

2016-10-06

## Political Culture and Ideology

### Key Question

- Who are the American people and what do they believe about government and politics?

### The Census

- The constitution mandates a census every decade
- Historians use that data to make judgements about the voting populace
- **Sample** = a collection of participants that represent a certain population
- **Random Sample** = technique employed by statisticians to ensure a sample is representative
  - Every member of a certain demographic should have an equal chance of being the representative of that demographic in the sample
- **Representative Sample** = sample must contain sufficiently large sub-samples for each demographic the survey is targeting
- **Sampling Error** = margin of error in survey results
- **Wording Effect** = wording of poll questions must be unambiguous and unbiased

### Three Waves of Immigration

- Wave 1: Western Europeans
  - Spain, Portugal, Britain, France, etc
- Wave 2: Southeastern European
- Wave 3: Asians and Hispanics
  - Asians come from war-torn areas = refugees

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### The American People

- Age as a political factor

- Because of baby-boomer generation, Americans over 65 are fastest-growing group
- Puts strain on social security
  - \* Less paying in, more taking out
- *How do Americans learn about politics?*
  - Answer: **Political Socialization** = the process through which one comes to identify with a particular political ideology
  - Factors
    - \* Family
    - \* Peers
    - \* Media consumed
      - Younger generation doesn't consume TV media—mostly internet
    - \* Class distinctions
    - \* Education
      - Public schools assimilate children into society = *indoctrination*?

## Voting Behavior

- **Political Ideology** = a set of beliefs about government, economics, and society
- Demographics
  - Age
  - Gender/Sexual Orientation
    - \* Women typically vote democrat
    - \* Men typically vote democrat
  - Race
    - \* Hispanics typically vote democrat
    - \* African Americans typically vote democrat
    - \* Asians typically vote Republican
      - Escaping communist regimes
      - Disproportionately wealthy
  - Religion
  - Income
    - \* Blue Collar/White Collar
  - Location
    - \* Urban/Rural/Suburban
  - Education

## 2016-10-11

### Groups of American Voters

- Ideologue = person who thinks of politics in terms of *ideology*
  - 12% of population
- Group Benefits = people who go along with party labels
  - 42% of population
- Nature of the Times = people who orient themselves based on the state of the nation (economic security, national security, etc)
  - 24% of population
- No-Issue Content = people who orient themselves politically based on personality of politicians
  - 22% of population

### Choosing to Vote

- **Legitimacy** = the belief that politicians rise to the ticket meritocratically; the voter has a say in *who* they're voting for
- **Political Efficacy** = the belief that political participation *actually* shapes the government
- **Civic Duty** = the belief that it is your moral *duty* to participate in democracy

### Voter Registration

- **Motor Voter Laws** = laws that allow people to register at the DMV
- Voting registration is the best predicting factor as to whether or not someone will vote
- Motor Voter Act 1993

### What Factors Influence Voter Turnout?

- Biggest factor: whether or not one registers to vote
  - Obviously...
- Demographics
  - Education
  - Age

- Gender
  - Race/Ethnicity
- Other factors
  - Marriage status
  - Persistent housing
  - Union membership

### What is “Political Participation”?

- Protesting as participation
  - **Protest** = engaging in disobedience for the purpose of furthering a political goal
  - **Civil Disobedience** = the conscious breaking of laws or norms to get a message across