

Texas Political Culture

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1 Political Culture

What is Political Culture

“Political culture” is broadly shared values or beliefs about how the government should function and how politics should operate. American political culture values liberty, equality, and democracy.

There are different types of political culture, and some people value one type over another:

- **Moralistic political culture** - belief that government should be active in promoting the public good, and that citizens should participate in politics and civil activities to ensure that good. The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few. Government action may not benefit you in every case, but it does the most good for the most people.
- **Individualistic political culture** - belief that government should limit its role to providing order in society so that citizens can pursue their economic self interest. Wants very little government intervention.
- **Traditionalistic political culture** - belief that government should be dominated by political elites and guided by tradition. In Texas, a political elite is usually a business leader, not the elected officials themselves.

Texas has a mixture of traditionalistic and individualistic political culture. Taxes are kept low and social services are kept to a minimum, which goes against moralistic culture. Texans don't like to stifle business growth, which is something that taxes do. Business leaders have a major say in how Texas is run. They do this through lobbying and political donations.

Why is Texas the Way it is?

Texas has this mix of trad/individual political culture because:

- **Traditional Voting** - Texas has been a one party state for over 100 years (democrats, until 2002). From 1870s-1990s, many people voted democrat by tradition. By the 1990s, republicans are gaining traction.
- **Provincialism** - A “narrow, limited, and self interested view of the world”. For a long time, Texan politicians were white males. After the civil war and during the 1900s, African Americans and women were granted the right to vote, so politicians had a more diverse constituency. Over the last 30 years, there has been an increase in minorities involved in Texas politics.
- **Business Dominance** - lobbyists, organized interest groups, etc. have direct access to Texan politicians and have influence over them.

Economic Change in Texas

Texas has undergone a series of economic changes since the early 19th century. Economic theorist Joseph Schumpeter created the Theory of Creative Destruction, which states that capitalism, and the willingness to create new ideas and products, is what leads to change.

Cotton was what made Texas rich in the first place. Inventions like barbed wire and the railroad increased production. Cattle was the next major product of Texas, due to the refrigerated rail car. Oil was discovered and that became the primary product. Texas Railroad Commission limited the production of oil for economic reasons. During the 1980s, there was a recession and oil wasn't

profitable. Texas turned to technology. In the 1990s and 2000s, CPUs and computer excessories were very profitable. Texas Instruments, Dell, etc.

NAFTA removed tariffs, which helped the Texas economy, especially in trade with Mexico.

2 Texas Demography

Texas's population has grown rapidly because:

- Strong economy - many people migrated here to participate in the strong economy.
- More childbirth - because of medical advancements, there are less infant mortality and life expectancy has increased.
- International immigration - A lot from Mexico, many from the middle east and India
- Intranational immigration - because of our low cost of living, many Americans move to Texas

Race Demographics

- **Anglos (47% in 2010)** - dominant race until recently.
- **Hispanic (37% in 2010)** - most are of Mexican descent. Only after WWII did the political status of Hispanics improve as Hispanic politicians take major roles in Texas politics. In the 1990s, democrats won the Hispanic vote and that has been how they traditionally vote.
- **African American (11% in 2010)** - Most African Americans came into Texas through slavery. After slavery was abolished, Jim Crow laws were strong in Texas. Many African Americans live in the urban centers of Texas, ie. Dallas, Austin, Houston.

The **majority** is 50% + 1, and a **plurality** is the largest group. In 2010, Anglos (47%) where **not** the majority, race; there was no majority.

Age

The age of Texans is younger than other states, with around 30% under 18.

Poverty and Wealth

Texas Population tends to be poorer than the rest of the country, per capita. It ranked 29th in 2010. This is offset by Texas' low cost of living.

Urbanization

Urbanization is the process where people move from rural areas to cities. Urbanization has basically finished in Texas, now we're under suburbanization. People are moving to the suburbs around major cities.

Urban political economy

“Political economy” is the interrelations of politics and the economy, and is reflected in the comparison of Texas’ 3 major metropolitan areas:

- **Houston** - The largest city in Texas, and the fourth largest in the US. Almost 6.1 million in 2010. Houston became one of the leading energy centers in the world due to oil and gas.
- **DFW** - Includes Dallas, Fort Worth, and surrounding cities, connected by highways. Strong entrepreneurship in DFW.
- **San Antonio** - Second largest in Texas. The economy of San Antonio is based on military bases, education, tourism, and medical research. Lacks the high tech industrial jobs that Houston and DFW have.

3 Texas: The Beginning

Mexico originally owned Texas, and American settlers came in. English-Scotch-Irish replace Hispanic culture. Women could own property, but they could not vote or serve on juries.

Factions vs. Parties

Early on, Texas didn’t have political parties, but it did have feuding factions.

- **Pro Houston Faction** - Wanted annexation for Texas by the United States, didn’t want Texas to be it’s own nation. Lead by Sam Houston.
- **Anti Houston Faction** - Wanted Texas to become it’s own nation, and extermination of natives.

In 1836, Texans voted for annexation, but the US didn’t invite Texas into the Union until 1845 because Texas was a slave state. During the Civil War, Texas voted to secede and join the Confederacy.

Political Progress

- **Women** - Women have had an increase in rights in the modern day. Governor Hobby around 1918 made Texas the first Southern state to ratify the 19th amendment (women’s suffrage).
- **Minority Court Cases**
 - **Nixon v. Herndon** - Texas was prohibiting African Americans from voting in the Democratic primary. Nixon (a black man) sues based on 14th and 15th amendments. Supreme Court rules in favor of Nixon. Supreme Court said that *government* can’t discriminate, but the Texas government allowed the Democratic party to take over running the primary in order to discriminate against African Americans.
 - **Grovey v. Townsend** - Grovey (a black man) is discriminated against (by the Democratic party) in the same way that Nixon was, and sues for the same reason. Supreme Court rules in favor of Grovey, but the Constitution can only prevent the *government* from discriminating, not a private entity.

- **Smith v. Allwright** - Overturns *Grovey v. Townsend*, Supreme Court rules that by allowing the Democratic party to run the primary by proxy, the state of Texas allowed discrimination to happen, which is a violation of the 14th and 15th amendment.
- **Sweatt v. Painter** - Sweatt (a black man) applies to UT Law school. He was not admitted based on his race. UT was operating under “separate but equal” doctrine. They said that they were going to open a school for African Americans. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Sweatt be admitted. They said that the African American school would be grossly inferior to the white school.
- **Hernandez v. The State of Texas** - Hernandez was found guilty of murder. Hernandez’s attorney appealed to the Supreme Court because Hernandez’s rights guaranteed equal protection under the law not only based on race but class. Hernandez’s jury was made up of all white people and no Hispanics. Court found that no Hispanics had served on a criminal jury for 25 years. State of Texas treated Hispanic people as white. Supreme Court ruled against the State of Texas.
- **Education** - The first progressive movement for better public education in Texas was just after WWI, and it provided free textbooks for public school students. The next progressive movement came in the 1980s, and had 3 parts:
 1. No Pass, No Play - Students had to do well enough academically in order to participate in extracurricular activities.
 2. No Pass, No Teach - Required that teachers take a content test and are capable of teaching in their area.
 3. Edgewood v. Kirby (Robin Hood plan) - effort to make sure all schools in Texas were funded equally
- **Parties** - Starting in 1973, Texans voted Democrat for every state office in response to a forced Republican governor. The Tidelands dispute between the federal government and Texas was over who owned oil found in Texas waters. The federal government eventually let Texas have the oil, but Texans are mad at the Democratic party. Under Governor Shivers, many Texans were “shivercrats”, who voted Democrat at the local and state level, but Republican at the federal level.

4 Review

This is taken from the review sheet that Smith provides, I’m just filling in the answers.

Key Terms

- **Political Culture**

“Political culture” is broadly shared values and beliefs about how the government should function and how politics should operate. American political culture values liberty, equality, and democracy.

- **Majority and Plurality**

A **majority** is 50% + 1, while a **plurality** is just the largest group. There may be no majority. In Texas in 2010, the Texas population was 47% white. This group held the plurality but not the majority.

- **Tidelands Controversy**

Oil was found off the coast of Texas, and Texas claimed it. The federal government decides to also lay claim and say its federal land, so they get the oil. Texas was voting Democrat at the time, and the federal government was also lead by Democrats. Texans are mad at the federal government and there are a few pieces of legislation and presidential vetoes. After everything, the federal government decides to let Texas have the oil anyway. Texans are still mad. Under the leadership of Governor Allan Shivers, many Texans become “shivercrats”, who vote Democrat in local and state elections, but Republican for federal elections in retaliation from the Tidelands controversy. Democrats grasp starts to slip in Texas.

- **Factions/Parties**

Early in Texas history, there were no parties but factions. The two main ones were the **Pro Houston** and **Anti Houston** factions. The Pro Houston faction wanted annexation into the US (they followed Sam Houston), while the Anti Houston factions wanted to secede and become a Nation.

Later on, Democrats controlled Texas for about a hundred years. Only around 2003 did the Republicans gain control of Texas. In 1973, the federal government forced a Republican governor which made Texans vote strongly Democrat. The Tidelands controversy made Texans vote Democrat at the state and local level, and Republican at the federal level.

Key Questions

- **What are the different types of political culture? What type(s) are applied to Texas?**

See the “What is Political Culture” section above for more details. The 3 types of political culture are:

- Moralistic - public good
- Individualistic - economic self interest
- Traditionalistic - traditions and political elites

Texas is a mixture of traditionalistic and individualistic political culture. Government programs are kept to a minimum, and Texans like businesses growth.

- **Know what items drove the economic change of Texas.**

- Cotton
- Barbed (rip) wire and the railroad
- Cattle and the refrigerated rail car
- Oil
- Technology

- **Why does Texas have the political culture that it does?**

Texas has a mix of trad/individual political culture because of:

- Traditional voting - Texas was a one party state for a long time.

- Provincialism
- Business Dominance - Lobbyists, political interest groups, etc. have direct access to Texan politicians.
- **What rights did women have when Texas was first established as a nation?**
Women could own property, but could not vote or serve on juries.
- **What were the significant court cases from Texas which helped minorities throughout Texas history?**
See the “Political Progress” section above for details about each one.
 - Nixon v. Herndon
 - Grovey v. Townsend
 - Smith v. Allwright
 - Sweatt v. Painter
 - Hernandez v. The State of Texas
- **Know about women’s suffrage.**
Under Governor Hobby around 1918, Texas was the first southern state to ratify the 19th amendment, giving women the right to vote.
- **Know the various governors we discussed in lecture.**
Probably don’t need to know all of these but these are all the Governors he mentioned.
 - **Allan Shivers (D)** - lead the “shivercrats”. See the Tidelands controversy above.
 - **Dolph Briscoe (D)** - Elected in 1972. He was a Democrat like the rest, but was the first governor elected without a majority. Symbolizes the Democrats losing control of Texas.
 - **William P. Clements (R)** - Elected in 1979, the first Republican governor since 1873.
 - **White (D)** - Elected in 1983. Defeats Clements and brings Democrats back into control.
 - **Clements (R)** - Wins reelection against Governor White, Republicans are back in the governors office.
 - **Ann Richards (D)** - Defeats Clements and brings Democrats back.
 - **George Bush (R)** - Defeats Richards, Republicans are back. After this, Republicans control both chambers of Texas legislature. Republicans are here to stay.