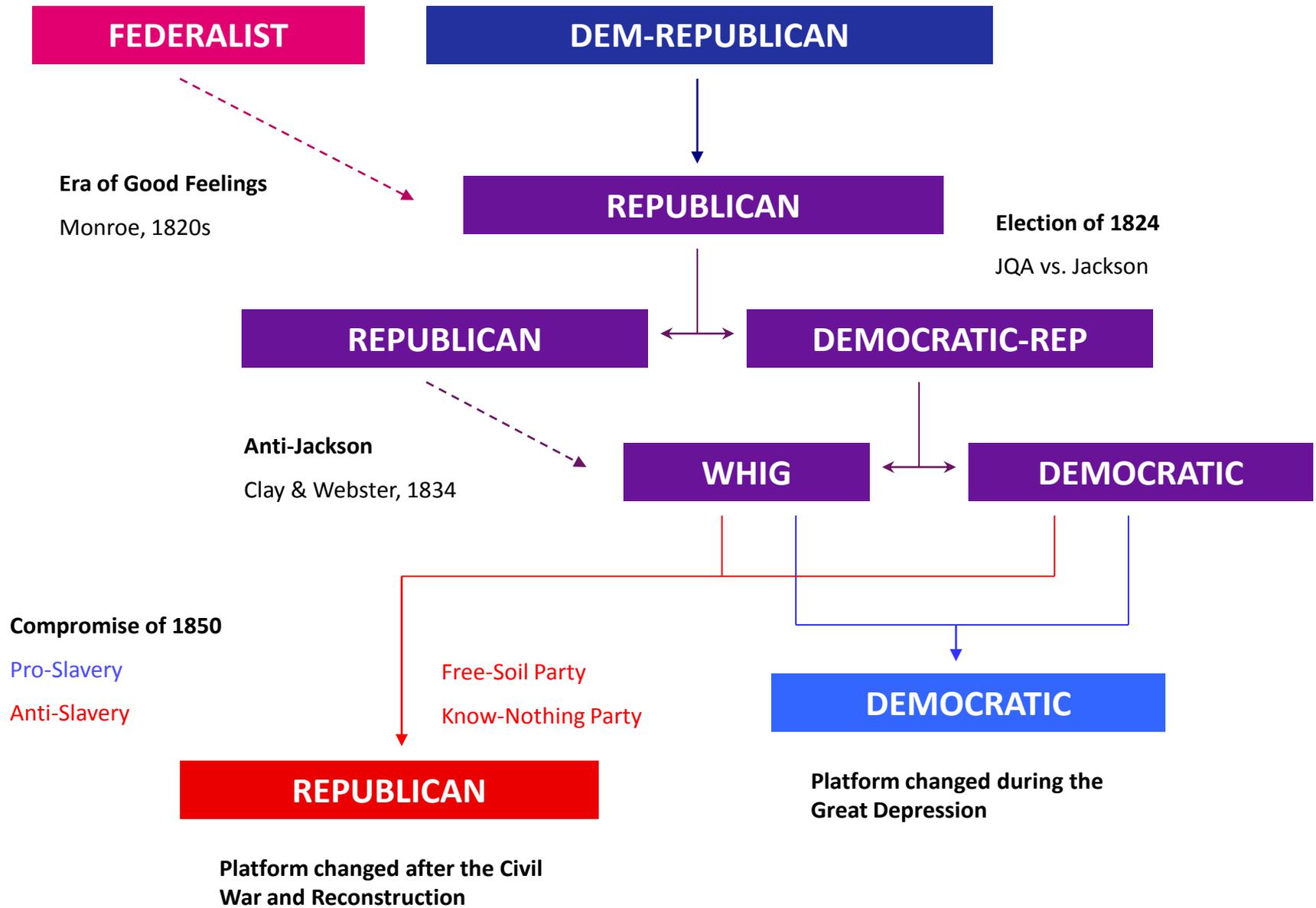


Chinese ballot paper for the European Parliament

Historical Development



- Washington wanted to avoid parties, but...
- His Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and his Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton disagreed about everything
- Hamilton = Federalist > strong central gov't
- Jefferson = Democratic-Republican (similar to Anti-Federalists) > strong individual and state powers



Platforms and Planks

A platform is the party's statement of principles, beliefs, and positions. A plank is a single issue in the platform like Taxes.

Democratic Party

- Moderately liberal (“left”): progressive reform, social change
- Highly educated, young, minority groups
- Regulation (environment, workplace, gun control)
- Social Programs (welfare, arts funding, foreign aid)
- Tolerance (pro-choice, gay rights, church/state)
- *Famous Democrats?*

www.democrats.org

Republican Party

- Moderately conservative (“right”): small, traditional government
- Business and Banking leaders, Conservative Christians
- Economic (less regulation, tax breaks, corporate incentives)
- Security (military, guns, death penalty, immigration)
- Morals (religion, marriage, pro-life, self-reliance)
- *Famous Republicans?*

www.gop.com

Third Parties

- A third party is any political party other than Dem and Rep.
 - *How many are there? What are the most popular ones?*
 - *Why do they so rarely win an election?*
 - *So why bother?*
- Ideas/views of third parties are often adopted by one of the main parties
 - Populist Party – died out but most of the issues were adopted by Democrats (farmers, laborers)
- Third parties can affect the outcome of an election
 - Teddy Roosevelt broke off of Republican Party to form his own, splitting the vote and giving the election to Democrat Woodrow Wilson
 - In 2000, Nader (Green) took votes away from Gore (D), which helped Bush (R) win the election.
- It isn't set in stone
 - Republican Party started off as a third party – took less than 10 years to win the Presidency b/c slavery issue heated up

votesmart.org/political-parties

Suffrage

Who had the right to vote when our Constitution was written?

Qualifications:

- Citizen
- Registered
 - *Do you have to register with a political party?*
- Resident of the state
- 18 or older

15th Amendment (1870)

Prohibits denying a person's right to vote on the basis of race

19th Amendment (1920)

Guarantees women the right to vote

23rd Amendment (1961)

Residents of D.C. can vote

24th Amendment (1964)

Outlaws poll tax in national elections

26th Amendment (1971)

Minimum voting age reduced to 18 for all elections

Voting



- *Why is voting important?*
- *Why is voter turnout so low in the U.S.?*
- *What groups are most likely to vote?*
- *What has been done recently to address this issue?*
- *How do most people prepare to vote?*
- *How should you prepare?*

• Register

- Library, School, County Election Office, DMV
- Register with a Party or as Unaffiliated?

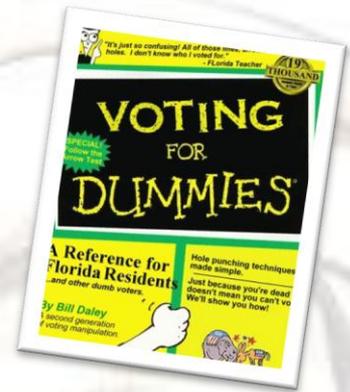
• Find your precinct and polling place, dates/times, request Absentee ballot or do Early registration if necessary

• Stay informed with TV, magazines, newspapers, and the Internet.

- Does the candidate share your same views?
- Is the candidate reliable?
- Is the candidate experienced?
- Will the candidate be effective?
- Does the candidate have a chance to win?

• Show identification, complete the ballot in secret

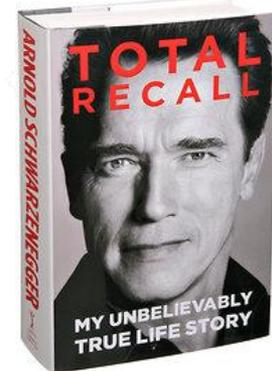
- Straight/split ticket?



Elections

Review: Who runs elections?

- Primary elections: Parties choose one nominee to run in the general election
 - Closed/open: If you have to be a registered member of the party or not
 - *Why would this matter?*
- General elections
 - Vote for candidates at national, state, and local levels
 - Vote on state or local laws:
 - When citizens propose a new state law, it is an initiative. If enough people sign the initiative petition, it becomes a proposition that will be put on the ballot. The referendum is when the citizens vote to approve or reject a state law.
- Special elections
 - Runoff: When there is no clear winner
 - Recall: Vote to remove a state official from office, force an early election



Presidential

1. Primary Elections to narrow down field
2. National Convention to announce candidate, platform
3. Debate Season
 - Media blitz, Public opinion polls
4. General Election held in every state on first Tues in Nov.
5. Electoral College
 - Winner-take-all-system:
Whoever wins the General election in the state gets all of the state's electoral votes
 - *Why do we use this system?*
 - *Pros/cons?*

www.270towin.com

fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com



Reform

- In the early 1900s, reforms were passed to deal with election fraud
 - Political machines: In some state and local governments, one party had so much power they controlled everything, even elections
- Now, the biggest debate is over campaign finance reform
 - *Why?*

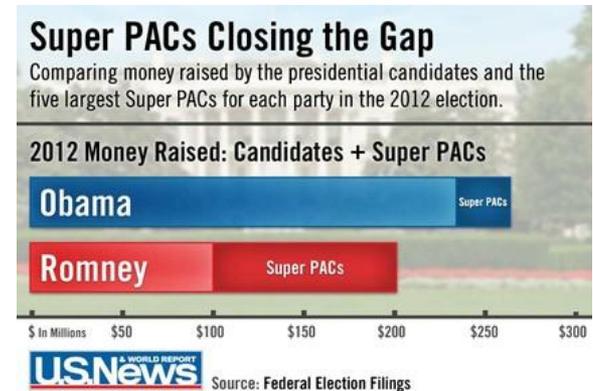


Dr. Seuss's "Tammany Hall," November, 1941

elections.nytimes.com/2012/campaign-finance

Money, Money, Money

- Federal Election Commission
 - Sets limits on direct contributions to candidates
- Public v. Private funding
 - Public: Presidential Election Campaign Fund, check box to donate on tax return
 - Private: Individuals, corporations, labor unions, interests groups
 - PACs are used by interest groups to raise \$
- Hard v. Soft money
 - Hard: Direct contributions to candidates are limited
 - Soft: Contributions to parties for general use or independent activities are unlimited
 - *Citizens United (2010)* led to rise of Super PACs



Do you agree with donation limits?

Interest Groups

- *How are interest groups different from political parties?*
- Types
 - Economic
 - Special Interest
 - Public
- Activities
 - Form PACs to help candidates who support their issue get elected
 - Hire lobbyists to influence lawmakers
 - Use media to sway public opinion

Major U.S. Interest Groups	
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	NAACP
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations	AFL-CIO
American Medical Association	AMA
National Organization of Women	NOW
American Association of Retired Persons	AARP
National Rifle Association	NRA
American Civil Liberties Union	ACLU

votesmart.org/interest-groups

The Media

- Public Opinion
 - Public officials pay attention to public opinion when they set their agenda of important issues to address
 - Mass media reflects public opinion and attitudes about the issues, but it can also influence them
 - *Example?*
 - *How is has the internet and social media affected politics?*
 - *How can you be on your guard for media bias?*
- Polls
 - Public opinion polls are taken regularly to monitor and track changes
 - Exit polls are taken as people leave the voting precincts to help them report early results
 - *How does this work?*
- Propaganda
 - Promotion of a particular viewpoint or idea using persuasive techniques



Propaganda



- Glittering Generality
 - Sounds good, so vague it is essentially meaningless
- Endorsement
 - Support from an influential celebrity or group
- Name Calling
 - Unpleasant association or label
- Bandwagon
 - Everyone else agrees, be on the winning team
- Just Plain Folks
 - I'm just like you, so you can trust me

- *Why do propaganda techniques work?*
- *Does propaganda help or hinder democracy?*
- *Examples?*



www.livingroomcandidate.org